



8 October 2025

Committee Chair: Councillor S Wilson

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor M Brady

Committee Members: Aldermen - J McGrath and S Ross

Councillors – J Burbank, S Cosgrove, P Dunlop, J Gilmour,
R Lynch, H Magill, T McGrann, V McWilliam,
M Ní Chonghaile, A O'Lone and M Stewart

Dear Member

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Community Development Committee will be held in the **Council Chamber, Mossley Mill** on **Monday 13 October 2025** at **6.30pm**.

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Baker".

Richard Baker, GM MSc
Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

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

For any queries, please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

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REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY 13 OCTOBER 2025

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 COMD/CD/006 COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME 2025-2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Letter of Variance that has been received from the Department for Communities (DfC) for the Community Support Programme 2025/26.

2. Background

The Community Support Programme was established in 1975 and is a joint programme involving the Department for Communities (DfC) and local Councils. The programme supports the provision of community centres, local advice services, social supermarkets, resource centres, grants to community groups and the employment of community support staff in Councils.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded it was reported at the September Community Development Committee that the Council was awarded an allocation of £548,838.67 towards the delivery of the programme in 2025/26.

4. Community Support Programme 2025/26 – Integrated Advice Partnership Fund

Members are advised that correspondence **enclosed** has been received from the DfC confirming a revised award of additional financial assistance of £29,383.22 for the delivery of the Integrated Advice Partnership Funding for 2025/26 under the Councils Community Support Programme.

As a result, the DfC offer of financial assistance has increased from £548,838.67 to £578,221.89 for the delivery of the Councils Community Support Programme in 2025/26.

5. Summary

The Council has received a revised offer for funding of £578,221.89 from the DfC for the costs associated with the Councils Community Support Programme for 2025/26.

The Letter of Variance is offering an additional £29,383.22 in financial assistance to include additional Integrated Advice Partnership Funding for 2025/26.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the offer of additional financial assistance totalling £578,221.89 from the Department of Communities for the Community Support Programme 2025/26 be accepted.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.2 COMD/CD/011 THE KINGS AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to the nomination of two voluntary groups for the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in 2026.

2. Background

Members are aware that the Kings Award for Voluntary Service is the highest accolade given to volunteer groups within the UK to recognise the outstanding work being done in their communities. The award was created in 2002 as the Queens Award for Voluntary Service to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Her Majesty the Queens Accession to the Throne. The Award changed to the Kings Award in 2023 following the Coronation of King Charles III.

Any organisation that has been in existence for a minimum of three years and undertaking voluntary work within their local community, whether social, economic or environmental, can be nominated for this award. To be successful groups must be volunteer led, well managed in terms of governance, financial management and safeguarding, be making a considerable difference to the lives of their beneficiaries and have an outstanding reputation locally.

Over the past three years, the following groups have been successful in receiving the award:

- All About Us – ASD Teens (2024)
- Queenspark Women's Group (2024)
- Monkstown Village Initiatives (2024)
- Randalstown Ulster Scots Cultural Society (2024)
- The Breakaways (2024)
- Mayfield Village Community Association (2023)
- Muckamore Parish Development Association (2023)
- River Bann and Lough Neagh Association (2022)
- Whiteabbey Community Group (2022)
- Monkstown Community Association (2022)

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that approval for the nomination of 2 groups for the 2025 Kings Award for Voluntary Service was given by Council in October 2024. The two groups nominated were: Mallusk Community Action Group and Sensory Kids. The outcome of these nominations will be announced on Thursday 14 November 2025, the day of the Kings Birthday.

Members are also reminded it was approved at the January 2025 Community Development Committee that the Council limit Kings Awards nominations by the Council to two Organisations per year.

4. 2026 Nominations

The deadline for nominations for the Kings Award for Voluntary Service 2026 is Monday 1 December 2025 and Officers are proposing that the following two community/voluntary groups be nominated:

The Community Relations Forum

The Community Relations Forum (CRF) in Antrim and Newtownabbey is a volunteer-led organisation dedicated to building inclusive, respectful communities through dialogue, education, and cultural engagement. Driven by a committed team of volunteers, CRF creates safe spaces for open conversations, delivers cross-community programmes, and organises events that celebrate diversity and promote mutual understanding. Their tireless voluntary efforts have had a lasting impact on community cohesion, making CRF a vital force for positive change in the Borough.

Moneyglass Community Centre Hall Committee

The Hall Committee managing Moneyglass Community Centre is a dedicated group of volunteers who manage the centre in a rural area with limited access to other community facilities. They work tirelessly to maintain the building, organise activities, and ensure the centre meets the needs of local residents. Thanks to their commitment, the centre serves as a vital hub for social, cultural, and recreational life, providing a welcoming space that brings the community together and helps combat rural isolation.

5. Financial Implication

There is no cost to the Council to nominate the two groups however if the groups are successful in securing the award it is proposed that celebration events up to a maximum cost of £5,000 per group be organised and hosted by the Council as in previous years. Provision for two celebration events will be included in the Community Development budget estimates for 2026/27.

6. Summary

It is proposed that The Community Relations Forum and Moneyglass Community Centre Hall Committee be nominated for the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in 2026.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Community Relations Forum and Moneyglass Community Centre Hall Committee be nominated for the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in 2026.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.3 AC/EV/025 BALLYCLARE MAY FAIR

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 10 September 2025 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

2. Background

Members are reminded that the role of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group is to promote, develop and organise the annual Ballyclare May Fair. The specific role of the May Fair Working Group is set out as follows:

- to advise the Council on the programme for the May Fair
- to organise delivery of the May Fair
- to promote participation in the May Fair by the Ballyclare community and wider Borough community
- to explore opportunities for sponsorship and additional funding for the May Fair
- to provide advocacy for the May Fair and achieve collaboration of a range of stakeholders into the design and delivery of the May Fair
- to contribute expertise, skills and knowledge from a range of sectors to the benefit and continuous improvement of this annual event so that Ballyclare DEA achieves maximum benefit from its delivery

The Working Group meets monthly from September to June each year and reports to the Community Development Committee. Membership consists of all Ballyclare DEA Elected Members, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and up to five non-elected voluntary members who are actively involved in the local community.

3. Previous Decision of the Council

The revised Working Group Terms of Reference were approved at the December 2023 Community Planning Committee. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved at the May 2025 Community Development Committee meeting.

4. Working Group Meeting

Members are advised that the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group met on 10 September 2025 in Ballyclare Town Hall. The minutes of the meeting are **enclosed.**

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 10 September 2025 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

Prepared by: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community Development

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.4 CP/CD/435 SOCIAL SUPERMARKET AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMME 2025-2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to continue to deliver a Social Supermarket in the Borough in partnership with Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey and a Family Support Programme in partnership with Save the Children.

2. Introduction/Background

Social Supermarkets are community driven shops which support those living in food poverty. They supply low-cost food sourced from the charity FareShare NI and donations from local businesses. The aim of a Social Supermarket model is to offer a longer term and sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to address the root causes of poverty rather than simply providing food.

The initial process to develop a Social Supermarket for the Borough commenced in June 2022 with a Consultant carrying out a feasibility study which included stakeholder engagement, focus groups, meetings with Elected Members and best practise visits with a view to designing a viable Social Supermarket model for the Borough.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded it was reported at the September Community Development Committee that the Council was awarded an allocation from the Department of Communities (DfC) of £548,838.67 towards the delivery of the Community Support Programme in 2025/26. Financial assistance up to £171,864.89 was allocated for the delivery of the Social Supermarket Programme.

It was agreed at the Community Development Committee in May 2024 that the continuation of programmes in partnership with Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey through Service Level Agreement to deliver a Social Supermarket in 2024/2025 including funding of £101,977. It was also agreed to continuing engagement with Save the Children to deliver the complimentary Family Support Programme in 2024/2025, including funding of £20,000 with match funding of £14,000 each being provided by both Save the Children and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

The interim Social Supermarket model opened in November 2022, and an update report was noted at the January 2023 Community Planning Committee.

4. Performance Review 2024/2025

The following statistics have been provided by CAAN and Save the Children in relation to the Social Supermarket and Family Support Programme in 2024/2025: Social Supermarket (April 2024 to March 2025)

- 385 Adults, 176 Children, 321 Households supported through the SSM.
- £115,560 food vouchers allocated
- 321 Benefit checks completed
- 78 clients offered 1-1 tailored advice and support on Budgeting & Debt advice
- 321 clients linked into other services
- 90 Clients referred from 49 referral partners. In addition, clients are signposted to CAAN for SSM support.
- 83% of people accessing service felt they were better off in the longer term for the help they received

Family Support Programme (April 2024 to March 2025)

- 119 families supported
- 234 children supported
- £45,385 of vouchers and early learning support packs provided

5. Financial Position/Implication

The total budget for the 2025/26 Social Supermarket programme is £171,864.89 as provided for in the 2025/26 estimates, of which £15,187.29 will be utilised for administering this grant fund, and it is proposed that the remaining £156,678.41 to be allocated to CAAN and Save the Children for the delivery of the Social Supermarket and Family Support Programme in 2025/26

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

Members are advised that an Equality impact Assessment and Rural Needs Impact Assessment have been carried out to inform the DfC's allocation of 2025-26 funds.

As part of the Council's responsibilities to identify and address potential Section 75 implications and promote equality of opportunity and good relations as required by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Social Supermarket and Family Support Programmes have been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and have been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment. The Council carried out an Equality Screening on these programmes which was reported to Committee in June 2025.

In addition, the Rural Needs Act places a duty on public authorities and local Councils to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. A Rural Needs screening exercise was carried out for the Social Supermarket and Family Support Programmes which was reported to Committee in June 2025.

7. Governance

Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey have been engaged through procurement of the Generalist Advice Contract, which includes provision for contract variations. Save the Children have previously been engaged through a Letter of Offer, which includes funding conditions.

Members are reminded that all funding awards are subject to satisfactory monitoring and evaluation.

8. Summary

Both the Social Supermarket and Family Support Programme have been very successful and provided significant support to families and individuals across the Borough during a time of need.

Given the performance review outcomes, it is proposed to continue both programmes in their current form as follows:

- Funding of £136,678.41 to be allocated to CAAN to deliver the Social Supermarket for the Borough in 2025/26.
- Funding of £20,000 to be allocated to Save the Children to continue to deliver the Family Support Programme in the Borough, with match funding from both Save the Children and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust anticipated as in the previous year.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- (a) the ongoing engagement of Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey to deliver a Social Supermarket in 2025/2026 including funding of £136,678.41 be approved.**
- (b) the ongoing engagement of Save the Children to deliver the complementary Family Support Programme in 2025/2026 including funding of £20,000 be approved.**

Prepared by: Conor Cuning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.5 AC/GEN/037 CULTURAL GRANT AID AND BURSARIES PROGRAMME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for a Cultural Bursary award.

2. Introduction/Background

The aim of the Cultural Grant Aid and Bursaries programme is to provide support to constituted groups and individuals based in the Borough to participate in, develop and promote Cultural activities and projects. Funding is available for projects which develop artistic talent and knowledge, showcase the arts and promote participation and inclusion, celebrate shared heritage, and contribute to the understanding of minority languages and cultural diversity.

Cultural groups may apply for grants for:

- Eligible costs involved in running a cultural event (with a maximum award of £1,000)
- Costs relating to the production of a cultural product e.g. a publication or an exhibition (with a maximum award of £500)
- Course fees for group members to attend an event or course or undertake training (with a maximum award of £500)

Individuals may apply for bursaries for:

- Costs relating to the production of a cultural product e.g. a publication or an exhibition (with a maximum award of £500)
- Contribution to costs associated with the attendance at cultural events, specialist training courses or study programmes relating to Arts or Heritage (with a maximum award of £500)

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Cultural Grant Aid and Bursaries Programme was approved by the Community Development Committee in February 2025.

4. Application for 2025/2026 Cultural Grant Aid and Bursaries Programme

One application has been received and assessed by officers under the appropriate funding category and maximum award available.

A summary of the application is set out below along with the proposed award:

Group / Individual Name	Funding Category	Funding Purpose	Proposed Amount Awarded
Linda McBurney	Contribution to costs associated with the attendance at cultural events, specialist training courses or study programmes relating to Arts or Heritage	<p>Linda is a local artist who lives in Parkgate, Ballyclare. She is undertaking a year-long printmaking and professional development project, to help advance her skills in etching and printmaking. This project commences November 2025 and lasts until December 2026. Council funding will directly support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist workshops at Belfast Print Workshop and Graphic Studio Dublin. • Research trip to London for study visits. • Professional photography training. • Materials <p>This grant will allow Linda to create a body of work suitable for exhibition submissions, residency applications, and collaboration as well as helping preserve and possibly extend the heritage of printmaking. Linda will share the outcomes with local audiences through exhibitions in ANBC galleries and digital platforms. Linda has previously exhibited her work in the Flax Gallery in Theatre at the Mill.</p>	£500

5. Financial Position

The budget available for the Cultural Grant Aid and Bursaries programme in 2025/2026 is £23,000. 35 grants totalling £9,500 have previously been approved by the Community Development Committee, and if the above application is approved a balance of £13,000 would be left for the remainder of the year.

6. Summary

One Cultural Bursary application has been received for £500 to support a resident of the Borough to attend specialist workshops at Belfast Print Workshop and Graphic Studio Dublin and a research trip to London for study visits, professional photography training and materials.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the bursary award for £500 be approved.

Prepared by: Leeann Murray, Arts Development Officer

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.6 AC/THB/008 FREE USE OF BALLYCLARE TOWN HALL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the free use of Ballyclare Town Hall by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) for the delivery of monthly Hearing Aid User Support Service sessions until December 2027.

2. Introduction/Background

The RNID is a national charity which supports the 18 million people in the UK who are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus by providing community-based audiology services and carrying out research into hearing loss and its treatment.

The RNID has been delivering monthly Hearing Aid User Support Service sessions with funding from the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) of the Department of Health in Ballyclare Town Hall and the Eyre Studio, Antrim Castle Gardens, since 2023. These public sessions have been well attended and have provided valuable support to residents of the Borough, with 553 people attending these sessions between July 2023 and May 2025. These sessions are only available in Northern Ireland.

Through these sessions the RNID provides:

- information on how to look after and fit hearing aids
- re-tubing, ear mould cleaning and battery replacement
- hearing checks
- information about coping with hearing loss, equipment and communication tips
- talks on managing hearing loss and hearing health training
- information about other services that can provide support

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval was given at the June 2023 Full Council meeting for the free use of Ballyclare Town Hall by RNID from June to December 2023.

Approval was given at the December 2023 Community Planning Committee meeting for the free use of the Eyre Studio, Antrim Castle Gardens, by RNID from January to December 2024.

Approval was given at the October 2024 Community Development Committee meeting for the free use of both the Eyre Studio and Ballyclare Town Hall by RNID from November 2024 to December 2025.

4. Request for Extension of Existing Free Use Approval

RNID has a contract with the Department of Health to deliver support for hearing aid users which runs until December 2027. The charity would like to extend the existing arrangement to hold monthly Hearing Aid User Support

Service sessions in Ballyclare Town Hall, which runs until the end of this year, to December 2027. They do not wish to continue using the Eyre Studio after December 2025.

5. Financial Position/Implication

Each monthly Hearing Aid User Support Service session lasts for about 3 hours, and the community rate for hiring the town hall for this period of time is £60. Over the course of a year this arrangement would equate to £720 in potential lost income.

There are no direct costs to the Council for facilitating these sessions.

6. Summary

The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) have requested an extension to the existing arrangement for them to have free use of Ballyclare Town Hall once a month for a three-hour Hearing Aid User Support Service session. The existing approval expires in December 2025, and the RNID would like to extend this until December 2027.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposal to extend the free use of Ballyclare Town Hall for the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) to deliver monthly Hearing Aid User Support Service sessions until December 2027, be approved.

Prepared by: Jenna Collier, Theatre Bookings and Events Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.7 COMD/MCPR/001 MEDIA PROTOCOL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for a Media Protocol which is intended to give clarity to Elected Members and officers on how the Council will deliver media relations.

2. Background and Introduction

The Marketing, Communications and PR Section of the Community Development Directorate are responsible for all aspects of managing media relations for the Council.

Council publicity is strictly controlled by provisions in the Local Government Act (NI) 1972. The Council attracts significant interest from all sections of the media and utilises media engagement to communicate, promote and seek publicity for all aspects of the Council's work.

A Media Protocol including an 'At a Glance Guide to Media Queries' has been developed in order to provide clarity to Elected Members and officers regarding all aspects of media relations in the context of the relevant legislation.

3. Media Protocol

The Media Protocol is **enclosed** for Members' information. A Media Protocol ensures that all Council communications with the media are consistent, accurate and objective. It protects the Council's reputation, ensures compliance with legislation, prevents political bias and helps build positive relationships with the media and residents.

The Protocol sets out:

- Who can speak on behalf of the Council
- How media queries, interviews and releases are managed
- Rules on publicity, photo calls, social media and ministerial visits
- A commitment to equality, diversity and impartiality and
- Arrangements which apply during elections

4. Finance

There are no financial implications arising from the development or implementation of the Media Protocol.

5. Governance

The Marketing, Communications and PR Section of the Community Development Directorate are responsible for the Media Protocol which will be kept under review with any updates or changes to be brought back to the Committee.

6. Summary

A Media Protocol which includes an 'At a Glance Guide to Media Queries' has been developed to provide clarity for Elected Members and officers regarding all aspects of media relations. This ensures that all Council communications with the media are consistent, accurate and objective. It is proposed that the Media Protocol is implemented with immediate effect.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Media Protocol be approved for immediate implementation.

Prepared and Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.8 CP/CP/240 TRANSLINK REQUEST TO SUPPORT THEIR STUFF A BUS CAMPAIGN

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for participation in the Translink 2025 'Stuff a Bus' Campaign.

2. Background

Translink are a recognised Community Planning partner. The Translink Stuff a Bus campaign is delivered in partnership with Fareshare NI and media partners Belfast Live and U105.

Research shows one in six people across Northern Ireland are facing hunger, with increasing pressures from the ongoing cost-of-living crisis significantly affecting families and individuals.

Now entering its ninth year, the award-winning Stuff a Bus initiative provides vital support, ensuring no one in Northern Ireland faces hunger at Christmas.

The campaign has options for participation, including:

- Food donations
- Staff-led monetary contributions
- Financial support alongside existing charity commitments

3. Stuff a Bus 2025

Members are advised that correspondence **enclosed** has been received from Translink inviting the Council to participate and partner the 2025 Stuff a Bus campaign.

Translink have requested that the Council participate in the 2025 campaign by providing food collection points in key areas for donations from Thursday 13th November 2025 to Thursday 18th December 2025. FareShare NI will supply donation stations directly to each location and handle all logistics simplifying the process.

It is proposed that donations will be invited from Elected Members, members of the public and employees.

All donations collected will directly support local food banks, community groups, schools, and frontline charities throughout Northern Ireland via FareShare NI. The initiative aligns to the 'Food Support' pillar of the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy, and the promotion of a holistic approach to food support across the Borough.

Media partnerships with U105 and Belfast Live offer opportunities for positive brand exposure through multiplatform promotions, media releases, social media features, and live broadcasts.

4. Financial implications

There is no financial cost for the Council to participate in the 2025 Stuff a Bus campaign and FareShare NI will be responsible for logistical operation of food donation baskets and ensuring these are collected at appropriate times.

5. Governance

It is proposed that the Stuff a Bus 2025 food donation baskets are placed at the reception areas in the following locations with responsibility for these retained by FareShare NI:

- Mossley Mill
- Antrim Civic Centre
- Ballyclare Town Hall

Officers have liaised with the Mayor's Office and confirmed this arrangement does not conflict with the Mayor's official charities.

6. Summary

Translink have requested that the Council participates in their annual Stuff a Bus campaign in partnership with FareShare NI as well as media partners Belfast Live and U105 by providing food collection points at Council venues.

The campaign will run from Thursday 13th November 2025 to Thursday 18th December 2025 with the logistical management of the proposed locations for the food donation points managed by FareShare NI.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request from Translink to participate in their Stuff a Bus 2025 Campaign be approved.

Prepared by: Conor Cunning, DEA Engagement Manager & Stef Buchanan, Community Development Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.9 COMD/CD/008 CHRISTMAS SWITCH ON EVENTS FUND GRANT AID RECOMMENDATIONS 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to the Christmas Switch On Events Fund Grant Aid Recommendations 2025.

2. Background

As part of its Community Development Grant Aid Programme the Council operates a Christmas Events Fund to assist groups that may wish to develop and deliver Christmas Tree Switch On events in the absence of a Council installed tree and associated switch on ceremony.

3. Previous Decision of the Council

Members are reminded that it was agreed at the Community Planning and Regeneration Committee in February 2018 to establish an annual Christmas Events Fund to assist groups who wish to deliver local Christmas switch on events.

Members are also reminded that it was agreed at the Community Development Committee in February 2025 to remove the match funding requirement of the programme and to increase the maximum award to £1,000.

4. Financial Implication

Members are reminded that the total budget available for the 2025/26 Community Development Grant Aid Programme, including the Christmas Events Fund, is £14,000.

The Christmas Switch On Events Fund opened for applications on 01 July 2025 and closed on 14 August 2025. In total 12 applications totalling £10,835 were received and assessed by a panel of Officers all of which are recommended for funding, subject to the receipt of all relevant supporting documentation.

A detailed summary of the applications is **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Section 75 Equality Screening

Members are advised that a Section 75 Equality Screening exercise, Rural Proofing and Data Processing Impact Assessment had been carried out in relation to the Grant Funding Policy.

6. Summary

The Christmas Switch On Events Fund opened for applications on 01 July 2025 and closed on 14 August 2025. It is proposed to award the 12 Christmas

Events Fund Grants to the successful applicants as outlined, at a cost of £10,835, provision for which exists within the Community Development grant aid budget for 2025/26.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the 12 Christmas Switch On Events Fund Grants requesting a total of £10,835 as outlined be approved.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.10 AC/HE/027 THE YANGTZE INCIDENT ON HMS AMETHYST IN 1949

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the erection of a plaque and information board in the vicinity of Macedon Point commemorating the eight sailors from Northern Ireland who served on board the HMS Amethyst during the Yangtze Incident in 1949.

2. Introduction/Background

HMS Amethyst was a ship of the British Royal Navy Far East Fleet in Hong Kong that was attacked as she made her way up the Yangtze River in China April 1949 during the Chinese civil war. Despite having a rite of passage, the Amethyst was attacked by the Communist forces of Mao Tse-Tung and many sailors were killed and injured. The ship grounded and the order to abandon ship was given. On board were eight sailors from Northern Ireland: James McClean, Samuel Bannister, Johnny Murphy, Raymond McCullough Snr, Alfred White, Hugh Haveron, James Johnston and John McCarthy.

Samuel Bannister was seriously injured with shrapnel wounds and, along with another sailor, was captured and taken prisoner. After 100 days, their release was negotiated and under cover of darkness HMS Amethyst eventually escaped in a daring exercise that goes down as one of the greatest escapes in Royal Navy history.

The film entitled 'The Yangtze Incident' was made during the 1950s and immortalised the episode.

3. Key Issues

The families of Samuel Bannister and Raymond McCullough have approached officers with a request to commemorate the role of the Northern Irish sailors in the Yangtze Incident by erecting a plaque and an information board. The area around Macedon Point has been suggested as a suitable location for this.

4. Financial Position/Implication

The cost of producing and installing a memorial plaque and an information board would be approximately £1,500. This would be funded through existing Arts and Culture budgets.

5. Summary

Officers have been approached by the families of two of the Northern Irish sailors who served on board HMS Amethyst during the Yangtze Incident in 1949, requesting the erection of a plaque and information board in the vicinity of Macedon Point, Newtownabbey, to commemorate this historic event.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposal to erect a plaque and information board in the vicinity of Macedon Point commemorating the eight sailors from Northern Ireland who served on board the HMS Amethyst during the Yangtze Incident in 1949 be approved.

Prepared by: Philip Magennis, Culture and Events Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.11 ED/ED/080/VOL4 COUNCIL EVENTS PLAN

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the proposed Council events plan for 2025/2026.

2. Introduction/Background

The Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events team is responsible for the delivery of the Council's events programme, which includes both directly managed events, and support for third-party events funded through the Council's Tourism Event Fund such as SuperCup NI and the Pipe Band Championships in the Borough. The programme of directly managed events includes annual highlights such as Enchanted Winter Garden and the Ballyclare May Fair, as well as one-off events such as the Tercentenary of the Old Courthouse (2026), VE Day 80th Anniversary (2025), Armed Forces Day (2024), the King's Coronation (2023) and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (2022).

The annual events managed directly by the Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events team attract more than 185,000 attendees each year. The third-party events supported by the Council account for thousands more visitors to the Borough and the economic benefits this brings.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Council Events Plan is brought to the Committee twice every year. Members are reminded that the previous Council Events Plan update and associated costs to the Council were approved at the Community Development Committee in March 2025.

4. Council Events March 2025 to September 2025

Highlights of the events delivered since the last Committee report in March 2024 include:

- St Patrick's Day: In 2025 St Patrick's Day music, dancing and family fun events took place in Mossley Mill and Antrim Castle Gardens, achieving an overall satisfaction score of 86% and attracting more than 6,500 visitors across the two locations.
- VE Day 80th Anniversary: a three-day commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe took place in early May, incorporated a Beating the Retreat performance at Mossley Mill, beacon lighting and flag raising ceremonies in Antrim Civic Centre, Antrim Castle Gardens and Mossley Mill, exhibitions focusing on the holocaust and World War II generally at Mossley Mill and Antrim Castle Gardens (opened by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland), and a VE Day-themed Party in the Park. These events attracted almost 4,000 people, with a customer satisfaction score of 100%.

- Ballyclare May Fair: the 2025 May Fair included new elements such as a football training day for local schools run in partnership with SuperCup NI and supported by the Manchester United Academy. Total footfall across the week (including amusements) was over 21,000.
- Garden Show Ireland: the 2025 Garden Show Ireland introduced a new Show Ambassador – renowned horticulturist and celebrity TV gardener David Domoney. David formally launched this year's Garden Show at a special event at the Old Courthouse Theatre on the evening of 3 April, mentored 40 community groups who competed to design a wheelbarrow garden for the show, and delivered a stunning Garden in Glass exhibition at the show. For the second consecutive year heavy rain throughout the 3-day event depleted audience numbers, which were down 53% compared to 2023 because of the weather.

5. Council Events October 2025-December 2026

Details of the proposed events to be delivered in the remainder of 2025 and throughout 2026 are **enclosed** for Members' information. Members are asked to note the following points in particular:

- Enchanted Winter Garden: approval was given at the March 2025 Committee to expand the duration of this flagship event until 30 December, and 30,000 tickets have already been sold. Following the event, attendance data from the additional nights will be analysed and a proposal for 2026 dates will be brought to the Committee in March 2026.
- St Patrick's Day: approval was given at the March 2025 Committee to increase the budget for St Patrick's Day to £25,000. In 2026 events which draw on both Irish and Ulster-Scots traditions, will form part of a four-week 'festival of land, story and song' relating to shared cultural traditions that have been handed down through generations, as well as a St. Patrick's Day-themed Park Run and family fun day in Antrim Castle Gardens, and a concert at the Theatre at the Mill.
- Borough Summer Festival: as noted above, consecutive years of very poor weather have resulted in a drop of 53% in attendance figures for Garden Show Ireland. To reduce risk, increase attendance and deliver the best possible value for money, it is proposed that a three-week Borough Summer Festival is trialled in place of Garden Show Ireland in June/July 2026. This festival, which would be largely undercover in a giant marquee in Antrim Castle Gardens, would be made up of a wide variety of events and entertainment, including a Home and Garden Show, a Beer Festival, a Photography Festival, an Over-30s Disco, concerts and comedy nights. Through economies of scale related to event infrastructure, this entire festival would be delivered for the same budget as Garden Show Ireland. Following feedback from Members, the gardens will remain open to the public throughout the festival period with the exception of the Events Field, car park and Parterre.

- Old Courthouse Tercentenary: 2026 marks the 300th anniversary of the Antrim Old Courthouse. To celebrate this, a weekend of talks, tours and historical re-enactments of court cases from throughout history will take place across the European Heritage Open Day weekend in September as part of the PEACEPLUS Our Historic Borough programme. In advance of this, the building will be repainted and further heritage information will be installed around the courthouse.

6. Finance/Governance

The proposed Council Events Plan for 2025/26 includes dates, ticket fees (where applicable) and estimated costs. Provision for these events has been made in the 2025/26 budget estimates, and will be included in the 2026/27 budget estimates.

7. Summary

The Council delivers a range of events year-round and across the Borough as well as hosting and supporting a number of events delivered by external event organisers. An update on the plan is brought to the Committee twice a year. Officers will continue to keep the Events Plan under review.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council Events Plan for 2025/26, including dates, ticket fees and estimated budgets, be approved.

Prepared by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.12 COMD/CD/009 CHRISTMAS FESTIVITY PROGRAMME 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members in relation to the delivery of the 2025 Christmas Festivity Programme.

2. Background

Since November 2018, the Council has been delivering Christmas Lights Switch On Events in each District Electoral Area across the Borough.

The programme at each event encompasses a range of family entertainment to include: Christmas Fun Rides, Meet Santa, Street Entertainment, Festive Food Stalls, Arts and Crafts and a short programme of Christmas Readings, Carols and Music following which the Mayor accompanied by the Schools Competition Winner and Santa switch on the Christmas Tree Lights.

Local School Choirs, Traditional Music Groups, Dance Academies and other local artists participate in the programme the theme for which changes on an annual basis.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded it was agreed at the September Council meeting that the delivery of 7 Christmas Light Switch On Events be maintained, with a review to be undertaken by a sub-group or working group in January/ February 2026 to reassess the approach for the 2026 programme. It was also agreed that the live streaming of each event be discontinued.

4. 2025 Switch Ons

The programme this year will follow a keeping children safe online theme of "Santa Goes Digital."

All 7 events will be delivered over the period Thursday 20 November – Saturday 29 November 2025 as detailed in the table below:

DEA	Date & Time
Airport Crumlin Leisure Centre	Thursday 20 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
Dunsilly Randalstown - John Street Car Park	Friday 21 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
Antrim Railway Street Car Park	Saturday 22 November 2025, 4.30pm - 6.00pm
Threemilewater Jordanstown Road/Devenish Drive	Wednesday 26 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
Glengormley Urban Lilian Bland Park	Thursday 27 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm

Macedon V36, Valley Leisure Centre	Friday 28 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
Ballyclare The Square Car Park	Saturday 29 November 2025, 4.30pm - 6.00pm

- Times will facilitate traffic management arrangements and ensure young families can enjoy the full experience of the events.
- A Christmas Tree will be located in each of the seven areas.
- The switching on of the Christmas Lights will once again take place at the mid-point of the programme as opposed to the end to facilitate those attending with very young children.
- A programme of family fun entertainment to include: A Children's Pantomime, Live Festive Music, Carols, Switching on of the Christmas Tree Lights, Fun Fair Rides, Festive Food Stalls, Arts and Crafts Activities, a Festive photo opportunity with Santa inside his Magical Snow Globe, and Street Entertainment will be delivered in each DEA.
- On the advice of the PSNI the venue for the Macedon Switch On Event will be relocated from Hazelbank Park to V36 at the Valley. V36 is a purpose-built event space and will ensure access, parking and health safety concerns are alleviated whilst providing more space for the increase in numbers attending
- Officers will once again encourage local businesses to open during the events however there has been limited take up of this opportunity in the past.

All events will be advertised and promoted through an electronic and direct marketing campaign to encourage residents' participation.

5. Elected Member Working Group

It is proposed to establish a cross party Elected Member Working Group to commence meeting in January 2026 to reassess the approach to these events for 2026. Group Leaders will be asked to nominate one member per political party.

6. Financial Implication

Members are advised that provision of £100,000 for the 2025 Christmas Festivity Programme, The Spirit of Christmas Awards and £15,000 for the Christmas Celebration Events Fund has been included in the 2025/26 Community Development budgets.

7. Summary

Seven Christmas Lights Switch On events, one in each DEA across the Borough, will take place from Thursday 20 to Saturday 29 November 2025. The programme theme "Santa Goes Digital" will support keeping children safe online.

A sub-group or working group will be established in early 2026 to reassess the approach for the 2026 programme.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the 2025 Christmas Festivity Programme be noted and that Group Leaders nominate one representative per political party to participate in the Elected member Working Group.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

3.13 AC/THB/008 FREE USE OF THE MASSEREENE ROOM, ANTRIM CASTLE GARDENS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the free use of the Massereene Room, Antrim Castle Gardens by Impact Network NI for the delivery of a two-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training event with the PSNI in November 2025.

2. Introduction/Background

Impact Network NI is a registered charity based in Randalstown which provides community development support to communities across Northern Ireland to improve health and wellbeing, mental health and health inequalities. Impact Network NI responds to the key issues which impact on the lives of local people and communities and is committed to tackling the impact of poverty and economic crisis in communities through commitment to suicide prevention and addressing the determinants of suicide.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval was given at the June 2025 Committee meeting for a proposal to bring all free use requests to Committee for decision.

4. Request for Free Use

Impact Network NI have approached officers requesting the free use of the Massereene Room, Antrim Castle Gardens on 11 and 12 November to deliver an Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training event with the PSNI. This internationally recognised training program empowers participants to recognise signs of suicidal thoughts and intervene effectively, equipping them with practical tools to support those at risk. By doing so, it not only enhances individual confidence and competence but also strengthens the overall capacity of the community to respond to mental health crises.

The event also actively promotes equality and addresses disadvantage by focusing on mental health — an area often stigmatized or under-resourced, particularly within marginalized or vulnerable groups. By training a diverse group of 16–20 participants, the charity aims to create a more informed, compassionate, and supportive community where help is accessible to all, regardless of background.

This initiative directly contributes to building a safer, more inclusive society where mental wellbeing is prioritized and valued.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The daily community rate for hiring the Massereene Room is £135, and the potential lost income for the requested days would be £270.

There are no direct costs to the Council for facilitating these sessions.

6. Summary

Impact Network NI have requested the free use of the Massereene Room, Antrim Castle Gardens on 11 and 12 November for the delivery of a two-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training event with the PSNI.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request for Impact Network NI to have free use of the Massereene Room on 11 and 12 November for the delivery of an Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training event with the PSNI be approved.

Prepared by: Jenna Collier, Theatre Bookings and Events Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 COMD/GR/006 ULSTER-SCOTCH LEID WEEK 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members about Ulster-Scotch Leid Week 2025.

2. Introduction/Background

Ulster-Scotch Leid Week (Ulster-Scots Language Week) is an annual event that has been run by the Ulster-Scots Agency since 2019. The event celebrates the Ulster-Scots language, history, and culture through a diverse and engaging public programme that includes interactive language workshops, storytelling sessions, community events, and exhibitions. This year Leid Week will take place from 24-28 November.

The Council has participated in Leid week annually since 2019 and plans to take part in this year's event are included in the Good Relations Cultural Awareness Programme alongside similar plans to deliver events showcasing the Irish Language during the Seachtain na Gaeilge le Energia festival.

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Council's Good Relations Programme 2025/26 Action Plan, including a commitment to participate in the 2025 Ulster-Scotch Leid Week, was approved at the May 2025 Community Development Committee.

4. Leid Week

It is proposed that The Council's Good Relations Team will deliver activities across the Borough to include:

- Leid Week Opening Event and launch of 'Yarns' Poetry book in partnership with the Ulster Scots Agency
- OCN Level 1 training in Ulster Scots Awareness- certification will be presented at opening event.
- Children and Young People's workshops focused on language and heritage.
- History, language, and poetry workshops

Officers are now engaging with the Agency to develop and finalise plans.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The budget for the 2025 Ulster-Scotch Leid Week is £2,000. This has been allocated from the 2025/26 Good Relations budget. Officers have secured an additional £1,250 grant from the Ulster Scots Agency to support programme delivery.

6. Summary

The 2025 Ulster-Scotch Leid Week will take place from 24-28 November. As in previous years, the Good Relations team will work with the Ulster-Scots Agency to develop a programme of events celebrating the Ulster-Scots language, history, and culture.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

4.2 CP/TD/107 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES FUNDING – AREAS AT RISK 2025-2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the offer of Areas at Risk funding from the Department for Communities.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that the Areas at Risk (AAR) programme is delivered across six Super Output Areas in Antrim and Newtownabbey. Historically the Newtownabbey AAR programme is part funded by the Department for Communities (DfC), whilst the Antrim AAR programme is fully funded by the Council.

A budget of £229,250 is included in the 2025/26 Community Planning budgets with £66,750 contribution anticipated from the Department for Communities (DfC).

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that it was reported to the April 2025 Community Development Committee that in the absence of the 2025-26 budget settlement interim funding awards for the DfC programmes to the end June 2025 will be retained at 2024/25 levels inclusive of the 5% uplift awarded in 2024/25.

Funding was to be issued for the first quarter of 2025/26 up to the end of June with confirmation of the 2025/26 budget position anticipated in the near future.

Members are also reminded it was agreed that an update on the DfC current budget position be communicated to those groups and organisations anticipating funding from the Department in 2025/26.

4. Letter of Offer

Members are advised that correspondence **enclosed** has been received from DfC confirming that the Council is being offered Area at Risk Programme funding of £76,395.38 for 2025/26.

An additional non-recurrent flexible funding award of £9,645.38 has been added to the anticipated £66,750 contribution. Members are advised that this offer of funding has been accepted by the Departments deadline of 26 July 2025.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The additional flexible funding award of £9,645.38 will be made to the organisations funded in part through DfC, the breakdown of which is contained with the Letter of Offer.

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

Members are advised that an Equality impact Assessment and Rural Needs Impact Assessment have been carried out to inform the Department's allocation of 2025-26 funds.

As part of the Council's responsibilities to identify and address potential Section 75 implications and promote equality of opportunity and good relations as required by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Areas at Risk Programme has been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and have been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment. The Council carried out an Equality Screening on this Funding which was reported to Committee in June 2025.

7. Governance

The Council will continue to contract manage Areas at Risk Funding including bi-annual reporting and the monitoring of the programme to the Department for Communities, as per conditions set out in the Letter of Offer.

8. Summary

The Council has received an offer of funding of £76,395.38 which is an increase of £9,645.38, from DfC for the costs associated with the Areas at Risk Programme, for the period of 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended that the update on the offer of Areas at Risk Programme funding 2025-2026 from the Department for Communities be noted.

Prepared by: Conor Cunning, DEA Engagement Management

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

4.3 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES FUNDING – NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL 2025-2026

COMD/TD/006 GRANGE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL
COMD/TD/003 RATHCOOLE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the offer of Neighbourhood Renewal Programme funding from the Department for Communities.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded in June 2003 the Neighbourhood Renewal – People and Place Programme was launched. Neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10% of wards across Northern Ireland were identified using the Noble Multiple Deprivation Measure. Following extensive consultation, this resulted in a total of 36 areas, and a population of approximately 280,000 (one person in 6 in Northern Ireland), being targeted for intervention.

Neighbourhood Partnerships have been established in each Neighbourhood Renewal Area as a vehicle for local planning and implementation. Each Neighbourhood Partnership may include representatives of key political, statutory, voluntary, community and private sector stakeholders. Together, they have developed long term visions and action plans designed to improve the quality of life for those living in the area.

There are currently two Neighbourhood Partnerships in the Borough namely Grange and Rathcoole Neighbourhood Partnerships.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that it was reported to the April 2025 Community Development Committee that in the absence of the 2025-26 budget settlement interim funding awards for the DfC programmes to the end June 2025 will be retained at 2024/25 levels inclusive of the 5% uplift awarded in 2024/25.

Funding was to be issued for the first quarter of 2025/26, to the end of June, with confirmation of the 2025/26 budget position anticipated soon.

Members are also reminded it was agreed that an update on the DfC current budget position be communicated to those groups and organisations anticipating funding from the Department in 2025/26.

4. Letter of Offer

Members are advised that correspondence **enclosed** has been received from DfC confirming financial assistance totalling £117,315.64 for the delivery of the Grange and Rathcoole Neighbourhood Renewal Programmes for 2025/26.

The funding awarded includes £27,858.56 for the Grange Neighbourhood Partnership and £89,457.08 for the Rathcoole Neighbourhood Partnership. This offer of funding has been accepted by the Departments deadline of 26 July 2025.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The £27,858.56 offer of funding for Grange Neighbourhood Partnership is a £1,955.28 increase on the £25,903.28 funding received in 2024-25 for the delivery of the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Programme. An additional non-recurrent flexible funding award has been included within the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal programme of £1,955.28.

The offer of funding to Rathcoole Neighbourhood Renewal programme will increase from £83,174.95 awarded in 2024/25 to £89,457.08 with an additional non-recurrent flexible funding award of £6,282.13.

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

Members are advised that an Equality impact Assessment and Rural Needs Impact Assessment have been carried out to inform the Department's allocation of 2025-26 funds.

7. Governance

Grange Neighbourhood Renewal

The partnership was formally established in April 2006 under funding from the Department for Communities as an inter-sectoral partnership, tasked with driving the delivery of the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy in Grange, Ballyclare.

Rathcoole Neighbourhood Renewal

The partnership was formally established in April 2006 under funding from the Department for Communities as an inter-sectoral partnership, tasked with driving the delivery of the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy in Rathcoole, Macedon.

The Council will continue to contract manage Neighbourhood Renewal programmes including the reporting and the monitoring of the programme to the Department for Communities, as per conditions set out in the Letter of Offer.

8. Summary

The Council has received offers of funding of from DfC for the costs associated with the Grange £27,858.56 and Rathcoole £89,457.08 Neighbourhood Renewal Programmes, for the period of 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended that the update on the offer of Neighbourhood Renewal Programme funding 2025-2026 from the Department for Communities be noted.

Prepared by: Conor Cuning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

4.4 AC/EV/015 THE MRS JOAN CHRISTIE CVO, OBE LEGACY BURSARY SCHEME 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursary Scheme 2025.

2. Introduction/Background

The Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursary Scheme was created in 2019 in recognition of the significant work carried out by Mrs Christie during her time as Lord Lieutenant for County Antrim. Each year, the scheme aims to award:

- Four bursaries of £1,000 to talented young musicians from the Borough to help further their career
- Two bursaries of £1,000 to young volunteers who play an active role in a group in the Borough
- Two bursaries of £1,000 to the groups in which the young people volunteer
- Two bursaries of £1,000 to schools in the Borough for horticulture projects designed for pupils with additional needs

Following an initial shortlisting process carried out by officers, applicants are assessed by a panel made up of an Elected Member from each political party and chaired by Mrs Christie's daughter, Harriet Roberts. The awards are presented at a lunch event at the Theatre at the Mill.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The 2025 Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursary Scheme was approved at the February 2025 Community Development Committee meeting.

4. The Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursary Scheme 2025

Applications for the 2025 Bursary Scheme opened at the start of June and closed at the end of August. 12 applications were received for music bursaries, 2 for volunteering bursaries, and 7 for horticultural bursaries. Following initial shortlisting by officers, the assessment panel met shortlisted applicants at the Theatre at the Mill on 22 September 2025.

Recipients of Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursaries will be announced at a lunchtime event on 3 November 2025 at the Theatre at the Mill.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The budget for the Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursary Scheme 2025 is £10,000 for the bursaries, with a further hospitality budget of approximately £1,000 for the awards lunch. Provision for this has been made in the 2025/26 Arts and Culture budget.

6. Summary

The Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursary Scheme 2025 received 21 applications, and the assessment panel met on 22 September to agree award recipients. Awards will be presented at a lunchtime ceremony on 3 November 2025.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the update on The Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Bursary Scheme 2025 be noted.

Prepared and Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Any Other Relevant Business (AORB) may be taken at this point.