



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2018 AT 6.30PM

In the Chair: Councillor N Kells

Members Present: Aldermen – F Agnew, W DeCourcy
Councillors – J Bingham, B Duffin, T Girvan, P Hamill, D Hollis, T Hogg, A Logue, M Maguire, N McClelland, P Michael, W Webb

Non-Committee Members Present: Alderman J Smyth

Officers Present: Director of Organisation Development – A McCooke
Head of Governance – L Johnston
Head of Finance – J Balmer
Head of Communications and Customer Service – T White
Head of Performance and Transformation – H Hall
Head of ICT – G Smyth
Borough Lawyer – P Casey
ICT Officer – C Bell
Customer Accessibility Officer – E Boyd
Governance Support Officer – D Conlan

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the February Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee and reminded all present of recording requirements.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor Goodman

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT INDICATORS 2018-19

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

Under the Act the Council has a statutory duty to make arrangements to:

- Secure continuous improvement
- Secure achievement of its improvement objectives
- Exercise its functions so that any Departmental specified standards are met.
- Gather information to assess improvements in their services and to issue a report annually on their performance against indicators which they have either set themselves or that have been set by Departments.

Over the last two years the Council has published a Corporate Improvement Plan detailing improvements which enhance the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities demonstrating clear links to both the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Plan.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office, Audit and Assessment Report (November 2017), made a proposal for improvement that:

"The Council needs to publish a range of indicators and standards to cover all of its functions within its Improvement Plan, in support of its general duty to continuously improve. This will improve the transparency of its arrangements to support continuous improvement. "

To this end Officers had identified a number of draft corporate improvement indicators which aim to measure four perspectives:

- Customers (e.g. percentage of satisfaction with recycled facilities)
- Processes (e.g. achievement of Green Flag Accreditation)
- Cost (e.g. cost per transaction/service)
- People and Learning (e.g. percentage of people participating in programmes)

The range of indicators also achieved a balance of coverage against the categories Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Fairness, Sustainability, Efficiency and Innovation as identified in Part 12 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 Act.

A short presentation was provided for Members on the draft corporate improvement indicators for the Organisation Development and Finance and Governance Directorates.

The Director of Organisation Development and Heads of Service responded to a number of questions and agreed a number of additional corporate

improvement indicators to be included. Members thanked staff for the presentation and for the positive results achieved.

It was proposed that the draft corporate improvement indicators be included in the overall Corporate Improvement Plan 2018-19, to be presented to full Council in February 2018 with an additional report outlining the proposed governance arrangements.

Proposed by Councillor Hogg
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the draft Corporate Improvement Indicators, with the new additions, for the Organisation Development and Finance and Governance Directorates be approved and included in the draft Corporate Improvement Plan 2018-19 for approval by Council in February 2018.

*ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development/
Helen Hall, Head of Performance and Transformation*

3.2 CCS/REG/15 APPLICATION FOR PLACE APPROVAL OF PREMISES

Members were advised that under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act (2004), the Council has the responsibility to approve appropriate applications for Place Approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

An application for the renewal of approval of an area at the specified premises had been received from:

- Shanes Castle, Antrim

Part of the process requires that a Notice of Interest is displayed for a three week period in a prominent place at the complex to allow for public objection.

No objections had been received to any of the notifications to apply for Place Approval and the premises had been formally inspected and no problems had been found with regard to the application.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

Shanes Castle, Carriage Room (incorporating patio area and lawn), be re-approved to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act (2004)

ACTION BY: Lisa Hall, Customer Services Manager

3.3 CCS/CIV/6 CIVIC RECEPTION FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS 2018

The Ulster University had enquired if the Council intended to again host a civic reception for the international students who have commenced their studies this academic year at the Ulster University, Jordanstown Campus.

The occasion is a highlight in the calendar of events organised for the students and it provides an opportunity to put the local area on the international map. Members were reminded that the Council hosted a reception for the students in March 2017.

This year the civic reception could be scheduled for Thursday 19 April at Mossley Mill and it was proposed to invite the following, plus one guest:

- Mayor and Deputy Mayor
- Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Community Planning Committee
- Members representing the Threemilewater and Macedon District Electoral Areas.

The estimated cost of the reception was £2,500 for which there is provision within the civic events budget.

Proposed by Councillor Duffin

Seconded by Councillor Hogg and agreed that

(a) a civic reception be held for the International Students, Ulster University, Jordanstown Campus on Thursday 19 April 2018 at Mossley Mill;

(b) invites be extended to the following, plus one guest:

- **Mayor and Deputy Mayor**
- **Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Community Planning Committee**
- **Members representing the Threemilewater and Macedon District Electoral Areas;**

(c) consideration be given to hosting next year's event earlier in the Academic year.

ACTION BY: Tracey White, Head of Communications and Customer Service

3.4 G-LEG-308/2 DfI ROADS - DISABLED PARKING BAY - NO 1 CHAINE COURT, ANTRIM

Correspondence had been received from DfI Roads outlining details regarding their proposal to reserve an on-street disabled parking space in the layby to the front of number 1 Chaine Court, Antrim (copy circulated).

DfI Roads requested a letter of confirmation that the Council was in agreement with this proposal.

Proposed by Councillor Duffin
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

a letter of confirmation to DfI Roads' proposal be provided.

ACTION BY: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer

3.5 G-LEG-14-102/10 5 DUNSONA PARK, JORDANSTOWN – STATUTORY CHARGE

Members were advised that Officers had received a letter from Magennis Creighton Solicitors on behalf of their client, the owners of 5 Dunsona Park, Jordanstown, seeking the removal of a historical statutory charge in relation to the property.

The Statutory Charge related to an agreement entered into in 1971 between Dundonald Estates Limited and Newtownabbey Urban District Council in relation to street works. The Statutory Charge had now expired.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the Statutory Charge in relation to 5 Dunsona Park, Jordanstown be removed.

ACTION BY: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer

3.6 CCS/REG/019 VENUES APPROVED FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES/PARTNERSHIPS

Members were reminded that, specific to civil marriages/partnerships, the registration function is regulated and governed by two pieces of legislation, namely:

The Marriage (NI) Order 2003, and
The Civil Partnership Act 2004.

The Legislation provides that each local government district shall be a registration district. In the exercise of the functions conferred on it as a local registration authority, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council acts as an agent for the General Register Office NI and in accordance with such directions as it may give to the Council.

In keeping with legislative requirements, and to provide a range of suitable range of locations, there are a number of venues registered for civil marriage/partnerships and these are as follows:

Registered/Approved Council Owned Venues

Antrim Civic Centre
Ballyclare Town Hall
Antrim Castle Gardens and Clotworthy House
Old Courthouse
Sentry Hill

Following frequent enquiries and requests received through our Registrar's office, it was proposed to add Mossley Mill as an available Council-owned venue so that customers have a balance of choice across Council-owned facilities within the Borough. Mossley Mill would be designated in the same way as Antrim Civic Centre is, ie 'the designated registry office ceremony', and the same booking fees would apply.

Approved Hotels/Venues

Barnabys
Breckenhill
Corrs Corner Hotel
Dunamoy Cottages and Spa
Dunsilly Hotel
Dunadry Hotel
Hilton Hotel
Maldron Hotel
Templeton Hotel
Shanes Castle
White River Hotel

The above list of approved hotels/venues may extend into the future following receipt of an application for approval as a venue for civil marriages/partnerships, all of which would be reported to Council for consideration and approval.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the list of approved venues be noted and that Mossley Mill be designated as a registry office ceremony venue.

ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

3.7 CP/CD/12 NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE (NIFRS)

Members recalled that correspondence was received from the NIFRS in October 2017 advising of proposed changes to crewing arrangements at Antrim Fire Station.

A further letter (copy circulated) had been received from NIFRS offering to deliver a presentation to Members to outline the rationale behind these changes.

Proposed by Councillor Michael
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer from Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue be invited to make a presentation to the Policy & Governance Committee

ACTION BY: Member Services

3.8 CCS/EDP/7 QUARTERLY SCREENING REPORT

Members were advised that in line with the Council's Equality Scheme it was agreed to provide quarterly updates on the screening of policies under Section 75. Within the Scheme, the Council gave a commitment to apply screening methodology to all new and revised policies. Where necessary and appropriate, these new policies would be subject to further equality impact assessment.

There are three formal screenings to be reported for noting, namely: Disability Action Plan 2016 – 2020 (circulated), Equality Action Plan 2017 – 2021 (circulated), and Christmas Events (circulated).

| POLICY | SCREENING DECISION |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Disability Action Plan 2016 – 2020 | 1 |
| Equality Action Plan 2017 – 2021 | 1 |
| Christmas Events Programme | 1 |

| |
|---|
| 1 Screened with no mitigation 2 Screened with mitigation 3 Screened and EQIA required |
|---|

Members were reminded that the Committee recently approved a new screening approach to incorporate Rural Proofing. Following training to Officers, all policies would be screened retrospectively for Rural Proofing from 1 June 2017.

Proposed by Councillor Hogg
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the quarterly screening report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.9 FI/ICT/4 DIGITAL PROJECTS PROGRESS REPORT

Members were reminded that the Digital Strategy was approved in March 2017 which set out the Council's approach to its vision of:

- providing transactional services and information online and in a user-friendly and inclusive way,
- using technology to change the way traditional face-to-face services are delivered,
- supporting our customers to use digital technology,
- supporting our businesses to compete in the digital economy,
- creating a digital workforce which is agile and mobile.

Our Digital Strategy projects align to four core themes which are summarised below:

1. **Digital Customer Service** - residents and businesses will have access to our transactional services 24 hours a day. These online services will be designed around the customer to provide a user friendly experience.
2. **Digital Workforce** - staff will have access to devices and software solutions that will ensure they deliver a high level of service to our customers.
3. **Digital Prosperity** - we will work in partnership with Government and third party organisations, and seek funding to achieve our digital ambition.
4. **Digital Infrastructure** - having the underlying infrastructure is key to supporting the development of digital delivery going forward. The application estate (i.e. the range of software applications that are in use within the Council to support the delivery of our Services) should be as lean as possible with high levels of system integration, providing seamless service delivery from beginning to end.

The enclosed Digital Projects Progress Report provided an update on a range of digital projects that had been completed/were ongoing since the Strategy was approved.

Three significant projects currently underway are:

LEISURE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

To fully support the new Leisure Pricing Strategy introduced in October 2017, a new Leisure Management System is currently being procured. The new system will operate across all leisure facilities in the Borough, offering online booking, kiosk facilities and other easy self-service options for customers. It is planned that the new Leisure Management System will be operational by June 2018.

Members highlighted the need for technology to be used to manage the use of free leisure classes.

RESIDENTS' APP

This App will deliver a smart device option for our customers to report issues, check Council information and request services at a time and place that suits them. The App will also provide a mechanism for push notifications, allowing the Council to communicate directly with App users. It is planned that the App will be delivered June/July 2018.

WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

This redevelopment is intended to make the Council website easier to navigate while providing more transactional and informational Council services. The redeveloped website will be closely aligned with our new Residents App and will further enhance the use of our social media platforms. During this financial year the website has attracted 370,486 visitors and our Facebook and Twitter accounts now have over 16,000 followers combined. It is planned that the redevelopment will be completed at the end of Summer 2018.

Members highlighted a number of practical matters for consideration:

- practical training for Members on Social Media tools;
- the use of Skype for business on ipads (or equivalent);
- the review of technology for online booking and the effective management of repeat user cancellation;
- the use of online cemeteries management solution to identify potential available cemetery space;
- arrange a future demo of the Residents' App when available.

Proposed by Councillor Webb

Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the report be noted and a further update be made to Committee.

ACTION BY: Tracey White, Head of Communications and Customer Service

3.10 CCS/EDP/017 DISABILITY ACTION PLAN (DAP) 2016–2020 and EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (EAP) 2017-2021 UPDATE

Members were reminded that under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the Council is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine categories of persons noted within the legislative framework. The Council must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

To this end, the Council's Equality Action Plan (EAP) 2017-2021 (circulated) includes arrangements for training staff, assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted.

Our Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to: promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and encourage participation by disabled people in public life. These are collectively referred to as 'the disability duties'.

The Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2016–2020 (circulated) is a statement of the Council's commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity for disabled people and complements the Council's Equality Scheme.

The DAP and EAP Progress Report were circulated at Appendices 3 and 4 respectively and the following key areas had been progressed:

- Inclusive signage installed at the Valley Pavilion Accessible Toilets to support the awareness of hidden disabilities,
- Inclusive play park equipment for wheelchair accessible swings being installed at the V36 Play Park.
- Accessible swing is due to be installed at the Loughshore Antrim.
- The Enchanted Winter Garden included a relaxed evening on Wednesday 20 December for adults and children with specific needs; including those who are sensitive to noise, lights and crowds. Attractions and rides were slowed down, music levels were lowered and strobe and strong lighting were not used on this evening. A total of 2,400 people attended and the feedback was positive.
- Reserved space at events for disabled people and the provision of Sign Language
- Dementia Awareness Training planned.
- Disability Awareness Training completed.
- JAM (Just a Minute) card roll out to commence February 2018.

Members commended staff for their achievements to date and a further update report will be made to Committee regarding progress on all inclusive initiatives

Proposed by Councillor Maguire
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

a progress report be provided regarding a Wheelchair accessible swing due to be installed at Lilian Bland Park in Summer 2017.

ACTION BY: Lisa Hall, CCS Manager

3.11 CCS/CPRM/5 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING UPDATE

The Communication and Marketing Plan was designed to provide an integrated approach to external communication, including marketing, and to protect and enhance the reputation of the Council.

Important to our progress is the innovative use of technology so that we communicate and engage with residents and customers in a way which meets their needs. This report summarises the progress made so far and notes some new developments for 2018.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Facebook and Twitter channels have a growing number of followers with 6,640 using Facebook (2017/18 target is 8,000 followers) and 9,400 using Twitter (2017/18 target is 5,000). In this final quarter we will specifically target the promotion of our Facebook to further increase our follower numbers.

The website is also attracting growing numbers of users and is being signposted from our social media platforms to support our marketing campaigns e.g. MORE Campaign in December 2017 was our busiest month ever on our website, with over 59,000 unique visitors. The MORE marketing campaign was primarily a digital campaign and has supported the successful achievement of the membership targets being met and exceeded.

High numbers of residents and customers are using our social channels to give us feedback on events and services, which is captured to inform service/event development e.g. extensive event feedback for Enchanted Winter Garden was captured via Facebook and reported to the Head of Service. Weather emergency notifications/service disruption updates are also popular and have effectively supported local and regional communication.

A development plan is in place to grow our in-house capacity to produce video clips and content for our social media platforms. Video content used on social media for the MORE campaign and the Enchanted Winter Garden attracted high numbers of views, with over 58,000 people having viewed a series of videos shared to promote Enchanted Winter Garden.

The social media analytics are now reviewed regularly and these indicate sound levels of engagement when benchmarked against other NI Councils (i.e. in December 2017 our Facebook fan growth was 20.65% (next NI Council was 5.5%) and our engagement measure was 95 (next NI Council was 64). There are further improvements that we can make to sustain these levels of engagement throughout the year.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Future developments include the:

- launch of a new website in 2018
- launch of a new Resident's App in 2018
- launch of a new Leisure Management System
- launch of an Instagram channel, by March 2018
- development of a digital newsroom.

- development of closer working with other key statutory partners and stakeholders to share and direct on line followers to important information/local and regional campaigns/online services.
- promotion of digital campaigns and publications with the aim of further rationalising printed advertisement and publications costs.

Members commended and thanked all staff for the achievements to date.

Proposed by Councillor Michael
 Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.12 CE/GEN/73 FLY A FLAG FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

Members were advised that a nationwide authority-led initiative will take place at 10 am on Commonwealth Day, Monday, 12 March 2018, to fly hundreds of Commonwealth Flags in simultaneous ceremonies at significant, strategic and eye-catching locations across the UK and beyond.

Members were reminded that the Council has participated in this annual initiative since 2015 and it was proposed to raise Commonwealth Flags at Antrim Civic Centre and Mossley Mill on Commonwealth Day on Monday 12 March, with a brief ceremony to be held at Mossley Mill.

Proposed by Councillor Bingham
 Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the Council participate in the Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth initiative by flying Commonwealth Flags at Antrim Civic Centre and Mossley Mill on Monday, 12 March 2018.

ACTION BY: Karen Hood, PA to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

3.13 ST/HS/207 AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

Members were reminded that agency staff are used across the Council to provide temporary cover for absence such as:

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts.

The use of agency staff is subject to a rigorous approval process, which requires the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team.

There is budgetary provision for the majority of posts filled via departmental salary budgets, salary contingency and grant funding.

The table below provides an update for Members on the use of agency staff as at December 2017 as compared to December 2016.

| Reason for Agency Worker | Dec 2017 | Position Covered | Dec 2016 | Comments |
|---|-----------------|--|-----------------|---|
| Additional Resource | 8 | Cleaner, Sentry Hill Receptionist Antrim Forum 6 x Recreation Assistant/Leisure Attendant at Antrim Forum for extended opening | 21 | Reflects the reduction of additional resources, some of which were related to temporary projects. |
| Filling Funded Posts | 5 | 3 x Affordable Warmth Project Officer Grange Community Project Officer PCSP Support Officer (PT) | 4 | |
| Covering Sickness/ Maternity Leave/ Shared Parental Leave | 7 | 3 x Waste Operative, ESD Receptionist (Valley) Waste Operative, ESD Building Control Surveyor On Call Leisure Attendant at Sixmile | 3 | |

| | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|---|
| Covering vacancies until structures filled | 31 | Conferencing & Cultural Events Manager 2 x Arts Technician Front of House Sales Assistant, Old Court House Receptionist (Clotworthy) Clerical (Building Control) Systems Support Assistant Payroll Manager HR Assistant Recreation Attendant Pavilion Attendant (Lilian Bland Pavilion) Team Leader Parks CSD 5 x Grounds Maintenance Operative Greenkeeper (Parks) Gravedigger Working Chargehand Central Services Supervisor 4 x Waste Operatives, CSD 3 x Waste Operatives, ESD | 11 | Increase due to vacant posts to be filled related to the new structure and the completion of the categorisation exercise. |
|--|----|---|----|---|

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| | | Home Safety Officer 3 x Driver Site Operatives | | |
| Covering career breaks/secondments | 7 | Systems Support Assistant E Communications Officer Clerical Officer Leisure Grounds Maintenance Operative Business Support Clerical Officer (Environmental Health) Waste Operative Clerical Officer (Waste) | 3 | Additional Secondments/Career Breaks |
| TOTAL | 58 | | 42 | |

The table above excludes limited ad-hoc agency cover, which is necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice.

Appendix one (circulated) set out expenditure on agency workers in December 2017. The cost of agency staff has reduced for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 December 2017 at 7.30% of all staffing costs compared to 7.68% for the same period last year.

Members were advised that a Categorisation timetable has now been completed to fill the new Organisation Structure and that permanent posts will be filled within the next 3-6 months, reducing the need for resources to be used via Recruitment Agencies.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.14 CE/GEN/40 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS – PROGRESS REPORT

Members were reminded that Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a new framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services. The Council's Corporate Improvement Plan 2017/18 was approved in June 2017 with seven identified improvement objectives.

A third quarter progress report was circulated for Members' attention.

Proposed by Alderman Agnew
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the Corporate Improvement Plan progress report be noted.

NO ACTION

4. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Councillor Kells reminded Members that 2018 is the centenary of women's suffrage and that it would be appropriate to mark this occasion.

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Hogg and agreed that

Officers consider options to mark this occasion and report these to Committee.

ACTION BY: Tracey White, Head of Communications and Customer Service

There being no further business the Chairperson thanked the Members for attending and the meeting ended at 7.38 pm.

MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and legal advice.