



8 April 2026

Committee Chair: Alderman J Smyth

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor L O'Hagan

Committee Members: Aldermen – L Boyle, P Bradley and L Clarke

Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, R Foster, J Gilmour, N Kelly, AM Logue, A McAuley, E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, M Stewart and S Ward

Dear Member

**MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Monday 13 April 2026 at 6.30 pm.**

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 5.20**

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

Tel: 028 9448 1301

[memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](mailto:memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)

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

### **1 APOLOGIES**

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

### **3 ITEMS FOR DECISION**

- 3.1 Application for the Renewal of Premises for Civil Marriages / Civil Partnership Ceremonies
- 3.2 Celebrating the Anniversary of Templepatrick Action Group Association and Donegore Girls Brigade
- 3.3 Parks and Open Spaces Sub Group Minutes
- 3.4 Sustainability Working Group Minutes
- 3.5 Directorate Business Plans 2026/27
- 3.6 Application for the Grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence – Randalstown Young Farmers Annual BBQ, James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL
- 3.7 Application for the Grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence – Straid Young Farmers Annual BBQ, Cullyburn Equestrian Centre, 18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN
- 3.8 Application for the Grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence – Lylehill Young Farmers Annual BBQ, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB
- 3.9 Application for the Grant of an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence – May Day Steam Rally, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB
- 3.10 Application for the Grant of an Occasional (Outdoor) Entertainment Licence – Reability, 7-8 Norfolk Court, Antrim, BT41 2SF
- 3.11 DAERA First Adaptation Report
- 3.12 Application for the Grant of an Annual Entertainment Licence - Cotter's Park, 48D Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL
- 3.13 Consultation on Amendments to the Landlord Registration Regulations
- 3.14 Northern Ireland Amenity Awards 2026
- 3.15 Rethinking Our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Strategy Consultation
- 3.16 Belfast Hills Partnership – "Journey 30x30" Project at Rathfern

#### **4 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

- 4.1 Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and Registrar General for Northern Ireland – Update on the Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Act (Northern Ireland) 2026
- 4.2 Animal Welfare Service Judicial Review Outcome
- 4.3 Summary of Test Purchase Exercises Carried out Throughout the Financial Year 2025/26

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

#### **6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE**

- 6.1 arc21 Joint Committee Papers
- 6.2 Carnmoney Hill Access Improvements and Potential Disposal of 6.16 Acres of Council-Owned Land within the Carnmoney Hill Area

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON  
MONDAY 13 APRIL 2026**

**3 ITEMS FOR DECISION**

**3.1 PK/REG/012 APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES / CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the renewal of place approval for the Maldron Hotel, Belfast International Airport 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 is 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 prominently displayed at the proposed venue for a period of three weeks to allow for the submission of any public objections.

No objections were received during the public notice period. Additionally, each of the premises has been formally inspected and deemed suitable to progress to the approval stage.

**3. Previous Decision of Council**

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

**4. Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the Maldron Hotel, Belfast International Airport 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.**

Prepared by: Paula Redpath, Registrar

Agreed by: Emma Thompson, Bereavement Services Manager and Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

### 3.2 PK/GEN/217 CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF TEMPLEPATRICK ACTION GROUP ASSOCIATION AND DONEGORE GIRLS BRIGADE

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the installation of a commemorative disc recognising the Templepatrick Action Group Association's 20th anniversary and the Donegore Girls' Brigade's 70th anniversary in 2026.**

#### 2. Introduction/Background

Templepatrick Action Group Association and the Donegore Girls' Brigade will mark significant milestone anniversaries in 2026, celebrating their 20th and 70th anniversaries respectively.

#### 3. Previous Decision of Council

Council has previously approved the placement of celebratory and anniversary discs throughout the borough in recognition of the significant achievements or milestones of local individuals, clubs, and community organisations.

#### 4. Financial Implication

The installation of the two anniversary celebratory discs is estimated to cost approximately £350. The proposed location for the Templepatrick Action Group Association disc is at the Templepatrick Surgery, while the disc recognising the Donegore Girls' Brigade is proposed for installation within Parkgate Village.

#### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that approval be granted for the installation of the anniversary celebratory discs recognising Templepatrick Action Group Association and Donegore Girls' Brigade.**

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

### 3.3 PK/GEN/035/VOL5 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES SUB GROUP MINUTES

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the most recent Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 19 March 2026.**

#### 2. Summary

At the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting on 19 March 2026, Members considered a detailed report which provided a range of updates from the Parks section. The minutes of the meeting are **enclosed** for Members' consideration.

#### 3. Recommendation

**It is recommended that the minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 19 March 2026 be approved.**

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

### 3.4 WM/S/003 SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP MINUTES

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the minutes of the Sustainability Working Group.**

#### 2. Background

The meeting of the Sustainability Working Group was held on 26 March 2026 and a copy of the minutes are (enclosed) for Members approval.

At the meeting, Members were updated on the following:

- 1) New staff who have joined the Sustainability Directorate;
- 2) Update on the DAERA First Adaptation Report;
- 3) External Environmental Management System Audit update;
- 4) Carbon Literacy Training for Elected Members;
- 5) Events and Campaigns Update
  - a. Christmas Toy Scheme 2025
  - b. Winter Woolies Campaign 2025
  - c. Big Spring Clean 2026
  - d. Family Reuse Fayre

#### 3. Recommendation

**It is recommended that the minutes of the Sustainability Working Group held on 26 March 2026 be approved.**

Prepared by: Claire Evans, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer

Agreed by: Leanne Smits, Waste Strategy and Sustainability Manager

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

### 3.5 PT/CI/073 DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS 2026/27

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Environmental Services and Sustainability and Estates and Recreation Business Plans 2026/27.**

#### 2. Background

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

Specifically, the duties in the Act relate to Section 84(1), 85(2) and 85(9) whereby the Council has a statutory duty to make arrangements to:

- Secure continuous improvement.
- Secure achievement of its improvement objectives; and
- Exercise its functions so that any Departmental specified standards are met.

#### 3. Previous Decision of Council

In January 2025 the Council approved a strategic performance framework as part of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 (draft for consultation).

#### 4. Business Planning

Business planning plays a vital role in the Council's performance management and delivery processes. It offers a more efficient and cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluating performance while improving overall visibility.

The purpose of the Directorate Business Plans are to:

- Demonstrate how each of the Directorates are supporting and achieving Council's priorities.
- Provide a clear sense of purpose of the Directorate and the challenges it faces.
- Illustrate how it is aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Measure performance and hold ourselves to account to ensure we deliver for the Council and its residents.

Business Plan for; Environmental Services and Sustainability and Estates and Recreation are **enclosed** for approval.

#### 5. Financial Position/Implications

As agreed, as part of the Council's rate setting process.

6. Governance

Progress reports on the Council's Directorate Business Plans 2026/27 will be reported quarterly to CLT and biannually to relevant Committees.

7. **Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the Environmental Services and Sustainability and Estates and Recreation Business Plans 2026/27 be approved.**

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed and Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Service and Sustainability

**3.6 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – RANDALSTOWN YOUNG FARMERS ANNUAL BBQ, JAMES HUGHES FARM, 47 CADDY ROAD, RANDALSTOWN, BT41 3DL**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the Randalstown Young Farmers annual BBQ, James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL.**

**2. Introduction**

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the following location

<b>Licensee</b>	<b>Location of Premises</b>	<b>Type(s)and hours of entertainment</b>	<b>File Number</b>	<b>New Application or Renewal</b>
Ms Erin Crawford	James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind.  <b>Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence</b>  Saturday 9 May 2026 20:30hrs – 01:00hrs  Number of persons – no greater than 1000	EL063	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 can 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 makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

### 3. Main Report

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval is required before the licence can be granted.

Members are advised that this event has been occurring annually at the same venue for several years, and there have been no previous issues or concerns regarding this event.

### 4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence has been received from Ms Erin Crawford for the Randalstown Young Farmers annual BBQ, James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence is granted to the applicant Ms Erin Crawford, Randalstown Young Farmers annual BBQ, James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL with the following Conditions.**

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

Prepared by: Katie Kinnear, Environmental Health Officer

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

**3.7 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – STRAID YOUNG FARMERS ANNUAL BBQ, CULLYBURN EQUESTRIAN CENTRE, 18 CULLYBURN ROAD, NEWTOWNABBEY, BT36 5BN**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for Straid Young Farmers annual BBQ, Cullyburn Equestrian Centre, 18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN.**

**2. Introduction**

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the following location

<b>License e</b>	<b>Location of Premises</b>	<b>Type(s)and hours of entertainment</b>	<b>File Number</b>	<b>New Application or Renewal</b>
Mr Gareth Baird	18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind.  Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence  Saturday 30 May 2026 21:00hrs – 01:00hrs  Number of persons – no greater than 800	EL023	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 can 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 makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

### 3. Main Report

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval is required before the licence can be granted.

Members should note that this event taken place annually at the same venue for several years and no previous issues or concerns have been reported.

### 4. Summary

An Application for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence has been received from Mr Gareth Baird for the Straid Young Farmers annual BBQ, Cullyburn Equestrian Centre, 18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence is granted to the applicant Mr Gareth Baird for Straid Young Farmers annual BBQ, 18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN with the following conditions.**

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

Prepared by: Katie Kinnear, Environmental Health Officer

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

**3.8 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – LYLEHILL YOUNG FARMERS ANNUAL BBQ, SHANE'S CASTLE ESTATE, ANTRIM, BT41 4NB**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the Lylehill Young Farmers annual BBQ, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB.**

**2. Introduction**

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the following location

<b>Licensee</b>	<b>Location of Premises</b>	<b>Type(s)and hours of entertainment</b>	<b>File Number</b>	<b>New Application or Renewal</b>
Ms Zara Jones	Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind.  Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence  Saturday 6 June 2026 19:00hrs – 01:30hrs  Number of persons – no greater than 500	EL070	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 can 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 makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

### 3. Main Report

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval is required before the licence can be granted.

Members are advised that this event has been occurring annually at the same venue for several years, and there have been no previous issues or concerns regarding this event.

### 4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence has been received from Ms Zara Jones for the Lylehill Young Farmers annual BBQ, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence is granted to the applicant Ms Zara Jones, Lylehill Young Farmers annual BBQ, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB with the following Conditions.**

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

Prepared by: Katie Kinnear, Environmental Health Officer

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

**3.9 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – MAY DAY STEAM RALLY, SHANE’S CASTLE ESTATE, ANTRIM, BT41 4NB**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence, held by Mr Ian Duff for May Day Steam Rally, Shane’s Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB**

**2. Introduction**

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence for the following location

<b>Licensee</b>	<b>Location of Premises</b>	<b>Type(s)and hours of entertainment</b>	<b>File Number</b>	<b>New Application or Renewal</b>
Mr Ian Duff	Shane's Castle Estate, Castle Road, Antrim, BT41 4NB	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind.  Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence  Friday 1 May 2026 17:00hrs – 23:00hrs  Saturday 2 May 2026 17:00hrs – 23:00hrs  Sunday 3 May 2026 11:00hrs – 23:00hrs  Monday 4 May 2026 11:00hrs – 23:00hrs  Number of persons – no greater than 5000	EL207	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 can 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 makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

### 3. Main Report

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval is required before the licence can be granted.

Members should note this is a family orientated event with camping facilities on site and entertainment provided. Tickets are pre-paid and purchased online; however, if tickets remain available, they may be purchased at the gate on the day of the event.

The applicant and event organiser, Mr Ian Duff will act as Safety Officer and will coordinate the event, liaising with relevant agencies through a Safety Advisory Group. This will include PSNI, NIFRS, DFI and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service. The event will be contained within the perimeter of Shane's Castle Estate; however, the event area itself will not be enclosed by barriers.

The entertainment element of the event has successfully operated without incident for the past two years since its introduction.

### 4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence has been received from Mr Ian Duff for May Day Steam Rally, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence be granted to the applicant, Mr Ian Duff for May Day Steam Rally, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim with the following conditions**

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

Prepared by: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services & Sustainability

**3.10 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL (OUTDOOR) ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – REHABILITY, 7-8 NORFOLK COURT, ANTRIM, BT41 2SF**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for an Occasional Entertainment Licence for an outdoor event, held by Rehability on land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU.**

**2. Introduction**

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional (Outdoor) Entertainment Licence for the following location

<b>Licensee</b>	<b>Location of Premises</b>	<b>Type(s)and hours of entertainment</b>	<b>File Number</b>	<b>New Application or Renewal</b>
Mr William Gould	Land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind.  Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence  Saturday 2 May 2026 13:00hrs until 18:00hrs  Number of persons – no greater than 300	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 can 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 makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

### 3. Main Report

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval is required before the licence can be granted.

Members should note that this applicant was successfully granted an application for this charitable event in 2024 and 2025. The event will follow the same purpose and format as previous years. The location has been changed, enabling the event to proceed without the requirement of a road closure order.

### 4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence has been received from Mr William Gould of Reability, 7-8 Norfolk Court, Antrim, BT41 2SF to be held on land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence be granted to the applicant Mr William Gould of Reability for Land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU with the following conditions.**

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

Prepared by: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services & Sustainability

### 3.11 WM/S/002 DAERA FIRST ADAPTATION REPORT

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed response to the draft DAERA First Adaptation Report being submitted to DEARA on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.**

#### 2. Background

Under The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, specified public bodies are required to submit their first climate change adaptation reports by 31 March 2026, covering a four-year period. These regulations, made under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, require public bodies, including councils, to include the following within their first adaptation report:

- . An assessment of current and projected climate impacts on the organisation's functions;
- Details of actions and plans to manage identified climate risks, including implementation timescales;
- A progress assessment of actions from the previous reporting period (not applicable for this first submission).

Public bodies must also demonstrate that they have had due regard to:

- The latest UK Climate Change Risk Assessment – Northern Ireland Summary (CCRA);
- The Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP);
- Opportunities for cross-border and cross-sector coordination of adaptation actions.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is responsible for these regulations and, in preparation for submission for the First Adaptation Report, they created an online portal for public bodies to submit their information which opened on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026.

#### 3. Summary

A response has been drafted, in conjunction with other departments and submitted into the portal in preparation for Councils submission for this first adaptation report and a PDF version of the document is enclosed for Members' approval along with appendices including best practice case studies from across Council (**enclosed**).

The response sets out the Borough's high-level climate adaptation objectives, identifies key climate-related risks and opportunities, and demonstrates alignment with the UK CCRA3 Northern Ireland Summary. It also outlines the actions proposed to address these risks and shows how these actions correspond with NICCAP3. All objectives, targets and actions referenced have been drawn from publicly available strategic documents, including the

Corporate Plan, Community Plan, Local Development Plan and the Climate Change Action Plan.

Due to the strict submission date of 31 March 2025, DAERA has permitted Local Authorities to submit a draft response and will allow any amendments to be submitted after the approvals process at the end of April.

Officers have submitted the draft response and supporting documentation.

#### **4. Recommendation**

**that Members approve the draft response to the DAERA First Adaptation Report.**

Prepared by: Claire Evans, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer

Agreed by: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

**3.12 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 is to seek Members approval for an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for Cotters Park, 48D Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL.**

**2. Introduction**

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

<b>Licensee</b>	<b>Location of Premises</b>	<b>Type(s) and hours of entertainment</b>	<b>File Number</b>	<b>New Application or Renewal</b>
Mr James Alexander	Cotters Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown BT41 3JL	Dancing, Singing, Music, Entertainment of a like kind  Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence  Thursday – Sunday 14:00hrs – 01:00hrs  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 can 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 makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

### 3. Main Report

A valid application has 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 is required before the licence can be granted.

The current application seeks to consider the licensing of events held within a communal welcome building known as "The Lookout", which is situated on the lake at the centre of the Cotter's Park site.

This report is being brought to Members following the recent deferral by the Operations Committee on 2 March 2026.

Criteria for deciding to grant an application in accordance with The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985

In considering any application for the grant of a licence, Members must have regard to the following:

- i. Any observations submitted by the appropriate PSNI Sub-Divisional Commander and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.
- ii. Whether the applicant has any relevant convictions or other matters which would preclude the grant of the Entertainments Licence; A licence may not be granted if the applicant has been convicted of an offence of either providing unlicensed entertainment, or providing entertainment otherwise than in accordance with the licence terms and conditions, within 5 years preceding the date of the application.
- iii. Any oral or written representations made by or on behalf of the applicant.
- iv. Any oral or written representations received during the statutory consultation period; and
- v. Any other public safety and/or public order considerations.

In consideration of points i to v above, members are asked to note the following:

- i. No objections have been received from PSNI nor from Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.
- ii. There are no relevant convictions to consider.
- iii. Members are advised that the applicant was given the opportunity to attend in person or submit a written statement in support of their application. The applicant has chosen not to provide oral evidence but has submitted a detailed written statement in support of their application, a copy of which is **(enclosed)**.

- iv. No representations were received within the statutory 28-day consultation period.
- v. No evidence has been received of substantiated public safety or public order concerns relevant to this application. Council has not received evidence of or substantiated complaints of this nature from PSNI.

As part of the application determination process, consideration has also been given to the potential adverse noise impacts on neighbouring properties from activity on site.

For members' consideration, the following documents and information are enclosed in relation to the application

- An officer briefing for Members (enclosed)
- A copy of the Council's document: "Conditions and Management Rules for Places of Indoor and Outdoor Entertainment" (enclosed)
- Planning decision notice dated 22 August 2025 (enclosed)
- Council Borough Lawyer advice when considering this application (enclosed)

Additional supporting documentation pertaining to the effective management of noise was submitted by the applicant, as follows:

- Noise Management Plan (enclosed)
- Independent Acoustic Report (enclosed)
- Site Management and House Rules - governing the use of the communal building (enclosed)

The applicants Noise Management Plan, Site Management and House Rules aim to minimise any potential for disturbance arising from entertainment, with measures including, for example;

- enforcement of quiet hours between 23:00hrs and 07:00hrs.
- prohibition on guests congregating anywhere outdoors on site.
- prohibition on personal amplified speakers; and
- restriction of entertainment activity to the designated communal building only- "The Lookout".

Officers are satisfied that reasonably practicable measures have been identified and implemented to effectively manage the operation of the premises and to minimise the potential for adverse impact on neighbouring residential properties.

The application was subject to a 28-day public and statutory consultation period. The public consultation closed on 14 January 2026. Members are advised that no public representations or objections were received during the statutory period.

Members are advised that where a decision is made to refuse the grant of the licence, the applicant shall be entitled to appeal the decision under

Schedule 1 (13) of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. Any appeal must be made to the County Court within 21 days, beginning with the date on which the person in question is notified of the refusal of the application.

Members should note that should they have concerns remain regarding the grant of this application, there is scope for the imposition of further controls which may include limiting the hours of entertainment, or issuing the licence for a shorter duration, for example six months, to allow for further review.

#### 4. Summary

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

#### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that an Annual Entertainment Licence is granted to the applicant Mr James Alexander - Cotters Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL subject to the Councils standard licencing requirements and additional special conditions.**

- a) **That all relevant licensing requirements are met as detailed in the Councils Document – “Conditions and management rules for places of indoor and outdoor entertainment”**
- b) **That the applicant complies fully with all conditions of the Planning Permission granted for the site, dated 22 August 2025.**
- c) **That all dancing, singing, music and entertainment of a like kind shall take place within the communal welcome building known as “The Lookout” only.**
- d) **That noise arising from entertainment shall not be audible beyond the site boundary.**
- e) **The licensee must ensure that the agreed Noise Management Plan, Acoustic Report and Site Rules are fully implemented and in operation during licensed hours.**

**Where a licence is granted, the licensee is responsible for ensuring strict adherence to all standard terms and conditions, as well as these additional special conditions.**

Prepared by: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services & Sustainability

### 3.13 EH/EHS/EP/01 CONSULTATION ON AMENDMENTS TO THE LANDLORD REGISTRATION REGULATIONS

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the draft response to the Department for Communities (DfC) consultation on draft regulations and an Equality Impact Assessment relating to the Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.**

#### 2. Background

Members are reminded that The Landlord Registration scheme was introduced through 'The Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014' to establish a central database of landlords who rent within the Private Rented Sector.

Northern Ireland Councils have enforcement powers to act against non-compliant landlords. In March 2023 it was agreed that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) would act as the lead council in the preparation for and transfer of the functions under the Landlord Registration Scheme within Northern Ireland.

In September 2023, a Programme Board was established to oversee the delivery of the project with representatives from the Department for Communities, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Belfast City Council, to oversee the transfer of these functions from DfC to local councils by March 2025.

This scheme operates on a cost neutral basis with all services offered by this scheme being funded from the registration fee only.

Amendments to the Regulations aim to link landlord registration with the standards required in private rented properties in Northern Ireland.

Amendments will also be made to reflect that as of 1 March 2025, Lisburn and Castlereagh Council have been appointed as landlord registrar on behalf of all Councils in Northern Ireland.

#### 3. Key Issues

The Department for Communities has launched a 12 week public consultation commencing on 2 March 2026. It is proposed that Council will submit the draft response attached for Members' information (**enclosed**). The consultation is available at the following link:

[Consultation on Amendments to the Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2014.](#)

The proposed amendments aim to link landlord registration with the standards required in private rented properties in Northern Ireland. Landlords will be required to give more information on their properties and standards at the point of registration. It is anticipated that these changes will make the Scheme a more effective tool for improving landlords' knowledge of, and compliance with, their legal duties.

Landlords will be asked to confirm whether they are compliant with existing legislation relating to the safety and standards of their properties, including the following:

The fitness for human habitation standards;

- Energy Performance Certificate requirements (providing a valid EPC to a tenant or prospective tenant is a requirement under The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008);
  - Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024;
  - Electrical Safety Standards for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024;
  - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004.
- Amendments will also be made to reflect that as of 1 March 2025, Lisburn and Castlereagh Council have been appointed as landlord registrar on behalf of all councils in Northern Ireland.

A draft consultation response highlights the following main points:

- Council considers that the requirement for landlords to provide more information on their properties and standards at the point of registration is a welcome amendment;
- Council suggests that landlords should be required to provide evidence that they are meeting these standards as part of the registration process;
- Council welcomes legislative confirmation that Lisburn and Castlereagh Council have been appointed as landlord registrar on behalf of all Councils in Northern Ireland.

#### 4. Equality and Rural Screening Requirements

In order to establish whether there may be adverse differential impacts, DfC has carried out a detailed Equality Impact Assessment for the Draft amendments, a copy of which is available at:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/amendments-landlord-registration-scheme-regulations-northern-ireland-2014-screening>

#### 5. Summary

The Department for Communities has consulted on draft regulations to amend the Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014. The proposed amendments aim to link landlord registration with the standards

required in private rented properties in Northern Ireland. Landlords will be required to give more information on their properties and standards at the point of registration.

## **6. Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the draft consultation response be approved.**

Prepared by: Liam Nicholas, Environmental Health Manager

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

### 3.14 PK/GEN/022 NORTHERN IRELAND AMENITY AWARDS 2026

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Council's submission for the Northern Ireland Amenity Awards 2026 competition.**

#### 2. Background

The Northern Ireland Amenity Council was established to promote the protection, enhancement, and long-term stewardship of the physical environment. The Amenity Council plays a central role in advancing initiatives such as the 'Best Kept' programme and leads the Northern Ireland Amenity Awards, which have served as a benchmark for similar environmental competitions across the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, and Europe, including well-known schemes such as 'Tidy Towns' and 'Entente Florale'. Entries to these awards are traditionally submitted by local authorities, housing associations, community organisations, and residents' groups, reflecting a broad commitment to environmental improvement and civic pride.

Over the past number of years, Council has achieved considerable success in in this award programme, consistently demonstrating high standards across its services and initiatives. Building on this strong track record, Council intends once again to submit applications for forthcoming award opportunities, with the aim of maintaining and further enhancing its recognised position of excellence. Traditionally, the same towns and villages are submitted for both the Ulster in Bloom and Northern Ireland Amenity Award competitions to ensure consistency and maximise the impact of each entry.

#### 3. Previous Decision of Council

Previously, entries for the Northern Ireland Amenity Competition were approved through the Operations Committee meetings. Last year, Council further demonstrated its commitment to this initiative by submitting a total of 12 entries, showcasing the dedication, accomplishments, and community led efforts of various local groups and organisations across the Borough.

#### 4. Submission for 2026

It is proposed that the following locations be nominated for consideration and inclusion in the 2026 Northern Ireland Amenity Awards competition. These proposed entries reflect a diverse range of sites across the Borough, each demonstrating significant community involvement, environmental stewardship, and a commitment to enhancing local environmental standards.

Antrim	Ballyclare	Crumlin	Toome
Templepatrick	Ballynure	Parkgate	Killead
Randalstown	Doagh	Burnside	Ballyeaston
Carnmoney	Whiteabbey		

**5. Recommendation**

**It is recommended that Members approve the entries for the Northern Ireland Amenity Awards 2026 competition.**

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

### 3.15 WM/WM/040 RETHINKING OUR RESOURCES: NORTHERN IRELAND RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY CONSULTATION

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the draft response to Rethinking our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Strategy by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).**

#### 2. Background

Members will be aware from previous report to Operations Committee in February that DAERA opened a consultation on the draft Rethinking Our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Management Strategy. The draft strategy aims to integrate policy reforms, modern technology, and partnerships to ensure long-term sustainability and adaptability. It focuses on controlled wastes from households, commercial and industrial premises, and category 3 animal by-products, contributing to recycling targets and Net Zero commitments. The strategy provides both long-term plans and short-term actions to drive significant environmental change.

Officers have prepared a draft response to the consultation (**enclosed**) in line with other waste bodies including arc21, LARAC and Council Waste Forum. It is felt that the proposed Strategy lacks clarity in terms of SMART objectives, detail on implementation of actions, funding and resources available for local authorities and solutions to barriers identified including the lack of infrastructure to ensure proximity of processing waste.

Council has raised concerns that the Department's response to 2024 Rethinking Our Resources consultation is yet to be published and this has resulted in a further lack of clarity on future requirements for household and commercial waste services.

#### 3. Summary

The draft Consultation Response to Rethinking our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Strategy consultation by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) (**enclosed**) details Council concerns to proposals and provides clarity on expectations of DAERA moving forward. The draft response needs to be submitted to DAERA by 8 May 2026.

#### 4. Recommendation

**It is recommended that the draft response to Rethinking our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Strategy be approved.**

Prepared by: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

### 3.16 PK/GEN/177 BELFAST HILLS PARTNERSHIP – “JOURNEY 30X30” PROJECT AT RATHFERN

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the pilot biodiversity project that aims to protect and effectively manage land and sea for nature by 2030. The project will be delivered by the Belfast Hills Partnership on land located beside the Sovereign Centre in Newtownabbey.**

#### 2. Background

Members will be aware that Council is a key partner in the Belfast Hills Partnership. This Partnership was originally established with the legacy Newtownabbey Borough Council in 2004 and has continued under Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council since its formation in 2015.

The Partnership delivers a broad range of initiatives focused on enhancing local sites, protecting and restoring biodiversity, and fostering community engagement across all age groups. These efforts help ensure that both residents and visitors can access, enjoy, and benefit from the natural landscape within Antrim and Newtownabbey section of the Belfast Hills.

#### 3. Key Considerations for the Project

The Journey to 30x30 project is a pilot initiative being delivered across the Belfast Hills to support the global commitment to protect and effectively manage 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030, as set out in the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Belfast Hills cover approximately 4,400 hectares across three council areas. A specific section of land at Rathfern has been selected as part of this project, as illustrated in the **enclosed** map.

Within the overall Belfast Hills landscape, approximately 60% of the land is privately owned. The project therefore aims to work collaboratively with landowners, community groups, and local stakeholders to support nature recovery in a manner that is inclusive, responsible, and beneficial for both people and wildlife.

The project focuses on the diverse habitats found within the Belfast Hills, including upland heath, blanket bog, woodland, species-rich grasslands, and freshwater environments such as ponds and rivers. A central aim is to strengthen ecological connectivity by supporting the development of Nature Recovery Networks that allow species to move more freely across the landscape and improve long-term ecosystem resilience. Activities will focus on three key site types farmland, quarries, and community sites demonstrating how biodiversity conservation can be integrated into a variety of land uses.

Community engagement is a core element of the project. Through workshops, events, and volunteering opportunities, local people will be

encouraged to contribute their knowledge and participate in shaping the future management of the Belfast Hills. Information gathered through community engagement will inform habitat management planning and support environmentally informed decision-making.

The project will also deliver practical conservation actions, including habitat restoration and management, wildlife surveys, ecological monitoring, and training for volunteers and community groups. In addition, later phases will address environmental pressures within the landscape such as fly-tipping, invasive species, wildlife crime, habitat degradation, and pollution through targeted engagement and awareness initiatives.

#### 4. Financial Implications for Council

The Journey to 30×30 is a fully funded project supported by the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). There will be no financial cost to Council associated with supporting or assisting in the delivery of this project.

#### 5. Recommendation

**It is recommended that Members approve support for the 30×30 pilot biodiversity project on land located beside the Sovereign Centre in Newtownabbey.**

Prepared by: Nadine Campbell, Parks Development Manager

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

## 4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

### 4.1 PK/CEM/011 CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE NORTHERN IRELAND STATISTICS AND RESEARCH AGENCY (NISRA) AND REGISTRAR GENERAL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND – UPDATE ON THE DEATHS, STILL-BIRTHS AND BABY LOSS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2026.

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to update Members on correspondence received in relation to the Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Act (NI) 2026, and to outline the implications for services delivered within Council's Bereavement Services section.**

#### 2. Background

Correspondence (**enclosed**) from NISRA provides an update on the legislative position regarding the remote registration of deaths and still-births, as well as the electronic transfer of documents previously enabled under the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Temporary arrangements introduced in March 2020 allowed registrations to be completed without the physical attendance of an informant and permitted digital sharing of documentation. Although originally intended as short-term measures, these processes have become well-established and have proven effective and efficient.

To formalise these arrangements, the Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Act (Northern Ireland) 2026 now places remote registration on a permanent legal footing and amends the existing Births and Deaths Registration Order (NI) 1976 and Civil Registration Regulations (NI) 2012.

The Act also revokes previous Coronavirus-related provisions. New regulations, the Deaths and Still-Births (Signing of Certificates) Regulations (NI) 2026 will shortly take effect to provide the statutory framework for signing relevant medical certificates.

These changes largely reflect the temporary processes already in use, and Council's registration office are well positioned to continue remote service delivery. All provisions will commence on 23 March 2026, after which no further Coronavirus Extension Orders will be required.

#### 3. Recommendation

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

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

## 4.2 EH/EHS/002 ANIMAL WELFARE SERVICE JUDICIAL REVIEW OUTCOME

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the Judicial Review of Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and to seek funding for the continued delivery of the service in 2026/27.**

### 2. Background

Since April 2012, councils have held responsibility for the statutory enforcement of the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011, in relation to non-farmed animals, namely companion animals and equines.

The Northern Region consists of Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council (ANBC), Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (CCG), and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council employs the animal welfare staff and manages the service on behalf of all three councils. A service level agreement is in place between the councils.

The Animal Welfare Service across the 11 councils had been fully funded, approximately £1.25M, by DAERA until August 2023. However, at that point DAERA advised that it was no longer able to continue funding support for councils in relation to non-farmed animal welfare services.

A Judicial Review was subsequently lodged in the High Court by Belfast City Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, on behalf of SOLACE, to challenge DAERA's decision to cease funding. On 23 January 2026, the court ruled in favour of the Council's, finding that the Permanent Secretary's August 2023 decision and the Minister's April 2024 decision to cut funding for certain animal welfare services were unlawful because the Environment and Rural Affairs Assembly Committee (AERA) was not notified in advance. DAERA must now inform the Committee before making any similar 2026/2027 funding decisions and notify councils thereafter. High Court awarded full legal costs to the Councils in relation to the Judicial Review.

The Judicial Review did not result in any funding being awarded or restored to councils for the years in which funding had been withdrawn.

By Order of the Court, the DAERA Minister was also required to refer the decision to change Animal Welfare funding back to the AERA Committee for further consideration. A copy of the Judicial Review is **(enclosed)** for Members' information.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

In November 2023, June 2024 and September 2025, Members agreed that Council approved the use of Council funds to finance the Animal Welfare Service during 2023-2024, 2024-2025 2025 -2026 to enable continued service delivery at a cost of approximately £140,000.

#### 4. Key Issues

Councils are now awaiting the DAERA Minister to bring forward the outcome of the Judicial Review to the AERA Committee at the earliest opportunity so that MLAs can consider the decision to cease Animal Welfare funding.

In the absence of DAERA funding, Councils within the Northern Region have been asked for their support for the continuation of service delivery as per the current model to end March 2027. For Council this has already been accounted in estimates 2026/27 budget. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have asked Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council and Causeway Coast & Glens Brough Council to commit to the 2026/27 costs to enable continued service delivery within the Northern Region on the basis of the three councils sharing all costs equally.

Enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (NI) 2011 in respect of companion animals and equines is Council's statutory duty. The future delivery model for this service is currently under consideration and further report will be brought back to members when the outcome of AERA committee discussions is known. Elected Members will be kept informed as to ongoing discussions and proposals regarding future changes in the service delivery model and related cost implications.

Mid and East Antrim will continue to manage the sub regional delivery model, awaiting the outcome of any final decision on external funding reinstatement.

#### 5. Summary

In April 2024, DAERA advised Council that it was withdrawing financial assistance for the Animal Welfare Service. However, no funding has been available since 2024. NI councils have sought a judicial review of DAERA's decision and a Court Decision found in favour of Councils. The DAERA Minister is now bringing the matter in front of the AERA Committee for review.

At present, MEA provides this service for Council and has requested confirmation that Council wish to continue the agreement in 2026-27. Given that this is a statutory duty of Council and the current arrangement is deemed to be the most efficient way to deliver service, Officers recommend approval of the funding request. Monies have been included in the 2026-27 budget for this service

#### 6. Recommendation

**It is recommended that the report be noted and that Council approves the current delivery mechanism for the Animal Welfare Service through Mid and East Antrim Borough Council at an estimated cost of £140,000 in 2026-2027.**

Prepared by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

#### 4.3 EH/EHS/015 SUMMARY OF TEST PURCHASE EXERCISES CARRIED OUT THROUGHOUT THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the outcomes of test purchasing activities carried out across the Borough during the 2025/26 regarding the sale of age restricted products.**

##### 2. Background

Members are reminded that, under current legislation, it is an offence to sell cigarettes, tobacco, nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes and e-liquids), and butane cigarette lighter refill aerosol canisters to persons under the age of 18.

The Public Health Agency funds the employment of Tobacco Control Officers (TCOs), who operate on behalf of district councils across Northern Ireland. Their role includes promoting compliance with tobacco control legislation and providing guidance to retailers on regulatory requirements.

TCOs are required to undertake a minimum of 100 advisory visits per year, including at least 70 test purchase exercises, to monitor compliance with age-restricted sales legislation.

Members are also reminded that it is illegal to permit the use, sale, or hire of sunbeds by persons under 18. Operators of sunbed premises are further required to provide prescribed health information and appropriate protective equipment, including eyewear.

Environmental Health Officers carry out advisory visits and routine inspections of sunbed premises to ensure compliance. The Public Health Agency recommends that all sunbed premises are subject to a test purchase exercise at least once every two years.

##### 3. Key Issues

Tobacco control test purchase exercises were conducted in April, May, September, and October 2025, and February 2026, across 72 retail premises within the Borough. Overall compliance was high, with 69 premises (96%) adhering to legislative requirements. 3 premises (4%) were non-compliant, all involving the sale of vape products to underage individuals. Appropriate follow-up action, including staff training and written warning was taken to address these breaches and support improved compliance.

A separate test purchase exercise was undertaken in July 2025 at 9 premises selling butane cigarette lighter refill aerosol canisters. All 9 premises (100%) were compliant; however, one premises indicated a willingness to sell the product but stated it was out of stock. An advisory visit was subsequently carried out to reinforce legal obligations.

Test purchase activity was also undertaken at sunbed premises. In July 2025, 5 premises were visited to assess compliance with underage access restrictions: 4 premises (80%) were compliant, and 1 premises was closed at the time of inspection. A further exercise in February 2026 assessed an additional 10 premises for compliance with the provision of health information leaflets, display of statutory notices, and the provision and use of protective eyewear. 8 premises (80%) were compliant, and 2 premises (20%) were non-compliant; these were issued with Fixed Penalty Notices of £250 each, in line with the Council's enforcement policy.

The (enclosed) report details the test purchasing activities undertaken during this period

#### 4. Summary

During the 2025/26 financial year, the Environmental Health Section carried out test purchase exercises across the Borough in relation to:

- The sale of age-restricted products, including cigarettes, tobacco, nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes and e-liquids), and butane cigarette lighter refill aerosol canisters; and
- The use, sale, and hire of sunbeds by persons under 18, including compliance with requirements to provide prescribed information and protective eyewear.

Overall levels of compliance were high, with the majority of premises meeting their legal obligations. Where non-compliance was identified, enforcement action was taken in accordance with the Council's enforcement policy, ranging from advisory guidance and written warnings to the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices.

#### 5. Recommendation

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

Prepared by: Gareth Thompson, Environmental Health Manager (Health and Safety and Consumer Protection)

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

**5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

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