



26 February 2025

Committee Chair: Councillor V McWilliam

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor A McAuley

Committee Members: Aldermen - P Bradley, L Clarke, J McGrath and J Smyth

Councillors – J Burbank, R Foster, J Gilmour, AM Logue, E McLaughlin, H Magill, M Ní Chonghaile, M Stewart and S Ward

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Monday 3 March 2025 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 & Newtownabbey Borough Council

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

For any queries please contact Member Services:
Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

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3 PRESENTATION

3.1 PK/GEN/177 BELFAST HILLS PARTNERSHIP PRESENTATION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this presentation is to provide Members with an overview of the work of the Belfast Hills Partnership following a request to update Council submitted by the newly appointed Manager, Dr Lizzy Pinkerton.

2. Introduction

Councillors McAuley and McLaughlin currently represent Council on the Belfast Hills Partnership.

Members are advised that Dr Lizzy Pinkerton, Belfast Hills Partnership Manager and Ms Jo Boylan, Woodland Officer will make a short presentation (**enclosed**) to update Members on the work of the Partnership.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the presentation be noted.

Agreed and Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 PK/REG/028 APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY APPROVAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGE / CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek temporary approval for a venue in which Civil Marriage/Civil Partnership ceremonies can be conducted.

2. Background

Under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act (2004), the Council has the responsibility to approve appropriate applications for Temporary Place Approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships. The process requires that a Notice of Interest be displayed for a three-week period in a prominent place at the venue to allow for any public objection.

3. Current Position

An application for a Temporary Place Approval has been received from the owner of 10 Mount Shalgus Lane, Randalstown, with specified areas detailed as the garden at 12 Mount Shalgus Lane, Randalstown.

No public objections have been received with the premises also having been formally inspected and deemed appropriate to proceed.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that 12 Mount Shalgus Lane, Randalstown be temporarily approved to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and 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: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.2 PK/GEN/022 NORTHERN IRELAND AMENITY COUNCIL – BEST KEPT AWARDS – ANNUAL FUNDING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to increase the annual affiliation fee to the Northern Ireland Amenity Council (NIAC) for participation in the Best Kept Awards programme.

2. Background

The NIAC has administered the Best Kept Awards for 68 years, encouraging communities across Northern Ireland to enhance and improve their towns and villages.

3. Affiliation Fees

Council has paid an annual affiliation fee of £2,300 since 2015. However, due to inflationary pressures and the loss of a key sponsor, NIAC has proposed an increase to £3,000. Correspondence from NIAC outlining this request is **enclosed** for Members' reference.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that an increase the annual affiliation fee to £3,000 for continued participation in the Best Kept Awards be approved.

Prepared by: Paula Robinson, Executive Officer to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.3 PK/GEN/217 CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF BURNSIDE ORANGE HALL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the installation of an anniversary disc at Greystone Roundabout in recognition of Burnside Orange Hall's 150th anniversary in 2025.

2. Introduction/Background

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. Members will be aware that the installation of the disc for Burnside Orange Hall was previously approved at the junction of Burnside Road, however, the organisation has requested that the alternative location of Greystone Roundabout now be considered for approval.

3. Financial Implication

The installation of the anniversary celebratory discs will cost circa £175.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the installation of an anniversary disc at Greystone Roundabout in recognition of Burnside Orange Hall's 150th anniversary in 2025 be approved.

Prepared by: Paula Robinson, Executive Officer to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.4 WM/SC/001 DEVELOPMENT OF A POSSIBLE SATELLITE WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPOT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the possible development of a satellite waste management depot in the Newtownabbey area for a small number of small and large sweepers.

2. Background

Street sweeping vehicles are currently located at the Environmental Services Depot (ESD) in Antrim and travel from this location across the Borough to carry out daily street sweeping operations. This includes locations like Loughshore, Newtownabbey and Toome, both of which are approximately 14 miles from the ESD.

Due to the slower speeds of the small sweeper, it can take the staff over 30 minutes to get to the destination and as a result Officers were asked to see if the service could be made more efficient if a satellite station was established to reduce travel time and increase operating hours on site.

3. Key Issues

The initial assessment has identified a number of locations as possible sites for the satellite depot, including Bruslee and O'Neill Road Recycling Centres and the Council's operational facilities at Ballyearl and V36.

Possible locations for the satellite depot will require some essential infrastructure including covered garage building, welfare facilities, fuel pumps and waste storage facilities. In addition, the vehicles will need to be covered by early morning start maintenance coverage. While it is estimated that a site with none of the required infrastructure would cost approximately £160,000 to develop, the current proposed sites do have some of these facilities.

There are benefits of establishing a satellite station and this would include the potential for an additional hour per day of operating time and if 5 vehicles were stationed at O'Neill Road Recycling Centre, this could equate to potentially 1,800 additional operating hours per annum. There would also be savings on fuel costs and while this is difficult to calculate it is envisaged to be approximately £2,500 per annum for a vehicle.

The establishment of a new satellite depot would have some operational constraints and these include supervisory management control and staff's employment arrangements.

4. Summary

The establishment of a new satellite depot would have a number of financial and operational benefits but would require a significant capital investment. As a result it is recommended that a full business case is

completed to identify the most appropriate location and whether it is economically advantageous to develop. It is envisaged that the business case will take approximately 6 months to complete and the results of this will be reported to the Operations Committee when available.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that a full business case be developed to identify the most appropriate location and assess the economic feasibility of a new satellite depot.

Prepared by: Darren Purdy, Head of Waste Operations

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

4.5 EH/PHWB/018 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES DRAFT FUEL POVERTY STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Purpose

The Department for Communities (DfC) has launched a consultation on a draft Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland. This Strategy sets out a pathway to a Northern Ireland where everyone lives in a warm, healthy home.

2. Background

The term fuel poverty refers to the inability to heat or power a home adequately at a reasonable cost. As of 2022, figures indicate that over a quarter of households in Northern Ireland are experiencing fuel poverty. Living in cold, damp conditions significantly impacts health and well-being, particularly for the most vulnerable members of society. The draft Fuel Poverty Strategy aims to establish a clear plan for ensuring that all households in Northern Ireland have access to warm, healthy living conditions. The plan has been developed within the context of a *Just Transition, the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022, Carbon Budgets, and the Programme for Government ("Our Plan")*. Its vision is to ensure "A warm, healthy home for everyone," with underlying principles focused on long-term sustainable solutions, a needs-based approach, and collaborative, participative efforts.

The draft Strategy aims to improve energy efficiency for vulnerable households, expand access to trusted advice and support through partnerships, and ensure consumers have access to affordable, sustainable energy.

Addressing fuel poverty is critical to protecting our resident's public health, as exposure to cold and damp homes can have severe consequences, particularly for vulnerable individuals. The consultation outlines draft proposals for the strategy including:

- range of actions to improve home energy efficiency;
- increase awareness and capacity;
- enhance collaboration;
- protect consumers.

A link to the consultation can be found at;

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-12/dfc-consultation-on-draft-fuel-poverty.pdf>

A draft consultation response (**enclosed**) has been prepared in collaboration with Environmental Health across all of the Councils in Northern Ireland. The response highlights the following points;

- The Councils' general agreement with the proposed vision of the Strategy.
- Proposes minimum energy efficiency standards in both the private and social housing rental sectors.
- Recommends a review and update of the fitness standard for human

- habitation.
- Calls for government energy schemes to take the fuel poverty strategy into account.
- Need for robust, data-driven approach to determine eligibility criteria for energy grant schemes.

The final Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland is expected to be published in summer 2025.

3. Summary

The Department for Communities (DfC) has launched a consultation on a draft Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland. This Strategy outlines the Department's vision, principles, objectives, expected outcomes, and governance framework. It details how DfC plans to collaborate in reducing fuel poverty across Northern Ireland, striving to achieve the vision of a warm, healthy home for all.

4. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the draft consultation response be approved.

Prepared by: Alison Briggs, Deputy Head of Environmental Health - Health and Wellbeing

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

4.6 PK/BIO/019/VOL3 CORRESPONDENCE FROM DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE – GREENWAY AND ACTIVE TRAVEL DELIVERY PLAN CONSULTATION – COUNCIL RESPONSE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to request approval for the proposed routes to be added to the Active Travel Delivery Plan consultation response.

2. Background

Members are reminded that in January 2025, correspondence was received from the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) Active Travel Team regarding feedback on their public consultation document for the Active Travel Delivery Plan, which outlines priority routes over the next 10 years. The primary objective of the delivery plan is to address urban areas with higher population numbers.

For the purpose of the plan, urban areas are defined as having a population of over 5,000 people. The identified areas and priority routes include:

a) Antrim Town – Three priority routes:

Castle Way to Stiles Way/B518 via Fountain Hill.
Greystone Roundabout along Greystone Road (B95) to Fountain Hill.
Hill Street along Railway Street to Stiles Way.

b) Ballyclare – One main priority route:

Ballyclare Western Relief Road/B95 Roundabout to the Square via Doagh Road.

c) Crumlin – One main priority route:

Lurgan Road to Main Street/Ballydonaghy Road.

d) Metropolitan Newtownabbey – Two main priority routes:

Carnmoney Road North/Mossley West to Church Road/Valley Retail Park via Prince Charles Way, Church Road, and Longwood Road.

e) Randalstown – One main priority route:

Randalstown Viaduct to Castle Road via Shanes Street and Station Road.

3. Key Issues

In support of the delivery of Greenway and Active Travel initiatives, Council fully endorses the five settlement 'Priority Routes' outlined above, as they align with the objectives set out in the Local Development Plan, Draft Plan Strategy 2030 Vision, and Strategic Objectives.

In addition to the 'Priority Routes,' Council seeks to incorporate connections to Employment Lands within the Borough, specifically targeting Strategic Employment Locations, which include:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Antrim | Rathenraw Industrial Estate Newpark Industrial Estate Antrim Technology Park Steeple Industrial Estate Randox Science Park Enkalon Industrial Estate Kilbegs Road Springfarm Industrial Estate Belfast International Airport |
| Ballyclare | Dennison Industrial Estate Avondale Business Park Hillhead Road |
| Crumlin | Nutts Corner |
| Metropolitan Newtownabbey | Global Point Monkstown Industrial Estate Church Rad Mallusk South of Antrim Road (Mallusk) North of Antrim Road (Mallusk) |

As Council progresses toward adopting its Draft Plan Strategy and conducts preliminary strategic studies related to the Draft Local Policies Plan (DLPP), it seeks clarification from the Department on the relationship between the Active Travel Plan and the Vision and Objectives of the Department's Eastern Travel Plan 2035 iteration for the Borough. Additionally, Council requests a timeline for the delivery of the final versions of both Plans.

Council emphasises that local development plans and transport plans should be closely aligned and implemented within the same timeframe. Furthermore, Council will seek assurances from the Department that this alignment is appropriately considered and addressed.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposed routes for the Active Travel Delivery Plan be approved and that Officers submit a response to the Department for Infrastructure's public consultation on Greenways and Active Travel Projects, as outlined above.

Prepared by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.7 PK/GEN/217 CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF BALLYCLARE METHODIST CHURCH GIRLS' BRIGADE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the installation of a celebratory disc at the junction of Main Street and Ballynure Road in Ballyclare to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Ballyclare Methodist Girls' Brigade in 2025.

2. Introduction/Background

Ballyclare Methodist Girls' Brigade is celebrating a significant milestone anniversary in 2025, with its 70th anniversary.

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 an anniversary celebratory disc will cost circa £175, with the proposed location for the disc at the junction of Main Street and Ballynure Road in Ballyclare.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the installation of a celebratory disc at the junction of Main Street and Ballynure Road in Ballyclare to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Ballyclare Methodist Girls' Brigade in 2025 be approved.

Prepared by: Paula Robinson, Executive Officer to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 L/GEN/080 LEISURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2024-25

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the results of an extensive Customer Satisfaction Survey recently conducted for the Council's Leisure Service.

2. Introduction

Members will be aware that the Council's Leisure Service continuously gathers customer feedback through a digital software system that calculates the Net Promoter Score (NPS), which is reported to the Committee on a quarterly basis.

As part of the Operational Performance Indicators for the section, a new customer satisfaction metric was introduced. For the 2024/25 year, the goal was to establish a baseline against which future performance can be measured. This metric is derived from an in-depth Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSAT), which will be conducted annually.

While NPS is a valuable tool for assessing customer loyalty and maintaining a continuous feedback loop, CSAT (due to its more detailed questioning) offers deeper customer insights and a wealth of actionable data.

3. Results

The survey received 2,245 responses over a six-week period, making it the largest customer survey undertaken by the Council to date. Responses were collected via member emails, social media, the Council's website, posters, and face-to-face interactions. A detailed breakdown of results for all six leisure centres is **enclosed** for Members' reference.

Key Findings:

- Overall satisfaction rate: 89.3%
- Top-scoring categories:
 - Staff: 97.3%
 - Value for money: 92.5%
 - Fitness classes: 90.9%

Among the six leisure centres, Ballyearl received the highest satisfaction score at 94.1%, followed by Antrim Forum in second place with 90.5%. The rankings for all six centres are as follows:

| Rank | Centre | % |
|-------------|---------------|----------|
| 1 | Ballyearl | 94.1% |
| 2 | Antrim Forum | 90.5% |
| 3 | Valley LC | 88.9% |
| 4 | Sixmile LC | 87.5% |
| 5 | Crumlin | 81.2% |
| 6 | Allen Park | 79.8% |

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager

Agreed by: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

5.2 PK/PG/005 PLAYPARK REFURBISHMENT UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's Play Park Refurbishment Project.

2. Introduction/Background

In June 2024, Council approved the advancement of the Play Park Refurbishment Project to Stage 2 of the Capital Programme, which covers design and procurement. The refurbishment plan includes 35 play parks, prioritised according to their current condition, with two new play parks recommended for full replacement at the Diamond, Rathcoole and Kings Park, Newtownabbey.

3. Current Status

Maintenance issues identified during the initial play park audit, along with concerns raised in the subsequent Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) reports, are actively being addressed. Additionally, general repairs are being carried out following weekly inspections by the Officers. A new equipment supply contract has been established to ensure the timely completion of these repairs.

Steeple Play Park, Antrim has undergone significant refurbishment following vandalism, including the installation of new play equipment, safety surfacing, and the respraying and relining of the multi-use games area. The total expenditure for this project is £115K.

The procurement process for replacement play park equipment, surfacing, maintenance, and design is currently in progress. The key milestones are as follows:

- Tender Returns: 24th March
- Evaluation: 25th March
- Council Approval: 31st March
- Award: 1st April
- Works to Commence on Site: Mid-May

Estates will prioritise installation based on the agreed list for each site. Efforts will also be made to leverage bulk purchasing opportunities, where possible, to maximise financial savings.

The audit has highlighted the need for full replacement of play parks at The Diamond, Rathcoole, and Kings Park, Newtownabbey. The procurement process for these replacements is live, with the following timeline:

- Evaluation: 7th March
- Council Approval: 31st March
- Award: 1st April
- Works to Commence on Site: Late June 2025

4. New Play Park Developments

Members will be aware that a previously approved new play park is currently under construction at the **City of Belfast Playing Fields, Mallusk**. The estimated cost for this development is £364K (including a developer contribution), with an expected completion date in late March 2025.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: David Blair, Head of Estate Services

Agreed and Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

5.3 PT/CI/060 PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024/25 PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT QUARTER 3

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members that the Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Performance Progress Report Quarter 3 Parks, Leisure and Estate Services and Sustainability be noted.

2. Background

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

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 was approved in June 2024. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with identified improvement objectives and a number of Statutory Performance Targets

3. Previous Decision of Council

As agreed at the August 2023 Council meeting, quarterly performance reports will be presented to the relevant committee.

4. Key Points

Third Quarter performance progress reports for Parks, Leisure and Estate Services, and Sustainability are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Performance Progress Report Quarter 3 be noted.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Katherine Young, Organisation Development and Employee Engagement Manager

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

5.4 EH/EHS/EP/01 TRANSFER OF LANDLORD REGISTRATION SCHEME TO LOCAL COUNCILS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the transfer of the Landlord Registration Scheme from the Department for Communities (DfC) to local Councils as the project nears completion.

2. Background

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. Currently, the scheme is managed by a Landlord Registrar and a small team that sits within DfC.

In March 2023 it was agreed that Lisburn and 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.

Northern Ireland Councils have enforcement powers to act against non-compliant landlords. In September 2023, a Programme Board was established to oversee the delivery of the project with representatives from DfC, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Belfast City Council, to oversee the transfer of these functions from DfC to local Councils by March 2025.

Engagement has been ongoing with both Councils and other stakeholders throughout the lifetime of this project, including various all Councils' group including Environmental Health NI (EHNI), IT officers, Head of Communications and Information Governance groups. Other stakeholders have included landlords, agents, tenants, DfC, PropertyPal and those who have contracts with the current scheme.

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

3. Key Issues

New Website and Registration Portal

Following an open procurement exercise conducted by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in March 2024, an IT software company was awarded the contract for the build and management of a new dedicated website and registration portal. Currently, this system is going through the User Acceptance Testing stage which once finalised will allow the data stored on the current system to be migrated over.

The transfer of the landlord registration functions to local Councils will occur on Saturday 1st March 2025 with a 'go live' date for the new system on Monday 3rd March 2025. This will see the completion of Phase 1. Phase 2 will commence shortly after that date with all additional functionality completed

by June 2025.

Full training, including user guides for future employees who will access the database, will be provided to all Councils and other users to maximise the benefits of the new system.

Appointment of New Landlord Registration Team

A recruitment exercise for a new landlord registration team was completed in 2024. Three positions have now been filled, including the appointment of a new Landlord Registrar.

Communications Plan

The DfC have developed an advertising campaign as part of a wider communications plan associated with the transfer of functions. This includes radio and social media advertisements that will go live from February 2025.

These advertisements will focus on the need for any landlords within the private rented sector to register with the scheme, with updates being provided by email or letter to those already registered about the changes.

Post-transfer, any campaigns will be led by the Landlord Registrar and shared with all other councils for their social media channels.

4. Financial Position/Implication

There is no financial implication to any Council. All funding for the project to date has been funded by the DfC. Post transfer of functions, all staffing costs, contracts and future initiatives will be funded through the registration fee. There will be no cost to Council.

5. Governance

The Programme Board will formally agree a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), new operation model and timeline for regulation change being brought forward by Department for Communities. These documents will provide clarity to Council on the governance structures for the scheme post transfer and propose how the Landlord Registration Scheme can become more meaningful to councils and landlords in the long term.

The transfer of the landlord registration data base from DfC to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council will have no impact on current working arrangements undertaken by the Council's Environmental Health Officers to enforce the provisions of the landlord registration scheme, however work will continue on proposed improvements to the scheme, post transfer which will assist with better regulation of the private rented sector with the overall aim of improving housing standards.

6. Summary

Starting on March 1, 2025, DfC will transfer its responsibilities for the Landlord Registration Scheme to a newly established team, led by Lisburn and

Castlereagh City Council. This team has been recently appointed and will provide support for the new system while collaborating with councils to enhance the system and processes, ensuring landlord registration becomes a more effective tool for all councils. There will be no operational or financial impact on Council.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Liam Nicholas, Environmental Health Manager

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

5.5 PK/GEN/221 NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND – NATURE TOWNS AND CITIES BID 2025

1. Purpose

This report provides an update on the Council's application for funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).

2. Introduction and Background

The National Lottery Heritage Fund's "Nature for Towns and Cities" initiative is a £15 million funding programme aimed at improving urban green spaces across the UK. The programme offers grants ranging from £250,000 to £1 million to local authorities and community organisations. It supports projects designed to revitalise public parks, nature sites, and community gardens.

These projects focus on strategic development rather than capital works and are expected to:

- Create comprehensive green space strategies
- Foster strong partnerships
- Develop sustainable management and funding plans
- Integrate nature into everyday urban life

3. Application Process

The first stage of the application process involved submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI). A total of 274 EOIs were submitted, requesting £170 million in funding. Following this, NLHF invited 38 applicants to submit full applications, with the expectation that 50% of these will receive funding.

The Council has been invited to submit a full application by 14 April 2025, requesting £485,000 in funding. The proposal focuses on green space development, nature recovery, and community empowerment, with plans to:

- Create masterplans for areas with limited green space
- Develop community gardens
- Support environmental initiatives

The application process spans from February to April 2025, with funding decisions expected by July 2025.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Ian McCurley, Parks Development Manager

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

5.6 L/LEI/004/VOL 2 KID'S SUMMER ACTIVITY PROGRAMME REVIEW 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on an annual review of Council's annual Kid's Summer Activity Programme.

2. Introduction/Background

Members will be aware that the Council operates a comprehensive Kid's Summer Activity Programme, which includes Summer Schemes and Sports Camps for children aged 6–12 across the Borough during the school summer holidays. These activities take place in both Council and community-owned facilities. A screening process ensures that necessary adjustments are made for children with additional care needs.

In collaboration with the Mae Murray Foundation, the Council offers a fully inclusive scheme, providing one-to-one support for up to 25 children per day over a 10-day period.

Additionally, the Council supports external children's summer programmes by allocating £34,000 through Community Development grants and £25,000 in Access and Inclusion funding to Special Educational Needs Schools, enabling them to run their own tailored schemes.

3. 2024 Programme Review

In 2024, the programme recorded a total attendance of 2,772 out of a maximum capacity of 2,935, achieving a 94% occupancy rate. A satisfaction survey conducted after the programme yielded an overall satisfaction rating of 93.2%.

For Members' reference, the survey is **enclosed**, along with a summary of key participation data related to the programme detailed below:

| Scheme | Capacity | Duration | Attendance | Percentage Occupancy |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Community Schemes | | | | |
| Ballynure | 90 | 10 days | 91 | 101% |
| Doagh | 45 | 5 days | 30 | 67% |
| Hydepark | 45 | 5 days | 20 | 44% |
| Merville | 180 | 20 days | 131 | 73% |
| Community Total | 360 | 40 days | 272 | 76% |
| Leisure Schemes | | | | |
| Ballyearl | 420 | 25 days | 401 | 95% |
| Crumlin | 45 | 5 days | 29 | 64% |
| Sixmile | 450 | 25 days | 449 | 100% |
| Valley | 1000 | 25 days | 1000 | 100% |
| Lillian Bland | 325 | 25 days | 311 | 96% |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Leisure Total | 2240 | 105 days | 2190 | 98% |
| Sports Camps | | | | |
| Sports Camp-Antrim Forum | 160 | 6 days | 159 | 99% |
| Sports Camp-Crumlin | 45 | 3 days | 29 | 64% |
| Castle Gardens | 80 | 3 days | 82 | 103% |
| Sport Camp Total | 285 | 12 days | 270 | 95% |
| Inclusive Camps | | | | |
| Antrim Forum | 25 | 5 days | 20 | 80% |
| Crumlin | 25 | 5 days | 20 | 80% |
| Inclusive Total | 50 | 10 days | 40 | 80% |
| Overall Scheme Total | 2,935 | 167 days | 2,772 | 94% |

4. Financial Review

In addition to the grant funding provided by the Council, the 2024 programme incurred a total expenditure of £190,032 and generated an income of £104,828. This resulted in a net cost to the Council of £85,204, equating to a subsidy of £30.70 per child. A detailed breakdown per location is provided below:

| Site | Income | Expenditure | Variance | Subsidy per child |
|--------------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| Leisure Schemes | | | | |
| Valley | £42,527 | £62,498 | -£19,971 | -£14 |
| Crumlin | £810 | £1,998 | -£928 | -£32 |
| Sixmile | £17,619 | £30,349 | -£10,130 | -£23 |
| Ballyearl | £15,676 | £26,397 | -£8,121 | -£20 |
| Lillian Bland | £11,484 | £18,494 | -£5,650 | -£18 |
| Community Schemes | | | | |
| Hydepark (rural) | £724 | £2,944 | -£2,220 | -£111 |
| Doagh-Kilbride(rural) | £1,045 | £3,335 | -£2,290 | -£73 |
| Merville (rural) | £2,952 | £10,943 | -£7,991 | -£61 |
| Ballynure (rural) | £3,388 | £2,933 | £455 | £5 |
| Sports Camps | | | | |
| Sports Camp-Antrim Forum | £4,698 | £4,062 | £636 | £4 |
| Sports Camp-Crumlin | £810 | £897 | -£87 | -£3 |
| Castle Gardens | £2,467 | £1,811 | £656 | £8 |
| Inclusive Schemes | | | | |
| Antrim Forum | £315 | £11,687 | -£11,372 | -£569 |
| Crumlin | £315 | £11,687 | -£11,372 | -£569 |

5. Programme 2025

Enrolment for the 2025 Kid's Summer Activity Programme (excluding the Inclusive Scheme) will open on 21st May 2025.

6. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager

Agreed by: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

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