MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT MOSSLEY MILL ON MONDAY 24 AUGUST AT 6.30 PM

In the Chair	:	Mayor (Councillor H Cushinan)
Members Present	:	Aldermen – L Boyle, P Bradley, L Clarke, J McGrath, M Magill, P Michael, and J Smyth
	:	Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, M Brady, M Cooper, S Cosgrove, P Dunlop, S Flanagan, R Foster, J Gilmour, R Kinnear, L Kirkpatrick, R Lynch, H Magill, A McAuley, T McGrann, E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, M Ní Chonghaile, S Ward, B Webb and S Wilson
Members Present (Remotely)	:	Aldermen – M Cosgrove and S Ross
	:	Councillors – A Bennington, J Burbank, M Goodman, B Mallon, L O'Hagan and M Stewart
Officers Present	:	Chief Executive - R Baker Director of Economic Development and Planning – M McAlister Director of Community and Culture – U Fay Director of Environment Services and Sustainability – M Laverty Director of Finance – J Balmer Director of People and Organisational Transformation – C Brown Director of Estates and Recreation – J News Director of Organisation Development (Interim) – L Johnston Borough Lawyer (Legal, Land, Governance & Policy) – P Casey ICT Systems Support Officer – C Bell ICT Helpdesk Officer – J Wilson Member Services Manager – A Duffy

1 BIBLE READING, PRAYER AND WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting and advised Members of the audio recording procedures.

The meeting opened with a Bible reading and prayer by Reverend Steven Lockington.

Alderman Boyle and Councillors Kinnear and McAuley joined the meeting at this point.

MAYOR'S REMARKS

The Mayor welcomed Collesa Brown and John News to the meeting following their appointments as Director of People and Organisation Transformation and Director of Estates and Recreation and wished them success in their new roles.

2 APOLOGIES

Alderman – Alderman Campbell
Councillors – Kelly, Logue and O'Lone

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4 MINUTES OF THE ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Foster and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Meeting of Monday 27 July 2026 be taken as read and signed as correct.

5(a) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 1

Moved by Alderman Boyle
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday 17 August 2026 Part 1 be taken as read and signed as correct.

5(b) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 2

Moved by Alderman Boyle
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday 17 August 2026 Part 2 be approved and adopted.

6 PRESENTATION -IN CONFIDENCE

The Mayor advised that the following presentation would be taken in confidence.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Councillor Foster and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct the following business 'In Committee'.

Members were advised that the live stream and audio recording would cease at this point.

6.1 P/FP/LDP/1 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, PROGRESS UPDATE – PRESENTATION

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this presentation was to provide Members with a progress update on the Council's Local Development Plan.

2. <u>Introduction</u>

The Mayor welcomed Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director for Planning and Building Control who provided Members with a presentation on the current progress of the Council's LDP, which had been circulated for Members information.

Moved by Councillor Kinnear
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted

NO ACTION

MOTION TO PROCEED 'OUT OF COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct any remaining business 'In Public'.

Members were advised that the audio recording would restart at this point.

Councillor Gilmour left and returned to the Chamber during Item 7.

7 NOTICE OF MOTION

Proposed by: Councillor Ní Chonghaile
Seconded by: Councillor McLaughlin

Aithníonn agus molann an Chomhairle seo an obair den scoth a rinne Comhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann agus a gcomhpháirtithe uilig i bpleanáil agus i reáchtáil Fhleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026.

Aithníonn sí na blianta d'fhís, de phleanáil, d'ullmhúchán agus d'obair chrua a bhí taobh thiar de Fhleadh Cheoil na hÉireann a thabhairt go Béal Feirste den chéad uair ina stair.

This Council acknowledges and commends the outstanding work of Belfast City Council, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and all their partners in the planning and delivery of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026.

It recognises the years of vision, planning, preparation and hard work behind bringing Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann to Belfast for the first time in its history.

Déanann an Chomhairle ceiliúradh ar rath iontach na seachtaine. Cé go raibhothas ag súil le thart ar 800,000 cuairteoir, tugann na meastacháin tosaigh le fios go bhféadfadh an tinreamh agus an líon coisithe ar fud na cathrach a bheith chomh hard le 1.6 milliún, rud a sháraigh na hionchais go mór agus a thug na deicheanna de mhilliúin punt de thairbhe eacnamaíoch, agus gnólachtaí áitiúla san earnáil fáilteachais ag tuairisciú méaduithe eisceachtúla sa trádáil.

Council celebrates the extraordinary success of the week. While approximately 800,000 visitors had been anticipated, initial estimates indicate that attendance and footfall across the city may have reached approximately 1.6 million, significantly exceeding expectations and delivering tens of millions of pounds in economic benefit, with local hospitality businesses reporting exceptional increases in trade.

Cuireann an Chomhairle seo a buíochas ar taifead d'achan duine a chuir leis an rath sin; foirne na Comhairle a d'ullmhaigh, a mhaisigh agus a ghlan an chathair; na hoibrithe deonacha; na ceoltóirí agus na damhsóirí; na seirbhísí éigeandála; agus na mílte duine a d'oibrigh uaireanta fada sna hóstáin, sna beáir, sna bialanna, sna caiféanna, sa trádáil agus san earnáil fáilteachais.

This Council places on record its thanks to everyone who contributed to that success – Council staff who prepared, decorated and cleaned the city; volunteers; musicians and dancers; the emergency services; and the thousands of people who worked long hours across hotels, bars, restaurants, cafés, retail and the hospitality sector.

Molann an Chomhairle go háirithe nádúr uilechuimsitheach na Fleidhe, a thug daoine ó phobail, ó chultúir agus ó thraidisiúin éagsúla le chéile agus a líon sráideanna Bhéal Feirste le ceol, damhsa, teanga, gáire agus cairdeas, ag *léiriú an chuid is fearr dár gcathair chomharsanachta agus dá muintir. Aithníonn muid freisin an Roinn Geilleagair mar an Roinn urraíochta agus molann muid an infheistíocht atá déanta aici i dtionscnamh dá leithéid.*

Council particularly commends the inclusive nature of the Fleadh, which brought people from different communities, cultures and traditions together and filled the streets of Belfast with music, dance, language, laughter and friendship, showcasing the very best of our neighbouring city and its people. We also acknowledge the Department for Economy as sponsoring Department and praise their investment in such an excellent initiative.

Dá réir sin, déanann an Chomhairle comhghairdeas le Comhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, a gcomhpháirtithe agus achan duine a chuidigh le rath iontach Fhleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026, gabhann sí buíochas leo, agus guíonn sí gach rath orthu agus an obair ag tosú arís do 2027.

Accordingly, Council congratulates and thanks Belfast City Council, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, their partners and everyone who contributed to the outstanding success of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026, and extends its very best wishes as the work begins again for 2027.

Fáiltíonn an Chomhairle fosta roimh an deis atá ann d'Aontroim agus Baile Nua na Mainistreach, agus don réigiún níos leithne, tógáil ar oidhreacht shuntasach chultúrtha, phobail, turasóireachta agus eacnamaíoch na Fleidhe agus deiseanna a fhiosrú le páirt a ghlacadh inti agus tacú lena filleadh ar Bhéal Feirste in 2027.

Council further welcomes the opportunity for Antrim and Newtownabbey, and the wider region, to build upon the significant cultural, community, tourism and economic legacy of the Fleadh and to explore opportunities to engage with and support its return to Belfast in 2027.

RESOLVED - the motion was declared carried.

ACTION BY: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

At this point in the meeting the Mayor congratulated the Antrim ladies GAA teams on their outstanding success in August. Having secured both the All-Ireland Junior football and the All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championships.

8 NOTICE OF MOTION

Proposed by: Councillor Magill
Seconded by: Alderman Bradley

"That this Council acknowledges the excellent work already undertaken by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council to foster welcoming, accessible and inclusive spaces for our residents and visitors.

Notes the importance of our existing Changing Places facilities at several council sites across the Borough, and their benefit to service users with profound learning disabilities or complex physical needs.

Further notes, with concern, the current reliance on the hiring of mobile facilities for outdoor council events, resulting in restrictive booking dates, high cumulative costs and a lack of availability across the full calendar of outdoor council-led events, along with the accessibility gaps that this situation is creating.

Subject to the application of council's relevant processes (short business case to confirm need and expenditure justification, and procurement), the Council therefore agrees, in principle, to the purchase of a dedicated mobile Changing Places Facility for use at council-led and council-partnered events, and where possible, through support in kind, the ability for the facility to be used by Community Groups".

RESOLVED - the motion was declared carried.

ACTION BY: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

Councillor Ní Chonghaile left and returned to the Chamber during Item 9.1.

9 ITEMS FOR DECISION

9.1 EH/EHS/EP/003 CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT AIR QUALITY (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2026 – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ANNUAL AVERAGE PM10 AND PM2.5 LIMITS, TARGETS AND OBJECTIVES

1. **<u>Purpose</u>**

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the submission of the Council's response to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) consultation on the Draft Air Quality (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

2. <u>Background</u>

This consultation proposed legislative amendments to tighten existing air quality standards for particulate matter, namely PM10 and PM2.5, in Northern Ireland. This would result in protecting public health, through reducing harmful air pollution and aligning with current World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines and emerging standards across the UK and Ireland.

Particulate matter was recognised as one of the most significant pollutants affecting public health. Fine particulate matter (PM2.5) was associated with respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer and premature mortality due to its ability to penetrate deep into the lungs and bloodstream. While particulate emissions had reduced significantly over recent decades due to cleaner technologies, transport, domestic solid fuel combustion and agriculture remain important sources of emissions.

The proposed amendments were intended to reduce long-term exposure to particulate matter and bring Northern Ireland's air quality standards closer to current WHO guidance and the direction of travel being taken elsewhere within the UK.

A copy of the full consultation document could be accessed at the link below:

[Consultation on the Draft Air Quality (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs]

3. Key Issues

The consultation proposed significant reductions to the existing annual average standards for particulate matter, with compliance proposed from 1 January 2028.

Pollutant	**Existing Standard**	**New standard**
PM10 Annual Mean Limit	40 µg/m³	20 µg/m³
PM10 Annual Mean Objective	40 µg/m³	20 µg/m³
PM2.5 Annual Mean Limit Value	25 µg/m³	10 µg/m³
PM2.5 Annual Mean Target Value	25 µg/m³	8 µg/m³

These amendments would approximately halve the permitted annual concentration for PM10 and reduce the PM2.5 standards by up to 60%.

A draft consultation response was circulated.

The draft response from Officers proposed support for the targets of the proposed Regulations and recognised the significant public health benefits associated with reducing long-term exposure to particulate matter. Monitoring data published for Northern Ireland indicated that all monitoring sites had achieved the proposed annual mean levels since 2019.

Continued compliance would require sustained action at regional and national level. Many of the principal sources of particulate matter including road transport, domestic solid fuel combustion, agriculture and transboundary pollution lie outside the direct control of district councils.

The draft consultation response supported the proposed amendments whilst emphasising the need for continued Government investment, appropriate resourcing for local authorities, updating the Local Air Quality Management guidance and publication of the Northern Ireland Clean Air Strategy.

4. Financial Implication

There were no immediate financial implications arising from the consultation.

DAERA currently provided grant funding to district councils to support statutory Local Air Quality Management functions. Consequently, the proposed Regulations were not expected to result in additional costs to Council or require additional Air Quality Management Areas. The draft response nevertheless highlighted the importance of continued DAERA funding, updated technical guidance and appropriate monitoring resources.

In addition, Officers were currently exploring the potential to utilise DAERA Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) grant funding to enhance particulate matter monitoring within ANBC area during 2026/2027. Specifically, consideration was being given to the procurement of PM2.5 and PM10 monitoring equipment and this would strengthen the existing monitoring network and improve the local evidence base for particulate matter concentrations.

5. <u>Equality Screening & Rural Needs Requirements</u>

DAERA had completed both an Equality Screening and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment. The Equality Screening concluded that the proposed Regulations were expected to have positive impacts through improved air quality, particularly for people with respiratory and cardiovascular conditions.

The Rural Needs Impact Assessment concluded that the proposed amendments were unlikely to have a disproportionate impact on rural communities. The draft response broadly agreed whilst recognising that future implementation measures should continue to consider rural transport, domestic solid fuel use and agricultural activities

6. <u>Summary</u>

The Draft Air Quality (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 represented a significant strengthening of Northern Ireland's air quality standards for particulate matter. The draft response supported the proposed amendments, recognising that they were evidence-based and proportionate. Continued compliance would depend upon coordinated Government action to address emissions beyond the direct control of Councils.

In response to concerns raised by a Member the Chief Executive agreed that separate to the consultation response, a letter would be issued to the Minister/Department highlighting Council's concerns regarding the blue-green algae bloom at the shores of Lough Neagh and its potential impacts on air quality and public health.

Moved by Alderman Michael
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and

RESOLVED – that the draft consultation response be approved.

ACTION BY: Mark Sloan, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

9.2 ED/DI/005 ASK CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAMME GRANT AWARDS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval for the award of six grants under the ASK Capital Grant Programme.

2. Background

The ASK (Advice, Skills and Knowledge) Mentoring Programme was launched in September 2025 and supported local businesses through tailored one-to-one mentoring and business development support.

Through the programme businesses could access up to 10 hours of mentoring support across a range of areas such as Advanced Digital Technologies, Digital Infrastructure & Strategy, Innovation & Product Development, Business Strategy and Planning and Sales & Marketing.

To support the implementation of mentor-led recommendations, the Council introduced the ASK Capital Grant Programme, which provided eligible businesses with grant assistance towards capital investment projects.

Following completion of mentoring eligible businesses may be invited to apply for an 80% funded capital grant of up to £1,500 to support investment in software, systems, equipment and other innovation-enabling technologies aligned with Economic Development objectives.

3. Previous Council Decision

In May 2026, Members approved the extension of the Ask Capital Grant Programme, with a budget allocation of £75,000 for the 2026/27 financial year.

4. Capital Grant Applications Received

Members were advised that during the period 2 July 2026 to 6 August 2026, a total of six applications were received, with a maximum of £8,540.77 being recommended for approval, subject to the receipt and verification of all relevant supporting documentation. Grant awards were set out in the table (circulated).

5. Financial Position

The overall ASK Capital Grant Programme budget for 2026/27 was £75,000. To date, £29,500 had been awarded. Should Members approve the six grant recommendations within this report the remaining programme budget would be £36,959.23

6. Summary

This report makes six grant recommendations under the ASK Capital Grant Programme for the period 2 July 2026 to 6 August 2026, with a total value of £8,540.77.

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Alderman McGrath and

RESOLVED – that Members approve the six grant awards totalling a maximum of £8,540.77 to the successful applicants under the ASK Capital Grant Programme, subject to the receipt and verification of all relevant supporting documentation.

ACTION BY: Natasha Donald, Economic Development Manager

9.3 ED/ED/315 RURAL INVESTMENT AND GROWTH FUND

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to update Members regarding the applicants which had reached the threshold for funding under the Pilot Rural Investment & Growth Fund and to seek approval to progress the applications through the grant processing and award stage, in accordance with the agreed programme criteria and available budget allocation.

2. <u>Introduction/Background</u>

Members were reminded that at Economic Development Committee in January 2026, it was agreed that a pilot Rural Investment & Growth Fund would be delivered to provide financial support to micro and SME businesses in rural areas. The grant rate available to businesses is £10,000 - £20,000 at a 50% grant rate, ensuring a minimum project value of £20,000. This emphasised the fund's strategic intent to deliver meaningful and impactful investments while avoiding duplication with other business support programmes.

3. <u>Previous Decision of Council</u>

The Economic Development Committee approved the delivery of a new Pilot Rural Investment & Growth Fund with an allocated budget of **£150,000** in January 2026.

4. <u>Programme Update</u>

The pilot Rural Investment & Growth Fund aimed to provide substantial capital support to micro and SME businesses operating in rural areas across the Borough.

The Scheme opened for applications from Monday 13 April 2026 and closed at midnight Friday 8 May 2026.

A total of 24 applications were received requesting a total grant amount of £418,398.06 well in excess of the budget available. Officers had processed applications through eligibility checks and assessments and determined that

7 applications had exceeded the scoring threshold to the sum of **£136,000**. The following table provided a summary of the applications and the proposed grant award:

Application ID	Business name	DEA	Project	Amount requested	Score	Proposed Grant Award
RIGF\100060	OD Contracts and Maine Drains	Dunsilly	Propose the purchase of a telescopic loader, to enable the business to grow sales in installations of waste water systems, repairs and replacements, with improved accessibility and a reduced environmental impact.	£20,000.00	97	£20,000.00
RIGF\100008	Glendale tree Services	Dunsilly	Delivery & supply of biomass fuel using multi-functional drying trailer.	£20,000.00	97	£20,000.00
RIGF\100061	Ai Services NI	Airport	SMART Stud environmental monitoring system with software data collection and analysis	£20,000.00	94	£20,000.00
RIGF\100009	Logan Construction	Ballyclare	Our project is to purchase an Avant 640 mini loader, specifically suited to the restricted access and tight outdoor spaces	£20,000.00	82	£20,000.00
RIGF\100068	Ecopart NI	Airport	As part of our business expansion, we are investing in a new counterbalance forklift truck to enhance our outdoor operations in handling End of Life Vehicle	£20,000.00	80	£20,000.00
RIGF\100041	Gary Cobain Building Contractor	Dunsilly	Purchase of a mini excavator (2.7 tonne) to enhance the operational capacity of our construction contracting business	£16,000.00	79	£16,000.00
RIGF\100080	Conveyortek	Airport	Seeking grant support to modernise and optimise the material handling processes within its overband magnet production area	£20,000.00	77	£20,000.00

5. Financial Position

Given the strategic nature of the proposed pilot programme, Council received a high level of demand for funding, with a strong standard of applications submitted. In recognising the overall quality and competitiveness of the applications received, the scoring threshold was set at 75/100 to ensure that the highest-scoring applications may be progressed for funding consideration whilst remaining within budget. This approach would ensure that the available funding was targeted towards those proposals demonstrating the strongest strategic alignment with the programme objectives and which would create the greatest potential impact.

Summary
A total of £150,000 had been ringfenced within the 2026/27 Economic Development budget for the delivery of the pilot programme. It was proposed to allocate £136,000, subject to members' approval, meaning that the programme could be delivered within the agreed budget allocation. Officers would provide feedback to the applicants that had not been successful under this call.

Given the high demand for this pilot programme Officers would closely monitor the implementation and should funding become available within the Economic Development budget provide an update to Members regarding the feasibility of a further call for applications.

Moved by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Webb and

RESOLVED - that Members approve the grant funding awards to the seven applications as set out in the report which will be met from the 2026/27 Economic Development Budget.

ACTION BY: Michael McKenna, Deputy Director Investment and Business

9.4 L/LEI/001 UK ACTIVE AWARDS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Council on the 2026 UK Active Awards shortlisting and seek approval for nominees to attend the awards ceremony at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham on Thursday 8 October 2026.

2. Introduction

UK Active is a national leisure industry body representing the public, private and third sectors. Its annual awards are among the sector's most prestigious, recognising excellence and innovation in health, wellbeing and fitness.
The 2026 awards attracted a record number of entries. Judging was independently led by Proinsight, with the Centre of the Year category including mystery shops and customer feedback.

Council Leisure Services had a strong recent record at the UK Active Awards. The Valley Leisure Centre was Regional Centre of the Year in 2022, while Ballyearl Arts and Leisure Centre won Regional and National Centre of the Year in 2023 and retained the Regional title in 2024.

In 2025, Arlene McMinn, Health Intervention Officer, was named 'Physical Activity Hero of the Year', recognising the impact of Council's Health Intervention Programme and its contribution to improved health and wellbeing outcomes across the Borough.

3. <u>2026 Awards Shortlisting</u>

Council had again received national recognition, with two leisure centres and one individual shortlisted in the 2026 UK Active Awards.

<u>Category: Regional Public Club/Centre of the Year – Northern Ireland and Wales</u>

Council finalists: (i) Crumlin Leisure Centre and (ii) The Valley Leisure Centre.

This reflected the continued strength of Council's leisure facilities, customer experience and community impact.

<u>Category: Outstanding Individual Leadership Award</u>

Council finalist: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations.

This recognises leadership within the physical activity sector and reinforces the reputation of Council's Leisure Services regionally and nationally.

4. <u>Awards Ceremony</u>

The winners would be announced at the UK Active Awards Ceremony at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham on Thursday 8 October 2026. Attendance would recognise the shortlisted centres and staff, support the Borough's profile within the sector and celebrate the continued success of Leisure Services.

Moved by Alderman Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and

RESOLVED – that Council approves attendance by the Mayor and the Chair of the Operations Committee, or their nominees, and relevant Council Officers, at the UK Active Awards Ceremony in Birmingham on Thursday 8 October 2026.

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

9.5 CCS/EDP/025 DUAL LANGUAGE STREET SIGN APPLICATIONS

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the current status of Dual Language Street Sign applications.

2. Introduction/Background

The Dual Language Street Sign Policy was adopted by Council in May 2022. This report provided and update on current applications and seeks approval where required in accordance with the Policy.

3. Applications Update

- *Petition received*

An application had been received for Moneynick Road, pending a verification of the petition at the Electoral Office of Northern Ireland.

- *Stage 1 – Petition Verification (For Noting)*

No applications are at stage 1.

- *Stage 2 – Residents Canvass (For Noting and Approval)*

Approval was given to progress the following applications to Stage 2 at Council meeting on 27 July 2026. Canvass letters were being prepared to be sent to residents.

- Brecart Road, BT41 3TH and BT41 3PJ
- Packenham Court, BT29 4EP
- Mayfield Park, BT36 7WP

Three further applications were at stage 2:

- Hollybrook Gardens, BT36 3ZS

Canvass letters had been issued and returned from occupants of Hollybrook Gardens. This application met the required threshold of two thirds of residents. Approval was requested for this application to progress to Stage 3 of design, fabrication and installation of street signs.

- Cargin Road, BT41 3NS
- Loup Road, BT41 3TW

Canvass letters had been issued to the occupants of Cargin Road and Loup Road and the outcome would be reported back to the Policy and Governance Committee.

- *Stage 3 – Street Sign Installation (For Noting)*

No applications were at Stage 3.

4. Map and Costs

Relevant maps and associated costs were circulated for Members' information.

Moved by Alderman Boyle
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED – that Members note the progress of the applications relating to Brecart Road, Packenham Court, Mayfield Park, Cargin Road and Loup Road, and to approve the progression of the Hollybrook Gardens application (BT36 3ZS) to Stage 3 of the process.

ACTION BY: Claire Webb, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Councillor Kinnear left and returned to the Chamber during Item 9.6.
Councillor Gilmour left the Chamber during Item 9.6.

9.6 ED/ED/131 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS UPDATE

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the outcomes of the Corporate Workshop on International Relations Activity and to recommend the approval of the following subsequent actions.

2. <u>Background</u>

International Relationships had been a feature of the work of many NI Councils including Antrim and Newtownabbey Council for decades. They were important in positioning the Council as an outward and forward- looking region, that seeks to learn from best practice elsewhere, share what we do well with partners and ultimately attract and create opportunities for our citizens.

The Council's engagement in international relationships had evolved over time, reflecting a blend of civic diplomacy, cultural exchange, educational collaboration, and economic ambition.

The current relationships were summarised below:

- Gilbert, Arizona (Sister City),
- Dorsten, Germany (Twinning),
- Rybnik, Poland (Twinning), and
- Leshan, China (Friendship).

The Council had also been approached more recently by the Poppy County, France to develop a formal relationship and some initial engagement had taken place.
The Economic Development section had delegated authority via the Council's Scheme of Delegation to support this activity as part of its overall programme delivery. There was no formal action linked to each relationship nor a dedicated resource within the team which focusses on this area of work.

The Youth Exchange programme with Gilbert was the only activity which was undertaken and budgeted for on an annual basis. All other visits and associated programming etc were dealt with on an ad hoc basis. In addition, there was currently no framework through which any request to initiate such relationships were assessed and therefore they were brought through Committee for consideration.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members would recall that at its meeting in March 2026, the Council considered the International Relations Review undertaken by Export Explore and approved the adoption of a new International Relations Framework to guide the assessment and management of both existing and future international partnerships. The framework provided a structured approach to evaluating opportunities based on strategic alignment, anticipated outcomes, resource implications and potential risks.

At that meeting, the Council also agreed that a Corporate Workshop be convened to allow Members to consider in greater detail the findings of the review and the emerging recommendations in respect of the Council's existing international relationships.

The framework approved by the Council was based on the following principles:
- Initial approach or expression of interest from a jurisdiction.
- Assessment of alignment with the Council's strategic priorities.
- Consideration of whether meaningful outcomes could be achieved through proportionate resource investment.
- Commencement of new relationships at Friendship level where appropriate.
- Evaluation of mutual benefit, organisational capacity and community interest.
- Progression to Twinning or Sister City status only where there is evidence of value, sustainability and strategic benefit.

4. Corporate Workshop Outcomes

A Corporate Workshop was held on 30 June 2026 at which Declan Barry, CEO of Export Explore, presented the findings of the International Relations Review and the proposed framework for assessing existing and future international partnerships. A copy of the presentation was circulated for Members information,

The review confirmed that international engagement could support a range of Council objectives including economic development, tourism, education, culture and community development and assessed each current relationship against agreed criteria relating to economic impact, civic engagement and resource commitment.

The review identified that the Council's relationship with Gilbert, Arizona was currently the most active and strategically aligned partnership. Members noted the success of the long-established youth exchange programme and agreed that there may be merit in exploring how the relationship could be expanded to include areas such as trade development, skills, education and civic collaboration. Members therefore considered that a more detailed Action Plan should be developed for future consideration, including associated resource requirements and costs.

In relation to Leshan, China, Members noted the findings that the relationship remains at an exploratory Friendship level and that there was currently insufficient evidence of economic or community benefits to justify progression to a higher level of engagement. Members were therefore supportive of maintaining the current position and undertaking no further activity at this stage pending the emergence of a clear business case and strategic rationale.

The review concluded that both Dorsten and Rybnik currently had limited measurable outcomes, although Members recognised the historical and civic importance of these relationships. Discussions highlighted that there may be opportunities to better understand and develop future collaboration with both jurisdictions and that further scoping work should be undertaken before any long-term decisions were made. Members also noted the recent Mayoral visit to Rybnik and the invitation for a reciprocal visit and considered that maintaining the relationship at a civic level while facilitating appropriate reciprocal engagement would be proportionate at this time.

Members also discussed opportunities for future international engagement, including the recent approach from Pays du Coquelicot (Poppy County), France, and the potential value of developing relationships closer to home within Ireland and Great Britain. It was acknowledged that any future opportunities should be considered through the newly approved framework to ensure they were strategically aligned, capable of delivering measurable outcomes and proportionate to available resources. Accordingly, Members indicated support for further assessment work in relation to Dorsten, Pays du Coquelicot and potential partner locations within Ireland and Great Britain.

Following discussion, Members were supportive of a more structured and outcome-focused approach to international relations activity, with future engagement being guided by agreed objectives, clear governance arrangements and regular review of outcomes.

Moved by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Cooper and

RESOLVED - that Members:

a) Approve the continuation of the Sister City relationship with Gilbert, Arizona and agree that officers develop and present a proposed International Relations Action Plan for Gilbert, including opportunities for trade development, skills and educational collaboration, civic engagement, resource requirements and associated costs.

b) Agree that the Council's Friendship relationship with Leshan, China be maintained at its current level, with no progression to a more formal

arrangement at this stage, pending the identification of clear strategic benefits and resource requirements

c) Agree that the twinning relationship with Rybnik, Poland be maintained as a civic relationship with limited engagement and approve the facilitation of an appropriate reciprocal visit following the Mayor's visit to Rybnik in June 2026

d) Approve the commissioning or completion of further assessment work, at an indicative cost of £30,000 to be met from the Economic Development budget, in relation to:
   i. the potential for enhanced collaboration with Dorsten, Germany.
   ii. the identification and assessment of potential partner cities or regions within Ireland and Great Britain for consideration through the Council's approved International Relations Framework.

e) Note the outcomes of the Corporate Workshop on International Relations held on 30 June 2026 and endorse the application of the Council's approved International Relations Framework in the assessment of all future partnership opportunities.

f) A report is prepared based on information already gathered on the merits of proceeding with a formal relationship with the Pays du Coquelicot (Poppy County) for Members consideration and that no further scoping study is required.

AMENDMENT

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin that Members

a) Approve the continuation of the Sister City relationship with Gilbert, Arizona and agree that officers develop and present a proposed International Relations Action Plan for Gilbert, including opportunities for trade development, skills and educational collaboration, civic engagement, resource requirements and associated costs.

b) Agree that the Council's Friendship relationship with Leshan, China be maintained at its current level, with no progression to a more formal arrangement at this stage, pending the identification of clear strategic benefits and resource requirements

c) Agree that the twinning relationship with Rybnik, Poland be maintained as a civic relationship with limited engagement and approve the facilitation of an appropriate reciprocal visit following the Mayor's visit to Rybnik in June 2026

d) Approve the commissioning or completion of further assessment work, at an indicative cost of £30,000 to be met from the Economic Development budget, in relation to:
   i. the potential for enhanced collaboration with Dorsten, Germany.

ii. the potential for developing a formal relationship with Pays du Coquelicot (Poppy County), France; and
iii. the identification and assessment of potential partner cities or regions within Ireland and Great Britain for consideration through the Council's approved International Relations Framework.

e) Note the outcomes of the Corporate Workshop on International Relations held on 30 June 2026 and endorse the application of the Council's approved International Relations Framework in the assessment of all future partnership opportunities.

On the Amendment being put to the meeting and a recorded vote having been requested by Alderman Smyth, Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Amendment Members viz 13	**Against the Amendment Members viz 22**	**Abstentions Members viz 0**
Aldermen – Boyle and McGrath Councillors – Burbank, Cushinan, Gilmour, Goodman, Lynch, McAuley, McGrann, McLaughlin, Ní Chonghaile, O'Hagan and Webb	Aldermen – Bradley, Clarke, Cosgrove, Magill, Michael, Ross and Smyth Councillors – Archibald-Brown, Bennington, Brady, Cooper, Cosgrove, Dunlop, Flanagan, Foster, Kirkpatrick, McWilliam, Magill, Mallon, Stewart, Ward and Wilson	

The Amendment was declared not carried.

The substantive proposal was then put to the meeting, with a recorded vote having been requested by Alderman Smyth, Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Amendment Members viz 22	**Against the Amendment Members viz 13**	**Abstentions Members viz 0**
Aldermen – Bradley, Clarke, Cosgrove, Magill, Michael, Ross and Smyth Councillors – Archibald-Brown, Bennington, Brady, Cooper, Cosgrove, Dunlop, Flanagan, Foster, Kirkpatrick, McWilliam, Magill, Mallon, Stewart, Ward and Wilson	Aldermen – Boyle and McGrath Councillors – Burbank, Cushinan, Gilmour, Goodman, Lynch, McAuley, McGrann, McLaughlin, Ní Chonghaile, O'Hagan and Webb	

The substantive proposal was declared carried and it was therefore

Moved by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Cooper and

RESOLVED – that Members:

a) Approve the continuation of the Sister City relationship with Gilbert, Arizona and agree that officers develop and present a proposed International Relations Action Plan for Gilbert, including opportunities for trade development, skills and educational collaboration, civic engagement, resource requirements and associated costs.

b) Agree that the Council's Friendship relationship with Leshan, China be maintained at its current level, with no progression to a more formal arrangement at this stage, pending the identification of clear strategic benefits and resource requirements

c) Agree that the twinning relationship with Rybnik, Poland be maintained as a civic relationship with limited engagement and approve the facilitation of an appropriate reciprocal visit following the Mayor's visit to Rybnik in June 2026

d) Approve the commissioning or completion of further assessment work, at an indicative cost of £30,000 to be met from the Economic Development budget, in relation to:
  i. the potential for enhanced collaboration with Dorsten, Germany.
  ii. the identification and assessment of potential partner cities or regions within Ireland and Great Britain for consideration through the Council's approved International Relations Framework.

e) Note the outcomes of the Corporate Workshop on International Relations held on 30 June 2026 and endorse the application of the Council's approved International Relations Framework in the assessment of all future partnership opportunities.

f) A report is prepared based on information already gathered on the merits of proceeding with a formal relationship with the Pays du Coquelicot (Poppy County) for Members consideration and that no further scoping study is required.

Councillor Ní Chonghaile expressed disappointment in the decision-making process associated with this item and questioned the purpose of developing this framework if it was not to be applied consistently and fairly to all proposals, noting that the agreed process undermined fair and transparent decision making and established undesirable precedent for future consideration.

ACTION BY: Steven Norris, Deputy Director of Regeneration and Infrastructure

9.7 PT/CI/061 AWARDS – APSE SERVICE AWARDS 2026 UPDATE

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the recent APSE Awards submissions and to seek approval on attendees to the awards ceremony.

2. Introduction/Background

Members would recall that the Council was awarded UK Council of the Year status at the APSE Award ceremony in September 2024 and Finalists in September 2025.

The APSE Service Awards uniquely recognised the profound contribution of local council frontline services to local communities and local people. These awards celebrated those contributions to the delivery of excellence on the frontline and striving to achieve continuous improvement in public sector delivery.

Council submitted entries to the following categories in the APSE service awards:

- Best Health and Wellbeing Initiative – Antrim and Newtownabbey Health Intervention Team
- Best Services Team – Leisure & Cultural Services
- Street Cleansing and Street Scene – Waste Management
- Best Services Team – Cemetery and Crematorium Service
- Best Services Team – Parks and Green Spaces

3. Judging Results

Submission to the APSE Service Awards had been considered by the judging panel and it had been confirmed that Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council had been nominated as finalists in the following categories:

- **Best Services Team, Leisure – Sports, Leisure & Cultural Service,** prepared by Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager
- **Street Cleansing & Street Scene Service – Waste Operations Street Cleansing**, prepared by Charlene McAdams, Waste Operations Manager
- **Best Health and Wellbeing Initiative – Antrim and Newtownabbey Health Intervention Team** prepared by Kevin Madden, Sport and Physical Activity Manager
- **Best Services Team Cemetery and Crematorium – Bereavement and Cemetery Services Antrim and Newtownabbey –** prepared by Paul Mawhinney Head of Parks

The shortlist for the prestigious Overall Council of the Year Award had been announced and for the third year in a row Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council have been nominated as Finalists.

4. Financial Position/Implication

Finalists were invited to attend the awards ceremony on Thursday 17 September 2026 in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Liverpool.

It was proposed that due to the exceptional performance, Members consider a table of ten at approximately £1,800 +VAT plus travel expenses.

It was proposed that The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of Operations Committee and Council APSE Representative or their nominees and relevant Officers attend as an approved duty.

Moved by Councillor Ní Chonghaile
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and

RESOLVED – that the approval is granted for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus the Chair of the Operations Committee and Council APSE Representative or their nominees and relevant Officers attend the Awards Ceremony as an approved duty.

ACTION BY: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Alderman Bradley and Councillor Archibald-Brown left the Chamber at Item 9.8.
Councillor Gilmour returned to the Chamber at Item 9.8.

9.8 G/MSMO/018 NILGA CONFERENCE 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to advise Members of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) Conference 2026 and invite expressions of interest to attend.

2. Key Points

Members were advised that correspondence (circulated) had been received from NILGA regarding its 2026 Loal Government Conference being held at Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn on Thursday 8 October 2026. The theme would be - The Politics of Delivery: Leading through Uncertainty.
As NILGA's only conference during the current council mandate, it provided an opportunity for elected members and officers to share learning, gain insight from expert speakers and contribute to discussion on the future diction of local government.

Members were encouraged to attend the conference where a 50% discount would apply reducing the delegate fee to £25 (+vat) per person which would be covered by Council. NILGA Executive Members, or their nominee, could attend free of charge.

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and

RESOLVED – that Members note the contents of this report and that any Member or Officer wishing to attend the NILGA Conference 2026 liaise with Member Services, who will coordinate and arrange bookings on their behalf.

ACTION BY: Member Services

Alderman Bradley and Councillor Archibald-Brown returned to the Chamber during Item 10.1.
Alderman Magill and Councillors Cooper, Kirkpatrick, McWilliam and Wilson left and returned to the Chamber during Item 10.1.
Councillor McLaughlin also left the Chamber during Item 10.1.

10 ITEMS FOR NOTING

10.1 CP/CC/004 USE OF CCTV ON COUNCIL SITES TO DETER HIGH LEVELS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, VANDALISM AND MITIGATE ASSOCIATED REPAIR COSTS.

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to advise members of Estate Services' proposed approach to monitoring the effectiveness of the recently installed CCTV system at Neilsbrook in deterring anti-social behaviour, vandalism and Council's associated repair costs. The pilot project and associated analysis would help to inform future decision-making regarding the installation of additional CCTV infrastructure across the Council Estate.

2. <u>Introduction / Background</u>

The Council manage and maintain CCTV cameras across its own estate to ensure that staff, contractors and site users and the physical assets were managed and maintained in a safe and secure manner. As such this report only relates to proposed CCTV systems on Council property.

The Council has no statutory responsibility to install and maintain public facing CCTV systems; 11no. public facing cameras within the Glengormley area were jointly funded with the PSNI in 2008 and the Council had continued to bear the cost of maintaining those systems since that time.

The Council continuously endeavours to reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB) on its estate and deploys a suite of interventions which included Park Wardens, security patrols, PSNI patrols, user engagement, partnerships with schools, community groups and the prompt removal of graffiti; in some scenarios, the use of CCTV may compliment these measures.

The term 'ASB' emerged in the 1990's to describe a wide range of nuisance, disorder and crime that affects people's daily lives. ASB was generally considered under three distinct themes - personal, nuisance and environmental. It was also generally accepted that no single intervention would successfully deter ASB, and rather the application of multiple measures may reduce the frequency, volume and impact of such incidents.

3. Previous Decision of the Council

Members were reminded that in April 2026 Council approved the installation of a stand-alone CCTV at Neillsbrook Community Centre due to high levels of vandalism and associated repair costs.

Following this installation, in response to Members requests, Estate Services presented a further report to the June Operations Committee regarding future additional provision of stand-alone CCTV systems at other locations across the Council estate. Members asked that officers collate additional data and information (including PSNI official statistics) to inform a further report to full Council on the matter.

4. PSNI and Council site specific CCTV and repair cost data

There were 14no. policing districts across Northern Ireland – aligned to each of the 11 district council boundaries (with Belfast split into four). The following data had been sourced from PSNI published statistics for the 14 districts in Northern Ireland.

PSNI data indicated that Province wide ASB (44,076 reported incidents in 2025-26) has reduced by 0.4%, compared to the previous year (2024-25). Anti-social behaviour within the Antrim and Newtownabbey policing district increased by 11.9% over that same period. Despite that anomalous increase, Antrim and Newtownabbey continued to have one of the lowest rates of ASB within Northern Ireland - 8th out of the 11 district council area. The figures below related to total ASB across the policing district/Borough rather than the Council estate specifically. However the cost to repair damage arising from vandalism/ASB on the Council had continued to increase annually over the last three years – reflecting increased costs of parts and labour. In 2023-24, ASB on the Council estate cost approx. £8,801 with that figure rising to almost £32,000 in 2025-26. Costs were also impacted by the nature of the vandalism/ASB.

ASB incidents	**Highest**	**Antrim & Newtownabbey**
2024-25	Belfast South (4,642)	2,691
2025-26	Belfast South (4,604)	3,012

At the June 2026 Operations Committee meeting, it was noted that a number of Council sites had experienced increased ASB-related repair costs. The table below matches PSNI ASB data and Council data over a three-year period. While the data focused on number of incidents and associated costs, it was also acknowledged that ASB vandalism also may result in periods of service disruption (on health and safety grounds) while Council affects repairs. Published research suggests that CCTV may result in ~20% reduction in anti-social behaviour

Location	PSNI Reported Incidents				ANBC repair costs			Indicative CCTV installation
	23/24	**24/25**	**25/26**		**23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**	
Ballyclare Public Toilets	3	3	4		£820	£1,375	£3,920	£7K, 2 cameras
Hazelbank Public Toilets	4	3	5		£1,550	£1,325	£2,190	£7K, 2 cameras
Lilian Bland Public Toilets	8	2	3		£1,825	£2,105	£2,825	£7K, 2 cameras
John Street Play Park	3	5	4		£1,955	£1,820	£4,705	£7K, 2 cameras
River Walk Randalstown	7	11	12		£1450	£1750	£1,850	No electrical supply
V36 (Toilets)	4	3	3		£1,950	£2,125	£1,540	£7K, 2 cameras
TOTAL	29	27	31		£9,550	£10,500	£17,030	

The above indicative costs exclude additional routine management and maintenance costs:

- Footage downloads (per 4hr period) £120
- Annual 'Cloud' licencing per camera £110

Following this further review of data related to ASB/vandalism across the Council estate and investigated the effectiveness of CCTV systems more generally, officers would evaluate the effectiveness of the new Neilsbrook CCTV installation over the first 12 months of operation (from June 2026) to identify evidence of intended outcomes including reduced incidence of ASB, reduced repair/replacement costs and reduced facility/asset closures.

5. Finance

The recent Neilsbrook CCTV installation provided an opportunity for Council to deliver a pilot study to evaluate the impact the new system on reduced ASB and associated service disruption and costs. Such a study would help to identify pay-back period (return on investment) associated with CCTV installation costs and support evidence-based, value for money, decision-making. In 2025-26, Council spent £1,894 repairing damage arising from vandalism and ASB within Neilsbrook.

6. Governance

The Estate Services team manage the maintenance and development of Council CCTV infrastructure across the Borough on an annual basis in line with the Council's annual approved budgets.

7. Summary

Estate Services recommend that the recent stand-alone CCTV installation at Neilsbrook is used as a pilot study to evaluate the effectiveness of CCTV installations at a Council site.
The data prior to the CCTV installation at Neilsbrook and post installation (quarterly for 12 months) would identify how effective such installations were in

combating ASB, reducing related repair costs and closures. This additional scrutiny and data source would subsequently inform decision-making regarding Council's CCTV infrastructure across its estate.

Members discussed the effectiveness of CCTV in addressing antisocial behaviour and vandalism and raised queries regarding prosecutions, associated costs and potential CCTV installation at other locations

The Director of Estates and Recreation advised that prosecution data would be investigated and noted that research indicated CCTV may have a limited deterrent effect, with alternative measures also available to address antisocial behaviour.

Members sought clarification on antisocial behaviour incidents along the Riverwalk Randalstown and the feasibility of installing CCTV at that location. It was agreed that additional information would be obtained and a report would be brought back to a future Operations Committee meeting.

It was noted that Neillsbrook CCTV scheme would continue as a pilot and its' effectiveness, together with existing CCTV provision across Council facilities would be reviewed to inform future decisions.

Moved by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

ACTION BY: John News, Director of Estates and Recreation

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct the following business 'In Committee'.

Members were advised that the live stream and audio recording would cease at this point.

11 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

11.1 IN CONFIDENCE CD/PM/182 APPOINTMENT OF INTEGRATED CONSULTANCY TEAM (ICT) FOR THEATRE AT THE MILL LIGHTING UPGRADE

1. Purpose
The purpose of this report was to obtain approval to appoint an Integrated Consultancy Team (ICT) to undertake the detailed design and delivery of the Theatre at the Mill Lighting Upgrade Project.

2. Introduction/Background

The lighting in the Theatre at the Mill was installed at the time of the theatre construction in 2010 and used traditional incandescent bulbs.

The system was now reaching the end of its life, partly due to its age, but also because it was becoming increasingly difficult to replace incandescent bulbs which were being phased out in favour of energy efficient LED systems.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

A Project Initiation Document for the replacement of the stage, auditorium and foyer lighting systems at an estimated cost of [redacted] was approved at the September 2025 Community Development Committee.

Specialist consultant Rider Levett Bucknall UK Ltd (RLB) was commissioned as the representative of the Perfect Circle Group through the SCAPE framework, to prepare a feasibility report and budget costings for the lighting upgrade for a fee of [redacted].

The SCAPE framework was procured in accordance with the procurement regulations and provided a simple, compliant procurement process with free access for the Council.

In the course of this work, RLB recommended that the scope of the lighting project be expanded to cover the totality of the theatre's lighting system, all of which was at the end of its expected lifespan.

At the Full Council Meeting of 29th June 2026, the following were approved:

- Outline Business Case including the preferred option of a full lighting upgrade at an estimated capital cost of [redacted] made up as follows:

Specialist Stage/Performance lighting	[redacted]
Works costs for remainder of lighting	
General Contingency	
Professional fees, surveys, utilities	

- Progression of the project to Stage 2 of Council's Capital Programme.

4. Procurement

RLB were initially appointed to prepare Council's Capital Programme Stage 1 feasibility study and budget costings for the project, as part of the Perfect Circle group under the SCAPE framework.

It was proposed to continue with RLB to undertake the professional services for Stage 2 and Stage 3 of Council's Capital Programme for the full lighting upgrade excluding the specialist stage/performance package.
The upgrade would be delivered through two packages of work as detailed below:

Package 1

Supply of Specialist Stage/Performance Lighting and installation by in-house staff.

Package 2
Supply and installation of remainder of lighting (dimmable auditorium lighting, foyer, gallery/feature, external, ancillary areas etc.) by external works contractor.

5. Financial Position/Implication

Fee Analysis

The following professional services fee quote for Package 2 had been received from RLB to deliver Council's Capital Programme Stage 2 and 3 professional services. This fee had been built up using the tendered framework rates.

Consultant	Capital Programme Stage	Fee (excl. VAT) (Package 2)
RLB	2 - Detailed Design and Tender Action (RIBA Stage 3&4)	[redacted]
	3 - Construction Contract Management (RIBA Stage 5&6)	[redacted]
Total Fee		[redacted]

Capital Development Officers had met representatives from RLB who confirmed they understood the requirements of the brief and had priced accordingly. The fee sum equates to 10.5 % of the works costs which was considered satisfactory for this specialist professional service.

Budget Cost Summary

RLB Fee Submission
RLB Contingency 10% (excl. VAT)
Intrusive investigations/surveys (excl. VAT)
Total Anticipated Fee (excl. VAT)

[redacted]

*Contingency sums totalling [redacted] had been included to cover any additional professional fees and any intrusive investigations that may be required. These additional contingencies may or may not be fully utilised.

6. Programme

When Stage 2 had been completed, a further report would be brought to Council to approve the works contract award and proceeding to Stage 3 of the Capital Programme.
A programme would also be presented to Members at the end of Stage 2 showing works on site being carried out July/August 2027 which was the quietest period for theatre bookings.

7. Social Value

Social Value in procurement was implemented by the Executive in June 2022 and incorporated all aspects of sustainable procurement including ethical and sustainable supply chains, community benefits and wealth building, job and skills creation and efforts to decarbonise. It was a mandatory requirement for some above threshold contracts. This procurement exercise did not meet the requirements for social value criteria to be applied.

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Webb and

RESOLVED – that Perfect Circle (with RLB as their representative) be appointed to undertake the detailed design and delivery of the Theatre at the Mill Lighting Upgrade (Package 2) for the total fee of [redacted] (excl. VAT) (fees, surveys and contingencies).

ACTION BY: Jill Lambert, Capital Development Officer

Councillor Ward left the Chamber during Item 11.2.

11.2 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/589 FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUPPLY, DELIVERY, AND MAINTENANCE OF A RANGE OF VEHICLES - FURTHER COMPETITION 4

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to obtain approval for the appointment of suitably qualified and experienced organisations to supply a range of vehicles to Council.

2. Introduction/Background

At the Council Meeting in May 2025, Members approved the establishment of a framework for the supply, delivery and maintenance of a range of vehicles for the Council. In accordance with the operation of the framework, where one or more vehicles were required throughout the contract period, any relevant appointed suppliers would be invited to tender in a Further Competition exercise. Should the costs of any further competition exceed the relevant threshold, a report would be brought to Council to inform Members.

In line with the ongoing fleet replacement programme, Officers identified several vehicles that were currently required by Council departments, and these were included in a procurement exercise under the Framework, hereafter referred to as Further Competition 4. Any vehicles purchased under this framework would be within the approved capital fleet replacement programme.

3. Procurement Process

Further Competition 4 was procured in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Framework and included the following lots and vehicles.

Lot 2 – 2 x Approx 5.2TGVW Open Back Dropside Tipping Vehicle

Lot 7 – 1 x 32T Rigid Hookloader Vehicle

Suppliers appointed to the Framework in the relevant lots were invited to tender via CiAnywhere on 4 June 2026.

Two tender responses were opened via the CiAnywhere Portal on 18 June 2026 and referred to the evaluation panel for assessment. The tenders were evaluated as follows:

Technical Assessment

For each item, the tenders were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for compliance with the specification. The tenders met the requirements of this stage and proceeded to the next stage of evaluation for their respective lots.

Commercial Assessment

The tenders were evaluated on the basis of cost (100%). Full details of the evaluation methodology were circulated for Members information.

The recommendation was as follows:

Lot/Item	Supplier	Cost Assessment (out of 100%)	Estimated Total Cost (£) (excl. VAT)
Lot 2 – 2 x Approx 5.2T Open Back Dropside Tipping Vehicle	**RD Mechanical Services Ltd**	[redacted]	[redacted]
Lot 7 – 1 x 32T Rigid Hookloader Vehicle	**TBF Thompson (Garvagh) Ltd**	[redacted]	[redacted]

The full list of bidders and evaluation outturn was also circulated.

4. Social Value

Social Value in procurement was implemented by the Executive in June 2022 and incorporated all aspects of sustainable procurement including ethical and sustainable supply chains, community benefits and wealth building, job and skills creation and efforts to decarbonise. It was a mandatory requirement for some above threshold contracts. This procurement exercise did not meet the requirements for social value criteria to be applied.

Moved by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and

RESOLVED - that, having achieved the scores detailed above for Further Competition 4, awards be made to RD Mechanical Services Ltd and TBF Thompson (Garvagh) Ltd for the abovementioned lots at the tendered rates.

ACTION BY: Melissa Kenning, Procurement Manager

Councillor Ward returned to the Chamber during Item 11.3.

11.3 IN CONFIDENCE FC/G/2 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

1. <u>Purpose</u>
The purpose of this report was to update the authorised signatory arrangements for Council's banking and credit card facilities.

2. <u>Introduction/Background</u>

Members were aware that Collesa Brown, Director of People and Organisational Transformation and John News, Director of Estates and Recreation commenced their position within Council on the 3rd August 2026.

3. <u>Key Issues</u>

To ensure compliance with financial operational requirements it was necessary to update Council's banking mandates and credit card arrangements.

Moved by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED – that with immediate effect Collesa Brown, Director of People and Organisational Transformation and John News, Director of Estates and Recreation are:

a) Authorised signatories to the Council's bank accounts
b) Authorised corporate credit card holders

ACTION BY: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Councillor McLaughlin returned to the Chamber during Item 11.4.
Alderman Boyle left the Chamber during Item 11.4.

11.4 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/626 PROVISION OF DOG POUND FACILITIES AND RELATED SERVICES

CONTRACT PERIOD 7 SEPTEMBER 2026 – 31 AUGUST 2028 WITH AN OPTION TO EXTEND FOR UP TO A FURTHER 24 MONTHS (SUBJECT TO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW)

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to obtain approval for the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced organisation to provide dog kennelling services on behalf of the Council.

2. <u>Introduction/Background</u>

The Dog Control Service provided by Council was committed to the delivery of efficient and comprehensive services for all residents in the Borough through a programme of education and enforcement initiatives that:

- protected the public and livestock from attack and annoyance by dogs;
- reduced the incidences of nuisance from dog fouling;
- promoted responsible dog ownership;
- reduced the instances of licence evasion.

As part of its legislative responsibility, the Council must make arrangements for the provision of dog pound services including the provision of kennel accommodation and day to day care of any stray or unwanted dog delivered by its Officers.

The contract also included a requirement that the service provider proactively worked to help reunite dogs and their owners and where this was not possible, works with appropriate organisations to rehome the dogs.

The approximate annual cost of this service was [redacted] (excl. VAT); however, the Council retained all monies received by the service provider for reclaiming, rehoming, and licensing of dogs.

3. Procurement Process

This tender was procured in accordance with good practice laid out in the Procurement Act 2023. The opportunity was made available on eSourcingNI on 22 June 2026.

One tender response was opened via the eSourcingNI Portal on 10 July 2026 and referred to the evaluation panel for assessment.

The tender was evaluated on a three-stage basis as follows:

STAGE 1 – COMPLETION AND COMPLIANCE
The tender was checked for completion and compliance and to ensure that no mandatory or discretionary exclusion grounds were applicable. The tender met the requirements of this stage and proceeded to Stage 2.

STAGE 2 – CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

The tender was evaluated on a pass/fail basis for:

- financial capacity;
- management systems and practices;
- previous relevant experience;
- data protection;
- declarations and form of tender.

The tender met the requirements of Stage 2 of the evaluation process and proceeded to Stage 3.

STAGE 3 – AWARD STAGE

Quality & Commercial Assessment

The tender was evaluated on the basis of:

- rehoming service (20%);
- contract management and performance monitoring (10%);
- location of the kennels (20%);
- cost (50%).

The quality score for the tender exceeded the agreed quality threshold and Officers were content that the tenderer could deliver a high-quality contract in accordance with all aspects of the specification. Full details of the evaluation methodology were circulated.

The recommendation was as follows:

Supplier	Quality Assessment (out of 50%)	Cost Assessment (out of 50%)	Total Score (out of 100%)	Estimated Annual Cost (£) (excl. VAT)
Animal Ark	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

While there was only one tenderer, the costs were in line with market rates and Officers were content that they represented value for money.

4. Social Value

Social Value in procurement was implemented by the Executive in June 2022 and incorporated all aspects of sustainable procurement including ethical and sustainable supply chains, community benefits and wealth building, job and skills creation and efforts to decarbonise. It was a mandatory requirement for some above threshold contracts. This procurement exercise did not meet the requirements for social value criteria to be applied.

The Director of Environment Services and Sustainability addressed Members' queries regarding the rehoming process and circumstance around the use of euthanasia. Members' suggestions that the Council consider supporting the promotion of rehoming activities through its' communications channels for future contracts was noted.

Moved by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Ní Chonghaile and

RESOLVED – that, having achieved a score of 100%, Animal Ark be appointed to provide dog pound services at the tendered rates for the period of 7 September 2026 – 31 August 2028 with an option to extend for up to a further 24 months, subject to performance and review.

ACTION BY: Melissa Kenning, Procurement Manager and Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

Alderman Boyle returned to the Chamber during Item 11.5.

11.5 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/619 PEACEPLUS DESIGN, BUILD AND MAINTENANCE OF HERITAGE TRAILS AND ASSOCIATED APPLICATION

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to obtain approval for the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced organisation to design, build and maintain a series of heritage trails and an associated app to showcase the Borough's cultural, social, and industrial heritage.

2. <u>Introduction/Background</u>

This project was being funded by and delivered through the PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan under Strand 1: Local Community Regeneration and Transformation, Programme 1: Our Historical Borough which had an available budget of [redacted] (excl. VAT). The programme aimed to deliver a range of new heritage-based visitor products centring on two designated Heritage Hubs in the Borough to ensure the regeneration and connectivity of a range of heritage and historical sites.

Within the programme, this project would provide an app, which would be free to the public and would include the following:

five borough-wide driving trails with audio commentary, interactive maps, physical interpretation and additional resources (10–15 location sites per trail);
10 local walking trails (named localities), each with audio, maps, and interpretation at key points;
linkage to physical signage/interpretation and printed resources available at two Heritage Hubs.

It would provide a platform that enabled self-guided exploration with geolocation, audio storytelling and rich media and would support a strong and vibrant local historical and tourism economy that highlighted, protected, and encouraged the growth and knowledge of the Borough's shared history for many years to come.

The anticipated launch date for the project was Summer 2027 and the contract would include maintenance for 3 years from launch, with an option to extend for up to a further 36 months, subject to performance and review.

3. <u>Procurement Process</u>

This tender was procured in accordance with good practice laid out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The opportunity was made available on eSourcingNI on 3 July 2026.

Two tender responses were opened via the eSourcingNI Portal on 31 July 2026 and referred to the evaluation panel for assessment.

The tenders were evaluated on a two-stage basis as follows:

STAGE 1 – SELECTION STAGE

The tenders were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for:

- mandatory exclusion and financial compliance;
- economic and financial standing;
- management systems and practices;
- information security, data protection and GDPR compliance;
- previous relevant experience;
- declarations and form of tender.

The tenders met the requirements of Stage 1 of the evaluation process and proceeded to Stage 2.

STAGE 2 – AWARD STAGE

Technical Assessment

The tenders were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for compliance with the specification. All tenderers met the requirements of this stage and proceeded to the next stage of evaluation.

Quality & Commercial Assessment

The tenders were evaluated on the basis of:

- project delivery & implementation plan (20%);
- content development & interpretation approach (20%);
- audio, multilingual & accessibility delivery (15%);
- technical solution & application functionality (15%);
- physical signage & digital integration (10%);
- cost (20%).

The tenders achieved scores which exceeded the agreed quality threshold and Officers were content that the tenderers could deliver a high-quality contract in accordance with all aspects of the specification. Full details of the evaluation methodology were circulated.

The recommendation was as follows:

Supplier	Quality Assessment (out of 80%)	Cost Assessment (out of 20%)	Total Score (out of 100%)	Estimated Total Cost (£) (excl. VAT)
Tourist Wise Ltd t/a Brilliant Trails	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

The full list of bidders and evaluation outturn were circulated.

4. Social Value

Social Value in procurement was implemented by the Executive in June 2022 and incorporates all aspects of sustainable procurement including ethical and sustainable supply chains, community benefits and wealth building, job and skills creation and efforts to decarbonise. It was a mandatory requirement for some above threshold contracts. This procurement exercise did not meet the requirements for social value criteria to be applied.

The Director of Community and Culture addressed a Member's query in relation to named localities and routes associated with the proposed walking and cycling trials presented in detail at the Peaceplus partnership in June 2026.

Members' requests that the 1798 Battle of Antrim, Henry Joy McCracken and Jimmy Hope be given due consideration as part of the relevant heritage interpretation and that Sentry Hill is fully considered as key historical resource in the development of the heritage trials was noted.

Moved by Councillor O'Hagan
Seconded by Councillor Foster and

RESOLVED – that, having achieved a score of 100%, Tourist Wise Ltd. t/a Brilliant Trails be appointed to design, build and maintain the heritage trails and associated application at the tendered rates.

ACTION BY: Melissa Kenning, Procurement Manager and Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

11.6 IN CONFIDENCE FI/GEN/30 CAR LOAN SCHEME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the Council's updated Car Loan Scheme.

2. Introduction/Background

Section 41B of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 provided district councils with the powers to make a loan to staff officers for the purchase of a motor vehicle or motorcycle, subject to such condition as the Department for Communities and Department of Finance may determine.

The Council Scheme offers the facility to Council Officers designated as requiring a form of transportation to fulfil their job, or in connection with their duties, to apply. All payments were repaid via a salary deduction agreement.

The current Scheme permitted loans of a maximum of £10,000, however following a review and feedback from staff it was proposed that the maximum is increased to £20,000. The maximum repayment period had also been increased to five years (60 months).

The Scheme had also been amended to ensure that officers were aware that loans over £10,000 may be reportable to HMRC and that there may be tax implications for the officer if the loan would be classified as "beneficial" under HMRC rules.

A loan would be classified as beneficial if the interest rate charged by Council would be lower than the HMRC official rate. The HMRC generally sets the official rate in advance for the whole of the following tax year, however the rate can be changed during the tax year if interest rates fall significantly. The Car Loan Scheme had been reviewed (circulated) and thereafter would be reviewed on a four yearly basis, or sooner as necessary, to ensure that it remained up to date with any legislative changes.

3. Governance

The Car Loan Scheme had been equality screened, a copy of which was circulated for information.

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED – that the updated Car Loan Scheme be approved.

ACTION BY: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

MOTION TO PROCEED 'OUT OF COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Alderman Magill and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct any remaining business 'In Public'.

Members were advised that the audio recording would restart at this point.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded at 8.30pm.

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MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and legal advice.