



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD IN ROUND TOWER CHAMBER, ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE
ON MONDAY 02 MARCH 2026 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Alderman J Smyth
- Committee Members
(In person)** : Aldermen – L Boyle and L Clarke
Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, R Foster,
N Kelly, AM Logue, A McAuley,
V McWilliam, L O’Hagan, M Stewart and S Ward
- Committee Members
(Remote)** : Alderman P Bradley
Councillors - J Gilmour and E McLaughlin
- Non Committee
Members
(In person)** : Councillor B Webb
- Non Committee
Members:
(Remote)** : Alderman S Ross
Councillor M Brady
- Officers Present** : Director of Estates and Recreation - M McDowell
Director of Environment Services & Sustainability –
M Lavery
Head of Parks Operations - P Mawhinney
Head of Waste Strategy & Sustainability – L Daly
Head of Leisure Operations – D O’Hagan
Head of Environmental Health & Wellbeing – C Kelly
Head of Estate Services – D Blair
ICT Change Officer – A Cole
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.

The Chairperson extended his thanks on behalf of Members to Matt McDowell for his years of service in the Council and wished him well in his new role.

1 APOLOGIES

None

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 PK/GEN/217 CELEBRATORY DISCS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the implementation of the Celebratory Discs framework on Council-owned land.

2. Background

Council had historically installed celebratory discs to acknowledge significant individuals, events, and contributions within the community. These installations had evolved over time in response to public requests, nominations by Elected Members and community-driven initiatives.

3. Proposed Framework

At present there was no approved framework to guide decision-making, resulting in inconsistencies in eligibility, assessment, and placement. Without clear criteria or procedures, nominations had been managed on an ad-hoc basis, creating challenges in ensuring fairness, transparency, and alignment with Council priorities.

The Framework for Celebration Discs and Banners set out a structured approach for the use of promotional signage on Council-owned land, ensuring that displays were managed in a consistent, safe, and visually appropriate manner. It outlined the purpose of supporting community initiatives, events, and milestones, while promoting inclusion and local identity. The framework established clear eligibility criteria, application and approval processes, design and safety requirements, and defined display durations. It also ensured that all signage aligned with legislative requirements and Council policies, while maintaining high standards of presentation, fairness, and accessibility across the Borough. The proposed framework was circulated for Members' reference.

4. Costs

Each celebratory disc produced incurs a cost of £175 plus VAT. Installation required an additional £100, which covered staff time and the mounting frame on which the disc is fixed. It was proposed that these costs were met by the

applicant, ensuring that the provision and installation of celebratory discs were cost neutral to the Council.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
 Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

approval be granted for the adoption of the Celebratory Discs framework on Council-owned land but with an amendment to the framework that charities and volunteering groups to be exempt from any costs.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

3.2 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN ANNUAL ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE - COTTER'S PARK, 48D CLONKEEN ROAD, RANDALSTOWN, BT41 3JL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval for an Annual Entertainment Licence for Cotters Park, 48D Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL.

2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Annual Entertainment Licence for the following location

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr James Alexander	Cotters Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown	Dancing, Singing, Music Entertainment of a like kind Annual Entertainment Licence Thursday – Sunday 14:00hrs – 01:00am Number of persons – no greater than 31	EL213	New Application

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

Council could decide the following:

- a) Grant the licence;
- b) Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- c) Refuse the licence;
- d) Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

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

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above-named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval was required before the licence could be granted.

The current application sought to consider the licensing of events held within a communal welcome building, which was situated on the lake at the centre of the Cotter's Park site.

As part of the application process, consideration had been given to the potential adverse noise impacts on neighbouring properties. Supporting documentation had been submitted, including a detailed Noise Management Plan, an Acoustic Report, and site "Management Rules" governing the use of the communal building. It was proposed that key provisions from these documents be incorporated as additional "special conditions" to ensure effective site management.

Planning permission for Cotter's Park was granted by the Council on 22 August 2025. To protect residential amenity at nearby noise-sensitive receptors, the following conditions applied:

1. The development should operate in accordance with the submitted Noise Management Plan.
2. All doors and windows to the communal building should remain closed between 23:00 and 07:00 whenever music was being played.
3. A maximum of 31 guests should be permitted on site between the hours of 23:00 and 07:00.
4. No amplified music or other forms of musical entertainment shall be provided or played externally within the site at any time.

In conjunction with the above planning conditions, the site had implemented further management rules to specifically address noise control. These included the introduction of "quiet hours" between 23:00 and 07:00, prohibiting guests from congregating outdoors, and preventing the use of personal amplified speakers. All entertainment was restricted to the designated communal building.

Venue staff proactively monitored noise levels in accordance with the approved Noise Management Plan. A noise monitoring device had been installed outside the communal building, and any exceedances were investigated immediately, with appropriate corrective action taken where necessary.

The application was subject to 28-day public and statutory consultation period. The public consultation closed on 14 January 2026. No objections were received.

4. Summary

An application for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr James Alexander in respect of Cotter's Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3LY. In accordance with Council procedures for the determination of Entertainment Licence applications, approval by Members was required prior to the licence being granted.

In support of the application, a comprehensive range of noise control measures was in place, in compliance with the existing planning permission and the approved Noise Management Plan. These measures were supplemented by additional on-site management controls to ensure noise levels were actively monitored and effectively managed, thereby preventing any adverse impact on neighbouring residential properties.

At the request of a Member, the Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing undertook to provide Members with the additional supporting documentation which had been submitted. He also agreed to consider Council's procedure on advertisement of entertainment licences and will bring a report to a future Operations Committee meeting.

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

the decision on this application be deferred until next month's Operations Committee allow the applicant to make representation to the Committee and for Council's legal representatives to be in attendance.

ACTION BY: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health & Wellbeing

3.3 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN ANNUAL ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE - THE GREEDY GOAT, 67-68 MAIN STREET, CRUMLIN, BT29 4UR

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval for an Annual Entertainment Licence for The Greedy Goat, 67-68 Main Street, Crumlin, BT29 4UR.

2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Annual Entertainment Licence for the following location

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Joseph McDowell and Mr Caoimhin McDowell	The Greedy Goat, 67-68 Main Street, Crumlin, BT26 4UR	<p>Dancing, Singing, Music & Entertainment of a like kind;</p> <p>Any public contest, match, exhibition or display of boxing/wrestling/judo/karate/similar sport or darts</p> <p>Machines for Entertainment or Amusement Equipment for playing billiards/pool/snooker/or other similar games;</p> <p>Annual Entertainment Licence</p> <p>Monday – Wednesday 12:00pm – 12.00midnight</p> <p>Thursday – 12.00pm – 01.00am</p> <p>Friday – Saturday 12.00pm – 01.30am</p> <p>Sunday 12.00pm – 01.00am Number of persons – no greater than 172</p>	EL227	New Application

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

Council could decide the following:

- Grant the licence;
- Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- Refuse the licence;

- Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

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

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above-named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval was required before the licence could be granted.

Members were advised that this premises had historically held an Entertainment Licence, however this was a new applicant.

The current application sought to cover events in the ground floor bar area, first floor restaurant and first floor function space.

4. Summary

Application for an Annual Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr Joseph McDowell and Mr Caoimhin McDowell for The Greedy Goat, 67-68 Main Street, Crumlin, BT29 4UR. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was needed on the granting of the licence.

Proposed by Alderman Boyle

Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

an Annual Entertainment Licence be granted to the applicant Mr Joseph McDowell and Mr Caoimhin McDowell for The Greedy Goat, 67-68 Main Street, Crumlin, BT29 4UR with the following Conditions

- a) That all relevant licensing requirements are met**
- b) That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval**

ACTION BY: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

3.4 **EH/EHS/CP/002 CONSULTATION ON SINGLE CONSTRUCTION REGULATOR PROSPECTUS**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval for a Council response on a Single Construction Regulator to reduce fragmentation and complexity of the current system.

2. Background

Following the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire, an Inquiry was established to examine the causes of the incident. The Inquiry concluded that longstanding shortcomings in the regulatory framework and across parts of the construction sector contributed to the failure and that confidence in the system had been significantly undermined.

In response, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government had proposed the creation of a single construction regulator to consolidate oversight of building safety, construction products, and professional standards. This proposal reflected the Inquiry's first recommendation and was intended to reduce regulatory fragmentation, improve consistency, and support a more coordinated approach to regulation, with the aim of increasing certainty for the market and reducing the risk of future regulatory intervention.

Details of the consultation can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/single-construction-regulator-prospectus>

3. Key Issues

Northern Ireland councils were surveillance authorities who ensured that products placed on the market meet legislative and technical standards and part of this remit included construction products. Given the vast amount and type of construction products on the market greater unified controls were welcomed. Council supported the proposal of a Single Construction Regulator but considered that further clarification and strengthening was required in several key areas:

- Appropriate funding streams to achieve the aims of the proposal.
- The development of legislation to make the requirements mandatory and consider any divergence.
- Consideration of linking to existing management information systems to prevent duplication and funding to support development work.
- Need for governance and audit on the proposal to facilitate accountability and transparency.
- Ability to consider local realities and flexibility to achieve compliance.
- Training and guidance to ensure enforcement consistency and transparency.

A draft Council response (circulated) was included for Members approval.

4. Summary

Council broadly welcomed a single construction regulator to improve guidance, consistency in enforcement. However, important issues remain, particularly around NI legislative context, clarity on legislative changes required, mechanisms for intelligence sharing and ensuring effective risk-based response.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the draft consultation response be approved.

ACTION BY: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Commercial)

3.5 PK/REG/008 APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES / CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS CEREMONIES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Council approval for the renewal of place approvals for Doubletree by Hilton, Templepatrick as a venue where Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership ceremonies may be conducted.

2. Background

In accordance with the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act 2004, Council was responsible for approving applications for temporary place approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

As part of this process, a Notice of Interest must be displayed in a prominent location at the proposed venue for a period of three weeks to allow for any public objections to be submitted.

No objections were received during the public notice period. In addition, each of the premises had been formally inspected and deemed suitable to proceed with the approval process.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The venue was previously granted approval by Council in March 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

Doubletree by Hilton, Templepatrick be re-approved as a venue to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, and for the registration of Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

ACTION BY: Paula Redpath, Registrar

3.6 PK/GEN/022 NOMINATION FOR IRELAND'S BEST KEPT TOWNS AWARDS 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the Council to support the nomination of Antrim Town for the Best Kept Ireland Towns Awards 2026.

2. Background

Ireland's "Best Kept Town" was a prestigious all-island competition that showcases the very best of community pride and environmental excellence. This unique contest pits top-performing villages and towns from Ireland's renowned "Tidy Towns" competition against the winners of Northern Ireland's "Best Kept" competition. It highlighted efforts to enhance local areas through cleanliness, sustainability, and aesthetic improvements.

3. Nominations for 2026

Correspondence had been received from the Northern Ireland Amenity Council requesting that Council supported the nomination of Antrim Town for the Best Kept Ireland Towns Awards 2026 in the category of "Best Kept Town".

Judging for the awards would take place throughout May with an awards ceremony held at Farmleigh House in Dublin being scheduled for June 2026.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

approval be granted for the Council to support the nomination of Antrim Town for the Best Kept Ireland Towns Awards 2026.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

3.7 **EH/EHS/009 REVIEW OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY (HMO) LICENCE SCHEME CHARGES AND PROPOSED INCREASE IN LICENCE FEE FROM 1 APRIL 2026**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval to increase HMO licence application and variation fees in order to support the cost-neutral operation of the HMO Licensing Scheme from 1 April 2026.

2. Background

Members would be aware the Northern Ireland Houses in Multiple Occupation (NIHMO) Unit, based within Belfast City Council, administers and managed the HMO licensing scheme on behalf of all 11 councils. This shared service included processing licence applications, carrying out property checks and inspections, and providing regulatory support to each council.

The Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 "2016 Act" received Royal Assent on 12 May 2016 and took effect from the 1 April 2019. The Department for Communities ("DfC") laid the subordinate Regulations the Houses of Multiple Occupation (Fees) Regulations (NI) 2019 "2019 Regulations". These Regulations set the maximum level of fee for an application for an HMO licence at £45 per person, per annum.

Following the submission of financial information by Belfast City Council to the Department for Communities ("DfC") in December 2024, the Department in

exercise of the powers conferred by Section 84 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 ("2016 Act") enacted the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 ("2025 Regulations"). Those regulations came into operation on the 1 August 2025.

The 2025 Regulations changed the maximum permissible fee from £45 per person, per annum to £62 per person, per annum and this allowed the HMO Licensing Scheme to continue to operate on a predominantly cost neutral basis for councils.

A paper was presented to the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives ("SOLACE") on 6 February 2026 to inform them of the need to increase the HMO licence fee. SOLACE agreed to the proposed fee increase and confirmed that each Council would take a report to their respective Council Committee in March 2026 to agree the uplift.

3. Previous Decision of Council

On the 2 September 2024 the Council agreed to increase the HMO licence fee to £45 per person per year, that being the maximum amount permissible at that time pursuant to Houses of Multiple Occupation (Fees) Regulations (NI) 2019 "2019 Regulations". The following additional fees were also agreed at that time:

Licence variations	
Item	Cost
Addition of a new managing agent.	£225
Addition of a new occupant	£225 for each new occupant + £100 inspection fee (per visit)

4. Financial Position

As part of the Belfast City Council's submission to DfC, in December 2024, officers proposed an increase to the maximum fee to future proof the fee structure and to ensure no burden to rate payers as a consequence of the delivery of this function.

The DfC Review was completed in 2025, and it accepted Belfast City Council's recommendation to increase the maximum HMO licence fee and brought and enacted the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 ("2025 Regulations"). Those regulations came into operation on the 1 August 2025. The maximum fee was increased from £45 per person, per annum to £75 per person, per annum.

In December 2025, the NIHMO team engaged with Belfast City Council Finance colleagues and ran financial models to calculate the current operating costs of the HMO Service.

The total gross cost of the service for the 5-year period from 2024/25 to 2028/29 was estimated to be £5.74M, of which £4.9M was eligible to be covered by the license fee. To cover the £4.9M over the 5-year cycle, councils needed to charge £62 per occupant per year.

It was proposed that the HMO licence application fee was increased to £62 per occupant per year for the remainder of the current 5-year cycle, with effect from 1 April 2026.

This would still leave the Council with £804k of unfunded activities outside of the application process. This was forecast to be met in part from enforcement fees and miscellaneous income.

It was proposed to increase the costs of varying an HMO licence for the remainder of the current 5-year cycle, with effect from 1 April 2026 as follows:

Licence Variations	
Item	Cost
Addition of a new managing agent.	£250
Addition of a new occupant	£310 for each new occupant + £125 inspection fee (per visit)

Councils had identified a shortfall in income due to the delay in increasing the licence fee and Members were advised that the Chair of SOLACE would write to the DfC Permanent Secretary regarding the financial risk being carried by councils and the need to bring forward legislation to address the possible financial gap within the current mandate.

Following a query from an Elected Member, Officers agreed to liaise with the NIHMO unit to investigate the feasibility of Council charging the maximum fee for the HMO licence.

It was agreed that the report be brought to Full Council.

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

3.8 EH/PHWB/018 CONSULTATION ON DOMESTIC SOLID FUEL BURNING: EMISSIONS AND LABELLING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) consultation on domestic solid fuel burning, focusing on proposed emissions limits, appliance and fuel labelling, periodic retesting, and enforcement measures to reduce PM2.5 emissions and associated health risks.

2. Background

PM 2.5 referred to fine particulate matter that was 2.5 micrometres or smaller; about 30 times thinner than a human hair. These particles, produced by vehicles, industrial emissions, and burning fossil fuels, could penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream, increasing the risk of respiratory issues, heart disease, and asthma.

Domestic solid fuel burning contributed significantly to PM2.5, impacting respiratory and cardiovascular health. DEFRA had proposed stricter emission limits for stoves, mandatory labelling of appliances and fuels with health warnings, periodic retesting, and strengthened enforcement powers. These measures aimed to improve air quality, protect public health, and support informed consumer choice.

Details of the consultation could be found at:

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/domestic-burning/consultation-on-solid-fuel-burning>.

Smoke Control Areas were already in place across parts of both Antrim town and Newtownabbey. These controls prohibit the burning of unauthorised fuels, including coal, slack, turf and wood, except where approved fuels or exempt appliances were used, in line with existing clean air legislation. The presence of these designated areas demonstrates that regulatory measures to address smoke emissions and protect air quality were already established locally.

3. Key Issues

In reviewing DEFRA's consultation proposals, a number of considerations had been highlighted from a Council perspective. These included the proposed emissions limits for domestic stoves, the introduction of mandatory appliance and fuel labelling, the requirement for periodic retesting to maintain compliance, enforcement arrangements and the potential effects on household, especially those experiencing fuel poverty or living in rural areas. The following points outlined Council's position and observations on the consultation;

- **Emissions Limits:** Council supported the proposed limits as necessary to reduce PM2.5 exposure and improve public health outcomes. Stricter limits aligned with local air quality objectives and complement national strategies to tackle air pollution.
- **Appliance and Fuel Labelling:** Mandatory labelling was strongly welcomed, particularly when it included clear information on emissions performance, approved fuels, and health impacts. Health labelling should explicitly reference asthma, cardiovascular disease and the potential for premature death to ensure residents understand risks. Labels could be enhanced with visual elements such as colour-coded ratings, icons, or QR codes linking to guidance.
- **Periodic Retesting:** Retesting of appliances every five to six years was recommended to maintain compliance and ensure ongoing emissions performance.

- **Enforcement:** Trading Standards, supported by Environmental Health teams, were considered the appropriate enforcing body. Graduated penalties (£300–£2,000), with higher fines for repeat offenders, are essential to encourage compliance and maintain credibility. Enforcement powers to inspect premises and recover costs were necessary to ensure effectiveness.
- **Equity and Public Awareness:** Council recognised that households in fuel poverty or rural areas with limited alternatives may be disproportionately affected. Transitional support measures and public awareness campaigns would be essential to help residents understand appliance requirements, associated health risks, and to support compliance.

A draft Council response (circulated) was included for Members' approval.

4. Summary

Council broadly welcomed DEFRA's proposals to reduce emissions, improve labelling, and strengthen enforcement. The introduction of these measures were expected to improve air quality, protect public health, and support informed consumer choice. Implementation should ensure support for vulnerable households, effective enforcement and clear public guidance.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly

Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the draft consultation response be approved.

ACTION BY: Mark Sloan, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Environment)

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 WM/WM/037 UPDATE ON WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING SERVICES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on waste and recycling collection services provided by Bryson Recycling in the Borough.

2. Background

Members would be aware following documented issues with the waste and recycling collection services provided by Bryson Recycling, their Chief Executive and Deputy Director attended the January full Council meeting to detail the recovery position and plan and actions going forward.

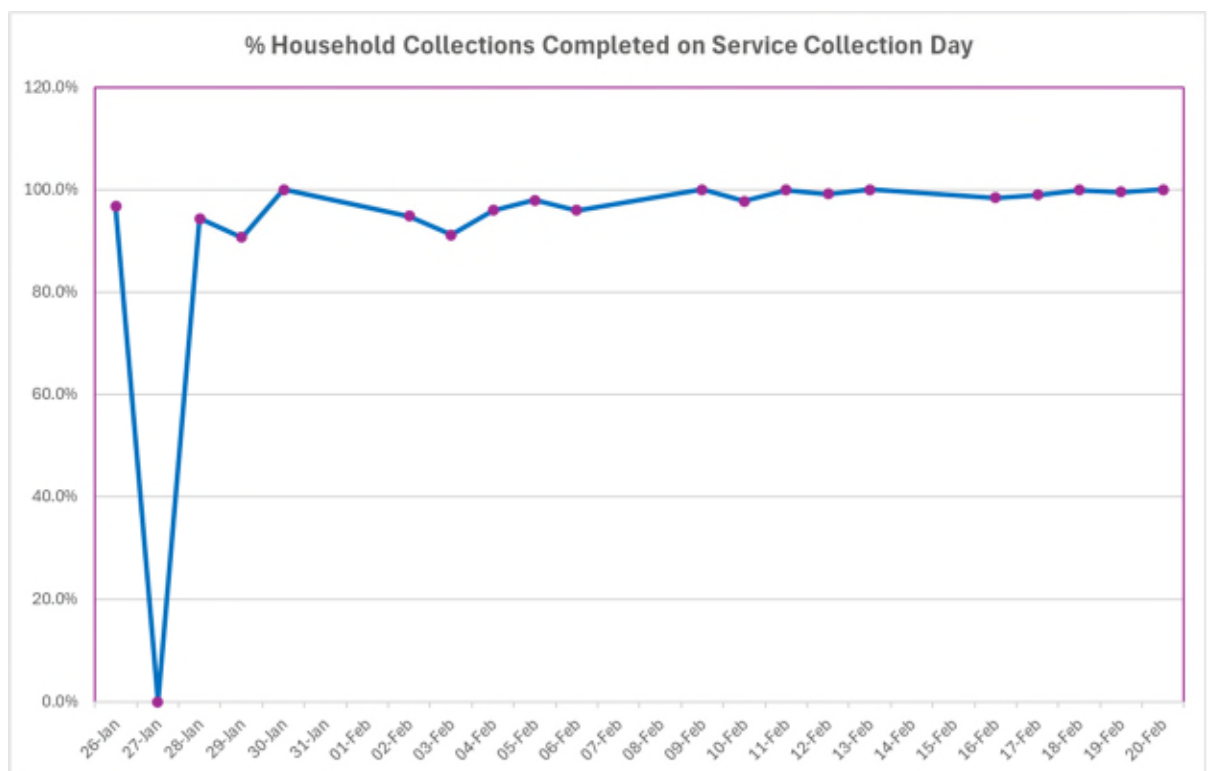
3. Key Information

As previously reported, Officers were continuing to work closely with Bryson Recycling staff to address outstanding collection issues and implement Recovery Plan. A noticeable improvement of collection standards had been reported since the start of February, despite the effect of storm Chandra

causing further difficulties. The following was an update on the ongoing actions which had been taken to improve the waste collection standards:

- Further staff had been recruited by Bryson Recycling and these drivers had been allocated to the waste collection services in the Borough;
- Targeted supervision in areas where there had been multiple collection issues;
- Officers were providing Members with weekly accurate performance reports including actual house numbers rather than %;
- No Council resources had been required in February to assist with waste collections;
- Quick Response Team (QRT) vehicle now operating in the Borough to address emergency requests;
- Ongoing discussions with the procurement team to ensure all elements of the contract had been delivered;
- Project Monitoring Officer working directly with Bryson Officers integrating daily operational challenges and continuing to target areas where service standards were not being met or where access issues had affected collections;
- Ongoing Weekly operational meetings to discuss any issues with service and continue to improve communications, reporting and accuracy of information.

The noticeable improvement in collections had been monitored by Officers and was presented in Graph 1 for Members information.



Graph 1: Missed collections across Borough.

The Director of Environment and Sustainability Services agreed to respond to

Members individually in relation to their reported waste collection issues.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment & Sustainability Services

4.2 L/LEI/004/VOL2 SUMMER SCHEMES 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the details of the Council's proposed Summer Scheme Programme for 2026.

2. Background

Members would be aware that the Council delivers a range of Summer Schemes and Sports Camps across multiple locations throughout the Borough during the schools' summer break for children aged 6 – 12 years old. A screening process was also available for those children with additional individual care needs (medical or disability) to ensure that any required adjustments were met where possible when attending the schemes.

For several years, the Council had partnered with the Mae Murray Foundation to offer an Inclusive Summer Scheme, which provided specialised one-to-one care for up to 25 children per day. This year's scheme would be delivered across two locations and feature a range of activities such as sensory play, inclusive wheelchair games, inclusive biking, and arts and crafts.

In addition to its own programmes, the Council supports external summer initiatives through:

- **The Community Planning Department's Programmes and Activities Grant**, which last year provided funding to 21 groups at a total estimated cost of £37,700.
- **Accessibility and Inclusion Funding**, which offered up to £5,000 per applicant from a total fund of £25,000, available to Special Educational Needs (SEN) schools within the Borough.

This comprehensive approach ensured a diverse and inclusive range of summer activities for children across the Borough.

3. Proposed 2026 Council Programme

Booking would be available from Tuesday May 19th with relevant information widely shared in advance via Council's various communication platforms. The proposed 2026 Summer Scheme Programme followed the same schedule as previous years and was as follows:

Scheme	Dates 2026	Times
Sixmile Leisure Centre (Ballyclare)	20 July – 21 Aug	10am -3pm
Valley Leisure Centre	20 July – 21 Aug	10am -3pm
Ballyearl Arts and Leisure Centre (Arts and Crafts)	20 July – 21 Aug	10am – 3pm
Merville House	20 July – 14 Aug	10am – 1pm
Lilian Bland	20 July – 21 Aug	10am – 3pm
Kilbride Church/St Brides	27 July – 31 July	10am – 3pm
Hydepark	17 Aug – 21 Aug	10am – 3pm
Ballynure	3 – 7 Aug & 10 – 14 Aug	10am – 3pm
Crumlin Leisure Centre	18 – 20 Aug	10am – 3pm
Castle Gardens Outdoor Sport & Physical Activity Camp	5 - 7 August	10am – 3pm
Crumlin Leisure Centre	3-5 August	10am – 3pm
Inclusive Summer Schemes Locations TBC	15-17 July 3-5 August	10:30am-5pm
Sports Specific Camps (Athletics, Dance, Tennis & Football) Various centres	July & August	10am – 3pm

The

completed Section 75 Policy Screening form and the Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) were circulated.

In response to Members' queries, the Director of Estates & Recreation advised that a wider review into the summer scheme programme was scheduled for autumn, and this would be reported back to Members. He also undertook to investigate the potential of an alternative booking system for summer schemes, due to issues with the current system.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Estates & Recreation

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

- 5.1 A Member raised concerns about the level of littering across the Borough. The Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing advised that his service would undertake an increase of patrols and erect signage in problem areas identified by the Member. In addition, he agreed to bring back a report in relation to enforcement activity at a future Operations Committee meeting.

ACTION BY: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health & Wellbeing

- 5.2 In response to a Member, the Director of Estates and Recreation advised that the contractor at Abbey Community College new campus had been contacted regarding the condition of the road surface of Bridge Road with soil and debris. The contractor committed to cleaning the area regularly and Officers will monitor the situation.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Estates and Recreation

- 5.3 On behalf of their respective Parties, Councillors Archibald-Brown, Foster, Logue and Kelly thanked Matt McDowell for his years of service to Council and wished him all the best for the future.

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

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

Councillor Logue left and returned to the Chamber during Item 6.1.

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 IN CONFIDENCE WM/ARC21/004/VOL 11 ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the January Joint Committee meeting.

2. Introduction

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

3. Previous Decisions of Council

All previous papers had been noted.

4. Main Report

The papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting are included (circulated) for Members' information:

- 29 January 2025

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.

5. Summary

The main issues from the January meeting were:

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and agreed

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

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

There being no further Committee business, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.48pm.

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.