



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD  
AT ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON MONDAY 6 MARCH 2023 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Councillor N Kelly
- Members Present :  
(In Person)** Aldermen - F Agnew, T Burns, L Clarke, M Girvan  
and J Smyth  
Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, A Bennington, R Foster,  
and N Ramsay
- Members Present:  
(Remote)** J Gilmour, J Montgomery and R Swann
- Non Committee  
Members:  
(In person)** Councillor B Webb
- Non Committee  
Members:  
(Remote)** Councillors - P Dunlop, V McWilliam and L Smyth
- Officers Present** :
- Director of Parks & Leisure - M McDowell
  - Director of Waste Operations – M Lavery
  - Deputy Director of Operations (Environmental Health, Building Control and Property) - C Todd
  - Deputy Director of Performance and Governance – L Johnston
  - Council Lawyer – A McDowell
  - Systems Support Officer – C Bell
  - Member Services Officer – L Irwin

**CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

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

**1 APOLOGIES**

Alderman J McGrath

## **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Item 6.7 – Alderman Burns

## **3 INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF**

None.

## **4 ITEMS FOR DECISION**

### **4.1 EH/EHS/LR/006 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES PRIVATE TENANCIES ACT (NI) 2022 - UPDATE ON POWERS FOR COUNCIL COMMENCING APRIL 2023**

Members were reminded that under the Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, Council had responsibility for privately rented dwellings in the Borough. Responsibilities included:

- ensuring obligations of landlords and tenants under private tenancies are fulfilled;
- issuing notices of unfitness and notices of disrepair;
- issuing certificates of fitness.

In order to make the private rented sector a safer and more protected housing option, the 2006 Order had been updated and the Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 received Royal Assent on the 27th April 2022. The new legislation would come into effect on the 1st April 2023. However, it should be noted that there are still a number of provisions which require further consultation and Members would be provided with an update on receipt of the Department for Communities (DfC) consultation papers.

The Act creates new offences for which the Council would have powers to issue fixed penalty notices. The fixed penalty payable in respect of an offence, determined by the Council, must not exceed one-fifth of the maximum fine payable on summary conviction for that offence. Currently the maximum fine payable is £2,500. The maximum level of fixed penalty fine that the Council could set for the new offences is therefore £500.

The Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022 would provide additional powers to Councils in relation to the regulation of the private rented sector as follows:

#### **Tenancy Information Notices**

The Tenancy Information Regulations 2022 requires a landlord to give a tenant a Tenancy Information Notice containing specified information within 28 days of the commencement of a tenancy. A Tenancy Information Notice is an important legal document, which provides the landlord and tenant with information on their respective rights and responsibilities.

It would help to minimise disputes as information, such as, the rent payable, deposit details, duration of tenancy, responsibility for repairs and notice of termination would be included. The Notice also would provide tenants with the landlord's (and, if appropriate, agent's) contact information. If the landlord had previously given a tenant a Notice which substantially meets the specified requirements of the new legislation this would be deemed compliant.

If the landlord commits an offence in relation to a Tenancy Information Notice, the Council would have the power to issue a fixed penalty notice, not exceeding £500. If the landlord was convicted by a court, the penalty would be a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale (currently £2,500).

The maximum fixed penalty notice fine level that can be issued by Council is £500 and it is proposed that in order to protect tenants that the fixed penalty level offence would be set by the Council at £500.

### **Provision of Written Receipts**

It is now a requirement for a landlord to provide a written receipt for any payment made in cash in relation to a tenancy. A receipt is a method of documenting cash payments that a tenant pays to a landlord under a tenancy. A receipt is beneficial to both tenants and landlords offering tenants documented proof of cash payments and landlords a record of cash payments. For tenants who pay their rent in cash a rent receipt may be the only written evidence they have of their payments.

If the landlord or his/her representative/agent commits an offence by failing to provide the receipt for cash payments, the Council may issue a fixed penalty notice not exceeding £500. If the landlord was convicted by a court, the penalty would be a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale (currently £2,500).

The maximum fixed penalty notice fine level that could be issued by Council is £500 and it is proposed that the fixed penalty level offence is set by the Council at £500.

### **Increase in time limit for requirements relating to tenancy deposits**

The time limit for a tenancy deposit to be protected in an approved Tenancy Deposit Scheme had changed from 14 days to 28 days and landlords have additional time to provide the prescribed information to the tenant as this had changed from 28 days to 35 days. This information must include:

- a) details of the amount of the deposit protected in an approved scheme and the full tenancy address;
- b) the landlord or agent's name, address and contact details;

- c) the name and contact details of the scheme protecting the deposit including how the tenant can let the scheme know about a disagreement over the return of the deposit;
- d) the reasons why part of, or all of, the deposit might be withheld at the end of the tenancy; and
- e) what happens when the tenant cannot be contacted at the end of the tenancy.

### **Removal of the 6-month time barrier for prosecution of tenancy deposit offences**

The Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 makes the failure to protect a tenancy deposit a continuing offence and removed the 6-month time limit on prosecutions. This means that there will be no time barrier on prosecuting a person who fails to comply with the legal requirements. In order to inform and remind landlords of their legal obligations, Environmental Health would seek to publicise details of the legislative provisions through normal media channels and by writing to landlords.

Proposed by Councillor Montgomery  
 Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**the new legislative powers for Council in relation to the private rented sector be noted and that approval be given for the maximum fixed penalty level of £500 for the new offences of (i) Failing to issue a Tenancy Information Notice, and (ii) Failing to provide the tenant with a rent receipt for payment in cash.**

*ACTION BY: Liam Nicholas, Environmental Health Manager (Environment)*

#### **4.2 EH/EHS/LR/007 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENVIRONMENTAL FIXED PENALTY NOTICES LEGISLATION/ADDITIONAL POWERS**

Members were reminded that the ability to set the level of Fixed Penalty Fines is set out in legislation. The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 were made on 8 December and came into operation on 30 December 2022.

These Regulations increased the maximum penalty capable of being specified by a Council for the offence of littering and contravention of a dog control order relating to dog fouling, from £80 to £200. The level for a fixed penalty notice capable of being specified by a Council for graffiti, flyposting and audible intruder alarms remained unchanged.

In order to protect our environment and act as a deterrent to offenders, Officers recommended that the fixed penalty fine for the offence of littering as well as contravention of a dog control order relating to dog fouling be increased from £80 to £200 with a reduction to £150 (currently £60) for early payment within 14 days.

**The Waste and Contaminated Land (Amendment) (2011 Act) (Commencement No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022**

In addition, Councils had been notified by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency that authority had been granted under the Waste and Contaminated Land (Amendment) (2011 Act) (Commencement No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 to enforce Articles 4 and 5 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997. The commencement date was 2 January 2023. These additional powers allowed for dual enforcement by NIEA and Councils enhancing existing powers that Councils had under the litter order.

Article 4 offences relate to waste deposited in or on any land under the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 as amended, and are subject to a potential fixed penalty fine of not less than £100 and not more than £400.

To further protect our environment and act as a deterrent to offenders, Officers were recommending that the maximum penalty for offences under Article 4 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 is £400, with reduction to £300 for early payment within 14 days, was applied.

In response to a query from a Member, the Deputy Director of Operations (Environmental Health, Building Control and Property) explained the twin approach of education and enforcement to littering and dog fouling and agreed to revert on the number of fixed penalty notices issued in the last year.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan  
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**approval is given:**

- i. To increase the fixed penalty fine for the offence of littering and contravention of a dog control order relating to dog fouling from £80 to £200, and,**
- ii. For a fixed penalty fine of £400 for offences under Article 4 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 as amended.**

*ACTION BY: Helen Harper, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Environment)*

**4.3 PBS/BC/003 VOL 2 STREET NAMING – RANDALSTOWN ROAD, ANTRIM**

A development naming application had been received from Samantha Shannon on behalf of Lotus Homes (UK) Ltd. regarding the naming of a residential development off Randalstown Road, Antrim. The development consisted of 74 dwellings, these being a mixture of detached and semi – detached. The development names and developer's rationale had been

submitted as outlined below, with the developer's application, location map and site plan was circulated.

1. Forest Green – With the new development being in close proximity of Antrim's Castle Garden Forest museum and the many forest trails in the area, they felt Forest Green would be a good representation that reflects the wider natural environment. Their research showed Forest had not been used in the Borough for street naming so no other street names would be the same or similar.
2. Forest Lodge – The same rationale as above applied to their second suggestion.
3. Forest Gardens – The same rationale as above applied to this suggestion.

In order to rationalise postal numbering, it was requested that officers were given delegated powers to add suffixes to the overall development name if required.

Should Council not wish to select one of the above names; the matter would be referred back to the developer via the Building Control section for further consideration.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

**The matter be referred back to the developer** [REDACTED]

*ACTION BY: Liam McFadden, Principal Building Control Surveyor*

#### **4.4 L/GEN/001 CORRESPONDENCE - CARERS POLICY FORUM**

Correspondence had been received (circulated) from the Carers Policy Forum, which highlighted the work conducted by the organisation and details of the support provided for unpaid carers within the Borough, and throughout Northern Ireland. In addition, the correspondence made enquiries regarding Council policies that promote the inclusion of unpaid carers in accessing services such as Leisure Centres. Council's Leisure Service currently has no policy relating to access for carers.

Within Council's leisure pricing policy, concession discounts were available for both membership and Pay as you Go options upon receipt of suitable evidence e.g. evidence of means tested benefits. It was proposed that this pricing option be extended to individuals who could produce a Carer ID card as evidence of being a carer. Officers had been in communication with The Northern Trust who state there were approximately 1,000 Carers Cards in circulation.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**the Leisure Pricing Policy be amended to include carers as eligible criteria for a concession discount upon presentation of a valid Carer ID card.**

*ACTION BY: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations*

#### **4.5 L/LEI/CLC/002 ULSTER GAA REQUEST FOR WALL BALL FACILITIES AT CRUMLIN LEISURE CENTRE**

Correspondence has been received, circulated, from the Chief Executive of the Ulster Council G.A.A. requesting installation of wall ball facilities at Crumlin Leisure Centre, which would facilitate the sport of Hand Ball.

Costs have been estimated to be in the region of £9,000- £10,000 for the installation of 3 wall ball courts in the leisure centre's sports hall.

In operational terms, the sports hall currently operates at 80% capacity during peak times for activities such as indoor soccer, netball and fitness classes, therefore availability of the sports hall would be largely limited to off peak times - during the day. In addition, the construction of the wall would result in the installation protruding slightly which would present some health and safety concerns for some other users notably 5-a side soccer. Therefore, the installation of a wall ball in facility in Crumlin Leisure Centre is not feasible.

Members are reminded that a business case for the installation of an Urban Sports Wall in both Glengormley and Antrim has been completed and will form part of the Peace Plus Local Community Action Plan that is currently being developed. If approved, these walls could also be utilised for the sports of wall ball and hand ball.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington  
Seconded by Alderman Burns and agreed that

**A review be undertaken of all facilities and a strategy developed for all indoor/ outdoor sports across the Borough and this be brought to Committee to include a plan and associated costs.**

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

#### **4.6 PK/GEN/022 NOMINATIONS FOR IRELANDS BEST KEPT TOWNS AWARDS 2023**

Correspondence had been received (circulated) from the Northern Ireland Amenity Council requesting that Council supported the nominations of Antrim and Randalstown for the Best Kept Ireland Towns Awards 2023 in the categories of "Best Kept Large Town" and "Best Kept Small Town" respectively.

Judging for the awards would take place throughout May with an awards ceremony to be held in Dublin scheduled for June 2023.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke  
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

**Council supports the nominations of Antrim and Randalstown for the Best Kept Ireland Towns Awards 2023.**

*ACTION BY: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations*

**4.7 WM/FM/003 REVIEW OF FUEL MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE**

The Fuel Management Policy and Procedure has been reviewed and updated in accordance with Council's agreed Policy Framework and schedule. The Policy and Procedure, which covers the management of fuel purchases and usage, was last updated in December 2020.

An internal audit completed in October 2022 and while the auditor gave the Policy and Procedure a "satisfactory" rating, a number of amendments were proposed including:

- Additional fuel card controls;
- New fuel storage and usage methods.

The new Procedures have been trialled by the operational sections and the auditor is satisfied that the changes strengthen the safeguards on the control of fuel. The proposed Policy and Procedures (circulated) have been approved by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Proposed by Councillor Archibald-Brown  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the revised Fuel Management Policy & Procedure are approved.**

*ACTION BY: Lynda Gregg, Transport & Contracts Manager*

**4.8 L/LEI/002/VOL4 MARY PETERS TRUST – REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE 2023/24**

Correspondence had been received from the Mary Peters Trust requesting financial support for its sporting awards to local athletes (circulated). Members were reminded that the Trust provides encouragement and financial support to young sportspersons from across Northern Ireland. Within the Borough the range of sporting disciplines supported in 2022/23 included: athletics, football, golf, gymnastics, netball, swimming, archery, canoeing, and para triathlon.

Council support for the last 6 financial years had been £2,000 per annum. A list of those athletes from the Borough who have received support is set out in the letter.



Proposed by Alderman Girvan  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**a contribution of £2,000 be made to support the work of the Mary Peters Trust within the Borough for 2023/2024.**

*ACTION BY: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations*

#### **4.9 WM/WM/040 CONSULTATION ON THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

The Department for the Economy (DfE) were seeking views on the Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland. The Strategy sets out a vision that by 2050, Northern Ireland would have an innovative, inclusive and competitive economy where business, people and planet flourish, with responsible production and consumption at its core.

The overarching target for the Strategy was to halve Northern Ireland's annual material footprint per person, currently 16.6 tonnes, to 8 tonnes by 2050, which was the level that the United Nations (UN) recommend people need to live sustainably. The Strategy sets out how this can be achieved through measures like:

- switching to materials that could be reused;
- increasing use of fuels that could be replenished;
- designing things to be kept in use for longer and reducing waste.

The Circular Economy impacts a range of Council sections and the proposed response reflects this. The main points of the proposed Council response (circulated) are as follows:

- we agreed with the stated target in the Strategy to reduce individual material footprint of the Northern Ireland population to the UN recommended sustainable living target of 8 tonnes of resources per year by 2050;
- the lack of funding to deliver this Strategy would need to be addressed;
- Promote the “carrot and stick” approach in the delivery of the Strategy with the use of regulatory and financial incentives to increase affordability and availability of sustainable options;
- Promote Public Sector procurement to increase circularity of resources;
- Encourage a focus on education and skill development to increase knowledge and awareness of Circular Economy and to address skill shortages through vocational training.

Further comments from Members are welcome before the submission of the response by 20 March 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington  
Seconded by Councillor Archibald-Brown and agreed that

**the draft response to the Consultation on the Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland is approved.**

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

## **5 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

### **5.1 EH/PHWB/010 NORTHERN HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PARTNERSHIP FUNDING – THE FOOD PROGRAMME**

Members were reminded that the Environmental Health and Wellbeing team were represented on the Northern Healthy Lifestyles Partnership (NHLP) and can apply to the Partnership for funding for projects and activities that support the prevention and reduction of obesity. To qualify, the projects and activities must contain one or more of the following;

- Breastfeeding
- Food/nutrition promotion/education
- Physical activity
- Food sustainability promotion/education
- Healthy lifestyle promotion/education

The NHLP supported the outcome of the regional obesity prevention framework “A Fitter Future for All”.

Two overarching objectives of this framework are:

- to increase the percentage of people eating a healthy, nutritionally balanced diet; and,
- to increase the percentage of the population meeting the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines on physical activity.

The Environmental Health and Wellbeing team submitted an application in 2022 for £6,000 funding for an initiative called 'The Food Programme'. The idea of the application was to increase adults' awareness of the importance of eating nutritious foods, highlighting the benefits of batch cooking and using slow cookers and air fryers, for example, to prepare healthier meals more easily. Budgeting and shopping for food was also included.

The application was successful and, with the assistance of the Community Planning team, community groups in each of the seven District Electoral Areas had been identified. The project was being delivered with, and has been co-designed by, each individual group so as to best meet local needs.

The sessions, which run until the end of March 2023, are weekly for 4 weeks and provide an opportunity for people to meet helping to reduce social isolation and loneliness and build community cohesion as well as participants learning new skills. The food prepared during the practical sessions was shared with everyone attending, ensuring that everyone had a hot meal.

Promoted as part of the Warm Welcome programme and via referrals from Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey from people who have used Council's Social Supermarket programme, sessions were being attended by approximately 20-30 participants. Feedback so far has been very positive. In response to a question from a Member, the Deputy Director of Operations (Environmental Health, Building Control and Property) undertook to investigate the possibility of further funding for the new financial year.

*ACTION: Clifford Todd, Deputy Director of Operations (Environmental Health, Building Control and Property)*

Proposed by Alderman Girvan  
Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

## **5.2 PK/GEN/207 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND – KING'S GARDEN, HAZELBANK**

Members were reminded that approval was granted at December 2022 Council for the appointment of Diarmuid Gavin Deisgns to design and deliver the King's Garden at Hazelbank Park, as part of the Botanical Borough concept and to provide a lasting legacy from the King's Coronation in May 2023.

Officers continually explore external funding opportunities to assist in the delivery of various Council schemes and projects, and had recently been successful in securing a total of £101,395 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund as a contribution to the design and delivery of the King's Garden. In restoring this green space, the funder noted the positive impact the project would have on both local residents and tourists.

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## **5.3 WM/WM/037 PILOT OF SOFT PLASTICS KERBSIDE COLLECTION SERVICE**

As Members would be aware, in April 2022 Council agreed to work with Bryson Recycling to pilot the collection soft plastics as part of their wheelie box collection service. The pilot commenced in June 2022 to a small sample of 200 houses in the Richmond and Abernethy areas of Glengormley and ran over an eight month period to incorporate the seasonal fluctuations of summer holidays and Christmas.

A full analysis of the pilot, including a customer survey with the residents had enabled conclusions to be made of preferable collection methods, establishing the type of soft plastics that can be collected, correct

communication methods and possible end markets for correct processing and recycling of the material.

The overall findings showed that during the course of the pilot approximately 27% of households participated in the scheme, with the majority of these households presenting good quality soft plastics with only 7% contamination, mostly in the form of incorrect materials. Whilst the sample size was very small over 750 kilos of soft plastics was diverted from landfill and when surveyed, almost 100% of households felt that adding this material to the collection service was beneficial and had a direct impact of the waste in their residual bin.

Members were reminded of the impending Extend Producer Responsibility regulations which would require the collection of soft plastics like bread, crisps and fruit bags. There were a number of other pilots due to take place in England and Wales and it was envisaged that the findings from our scheme and the others in the UK would shape future collection arrangements. Officers were seeking funding opportunities from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and Bryson Recycling to develop further soft plastic collections.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington  
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

#### **5.4 PK/BIO/012 NORTHERN IRELAND FOREST SCHOOL ASSOCIATION – FOREST SCHOOLS PROGRAMME**

Members were reminded that Council had contributed annually to the Northern Ireland Forest Schools Programme. The Northern Ireland Forest School Association is a charity that promotes, develops and delivers sustainable environmental education programmes. The Forest Schools Programme is an innovative educational approach to outdoor play and learning, with a philosophy to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences.

Members were further reminded that approval was given in January 2023 to increase Council's contribution from £5000 to £7000 to allow one school from each DEA to be selected for participation in the programme. As a result, an expression of interest was forwarded to all schools within the Borough, with the following schools being selected to participate in the programme this year:

School	DEA Area
Antrim Primary School	Antrim DEA
Mallusk Primary School	Airport DEA

Groggan Primary School	Dunsilly DEA
Ballynure Primary School	Ballyclare DEA
Kings Park Primary School	Macedon DEA
St Bernard's Primary School	Glengormley DEA
Mossley Primary School	Threemilewater DEA

Proposed by Alderman Clarke  
 Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

### **5.5 DIR/OPS/013 COPORATE PLANNING WORKSHOP 2022 – UPDATE**

Following circulation of the minutes of the Corporate Planning Workshops held on 4 November and 2 December 2022, it was agreed that reports would be taken to relevant Committees to approve actions.

Actions taken to date in relation to the Operations Committee were circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Ramsay  
 Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed

**that the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

### **5.6 L/LEI/004/VOL 2 SUMMER SCHEMES 2023**

Members were reminded that Council delivers a range of Summer Schemes and Sports Camps throughout the Borough during July and August. Council's Accessibility and Inclusion Officer provides support to the Council run mainstream schemes to ensure that any individual care needs (medical or disability) are met. Details of the proposed programme of Summer Schemes for 2023 were circulated.

Members were advised that Council also provided additional support and access for children and young people with special needs. In partnership with the Mae Murray Foundation a pilot inclusive scheme provided specialised one to one care for up to 20 children with complex disabilities and medical conditions.

The schemes located at Antrim Forum and Valley Leisure Centre, featured a range of activities such as sensory play, inclusive wheelchair games, inclusive biking and arts and crafts. Feedback from the pilot scheme indicated that parents would welcome the scheme extended further. The Mae Murray Foundation has highlighted limited capacity as a challenge to this, however, Officers were currently sourcing additional providers to ensure the scheme can be extended by one day each week and a further week added.

Finally, Members were advised that Council provided further support through the provision of funding up to a maximum of £5,000 to each special needs school within the Borough that delivered a summer programme.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## **5.7 L/LEI/SD/018 HEALTH INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN – UPDATE**

Members were reminded that in November 2022 Council's Health Intervention Action Plan was approved. To assist with the successful delivery of the Action Plan, two Health Intervention Officers commenced work in December 2022 and had since facilitated numerous well-being sessions and health information sessions to Council staff and various community groups.

In February 2023 and as part of the Action Plan, a new mental health programme called "More Movement for the Mind" was launched. The programme was open to individuals with mild to moderate mental health issues who would like to get more active and as a result improve their mental health. Furthermore, a referral based mental health programme for participants with more severe mental health issues was currently being delivered in partnership with the Hollywell Hospital mental health team and Woodlands Wellness Hub (based at Whiteabbey Hospital).

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

The Chair advised that AOB would be taken at this point of the meeting.

## **8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A Member requested that 'Letters to Heaven' post boxes be installed in all cemeteries in the Borough and managed by cemetery staff.

Proposed by Councillor Ramsay  
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

**that 'Letters to Heaven' post boxes be installed in all cemeteries in the Borough and managed by cemetery staff.**

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

In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations confirmed that those with allotments in Crumlin are in the process of being notified and they would be officially opened at the end of March.

NO ACTION

A Member requested that, due to a number of suicides on local bridges, Council writes to the Department for Infrastructure to investigate options for preventative measures to be put in place.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington  
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

**that Council writes to the Department for Infrastructure to investigate options for preventative measures on bridges.**

*ACTION: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations*

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

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed

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

## **6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE**

### **6.1 IN CONFIDENCE WM/arc21/4/VOL10 arc21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS**

The papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting were circulated for:

- 23 February 2023

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

Proposed by Councillor Bennington  
Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

**the papers be noted.**

NO ACTION

### **6.2 IN CONFIDENCE G/LEG/052/VOL3 BYE-LAWS PROHIBITING THE CONSUMPTION OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR IN PUBLIC PLACES**

Members were reminded that two existing legacy Council bye-laws were in place with respect to the prohibition of the consumption of intoxicating liquor in public places, circulated. Officers had reviewed the two sets of bye-laws with a view to aligning into one for Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough. In doing so, two issues have emerged, (i) minor updates were required to the bye-laws, as they stand, such as updating names of some areas covered by bye-laws which had changed over time and (ii) adding any streets or areas which would benefit from being included.

Members were advised that the Enforcement team were currently carrying out a review of signage in existing areas set out in the bye-laws and any replacement signage would be ordered.

With this in mind, it was essential that Members had the opportunity to both review the existing bye-laws and identify any specific streets or roads which should be added. In addition, the PSNI, had been contacted and had identified 14 streets and areas which they requested to be added, circulated.

Bye-laws are governed by section 90 of the Local Government Act 1972. Guidance was published by the Department of the Environment (now Department of the Communities) confirming that existing bye-laws made by predecessor Councils would remain extant after those Councils ceased to exist. However new Councils were encouraged to review existing bye-laws to ensure they remained appropriate for their new Council areas.

It was therefore proposed that when amending the 2 existing bye-laws to add any streets or areas identified and agreed by Members and those 14 new areas highlighted by the PSNI, that the two bye-laws are aligned and any minor amendments made in order to provide uniformity and consistency throughout the Borough.

If approval was given and preliminary approval is given by the Department, statutory steps need to be followed prior to the bye-laws coming into force, namely:-

- (a) Public consultation at least one month prior to formal application for approval including notice of intention in 2 local newspapers; copy of proposed bye-laws placed in Council buildings and on website
- (b) Report provided with any objections for Council to consider
- (c) Matter returns to Council for resolution subject to approval of the Department that the above process has been followed
- (d) Public Notice is put in press
- (e) One month later bye-laws come into effect (unless Department sets another date)

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and agreed that



approval is given for:

- (i) **the 2 existing legacy Council Bye-Laws in relation to the prohibition of consumption of intoxicating liquor in public places be aligned into one bye-law to reflect the Borough Council that is Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council**
- (ii) **those areas identified by Members, together with the 14 streets and areas highlighted by the PSNI to be included within the new aligned bye-law**
- (iii) **Minor updating of names and relevant areas to the legacy bye-laws**

*ACTION BY: Alison McDowell, Council Lawyer*

### **6.3 IN CONFIDENCE PBS/PS/016 ENERGY MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN - UPDATE**

Council's Property Energy Strategy is a framework for future strategic management decisions in relation to energy and water use and the effective control of carbon emissions.

The Energy Management Action Plan for 2022-2025 sets out Council's targets for the three year period starting with establishing baseline energy use across Council properties through a programme of energy and water audits, provision of recommendations to reduce both energy and water consumption via the adaptation of assets and the implementation of mitigation actions that would reduce our emissions circulated.

A key aspect of the Energy Management Action Plan is the need to improve the performance of existing buildings in terms of energy efficiency and to reduce the use of fossil fuels as an energy source. Members may wish to note that the development of future facilities through the Capital Projects team would separately consider these matters and would be the subject of separate reporting.

Whilst there were significant challenges across the Council's built and natural environment in decarbonising, there were also opportunities to improve performance through setting standards, best practice and strategic decision making.

Energy use in some of Council's buildings is significant as are carbon emissions and whilst progress in reducing consumption has already been made, there is more to do both in retrofitting existing buildings, via improvements being implemented, and through proactively seeking alternative energy solutions.

#### **Analysis of Main Council Sites**

As previously reported, the top five consumers of energy and therefore those with the biggest environmental and financial impact were: -

- Valley Leisure Centre,
- Antrim Forum,
- Mossley Mill,
- Sixmile Leisure Centre
- Antrim Civic Centre

In 2021/2022, these buildings equated to 67.5% of the Council's entire energy consumption and were responsible for 70.4% of the entire CO2 emissions output from built assets.

The table below highlights the actual changes in consumption within these buildings throughout April-January when comparing a pre-pandemic base year of 2018/19 with April - January 2022/2023. Energy consumption levels had reduced in the past four years, primarily due to improvements implemented by Property Services to the Building Management Systems. Costs had risen significantly this year due to high energy prices, however the reduced usage has softened the impact of price increases.

The Council had been able to avail of the Government Energy Bill Relief Scheme that was introduced in September 2022 – this had reduced utility costs, and would continue until the end of March when it is anticipated that the extent of scheme support would reduce significantly.

Site	Apr – Jan 18/19 Consumption (kWh)	Apr – Jan 22/23 Consumption (kWh)	% Change	Apr – Jan 18/19 Cost	Apr – Jan 22/23 Cost	% Change
Antrim Civic Centre	1,193,829	1,083,141	-9.3%	£ 102,487	£ 231,354	+125.7%
Mossley Mill	2,294,156	2,270,281	-1.0%	£ 198,177	£ 441,819	+122.9%
Antrim Forum	2,991,782	2,685,447	-10.2%	£ 270,800	£ 541,744	+100.1%
Valley Leisure Centre	3,860,694	3,339,440	-13.5%	£ 202,270	£ 508,183	+151.2%
Six Mile Leisure Centre	3,596,458	2,574,599	-28.4%	£ 270,188	£ 409,644	+51.6%
Total	13,936,919	11,952,908	-14.2%	£ 1,043,922	£ 2,132,744	+104.3%

### Energy Costs

Members were reminded that due to the current volatility of the energy market, the actual energy costs (i.e. gas, electricity and biomass) for these five buildings had more than doubled in one year. In comparing the months April - January 2021/2022 with April - January 2022/2023, actual costs for the five properties had risen from £977,257 to £2,132,744 as set out below:

	Actual Cost for April-Jan 2021/22 (£)	Actual Cost for April-Jan 2022/23 (£)
Valley Leisure Centre	£273,048	£508,183
Antrim Forum	£222,882	£541,744
Mossley Mill	£200,630	£441,819
Six Mile Leisure Centre	£176,020	£409,644
Antrim Civic Centre	£104,677	£231,354
<b>Total</b>	<b>£977,257</b>	<b>£2,132,744</b>

### Energy Improvement measures – Updates

The Property Services team was continuously exploring ways to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon and mitigate Council's exposure to the increasing energy costs. As approved, in the Energy Management Action Plan, the priority is improvements in the top five energy using buildings and the following update illustrates the extent of work being undertaken with costs being met from the Capital Fund for Energy Efficiency approved in April 2022:

#### Valley Leisure Centre

Considerable work is underway in the Valley:

- i. The primary focus was on the installation of a new biomass facility. Works had been undertaken to upgrade boiler/wood pellet integration, hopper provision, adjacent cold water storage tanks and roof repairs.

Works were nearing practical completion and it was anticipated that the boiler commissioning would be completed in March 2023. The activation of the biomass facility would reduce gas consumption on the site by at least 25% – this equates to over 750,00 kWh and represents an estimated saving in excess of £50,000 per annum based on current tariffs. In tandem, carbon dioxide emissions would reduce by 68,000kg CO<sub>2</sub>.

- ii. A full condition survey had been completed of the existing boiler and heat pump installation. The installation was approximately 25 years old, inefficient and in poor condition. This was resulting in numerous repairs to keep it operational. The report recommends the full replacement of the installation and a feasibility study is underway to inform the type of fuel system for the boiler design – gas, air source heat pumps (electricity) or a hybrid.

- iii. A lighting upgrade scheme had commenced with the following actions having been completed which would result in energy savings:
  - a. Lights in 3 main halls changed to LED fittings
  - b. All lights in front car park replaced - now 100% of bulbs are LED with a time clock and photocell installed (this means that lights will only come on when it is sufficiently dark and helps particularly at this time of year when the days are lengthening)
  - c. Movement sensors have been installed for lights in various areas of the building across all three floors including corridors, staff areas etc.
  - d. Lights in hall stores have also been replaced with LED bulbs and had movement sensors installed.
  - e. Floodlighting at the More Soccer Pitches has had photocells installed.
  
- iv. A hydrogeological assessment had been completed for the Centre to assess the potential for geothermal energy to be used – with the potential to significantly reduce heating costs. Preliminary results were very favourable for this site and merit further investigation through test boreholes. The cost effectiveness of geothermal would need to be considered as part of the long term strategy for leisure provision at the site. A report would be brought for consideration in due course.
  
- v. Proposals had been developed for a pool plant efficiency audit to save electricity through a range of energy saving measures at the Centre as well the other two wet side centres.

### **Antrim Forum**

To date at Antrim Forum the following is underway:

- i. The Property Services team has engaged specialist consultants to work with NIE to maximise the efficiency of the recently installed Combined Heat and Power (CHP) unit at the Forum to further reduce energy consumption and emissions.

CHP systems were highly efficient, making use of the heat which would otherwise be wasted when generating electrical or mechanical power. This allows heat requirements to be met that would otherwise require additional fuel to be burnt. CHP is the measure that offers the most significant single opportunity to reduce energy costs and to improve environmental performance, typically saving around 20% on energy costs. An application for an export licence had been lodged with NIE Networks – this would give the Council the ability to generate energy which can be used on site as it is not permitted to be exported to the wider electricity grid. Electrical load testing had

been completed with mechanical load testing to follow providing effective systems balancing within the centre that facilitates the efficient operation of the CHP.

- ii Proposals had been developed for a pool plant efficiency audit to save electricity through a range of energy saving measures at the Centre as well the other two wet side centres.
- iii Proposals had been developed for replacement of Forum car park lighting to LED bulbs with an anticipated 50% reduction in energy consumption, resulting in potential savings of over £2,000 per annum. A review of internal LED lighting provision, similar to that undertaken in the Valley Leisure Centre was planned for this year.

### **Mossley Mill**

To date the following measure are underway:

- i. A full condition survey had been completed of the boiler and heat pump installations. The installation in the west wing of the site is approximately 25 years old, inefficient and in poor condition. This was resulting in numerous repairs to keep it operational. The survey report recommends the full replacement of the installation. A feasibility study was underway to inform the type of fuel system for the boiler design – gas, air source heat pumps (electricity) or a hybrid.  
Cost, efficiency and emissions output information had been obtained for high efficiency gas boilers. Costs were estimated to be around £250,000. A similar information package was being completed for an air source heat pump installation. A report would be tabled for consideration in due course.
- ii. Feasibility studies had been completed for a solar array to be located on the rooftop of Mossley Mill. The array would have the potential to comprise 106 375W panels producing 35,000kWh/year. Costs were estimated to be in the region of £75,000 and the anticipated return on investment is 6 years. It is anticipated that such an array would generate 7% of the electricity demand for the building.

The Property Services team had made application for an export licence to NIE Networks in November 2022 and await a response. The outcome of the NIE decision is critical in determining the extent of the array(s) that could be installed on the site. Informal planning consultation on the installation had already been undertaken and a formal application could be lodged upon receipt of the NIE Network response.

- iii. The potential to use hydroelectric power at Mossley Mill was initially examined in a feasibility report in 2020. Property Services

had procured an update to this report that provided current costings and further meetings and site visits with the consultants are being arranged to explore available options. Electricity generation was estimated to be circa 7,000kWh/year. Costs were estimated at £250,000 and the anticipated return on investment is 20 years. It is anticipated that a hydroelectric turbine would generate 3% of the electricity demand for the site.

- iv A comprehensive review of lighting provision within Mossley Mill was being procured. The review would provide recommendations and costs for the upgrade to light fittings and controls throughout the site. This was expected to be completed in April 2023.
- v A full assessment was completed in February 2023 to implement a pilot Energy Management Software package. The software package would operate in conjunction with the current Building Maintenance System (BMS) to holistically interrogate energy usage and CO2 Consumption on a pilot basis in the Mill, as well as two other pilots in the Gateway Centre and Sentry Hill. Locations were selected to provide a variety of building type (incl. a heritage building) to assess integration with existing systems.

With a project completion timeframe of 8 weeks from inception to handover, the software package would provide Council with an overview of energy and CO2 consumption on a daily, weekly or monthly basis against defined parameters, for example, by floor area or department. The software would provide an insight into the operational efficiency of the plant and infrastructure against occupancy hours, generating energy consumption trends and mapping to highlight areas performing poorly. This means that further energy efficiencies could be realised. The approximate cost to implement the EMS software for one year across all three sites was approximately £16,000.

Work was currently ongoing to implement the required infrastructure to incorporate the EMS software within each of the denoted properties. It was anticipated this work would be completed at the end of March 2023.

- vi A consultant had been appointed to deliver a comprehensive report on the current provision and condition of both the Building Management System and ageing Air Conditioning System, which is currently 25 years old, 5 years beyond its economical lifespan.

The report would identify the current effectiveness and efficiency of the system, both in design and supply, including, if applicable, recalibration of plant i.e. dampers, realignment of heating controls with occupancy hours, relocation of heating controls and sensors. The report would identify all necessary remedial works with associated estimated costs. It was anticipated the report would

be available for review by Property Services at the end of March 2023.

### **Sixmile Leisure Centre**

Work underway at Sixmile Leisure Centre includes:

- i. A comprehensive report on heating controls had been completed and had identified a number of minor works that could be undertaken to improve the efficiency of the Centre.

Phase 1 of the identified works packages had been completed, with a rebalancing of air handling units to suit occupancy and need in both dry side and wet side changing areas. This would improve system efficiency resulting in cost savings and reduced emissions.

- ii. Phase 2 works on underfloor heating improvements and heat recovery systems in the pool hall were to commence shortly, subject to clarification on costing. The tender had been awarded with works expected to commence in the coming weeks. Cost savings would be determined on comparisons to the previous year.

- iii. Phase 3 works include: -

- a. Supply and extract ductwork to be cleaned throughout (to help performance of the system and reduce stress on motors)
- b. Review of the control strategy for the pool hall, especially in the summer months
- c. Alterations to the exhaust louvre as the current arrangement is inefficient.

These works were to be tendered in the next couple of weeks.

Proposals had been developed for a pool plant efficiency audit to save electricity through a range of energy saving measures at the Centre as well the other two wet side centres.

- iv. The existing biomass system had been reviewed and operational efficiencies would be made through alterations to the interconnecting pipework between the biomass and heating system. This would improve the efficiency of the biomass boiler and reduce the demand on the gas boilers.
- v. The Property Services team was exploring costs to integrate controls for the biomass boiler within the overall Building Management System. This would give complete control of the heating system remotely which is beneficial in dealing with a wide range of issues remotely.

- vi. Future planned improvements included:
  - a. Hall lighting upgrade to LED (potentially 50% savings). Around 33% of bulbs had already been changed to LED.
  - b. Carpark lighting upgrade to LED (current fittings detail still to be established, but anticipated to be high output which could result in significant savings if replaced with LED). Around 33% of bulbs had already been changed to LED.

### **Antrim Civic Centre**

Work is underway at Antrim Civic Centre as follows:

- i. A full condition survey had been completed of the boiler and heat pump installation. The installation is approximately 17 years old and is operating in reasonable condition. The report recommends the full replacement of the installation within the next five years.
- ii. Feasibility studies for the installation of a rooftop solar array are underway.
- iii. The Property Services team was currently working with contractors to review the heating/cooling strategy for the building. Various areas with multiple fan coil units seem to be in conflicting operation, which is resulting in unnecessary energy consumption. Property Services were exploring the possibility that the cooling system could be isolated in the winter months (outside air temperature depending) and the heating circuit pump set could be isolated in the winter. This would save gas and electricity. Specialist advice was to be sought on the review of this strategy before implementing any changes.
- iv. Although the existing lighting was functioning well, the Property Services team was currently replacing faulty fittings with LED, with the aim of providing a complete lighting overhaul in phases over the medium term. Approximately 60% of fittings had been replaced to date, reducing costs by two thirds.

### **Minor projects to improve efficiency**

In addition to the larger scale proposals underway for the top 5 energy consuming buildings, a series of other minor improvements were being progressed and with 'quick-win' projects that would result in meaningful reductions:

#### **Heating Improvements**

- Sixmile Caravan Park pipes had been lagged and insulated
- A review of heating had been completed at Muckamore, Neillsbrook and Stiles Community Centres to ensure heating provision matches



booking periods. This has seen heating consumption drop to the lowest in 5 years.

- An improved boiler servicing programme was in place to increase and maintain efficiency and prevent energy wastage through an increased servicing regime to six monthly servicing with quarterly inspections for all sites.
- Cranfield Toilets - pipes and cisterns had been lagged
- Sentry Hill has had thermostatic controls fitted to the heating system to regulate the heating and prevent unnecessary energy use.
- Jordanstown Lough Shore café has had draught proofing fitted to doors to prevent heat loss.
- The Allen Park biomass system was to be refurbished as heat flow is restricted. Works proposed to reconfigure pipework to ensure maximum efficiency
- Exploratory discussions are underway with boiler manufacturers to develop proposals for the use of hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) as a fuel source for premises currently using heating oil.

### **Lighting improvements**

- Site surveys had been undertaken at Ballyearl to review inefficient lighting. With LED bulb replacement and sensors being installed. This would include internal and external lighting.
- New external LED lighting and MUGA LED lighting had been installed at Neilsbrook Community Centre.
- A lighting review had been completed at the vehicle garage in ESD - 35 x 400W Metal Halide fittings had been replaced by 200W LED fittings. Adequate lighting levels had been maintained with energy consumption reduced by 50% in that area.
- There were roughly 50 more 400W Metal Halide fittings in the maintenance area, Stores and Parks depots. The majority of these would be changed to 150w LED fittings, with the higher bay fittings being changed to 200w LED. This would result in greater savings than the vehicle garage.
- Floodlighting and remote switching had been enhanced at Foundry Lane through the installation of photocells. This had the potential to save an estimated £43 per day at the current rate, over the 6 month winter period. The remote switching software is installed offsite and currently being tested.
- 50% of external lighting at Lilian Bland had been changed to LED bulbs and works were ongoing to replace all of the remaining lights
- Daylight photocell sensors had been installed at floodlighting at the Allen Park Pitches and Three Mile Water Park car parks
- A replacement programme to install LED bulbs at Gideons Green Car Park had been completed with all bulbs now changed
- At Hazelbank
- 30% of the car park lighting had been changed to LED. The remainder of the car park lights would be changed to LED within next 3 months
- Other Lighting – 100% changed to LED

- Mossley Pavilion – 100% of external and car park lighting changed to LED bulbs
- Plans were underway to replicate the lighting scheme already installed at Foundry Lane for the pavilion floodlights at V36.

## **Other**

Condition reports for all heating installations across the Council's estate were being compiled. The findings to date had identified the need to replace a number of systems that were currently operating inefficiently and beyond their life expectancy. Any proposals for upgrade or replacement would be based on return of investment principles and emissions awareness. Reports would be brought on a phased basis with the intent to implement improvements in work packages for economies of scale.

The Property Services team was updating existing Building Management Systems across a number of key sites. The aim was to provide greater monitoring and control within buildings, improving the 'zoning' capability that allows for focused energy use where needed. The IQ Vision system had recently been installed at Mossley Mill, Antrim Civic Centre, the Valley Leisure Centre, Antrim Forum, Six Mile Leisure Centre, Allen Park, Crumlin Leisure Centre, Theatre at the Mill, Antrim Castle Gardens, Sentry Hill, Mossley Pavilion, the Old Courthouse and Dunanney Centre.

This system requires greater infrastructure upgrades to realise its full benefit. This process would be embarked upon throughout this year.

Phase 2 rollout of the installation of IQ Vision was due to commence in summer 2023 with sites to be selected based on both usage and operations.

The Property Services team were procuring feasibility studies for the installation of solar arrays at all Council sites. The studies were intended to provide information on site suitability, scope, cost and payback periods

## **Benchmarking**

The Property Services team was actively benchmarking with others where possible to achieve best practice. Case studies were limited at present in Northern Ireland as organisations await the development of a decarbonisation funding framework from the Northern Ireland Executive. As a result, comparators had been sought from local authorities in England who had enjoyed access to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for a number of years. Communication with a number of local authorities was ongoing and had resulted in valuable insight from their experiences in retrofitting existing buildings.

## **Potential Funding**

Discussions with the Department of Economy to explore the potential for funding for the installation of renewable technologies had stalled due to the

withdrawal of their funding stream. It was hoped that discussions would resume during 2023/2024. The collation of Council's comprehensive energy consumption database was proving to be of real value as this allows for clear 'before' and 'after' comparison – this would provide assurance to the Department on our readiness to benefit from funding.

The establishment of the Capital Fund for Energy Efficiency in Council Properties had been used to meet the costs of the above measures. The energy efficiency initiatives vary in scale and scope but all require up-front investment – resulting in significant reductions in energy consumption, emissions and lower costs. All investments take into account the impact of maintenance and operating costs. In using this Return on Investment principle, the focus was on reducing the amount of time required to repay the upfront investment. The annual recurrence of this capital fund allowed for the development of a short to medium term programme of energy efficiency intervention across the Council estate.

Implementing energy efficiency initiatives produces savings however, exposure to increasing energy costs and volatility in the market remain. The Property Services team would continue to ensure financial prudence, risk management, due diligence and compliance with all the relevant legislation and contract rules.

To further supplement these initiatives, the Property Services team works in partnership with staff across a wide range of services in supporting the Energy Champions initiative across Council to ensure that every employee is aware of the need to reduce unnecessary energy usage. It was the responsibility of each employee to switch off lights and IT equipment when not in use.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan

Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*No action*

#### **6.4 IN CONFIDENCE WM/WM/020 WASTE TREATMENT CONTRACTS**

As Members would be aware a number of Council's waste treatment and disposal contracts were procured through arc21. Two of these contracts were Municipal Waste Disposal and Materials Recycling Facility and both of which require Council approval for proposed actions.

##### **1. Municipal Waste Disposal:**

At present, Council uses the arc21 Municipal Waste Disposal contract which sees the waste landfilled at Biffa's Cottonmount facility. The current landfill contract runs until 31 July 2023 and was also used by Mid & East Antrim Borough Council (MEABC), Belfast City Council, Ards & North Down Borough Council, and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

While the majority of the councils, including Antrim and Newtownabbey, would be using the interim residual waste treatment contract, MEABC had indicated that they are likely to have a requirement for access to this site beyond July 2023. The contract had provision for further extensions of up to 24 months, without any guaranteed tonnages, and it was proposed to do so. The extension would provide Council with contingency capacity suitable for residual waste disposal in the event that any issues with the procurement of the interim treatment services.

## **2. Materials Recycling Facility:**

Due to the delay in the harmonisation of the recycling collection services in the Borough, a new Wheelie Box collection contract had to be procured by Council. In order to try and encourage more competition in the market, the tender was for a collection only service with the collected materials going through the existing arc21 Materials Recycling Facility contract. Currently Council use the arc21 MRF contract with Bryson Recycling as the service provider, and to accommodate this change a variation in contract was required which was approved by Joint Committee at the February 2023 meeting.

In addition, arc21 is proposing a one-year extension of the current MRF contract that is due to expire on 29 September 2023. There were a number of uncertainties in relation to aspects of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and DAERA's views on the future recycling and separate collection of waste of a household nature and given this lack of certainty it was therefore recommended that the current contract is extended to 29 September 2024. As per arc21's Terms of Agreement the contract was approved by the arc21 Joint Committee and now requires ratification by the arc21 constituent Councils as the value of both contracts was above £250,000.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington  
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

### **Council approves:**

- (i) the extension to the Municipal Waste Disposal contract with Biffa Waste Services Ltd. from 1 August 2023 for further periods up to a maximum 24 months;**
- (ii) the extension to the Materials Recycling Facility contract with Bryson Recycling Ltd. from 29 September 2023 for a further 12 months; and**
- (iii) writing to Biffa in relation to odour issues and seeking detail on the preventative measures to be taken to control these at their Cottonmount landfill site.**

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

## 6.5 **IN CONFIDENCE** PK/CEM/CR/006 **CREMATORIUM UPDATE**

Members were reminded that at the February 2023 Operations Committee, the crematorium ancillary and memorial fees were approved with the exception of the matter of fees for cremating those under 17 years of age, with the request that the matter be reported in greater detail.

By way of background, members were advised that in May 2018, Council approved the waiving of fees for burials and cremations for residents up to the age of 18 years. Furthermore, at the June 2022 Policy and Governance Committee, correspondence from the Department for Communities was shared and detailed the establishment of a Child Funeral Fund for Northern Ireland. The fund provides a lump sum payment to cover the expense of a funeral after the death of a child under the age of 18, or stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy. The lump sum payment of £3,056.00 can be paid directly to the Funeral Director and could assist any non-resident bereaved with funeral costs relating to cremation.

Council currently applies the following burial fees for children up to the age of 18 years:

<b>All Cemeteries</b>	<b>Resident Fee</b>	<b>Non-Resident Fee</b>
Burial of infantile remains (i.e. less than 24 weeks gestation)	No charge	150
Stillborn internments (More than 24 weeks gestation up to birth)	No Charge	50% of charge for burial
Child up to 18 years	No Charge	50% of charge for burial

Members may wish to consider the following options

- i. Council do not charge the cost of cremation for non-residents up to the age of 18 years and accordingly all costs related to those services be waived.
- ii. Council aligns cremation fees to that of burial fees and accordingly a 50% of charge for the costs of cremation for non-residents up to the age of 18 years is applied.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Gilmore and agreed that

**Option 1 be implemented, that Council do not charge the cost of cremation for non-residents up to the age of 18 years and accordingly all costs related to those services be waived.**

*ACTION BY: Jim Parker, Crematorium Manager*

## 6.6 **IN CONFIDENCE** L/LEI/AF/011 **NORTHERN IRELAND CENTENARY STADIUM TRACK REPLACEMENT**

Members were reminded that the Northern Ireland Centenary Stadium provides full track and field athletics facilities, including an 8 lane 400m running track as part of the facilities at Antrim Forum.

In May 2019, Council approved the option of resurfacing the track at the Stadium using a pre-fabricated "Mondo" system at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED]. The track was previously resurfaced in 2004 using a "Sandwich" system and findings of a condition survey in 2018 showed that the surface had deteriorated to the point that a full replacement of the track was required. At this time, Officers had been exploring options for external funding to assist with the track replacement and had held positive meetings with Department for Communities (DfC) regarding the possibility of funding for this project. However, due to the onset of the pandemic and subsequent re-prioritising of Council's capital programme, the project was paused and the potential for funding from DfC is now no longer available.

Following the pandemic, the project was again included within Council's capital programme with Officers recently receiving updated costs for the previously approved option of resurfacing the track using a pre-fabricated Mondo system, now estimated at £[REDACTED] including contingency and fees. As a result of this increase in costs, Officers requested updated costs for the option of resurfacing the track using the Sandwich system, now estimated at £[REDACTED] including contingency and fees. While the Mondo system provides a surface suited for high performance and predominantly used in international standard athletics events, it has a predicted lifespan of 8-10 years compared to the Sandwich system, which offers more durability of 12-14 years. It was proposed that due to the significant increase in costs that the track is resurfaced again using the Sandwich system.

Further review of the current condition of the track and associated facilities within the Stadium had revealed that the throwing cage is in poor condition and lacks the accessibility requirements to meet criteria for hosting competition. The estimated cost for replacement of the throwing cage was £[REDACTED] and if approved would be included within the works contract for the resurfacing of the track.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**approval be granted for the resurfacing of the track using a Sandwich system and replacement of the throwing cage at the Northern Ireland Centenary Stadium at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED] including contingency and professional fees.**

*ACTION BY: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations  
Having declared an interest in item 6.7, Alderman Burns left the Chamber.*

## 6.7 **IN CONFIDENCE** L/LEI/00/008 **MOSSLEY PARK 3G PITCH AND CHANGING FACILITIES**

Members were reminded that in February 2023, Council's Pitch Strategy was approved. The Strategy set out a series of recommendations with one being the development of a 3G pitch and the refurbishment of existing changing facilities at Mossley Park, Newtownabbey.

Members were further reminded that in February 2023, approval was granted to support an Expression of Interest for funding through the Irish Football Association (IFA) Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities Investment Fund 2023-25 for the recommended investment at Mossley Park. While still to be confirmed by the IFA, it is anticipated that successful applications would receive funding of up to £450,000 to support approved projects.

In order to progress the matter, an Economic Appraisal had been completed and was circulated together with a Section 75 Screening Form. An EQIA is not required.

The Appraisal considered a number of options and following assessment recommends option 3: Development of a 3G pitch with floodlighting, and the refurbishment of existing changing facilities at an estimated cost of [REDACTED]

Proposed by Alderman Agnew  
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**subject to a successful application to the IFA Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities Investment Fund, approval be granted for the Economic Appraisal, together with the Section 75 Screening Form as set out in Option 3, the development of a 3G pitch with floodlighting and the refurbishment of ancillary changing facilities at Mossley Park at an estimated cost of [REDACTED].**

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

*The Chairperson advised that the 'in confidence' Supplementary item would be taken at this point.*

## **IN CONFIDENCE** L/LEI/AF/011/VOL2 **MARKS ARENA FLOODLIGHTING**

Members are advised that following ongoing faults with floodlighting at the Marks Arena a condition survey was commissioned in May 2022. The expected life span of the lighting standards is between 30 - 40 years with the age of the lighting standards at the Marks Arena being 36 years.

Several issues were detailed within the results of the condition survey and in summary due to the age and current state of repair of the floodlights; Officers

recommend a full replacement of all lighting standards and LED light heads at an estimated cost of [REDACTED]

Members are reminded that the proposed replacement of the track at the Northern Ireland Centenary Stadium is scheduled for consideration at March 2023 Operations Committee. If approved, it is proposed that the replacement of the floodlighting at Marks Arena be included in the scope of works for this project. This will expedite the proposed work allowing completion in summer months and limiting any disruption to hockey teams using the Arena.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and agreed that

**that approval be given for the replacement of floodlighting at Marks Arena at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED] including contingency and fees**

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

*Alderman Burns returned to the Chamber at this point.*

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

Proposed by Councillor Ramsay  
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed

**that the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.**

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further Committee business, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.32pm.

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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.***