



29 January 2026

Committee Chairperson: Councillor B Webb

Committee Vice-Chairperson: Councillor H Magill

Committee Members: Aldermen – P Bradley, L Clarke and M Cosgrove

Councillors – J Burbank, S Cosgrove, H Cushinan, P Dunlop, M Goodman, N Kelly, A McAuley, T McGrann, V McWilliam and A O'Lone

Dear Member

**MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Tuesday 3 February 2026 at 6.30pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

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

Richard Baker, GM MSc  
**Chief Executive, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council**

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

**For any queries, please contact Member Services:**

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## **A G E N D A**

### **1 APOLOGIES**

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

### **3 ITEMS FOR DECISION**

3.1 Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29

3.2 Treasury Management Strategy

3.3 Capital Strategy

3.4 Report by the Chief Financial Officer on the Robustness of the Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves

3.5 Grant Funding Policy

### **4 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

4.1 Budget Report – Period 9

4.2 Dual Language Street Sign Applications

4.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference 2026

### **5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE  
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON  
TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2026**

**3 ITEMS FOR DECISION**

**3.1 FI/FA/7 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 TO 2028/29**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to provide updates and obtain approvals on the Council's future financial planning (and treasury management activities) as required by the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.**

**2. Background**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2011

Members are reminded that under the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Prudential Code, the Council is required to have regard to a number of reports and to approve a range of indicators and strategies prior to the prescribed date for striking the rates, 15 February 2026.

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 TO 2028/29

The Prudential Code requires the council to develop three-year revenue forecasts and three-year capital expenditure plans. These are shown in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29, a copy of which is **enclosed**.

**3. Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29 be approved.**

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance

## 3.2 FI/FA/8 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to provide updates and obtain approvals on the Council's future financial planning (and treasury management activities) as required by the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.**

### 2. Background

The Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires the council, in carrying out its capital finance functions, to have regard to the current editions of the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes and the Prudential Code.

The Council is therefore required to set out its Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy which sets out the council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

The above policy and strategy is **enclosed**.

### 3. Recommendation:

**It is recommended that:**

- a) the Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 be approved**
- b) the Annual Investment Strategy 2026/27 be approved**

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance

### 3.3 FI/FA/5 CAPITAL STRATEGY

#### 1. Purpose

The Prudential Code requires the Council to develop a Capital Strategy which provides a high-level overview of the long-term context of capital expenditure and investment decisions and their associated risks and rewards along with an overview of how risk is managed for future financial sustainability.

A copy of the Capital strategy is **enclosed**.

#### 2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Capital Strategy 2026/27 be approved.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance

### **3.4 FI/FA/9 REPORT BY THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER ON THE ROBUSTNESS OF THE ESTIMATES AND ADEQUACY OF RESERVES**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to ensure robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves for the next financial year.**

#### **2. Background**

Section 4 and 6 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires the Council to have regard to a report, a copy of which is **enclosed**, from the Chief Financial Officer on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves.

#### **3. Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the report by the Chief Financial Officer on the Robustness of the Estimates and Adequacy of the Reserves be approved.**

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance

### 3.5 CP/GEN/049 GRANT FUNDING POLICY

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the review of the Grant Funding Policy (enclosed).**

#### 2. Introduction/background

In January 2025 Council approved a New Grant Funding Policy which aims to set out the principles, criteria and governance processes for funding for external bodies.

The Grant Funding Policy is reviewed annually.

#### 3. Key Issues

The review has identified a number of minor amendments as being required. The changes are summarised as follows:

- Updated appeal process (appendix 3)
- Additional Proportionate/risk based framework
- Addition of term 'other financially regulated institutions' within the general condition of fundings section

#### 4. Summary

These amendments have been made to the enclosed draft of the Policy. The reviewed policy has been approved by CLT. A Section 75 Equality Screening and Rural Proofing exercise on the Grant Funding Policy was completed and are enclosed.

#### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that the review of the Grant Funding Policy be approved.**

Prepared by: Anna Boyle, Funding Hub Manager

Agreed by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance & John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

## 4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

### 4.1 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – PERIOD 9

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the financial performance for the Directorates reporting to the Policy and Governance Committee and for the whole Council for Period 9.**

#### 2. Introduction/Background

As agreed, quarterly budget reports will be presented to the relevant Committee. All financial reports will be available to all Members.

#### 3. Summary

As at period 9:

The Finance and Governance Directorate has a favourable variance of 226k, or 6.9%, against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

The Organisation Development Directorate has a favourable variance of £155k, or 8.2%, against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

Overall, the Council has a favourable variance of £1.0m or 2.0% against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

A report on the financial performance, employee costs, highest areas of expenditure and income, and the financial performance by Head of Service is **enclosed** for Members' information.

This report also includes the overall financial performance of the Council, including a summary of the financial performance of each Directorate.

#### 4. Recommendation

**It is recommended that the report be noted.**

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

## 4.2 CCS/EDP/025 DUAL LANGUAGE STREET SIGN APPLICATIONS

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve and note the Dual Language Street Sign applications as follows:

#### Stage 1

- No applications at stage 1 be noted.

#### Stage 2

- No applications at stage 2 be noted.

#### Stage 3

- Arthur Crescent, Newtownabbey, BT36 7AL be noted.

### 2. Background

Members are reminded that in accordance with the Dual Language Street Sign Policy, adopted by Council on 30 May 2022 (**enclosed**), the following update outlines the current status of applications received.

### 3. Application Update

STAGE 1: PETITION VERIFICATION - there are no applications at Stage 1.

STAGE 2: RESIDENTS CANVASS – there are no applications at Stage 2.

STAGE 3: STREET SIGN INSTALLATION

One application has been progressed to Stage 3.

1. ARTHUR CRESCENT, NEWTOWNABBEY, BT36 7AL

The occupiers of the above street have been canvassed and the threshold of two thirds or more in favour of the erection of a second language street sign has been met as required within the approved Policy.

Maps and costs are **enclosed** for information.

### 4. Recommendation

**It is recommended that the Dual Language Street Sign applications at:**

#### Stage 1

- No applications at stage 1 be noted.

#### Stage 2

- No applications at stage 2 be noted.

#### Stage 3

- Arthur Crescent, Newtownabbey, BT36 7AL be noted.

Prepared by: Claire Webb, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

#### 4.3 CCS/EDP/028 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CONFERENCE 2026

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to ask Members to hold the date for the Council's upcoming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Conference, scheduled for Wednesday 27 May 2026.**

##### 2. Main Report

Members are advised that planning is currently underway for the Council's first Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference. The event will take place on Wednesday 27 May 2026 in Theatre at the Mill

Further details, including the conference programme and calendar invitations, will be shared in due course.

##### 3. Recommendation

**It is recommended that Members hold the date for the Council's upcoming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Conference, scheduled for Wednesday 27 May 2026.**

Prepared by: Claire Webb, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Agreed and Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

**5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

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