MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD IN ROUND TOWER CHAMBER, ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON 1 DECEMBER 2025 AT 6.30 PM

In the Chair	:	Alderman J Smyth
Committee Members (In person)	:	Alderman L Clarke Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, R Foster, J Gilmour, N Kelly, AM Logue, A McAuley, E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, L O'Hagan, M Stewart and S Ward
Committee Members (Remote)	:	Aldermen – L Boyle and P Bradley
Non-Committee Members (In person)	:	Councillors – M Cooper and B Webb
Non-Committee Members: (Remote)	:	Alderman S Ross Councillors – S Cosgrove, R Lynch, T McGrann, M Ní Chonghaile,
Officers Present	:	Director of Estates and Recreation - M McDowell Director of Environment Services and Sustainability – M Laverty Head of Parks Operations - P Mawhinney Head of Waste Operations – D Purdy Head of Waste Strategy & Sustainability – L Daly Head of Leisure Operations – D O'Hagan Head of Environmental Health & Wellbeing – C Kelly Borough Lawyer – P Casey Council Lawyer – A McDowell ICT Change Officer – A Cole ICT Support Assistant – D Graham Member Services Officer – L Irwin
In Attendance:		Kevin Bloomfield, NI Houses in Multiple Occupation Unit, Belfast City Council Kevin McDonnell, Solicitor, Belfast City Council Olatunbosun Lawal, Lawal Healthcare Services Limited

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the December Operations Committee meeting and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

1 APOLOGIES

None

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Items 6.2 & 6.3 – Alderman J Smyth
Items 6.2 & 6.3 – Councillor J Archibald-Brown
Items 6.2 & 6.3 – Alderman L Clarke
Item 3.4 – Councillor R Foster
Item 3.4- Councillor J Gilmour

The Chair advised that Items 6.2 and 6.3 on the agenda would be taken at this point.

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Ward and agreed

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

Having declared an interest the Chairperson Alderman J Smyth, Alderman Clarke and Councillor Archibald-Brown left the Chamber and Councillor O'Hagan assumed the role of Chairperson.

Councillors McWilliam and Ward left and returned to the Chamber during Items 6.2 & 6.3 and were therefore unable to vote on these Items.

6.2 IN CONFIDENCE EH/EHS/009 APPLICATION FOR A NEW LICENCE TO OPERATE A HOUSE OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]	[redacted]		[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	

[redacted]

[redacted]

Mr Kevin Bloomfield NI Houses in Multiple Occupation Unit, Belfast City Council presented his report to Members.

[redacted], made his representations to the Committee.

Members clarified a number of issues with [redacted] and Mr Bloomfield in relation to the application.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Bradley

that the proposed licence holder was not a fit and proper person, as per the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (2016), Section 10 paragraph 3, and paragraph 4(d); that the applicant had contravened a provision of the law relating to housing and landlord and tenant law, as outlined in the presentation and report; and misdirected tenants to provide misleading statements to the Council that the property was not in HMO usage; and therefore the licence application should be refused.

On the proposal being put to the meeting, a recorded vote was taken and Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Proposal Members viz 2	Against the Proposal Members viz 8	Abstentions Members viz 0
Alderman – Bradley Councillor - Foster	Alderman – Boyle Councillors – Gilmour, Kelly, Logue, McAuley, McLaughlin, O'Hagan and Stewart	

On the proposal put forward, 2 Members voted in favour, 8 against and 0 abstentions.

The proposal was declared not carried.

A further proposal was then put to the meeting.

Proposed by Alderman Boyle
Seconded by Councillor Logue

that the application for a new HMO licence at [redacted] be granted for the reduced period of 12 months and furthermore during the duration of the licence [redacted] shall appoint and retain the services of a competent person or body (whether incorporated or not) to be involved in the management of the accommodation.

On the proposal being put to the meeting, a recorded vote was taken and Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Proposal Members viz 8	Against the Proposal Members viz 2	Abstentions Members viz 0
Alderman – Boyle Councillors – Gilmour, Kelly, Logue, McAuley, McLaughlin, O'Hagan and Stewart	Alderman – Bradley Councillor - Foster	

On the proposal put forward, 8 Members voted in favour, 2 against and 0 abstentions it was agreed

that the application for a new HMO licence at [redacted] be granted for the reduced period of 12 months and furthermore during the duration of the licence [redacted] shall appoint and retain the services of a competent person or body (whether incorporated or not) to be involved in the management of the accommodation.

A further proposal was then put to the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McAuley

And agreed by all

that the application be brought back to Committee after the 12 month period for review.

Amended at full Council on 15 December 2025 as follows:

Following discussions in relation to the HMO applications before the Operations Committee and on future applications which may come before Council it was

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Magill that

the Operations Committee minutes be approved with the exception of Items 6.2 and 6.3 for the following reasons:

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Following dissension in the Chamber, the Mayor put the proposal to a vote.

On the proposal being put to the meeting 16 Members voted in favour, 16 against and 0 abstentions.

The Mayor used her casting vote in favour of the proposal and it was accordingly declared carried.

Moved by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Operations Committee Meeting of Monday 1 December 2025 with the exception of Items 6.2 and 6.3 be approved and adopted.

ACTION BY: Kevin Bloomfield, Belfast City Council, NIHMO Manager

6.3 IN CONFIDENCE EH/EHS/009 APPLICATION FOR A NEW LICENCE TO OPERATE A HOUSE OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Mr Kevin Bloomfield NI Houses in Multiple Occupation Unit, Belfast City Council presented his report to Members.

[redacted], made his representations to the Committee.

Members clarified a number of issues with [redacted] and Mr Bloomfield in relation to the application.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Bradley

that the proposed licence holder was not a fit and proper person, as per the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (2016), Section 10 paragraph 3, and paragraph 4(d); that the applicant had contravened a provision of the law relating to housing and landlord and tenant law, as outlined in the presentation and report; and misdirected tenants to provide misleading statements to the Council that the property was not in HMO usage; and therefore the licence application should be refused.

On the proposal being put to the meeting, a recorded vote having been requested by the Vice Chair Councillor O'Hagan, Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Proposal **Members viz 2**	**Against the Proposal Members viz 8**	**Abstentions Members viz 0**
Alderman – Bradley Councillor - Foster	Alderman – Boyle Councillors – Gilmour, Kelly, Logue, McAuley, McLaughlin, O'Hagan and Stewart	

On the proposal put forward, 2 Members voted in favour, 8 against and 0 abstentions.

The proposal was declared not carried.

A further proposal was then put to the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor McLaughlin
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour

that the application for a new HMO licence at [redacted] be granted for the reduced period of 12 months and furthermore during the duration of the licence [redacted] shall appoint and retain the services of a competent person or body (whether incorporated or not) to be involved in the management of the accommodation

On the proposal being put to the meeting, a recorded vote having been requested by the Vice Chair Councillor O'Hagan, Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Proposal **Members viz 8**	**Against the Proposal** **Members viz 2**	**Abstentions** **Members viz 0**
Alderman **–** Boyle Councillors **–** Gilmour, Kelly, Logue, McAuley, McLaughlin, O'Hagan and Stewart	Alderman **–** Bradley Councillor - Foster	

On the proposal put forward, 8 Members voted in favour, 2 against and 0 abstentions it was agreed

that the application for a new HMO licence at [redacted] be granted for the reduced period of 12 months and furthermore during the duration of the licence [redacted] shall appoint and retain the services of a competent person or body (whether incorporated or not) to be involved in the management of the accommodation.

A further proposal was then put to the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McAuley

And agreed by all

that the application be brought back to Committee after the 12 month period for review.

Amended at full Council on 15 December 2025 as follows:

Following discussions in relation to the HMO applications before the Operations Committee and on future applications which may come before Council it was

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Magill that

the Operations Committee minutes be approved with the exception of Items 6.2 and 6.3 for the following reasons:

[redacted]

[redacted]

Following dissension in the Chamber, the Mayor put the proposal to a vote.

On the proposal being put to the meeting 16 Members voted in favour, 16 against and 0 abstentions.

The Mayor used her casting vote in favour of the proposal and it was accordingly declared carried.

Moved by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Operations Committee Meeting of Monday 1 December 2025 with the exception of Items 6.2 and 6.3 be approved and adopted.

ACTION BY: Kevin Bloomfield, Belfast City Council, NI HMO Manager

PROPOSAL TO MOVE OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

any remaining Committee business be conducted in Open Session.

The Chairperson Alderman J Smyth, Alderman Clarke and Councillor Archibald-Brown returned to the Chamber and Alderman Smyth resumed the role of Chairperson.

Councillor Ward left and returned to the Chamber during Item 3.1.

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 PK/GEN/035/VOL5 PARKS AND OPENS SPACES SUB GROUP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the most recent Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 18 November 2025.

2. Summary

At the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting on 18 November 2025, Members considered a detailed report which provided a range of updates from the Parks section. The minutes of the meeting were circulated for Members' consideration.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

the minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 18 November 2025 be approved.

ACTION BY: Paula Robinson, Executive Officer to Director of Estates and Recreation

3.2 L/GEN/005/VOL2, PK/GEN/180 PROPOSED CHANGES TO PARKS, LEISURE AND BEREAVEMENT SERVICES CHARGES AND REVIEW OF PRICING POLICY AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the Parks, Leisure and Bereavement Services Schedule of Charges, Pricing Policies and Terms and Conditions for 2026/2027.

2. Background

Members were advised that an annual review of pricing for Parks, Leisure and Bereavement Services is completed in advance of each new financial year.

In addition to this a review of the Leisure Pricing Policy was undertaken.

3. Pricing Changes

An inflationary rise of 3.5% has been applied across all prices.

In addition to the circulated Schedule of Charges, Summary of Proposed Changes, Pricing Policies and Terms and Conditions, Members' attention was drawn to two key proposed amendments:

1. Introduction of a £10 per person Spa bolt-on at Antrim Forum, which reflects the facility's status as a premium, luxury service beyond the standard health suite provision available at Valley and Sixmile Leisure Centres. The Spa was currently heavily oversubscribed, resulting in a detrimental impact on overall member experience. The proposed bolt-on aims to manage demand and protect service quality.

2. Provide priority booking for sports clubs based within the Borough during the annual allocation process. This approach ensured that Council-owned facilities primarily benefit local clubs and communities.

The EQIA screening document has been reviewed and does not require amendment.

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

approval be granted for the changes to the Schedule of Charges, Pricing Policies and Terms and Conditions for 2026/2027 for Parks and Leisure 2026/2027.

ACTION BY: Glenda James, Parks and Leisure Administration Manager

3.3 L/GEN/056, PK/GEN/205, WM/RC/008 FACILITY CLOSURES AND OPENING HOURS – OPERATIONS 2026/27

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the proposed operating hours and closure schedule for Operations for the 2026/27 period.

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

Members were reminded that annually, in the last quarter of the year, proposed schedules of closure arrangements on Bank and Public Holidays for Council facilities are brought to the relevant committees for approval. A draft schedule of bank and public holiday closures was circulated for Members' reference.

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

approval be granted for the proposed operating hours and closure schedule for Operations for the 2026/27 period with a review of longer Saturday opening hours to be brought before Committee for consideration.

ACTION BY: Paula Robinson, Executive Officer to Director of Estates and Recreation

Having declared an interest in Item 3.4, Councillors Foster and Gilmour left the Chamber.

3.4 L/LEI/002/VOL3 LEISURE GRANT AID PROGRAMME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the recommendations set within the 3rd call of the Leisure Grant Aid Programme.

2. Introduction

Members were advised that for the period 1st August 2025 - 31st October 2025, 31 applications were received, 3 applications were deemed ineligible and 28 met the criteria for funding. Details of the grant programme criteria were circulated.

A table setting out details and recommendations was circulated for Members' reference. Upon approval of the listed grants, the remaining balances in each funding category were outlined below:

Category	**Budget**	**No. of apps to date 25/26**	**Approved spend to date 25/26**	**No. of apps. Call: 3**	**Grants proposed (£)**	**Funding Balance remaining (subject to approval of application)**
Capital Grants	£40,000	5	£39,750	0	0	£250
Grants to Clubs	£40,000	7	£36,585	3	£3,315	£100
Grants to Athletes Bursaries	£50,000	45	£37,876	16	£12,097	£27
Grants to Coaches and Officials Bursaries	£5,000	4	£720	4	£750	£3,530
Sports Event Grant	£30,000	10	£19,706	3	£2,126	£8,168
Defibrillator Grant	£5,000	2	£1,500	2	£2,982	£518
Allocation total	**£170,000**	**73**	**£136,137**	**28**	**£21,270**	**£12,593**
Fitness suite Gold Card	20 Applications	11	8 applications	3	3 eligible	9 applications

3. Financial Position/Implication

The overall budget for the 2025/26 programme is £170,000. £136,137 was previously approved for Call 1 and Call 2. Call 3 totals £21,270. Should approval be given for the grants listed; the total spend to date would total £157,407 with a remaining balance of £12,593. A further call for applications opened on 1 November and would close on 31 December 2025.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

approval be granted for the Leisure Grant Aid Programme, covering the period from August 2025 - October 2025.

ACTION BY: Anna Boyle, Funding Unit Manager

Councillors Foster and Gilmour returned to the Chamber.

3.5 PK/BIO/001 INTERNATIONAL SWIFT CONFERENCE 2026 – IRELAND

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for Council's nominated Swift Champion and a Council Officer to attend the 8th International Swift Conference, scheduled to take place in Castlebar, Co. Mayo, from 27 to 29 May 2026.

2. Background

The International Swift Conference would bring together a diverse community of global enthusiasts, including conservationists, researchers, ornithologists, and citizen scientists, all united by a shared commitment to Swift conservation.

This year's event would provide a comprehensive platform for learning, collaboration, and the exchange of best practice. Attendees would engage with a broad range of topics central to Swift research and protection, including species conservation, biology, rehabilitation, migration patterns, citizen science initiatives, and updates from leading organisations and associations active in the field.

These sessions were designed to foster meaningful knowledge sharing and strengthen connections among individuals and groups working across different aspects of Swift conservation. Participants would have valuable opportunities to develop new partnerships, enhance their understanding of emerging research, and contribute to the advancement of conservation efforts worldwide.

3. Costs

Conference registration was €145 per delegate. This cost included all tea and coffee breaks, lunch on each day of the event, and the closing buffet. Accommodation will be provided in single, bed-and-breakfast rooms at a rate of €130 per person per night. The total cost to the Council was €810.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

approval be granted for Council's nominated Swift Champion and a Council Officer to attend the 8th International Swift Conference scheduled to take place in Castlebar, Co. Mayo, from 27 to 29 May 2026.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

3.6 EH/EHS/LR/001 GRANT OF ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – FIRST ANTRIM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval for an Indoor Occasional Entertainment Licence for First Antrim Presbyterian Church, 82 Church Street, Antrim, BT41 4BA.

2. Introduction

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

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Robin Kirkpatrick	First Antrim Presbyterian Church, 82 Church Street, Antrim, BT41 4BA	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind Indoor Occasional Entertainment Licence 14 unspecified days within 12-month period Monday – Thursday 12:00hrs – Midnight Friday-Saturday 11:00hrs – Midnight Sunday 12:00hrs-Midnight Number of persons – no greater than 200	EL051	New Application

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

Council could decide the following:

I. Grant the licence;
II. Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
III. Refuse the licence;
IV. Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

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

3. Main Report

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

Members were advised that the applicant previously held an Entertainment Licence for this venue but did not renew it due to renovation works at the premises. Consequently, the licence expired on 30 June 2022, and no entertainment had taken place there since.

4. Summary

An application for an Indoor Occasional Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr Robin Kirkpatrick for First Antrim Presbyterian Church, 82 Church Street, Antrim, BT41 4BA.

In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was required on whether to grant the licence.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

an Indoor Occasional Entertainment Licence be granted to Mr Robin Kirkpatrick, First Antrim Presbyterian Church, 82 Church Street, Antrim, BT41 4BA with the following conditions:

a) That all relevant licensing requirements are met

b) That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval

ACTION BY: Katie Kinnear, Environmental Health Officer

3.7 EH/EHS/FC/022 SBS FOOD AND DRINK LTD APPROVAL OF PREMISES AS A COLD STORE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Member approval for the designation of SBS Food and Drink Ltd, Unit 2, Building 13 Central Park Industrial Estate, Mallusk Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 4FS as an approved cold store under Regulation (EC) 853/2004.

2. Introduction

Members were reminded that, since1 June 2006, it had been a legislative requirement to approve product specific food establishments under regulation EC 853/2004.

All cold store premises which handle products of animal origin (including, meat, dairy and poultry products) require approval unless they operate in a way that was exempt under Regulation 853/2004.

3. Key Issues

An application for approval had been received from SBS Food and Drink Ltd, Unit 2, Building 13 Central Park Industrial Estate, Mallusk Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 4FS.

The Council's Environmental Health Section, as the relevant enforcing authority, had inspected the following premises in accordance with Regulation (EC) 853/2004 and other relevant regulations.

Premises	**Address**	**Identification Number**
SBS Food and Drink Ltd	Unit 2, Building 13 Central Park Industrial Estate Mallusk Road Newtownabbey BT36 4FS	UK(NI) ZJ 028

The premises had been inspected and fully comply with current legislative requirements. Full approval of these premises is therefore deemed appropriate.

4. Summary

SBS Food and Drink Ltd had submitted an application for approval as a cold store handling product of animal origin. Following an inspection by the Council's Environmental Health Section, the premises were found to be compliant with all relevant food safety legislation.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

SBS Food and Drink Ltd, Unit 2, Building 13 Central Park Industrial Estate, Mallusk Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 4FS be designated as a cold store under current legislation.

ACTION BY: Lara Nelson, Environmental Health Manager (Food)

3.8 WM/WM/033 REQUEST FOR ECO SCHOOLS SUPPORT 2026/2027

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for funding to continue the Eco-Schools Programme for the 2026/2027 academic year.

2. Introduction/Background

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful co-ordinated the Eco-Schools Programme which aimed to combine pupils' learning with action on improving the environmental performance of the school. The Eco-Schools Programme was extremely popular across the Borough with 74 schools now registered and 40 of these schools achieving the highest level, Green Flag accreditation. Ballyclare, Ballycraigy and Fairview Primary Schools were also recognised as Ambassador Schools for the Borough.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Last year, £10,942 in financial support was agreed for the 2025/26 academic year. The funding provides a vital environmental education role for Council and includes a dedicated Field Officer who supports schools through the Eco-Schools Programme and delivers workshops on waste and recycling, biodiversity and climate change.

A summary of the Eco-Schools engagement for the 2024-25 academic year waees included for Members information(circulated). As of June 2025, 54% of schools in Antrim and Newtownabbey had achieved Green Flag status, ahead of the current NI average of 50%.

Council had received this year's funding request (circulated) from KNIB for the Eco-Schools Programme 2026/27 with two options available.

4. Financial Implication

The funding request for 2026/27 included two funding options:

Option 1: Support of the Programme at a cost of £11,400, which included Wheelie Big Challenge, Eco Schools and core running costs of the programme including a Field Officer in our Council area and top tier promotion of council campaigns and activities every month through Eco-Schools

communication channels. An increase of £458 (4.2%) on last year's amount.

Option 2: Support from the Eco-Schools Programme at a cost of £3,100, which included Eco-Schools communication, training and development to all schools in the Borough.

Officers recommended Option 1 as evidence showed this level of support had directly contributed to improved outcomes in the Borough. Increased Field Officer involvement and tailored Eco-Schools engagement had helped raise Green Flag achievement from 49% to 54% and supported the development of three Ambassador Schools. Option 1 would allow targeted, high-impact support to continue through the Wheelie Big Challenge and other bespoke interventions, representing strong value for money at approximately 54 pence per pupil.

In addition, local schools would benefit from match funding from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for assistance with environmental issues.

Budget provision had been made for these costs in the 2026-27 estimates.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

funding in the amount of £11,400 for the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools Programme 2026/27 be approved.

ACTION BY: Nicola Keown, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer

3.9 PT/CI/066 BUSINESS PLAN 2025/26, PERFORMANCE REPORTING TEMPLATE QUARTER 2

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval for the Business Plan 2025/26, Performance Reporting Template for Sustainability and Estates & Recreation Directorates.

2. <u>Background</u>

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

Specifically, the duties in the Act related to Section84(1), 85(2) and 85(9) whereby the Council had a statutory duty to make arrangements to:

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

In June 2025 the Council approved a strategic performance framework as part of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26.

4. Business Planning

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

The purpose of the Directorate Business Plans were 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 Plans Quarter 2 Performance Reporting Templates for; Sustainability and Estates & Recreation Directorates 2025/26 (circulated) were included at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for Members' Information.

5. Financial Position / Implications

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

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and agreed that

It is recommended that the Business Plan 2025/26 Quarter 2 Performance Reporting Template for Sustainability and Estates & Recreation Directorates be approved.

ACTION BY: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

The Chair advised that Item 3.10 would be taken 'in confidence'.

3.11 PK/GEN/214 ROUNDABOUT SPONSORSHIP UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to inform Members about the current roundabout sponsorship scheme and to outline potential improvements, including opportunities to generate additional revenue.

2. Background

Members were reminded that Council had operated a roundabout sponsorship scheme for several years across multiple sites across the Borough. This scheme provided local businesses with a unique, high-visibility opportunity to promote their services within the community.

The sponsorship scheme offered businesses several advantages, including:

- Increased visibility and presence within the local community
- Positive association with a scheme that enhanced the local environment for residents and visitors
- Alignment with corporate social responsibility objectives
- Year-round exposure, operating 24 hours a day
- High traffic volumes providing extensive public visibility
- Additional PR opportunities through local media
- Cost-effective promotion compared with other advertising channels
- A rare opportunity to display an organisation's name on the public highway

To date all 39 sites had been successfully renewed, with contracts now secured through to March 2026.

3. Cost of Sponsorship

Under the current sponsorship process, there was no established cost matrix or structured pricing framework associated with each individual roundabout. As a result, the value assigned to sponsorship opportunities varies considerably from site to site, creating inconsistencies in how charges were determined and applied. This lack of a standardised approach had made it difficult to ensure fairness, transparency, and predictability for both Council and potential sponsors.

Moving forward, officers proposed to establish defined values for each roundabout. These values would be determined based on several factors, including the roundabout's location, its size, and the traffic volume on the surrounding road network. In addition, each roundabout would be allocated two sponsorship signs as standard. Should a sponsor require more than the allotted number, an additional charge would be applied.

Average Daily Vehicle Count	**Proposed Charges (Per 2 Signs)**
0 -10,000	£600
10,001 – 15,000	£700
15,001 – 20,000	£800
20,001 – 25,000	£900
25,001 – 29,999	£1000
30,000+	£1200

The figures provided represented approximate average daily traffic volumes. The Department for Infrastructure (DFI) had advised that traffic counters were typically not installed directly on roundabouts. Instead, the data reflected the most accurate available averages derived from each approach to the roundabouts.

Roundabout Sponsorship				
Roundabout	**Daily Vehicle Count**	**No of signs**	**Current Annual cost**	**Proposed New Annual Costs**
Kilbegs, Carnbeg	20,000	3	£1,200	£1,350
Stiles Way, The Junction	20,000	4	£750	£1,600
Springfarm	20,000	4	£1,250	£1,600
Blackchapel	12,000/14,000	4	£1,400	£1,400
Fountain Hill, Belfast Road	12,000/14,000	3	£1,000	£1,050
Belmont Heights	9,000/10,000	4	£1,000	£1,200
Hospital South 1 (Antrim side)	12,000/14,000	4	£750	£1,400
Hospital North 2 (Belfast side)	12,000/14,000	3	£1,250	£1,050
Greystone	10,000/12,000	4	£1,000	£1,200
Templepatrick (Hilton)	16,000	4	£1,000	£1,600
Kilmakee, Templepatrick	16,000	?	£1,000	£1,600
Nutts Corner	25,000	6	£1,800	£3,000
Dublin Road	12,000/14,000	3	£750	£1,050
Killead, Int Airport	23,000	4	£1,250	£1,800
Templepatrick, M2 (can't be used, hard surface)	16,000	4	£1,000	£1,600
			£16,400	**£22,500**
Sandyknowes (Mallusk Playing Fields and A8)	35,000/40,000	2	£1,200	£1,200
Sandyknowes (M2 Southbound and Ballyhenry)	35,000/40,000	2	£1,200	£1,200
Sandyknowes (M2 Northbound & Mallusk)	35,000/40,000	2	£1,200	£1,200

Sandyknowes (Antrim Rd)	35,000/40,000	1	£1,200	£1,200
Corrs Corner	16,000	4	£1,000	£1,600
O'Neill Road	20,000	4	£1,000	£1,800
Whiteabbey	35,000	4	£1,700	£2,400
Cloughfern	15,000	3	£850	£1,050
Lindsay's Corner	10,000/12,000	4	£600	£1,200
Abbey Centre	35,000	4	£750	£2,400
Manse Road / Prince Charles Way	15,000/17000	3	£800	£1,200
Manse Road / Beverley Shops	15,000/17000	4	£1,000	£1,600
Coleman's Corner	10,000/12,000	4	£750	£1,400
Northcott Tesco	15,000/17000	3	£800	£1,200
Ballyhenry	15,000/17000	3	£500	£1,200
Houston's Corner	18,000	4	£750	£1,600
Hazelbank	35,000	4	£1,700	£2,400
Longlands	10,000/12,000	4	£1,000	£1,400
Prince Charles Way	18,000	3	£1,000	£1,200
Ballynure	10,000/12,000	4	£750	£1,400
Ollar Valley	10,000/12,000	4	£1,200	£1,400
Jubilee Road	10,000/12,000	4	£1,000	£1,400
NEW: UUJ (Shore Road)	30,000	3	£1,200	£1,800
NEW: Shorelands	30,000	3	£1,200	£1,800
			£24,350	**£36,250**

4. Conclusion

With the implementation of the proposed pricing matrix, it was anticipated that an additional £18,000 could be generated, subject to all sponsorships being renewed. As all current contracts were in place until March 2026, officers would begin preparations for the next round of the sponsorship scheme in February, ensuring it was ready for rollout in the new financial year.

The Director of Estates and Recreation confirmed that Council did not own the Templepatrick, M2 roundabout and undertook to discuss any potential opportunities with the Department and Translink, with an options report brought back to Committee.

Following a query from a Member, the Director of Estates and Recreation agreed to look at increased costs for Sandyknowes roundabout, and bring a report back to a future Committee for Members' consideration.

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

the new pricing matrix for roundabout sponsorships across the Borough be approved.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

The Supplementary report was taken at this point.

3.12 PK/GEN/030 UK FINALS NOMINATIONS - BRITAIN IN BLOOM 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the Council to support the nominations of Ballynure, Randalstown and Antrim for the 2026 Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom competition.

2. Background

Britain in Bloom was one of the United Kingdom's most respected and long-established horticultural initiatives, celebrating community pride, environmental responsibility, and imaginative planting across towns, villages, and cities. Founded in 1963 and now delivered by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), the campaign encouraged local groups, councils, and volunteers to work collaboratively to improve their surroundings through sustainable planting schemes, enhancement of public spaces, and initiatives that support biodiversity and long-term environmental stewardship. Entrants are assessed against three core criteria: horticultural excellence, environmental responsibility, and meaningful community engagement ensuring that success reflects both quality and community impact.

Entry to the prestigious Britain in Bloom UK Finals is highly competitive. To be considered at national level, participants must first secure victory in their regional category, with only the highest-performing groups progressing. This approach ensured that those representing each region at the finals were exemplary in meeting the RHS's demanding standards.

3. Nominations

At this year's Ulster in Bloom Awards, Council achieved notable success, winning three significant categories: 'Small Village', 'Small Town', and 'Large Town / Small City'. These achievements highlighted the dedication of local communities and the effectiveness of Council's ongoing environmental and horticultural initiatives.

Historically, Council had typically received only a single nomination to progress to the Britain in Bloom UK Finals. However, correspondence had now been received from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), acting on behalf of the Royal Horticultural Society, formally

requesting Council support for three nominations, Ballynure, Randalstown, and Antrim for inclusion in the 2026 Britain in Bloom UK Finals.

This unprecedented level of recognition reflected the exceptional performance, dedication, and community commitment demonstrated by each of these areas. Their achievements positioned them as strong and deserving contenders to represent the region on the national stage, further highlighting the ongoing success of Council's environmental and horticultural initiatives.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

approval be granted for Members to support the nominations of Ballynure, Randalstown and Antrim for the 2026 Britain in Bloom Awards competition.

ACTION BY: Paula Robinson, Executive Officer to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 EH/PHWB/012 POSITIVE AGEING MONTH 2025

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to advise Members of the Positive Ageing Month events held throughout the Borough by Environmental Health and Wellbeing Section.

2. <u>Introduction</u>

Members were reminded that the Environmental Health section leads the Age Friendly agenda, celebrating Positive Ageing Month in October in recognition of the contributions of those over 50 years old make to our Borough.

3. <u>Key Issues</u>

Seven "Tea & Treats" events were held across each District Electoral Area, focusing on the Take 5 steps to wellbeing. Activities included boccia, quizzes, groups discussion on key issues such as transport in the Borough. Attendees shared insights on ageing in the Borough. A total of 469 residents participated, with 99% finding the events beneficial and 96% valuing social connections most.

Feedback from attendees was overwhelming positive, with comments including:

- *"I enjoyed the treats and plenty of information given, keep up the good work'*

- *"I enjoyed being told of the support for older people that the Council are providing. It was well presented"*

A Positive Ageing Month Booklet, listing over 100 community groups and events, was distributed both online and through 1,000 printed copies. The booklet is available online at;

https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/community-initiatives/age-friendly/positive-ageing-month/

In addition to "Tea and Treats," several other events were held, including the launch of the Over 50s Council, Be Safe Be Well Antrim, Templepatrick Health Fair, a food program in Ballyclare for individuals living alone, and the "Hop Aboard" day trip, on the train to Coleraine.

To highlight Positive Ageing Month, four social media videos were created. These videos included the Councils "Take a Seat" campaign encouraging business to offer a seat for older people to rest when out shopping and an intergenerational project between Inniscoole Day Centre and Rathcoole Primary School. The videos showcased efforts to reduce isolation and loneliness among older adults and have received over 8,500 views. Videos of the intergenerational project can be viewed at;

antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/community-initiatives/age-friendly/intergenerational-work/

For those unable to attend Positive Ageing Month events, the Council website provides an Age Friendly section with the "News For You" magazine and an "Ask the Age Friendly Officer" feature, where older residents can submit questions to the Age Friendly Officer. A link is below;

https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/community-initiatives/age-friendly/

4. Financial Position

The total expenditure for "Tea and Treats" events amounted to £701.50.

5. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

A Section 75 Screening form and Rural Needs impact assessment in relation to this initiative is included (circulated) with a full Equality Impact Assessment not required.

6. Summary

Seven "Tea & Treats" events were held in October to celebrate the contributions of older people to the Borough. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 96% of participants highlighting social connections as the most valued aspect of the events.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION.

4.2 WM/WM/049 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PERFORMANCE UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to advise Members that Council had successfully maintained the Environmental Management System (EMS), accredited to ISO14001 standard.

2. Background

In order to reduce the organisation's impact on the environment, Council maintains an EMS to ISO14001 standards. The EMS was audited annually by an independent external auditor.

The EMS must meet specific criteria including a commitment by Council to meeting the requirements of environmental legislation and regulations, preventing pollution and striving for continued improvement in environmental performance.

The auditor competed the annual audit in October and confirmed that the Council had successfully maintained the ISO 14001 standard. The audit noted that high levels of compliance and the availability of documented information, demonstrating that the management system was well implemented and understood. It was also evident that the organisation was adhering to its key policy commitments.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.3 WM/WM/037/VOL2 SUPPLY OF CADDY LINERS UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the supply of caddy liners to residents.

2. Background

Members were reminded that in December 2024, changes to the current caddy liner scheme were approved.

It was recommended that residents would receive one free roll of caddy liners, distributed twice a year to residents' homes with further liners available for collection by residents from Council and community facilities.

Members however were advised in May 2025 that due to a change in legislation, local authorities in England were required to introduce food waste collections. This had a significant increase in demand for caddy liners and led to a delay in the supply of caddy liners. Members agreed that as a result of the delay the first delivery of caddy liners would be postponed until October 2025 and in the meantime, caddy liners would continue to be distributed by the contractor when residents present their red tag.

Since approval was granted, the harmonisation of waste collection across the Borough had been implemented, including changes to bin collection dates. As a result of this disruption Officers felt it was prudent that rolling out the new caddy liner deliveries should be delayed.

With the harmonisation project now complete, it was proposed to allow residents time to adjust to the new collection arrangements before beginning the revised caddy liner delivery method. Therefore, it was proposed that the first delivery of liners be deferred until April 2026.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.4 WM/WM/037/VOL2 HARMONISATION OF WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the progress of the Harmonisation of Waste Collection Services in the Borough.

2. Background

Members would be aware that Officers were actively working on the Harmonisation of Waste Collection Services across the Borough along with key stakeholders including, third party waste companies, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and dedicated consultants. Officers had continued to provide Members with a monthly update on how the project was progressing.

3. Key Information

Delivery of wheelie boxes and black bins, along with the uplift of blue bins and the legacy 240L black bins, was completed as scheduled by the week commencing 17 November. The distribution phase was undertaken over an

11-week period, with contractors remaining on site for an additional two weeks to complete outstanding mop-up activities.

Implementation of the communications plan was ongoing. Further social media activity, including the use of influencers, targeted messaging, and the production of informational videos, continued to be developed and delivered. Additional education and awareness sessions for schools, community groups, and housing associations had been completed, with further sessions scheduled.

Both the Bin Checker and the Chat Bot were now live on the Council website, providing residents with access to collection calendars, service information, and other relevant details.

In November, Council reported delays in the daily collection of containers across the Borough. These delays were not related to the roll-out programme but were the result of staffing shortages impacting overall collection operations. Unfortunately, these challenges continued for several weeks, necessitating the use of overtime and weekend working to ensure completion of scheduled collections.

External monitoring of the roll-out and collection service had been completed by WRAP, supported through funding from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). WRAP officers undertook assessment and monitoring activities, with Council officers actively participating throughout the process.

Council officers continued to engage proactively in contract management, including ongoing monitoring of the collection service. This work was focused on ensuring high standards of service delivery and maintaining robust and effective contract compliance throughout the programme.

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

this item be deferred to Full Council, with an opportunity for contractual issues to be discussed 'in confidence'.

ACTION BY: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

4.5 WM/WM/047 ANNUAL NORTHERN IRELAND ENVIRONMENTAL BENCHMARKING SURVEY 2025

1. <u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the submission to the Annual Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking Survey 2025.

2. <u>Introduction</u>

Business in the Community's Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking

Survey was NI's principal benchmarking exercise that helped businesses to examine, review, compare and improve their environmental performance, and champions organisations who were demonstrating action for real change.

The survey was open to all organisations in Northern Ireland and was widely recognised as NI's principal environmental benchmarking exercise.

Since 1998, the Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking Survey had pushed the environmental agenda to the fore and in 2025 more than 150 organisations of all sizes and from a range of industry sectors took part, including, construction, education, engineering, and food and drink.

Participating organisations were ranked by level: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze or Green. The higher the overall score, the higher the organisation would rank. There was no limit on the number of organisations that could fall into any one 'band'.

This year Council secured the prestigious Platinum Award in the Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking Survey. As the only Council in Northern Ireland to attain this highest level of recognition, this achievement underscored Council's unwavering commitment to environmental excellence and sustainability leadership.

Proposed by Councillor McLaughlin
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

5.1 A number of Members congratulated St Ergnat's Moneyglass Senior Ladies GAA club on reaching the All Ireland Finals, due to take place on Saturday 13 December. They acknowledged this achievement and wished them well for the upcoming finals match.

NO ACTION

5.2 The Director of Estates and Recreation advised, in response to a Member's query on Executive Floor security at Mossley Mill, that keycard access is to be reinstated.

NO ACTION

5.3 Following a query from a Member in relation to dog fouling, the Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing advised that further methods of enforcement were being considered and this matter would be brought back to a future Committee for consideration.

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

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

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

Councillor Logue left and returned to the Chamber during Item 3.10.

3.10 L/LEI/SD/021 BAWNMORE MUGA PITCH

[redacted]

The Borough Lawyer provided guidance to Members regarding the way forward.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and agreed

that Officers liaise with the Education Authority and NI Housing Executive to establish the options available. Officers to prepare a report in relation to taking ownership of the land including costs, and this would be presented to a future Operations Committee for consideration.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations and Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 IN CONFIDENCE WM/ARC21/4/VOL 11 ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the October Joint Committee meetings.

2. Introduction

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

3. Previous Decisions of Council

All previous papers had been noted.

4. Main Report

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

- 30 October 2025

Members were reminded that these documents were confidential and may be legally privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure so therefore Members should not disclose this information to any third party and the information must be kept secure.

5. Summary

[redacted]

[redacted]

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

It is recommended that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.4 IN CONFIDENCE WM/RC/001 PROJECT UPDATE ON CAPITAL WORKS AT CRAIGMORE HRC

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an update on the capital works currently being undertaken at Craigmore Household Recycling Centre.

2. Previous Decisions of Council

Following Council approval of the Business Case in January 2024, tenders were invited and the contractor for the works together with a total predicted project cost (works & fees) of £[redacted] was approved by Council in July 2025.

The scope of works included:

- Drainage repairs
- Replacement of waste bay walls
- New drainage elements
- Concrete and asphalt surfacing repairs
- Site layout/traffic flow improvements

3. Issues Encountered

Works commenced on 15 September 2025, with a planned completion date of 5 December 2025. While significant progress had been made to date, the contractor had encountered several unforeseen issues, including:

- additional drainage failures not identified during the initial survey
- damage to concrete base of waste bays
- the discovery of underground rock that requires breaking out

As a result of the above, the completion date was currently under review. The option to accelerate the work was currently being investigated to have the facility fully operational by 19 December, subject to favourable weather conditions. The cost for this was awaited.

4. Finance Position

Due to unforeseen issues, as listed above, and if acceleration to works was accepted, it was anticipated that the outturn cost would marginally exceed the approved budget of £[redacted]. A further report would be brought to Council on the final costs.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

a report on the final cost of the Project will be brought back to Committee for information.

ACTION BY: Darren Purdy, Head of Waste Operations and Reggie Hillen, Head of Capital Development

PROPOSAL TO MOVE OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

any remaining Committee business be conducted in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that the audio recording would recommence.

There being no further Committee business the Chairperson thanked Members, Officers and IT staff for their attendance and wished all a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. The meeting concluded at 9.06pm

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MAYOR

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