



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD AT ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2022 AT 6.30 PM

In the Chair: Councillor N Kelly

**Members Present :
(In Person)** Aldermen - T Burns, L Clarke, M Girvan,
J McGrath and J Smyth
Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, A Bennington, R Foster,
J Gilmour and J Montgomery.

**Members Present:
(Remote)** Councillors A Logue

**Non Committee
Members:
(In person)** Councillor W Webb

**Non Committee
Members:
(Remote)** Councillors V McWilliam, A McAuley and M Stewart

Officers Present : Director of Operations - G Girvan
Director of Parks & Leisure Operations - M McDowell
Director of Waste Operations – M Lavery
Deputy Director of Operations (Environmental Health,
Building Control and Property) - C Todd
ICT Helpdesk Officer – David Mason
ICT Change Officer – Andy Cole
Mayor & Member Services Officer – S Fisher
Member Services Officer – E Skillen

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

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

Although the COVID restrictions had been relaxed, to manage numbers and minimise risk, members of the public and press continue to access those parts of the Council meetings which they are entitled to attend through the livestream on the Council's website.

1 APOLOGIES

Alderman F Agnew
Councillors R Swann and N Ramsay

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.2 - Councillor J Montgomery

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 L/LEI/VLC/001 USE OF THE VALLEY LEISURE CENTRE FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION BALLOT COUNT ON 4TH – 6TH MAY 2023

Members were advised that the Valley Leisure Centre would be used for the election count for the Local Government Elections from Thursday 4th May to Saturday 6th May 2023 inclusive.

The Centre would be affected as follows:

- (a) the main sports hall and ancillary halls would be closed from 09.00am on Thursday 4th May 2023 to allow the building to be secured.
- (b) total closure of the centre on Friday 5th May and Saturday 6th May 2023 inclusive.

The Centre would re-open on Sunday 7th May 2023.

The pitches could remain open, being independently operated from the pavilion, and MORE members would be informed of the alternative facilities at Sixmile and Ballyearl.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

approval be given for the Valley Leisure Centre to be closed as outlined in the report to facilitate the Local Government Election Count.

ACTION BY: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

3.2 PK/GEN/117 NORTHERN IRELAND FOREST SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Members were reminded that Council had contributed annually to the Northern Ireland Forest Schools Programme. The Northern Ireland Forest School Association (NIFSA) is a charity that promotes, develops and delivers sustainable environmental education programmes. The Forest Schools Programme is an innovative educational approach to outdoor play and

learning, with a philosophy to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences.

In 2021 – 2022, the Forest Schools Programme delivered an active training programme across six schools and nurseries in the Borough.

School	DEA Area
St. MacNissi's Primary School	Threemilewater
Round Tower Integrated Primary School	Antrim
St. Joseph's Nursery School	Antrim
Carnmoney Primary School	Glengormley
Thornfield House School	Threemilewater
Parkhill Primary School	Antrim

For the 2022/23 year, NIFSA had again requested £5000 to assist in delivering the programme. All schools and nurseries within the Borough were invited to register their interest in joining the programme by completing an online form.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

a contribution £5000 is provided to Northern Ireland Forest School Association to assist with the delivery of the Forest Schools Programme and that a link to the programme be circulated.

ACTION BY: Angela Ross, Parks Development Officer

3.3 PK/GEN/003 SUCCESSIONAL BULB PLANTING

Members were reminded that from 2018 Council's Parks Service had delivered an annual successional planting scheme across all DEAs.

The specialist supplier had indicated that due to an increase in costs relating to transportation, staff and machinery, the successional planting plan had increased on last year's figures of £38,150. The planting costs for this year were estimated to be in the region of £49,000.

The following locations were proposed to be planted:

- Antrim, Fountain Hill
- Randalstown Castle Road
- Ballyclare Sixmilewater Park
- Ballynure Roundabout
- V36 Park
- Lillian Bland Park
- Monkstown, Jordanstown Road
- Roundabouts at Nutts Corner, Ballynure, Sandyknowes, and Templepatrick

Clarification was provided on the nature of successional planting within the summer planting programme.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed that

successional bulb planting be deferred for the current year.

ACTION BY: Angela Ross, Parks Development Officer

3.4 PK/CEM/022 DOAGH CEMETERY (CHURCH LANE BURIAL GROUND)

Members were reminded that currently, Council have responsibility for the maintenance of Doagh Cemetery, officially called Church Lane Burial Ground. This entails two grass cuts per year with maintenance also carried out from time to time involving cutting back shrubs and works undertaken to trees. Burials and administration of plots currently sits with a Cemetery Committee which keeps its records manually and which makes its own arrangements for digging graves through undertakers. A request had been received from the Cemetery Committee, for Council to take responsibility for both burials and administration.

The ancient graveyard, which appears to date back to the 1300s has, on average, one burial per year. Due to its age, the layout is such that manual digging of graves is required. It is worth noting that with the older cemeteries, grave records are not always accurate. Council's Cemeteries Admin staff have considerable experience in working through this type of issue.

Members were advised that research carried out following the request indicates that ownership of the land was vested in the local authority through a Schedule of Burial Grounds vested by the Commissioners of Church Temporalities in Ireland relating to the Irish Church Act 1869.

In considering the request, Members may wish to note that the number of burials are likely to reduce over time, whilst from a Cemeteries Administration perspective, the existing cemetery map would need to be transferred to the new cemetery software system, Plotbox, in line with the mapping underway for all cemeteries under Council ownership or stewardship. In assuming responsibility for the cemetery, Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations would apply.

There are a mix of cemetery arrangements in place currently - those owned, developed and operated by Council, a number which were transferred to the legacy councils and which are maintained by Council which also has responsibility for burial and a small number where maintenance only was provided.

Proposed by Councillor Archibald-Brown
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed that

responsibility for the administration and arrangement of burials at Church Lane Burial Ground by Council be approved and that it be known as Church Lane, Burial Ground, Doagh.

Prepared and Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 PK/GEN/001/VOL3 COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMME

Update on Commemorative Programme Sponsorship of Benches and Trees.

Benches

Year	Total	Location
Qtr 1 2022	6	Antrim Stadium (1), Carnmoney Cemetery (2) Crumlin Cemetery (1), Kilbride Cemetery (1), Valley Park (1)
Qtr 2 2022	3	Carnmoney Cemetery (1) Crumlin Cemetery (2)

Trees *

*Tree planting is only carried out Qtr 3 & 4 (Nov to Feb)

All requests were compliant with Council policy.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.2 WM/WG/2 WINTER OPERATIONS PLAN

From November to April, the Council maintains a Winter Operations Plan to assist staff in delivering Council services as safely and efficiently as possible during the winter months. The Plan also includes provision for gritting services all Council facilities and designated areas like town centres and car parks, the delivery of the waste collection services during adverse weather, and snow clearance operations.

The Plan is reviewed every year and as winter approaches, it was deemed prudent to advise Members on its provisions of the Plan (circulated) which includes Appendix 2 that outlines the areas which will be gritted including how and when this will occur.

The Plan outlines the notification procedure for gritting operations which would be activated if the designated officer believes there is a strong possibility of ice occurring based on Met Office warnings and media weather reports.

The procedure takes into account micro climatic differences across the Borough, for example, areas may be gritted in Glengormley due to sub-zero temperatures but there would be no requirement to do so in Crumlin as the temperature is above freezing.

The Plan aims to have Council facilities gritted before staff arrive at work and the main town centres to be serviced before shops and businesses open at 9am, although Members should be aware that gritting operations cannot take place during periods of heavy rain or snow and are dependent on available resources.

The Plan also addresses the possible impact of adverse weather on the waste collection services. In the event of severe weather, road conditions would be assessed and operations revised to reflect the increased risks to staff and public safety.

Community Winter Resilience Kits

As per Members request, Council also has three Community Winter Resilience Kits, including salt spreader, salt, grit box, snow shovels, ice grippers, gloves, and hi vis vests, for each DEA. The contact details of the community groups or individuals would be kept on a database in case resources need to be shared across the Borough if ice coverage is patchy. Community groups or individuals receiving the Kits would also be supplied with health & safety guidance notes.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.3 WM/SC/01 GRANITE SURFACES – CLEANSING REQUIRMENTS

Members were reminded that the public realm schemes in Antrim, Ballyclare, Glengormley and Randalstown had included granite paving and cleaning requires a specialist machine. Council purchased pavement scrubbing machines in order to maintain the appearance of the granite.

While the vehicles have reduced the requirement for cleans by specialist contractors but the nature of the staining often caused by greasy food products, vehicle oil or chewing gum, Officers were exploring other cleansing options as we seek to maximise the streetscape aesthetics to encourage economic growth in town centres.

As a result, officers would be trialling a hot water sweeper from 7 November 2022 to ascertain its effectiveness at keeping a high level of appearance at these public realm areas.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

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

5 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

5.1 IN CONFIDENCE PK/GEN/171 QUOTATION FOR THE RIGHT TO SELL FOODSTUFFS AND HOT/SOFT DRINKS IN COUNCIL PARKS

Contract Period 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023 (with an option, by the Council, to extend for a further period of 12 months, subject to review and performance)

A procurement process had recently been completed for the provision of foodstuffs and drinks in parks.

Invitations to quote were issued to vendors who expressed an interest in providing this service. Following assessment and having quoted the highest bid the following services had been awarded.

Hot Drinks / Light Snacks

Wallace Park, Templepatrick - Pablo's Espresso Bar



Lillian Bland Park, Glengormley – Pablo's Espresso Bar



Ice Cream / Soft Drinks

Hazelbank Park, Newtownabbey – Mr George's Ices



Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.2 IN CONFIDENCE L/LEI/VLC/005 VALLEY LEISURE CENTRE ROOF, CAFÉ, CONCOURSE & UNDER CROFT

Members were advised that regular building surveys were carried out across all Council facilities including Leisure Centres to assess the ongoing maintenance and repair needs. Based on a series of condition surveys three areas had been identified at the Valley Leisure Centre

which require urgent attention. The Centre had undergone several refurbishments in recent years which have enhanced the look and feel of the customer facing areas however due to the age of the building there had been significant deterioration to the structural integrity, in particular to the roofing fabric, causing reoccurring instances of water penetration into the building.

Centre Roof

In 2019, a detailed and comprehensive report was commissioned assessing the overall condition of the roof, insulation and energy usage with a view to providing options and recommendations to address the roof deterioration. The report also referred to additional health and safety requirements for accessing the roof to undertake general maintenance. The works, including additional health and safety, professional fees and contingency total [REDACTED] and were previously approved as part of Council's capital estimates.

Café & Concourse

An initial investigation over the performance of the existing kitchen extract led to the commissioning of a condition survey for the area. Recommendations were made to replace the fan along with the supporting duct work and remedial works to ensure adequate fire and smoke compartmentation. A further report was conducted in March 2022 to assess the feasibility of a full refurbishment of the café and kitchen to include an extension of the café onto a resurfaced concourse. The works including professional and contingency fees are estimated at [REDACTED].

Swimming Pool Under Croft

A further condition survey was completed for the swimming pool under croft. The survey had identified degradation of the concrete underneath the swimming pool. Further deterioration would be accelerated by chlorides from the pool and the under croft would ultimately become unsafe to the extent that the pool may have to be closed. The works including professional and contingency fees is estimated at [REDACTED].

It was anticipated that the above works would have minimal impact on service and would be delivered in a live operational environment. Provision for funding the works had been made within the Council Repairs and Renewal reserves.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Councillor Robinson and agreed that

The matter be deferred pending a further report.

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

Amended by Council 31 October 2022.

5.3 IN CONFIDENCE WM/arc21/4/VOL9 arc21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

The papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting were circulated for:

- 29 September 2022

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.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the papers be noted.

NO ACTION

5.4 IN CONFIDENCE WM/CON/005 RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT CONTRACT PROCUREMENT

Members were reminded that Council agreed to participate in a joint procurement exercise for a Residual Waste Treatment Contract, coordinated by arc21. This exercise was to replace the existing contract that results in the residual waste being taken to Cottonmount Landfill Site and was not connected to the Hightown planning application.

Treatment of residual waste, as opposed to disposal, would be through a combination of treatments including the removal of recyclables where possible, the recovery of energy through thermal processes and the landfilling of any subsequent remaining waste. This type of treatment contract is compliant with UK legislation and would be deemed to be more environmentally advantageous than straight landfill disposal.

Five councils in the arc21 group were participating in this joint procurement exercise and as the initial part was ongoing with the mandatory requirements of the contract, like corporate information, insurance requirements, and regulatory consents, being evaluated. Once this has been completed a further procurement stage is required, e.g. submission of contract rates, with award expected in December 2022 and commencement in April 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.5 **IN CONFIDENCE** PK/GEN/120 GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE - SIXMILE CEMETERY

Members were advised that Council currently had an estimated 13 years of burial capacity across its cemeteries and in response was actively searching for potential cemetery locations as well as currently constructing a Crematorium, which is scheduled to open in Summer 2023. As a result of the continued and expected increase in growth in the number of cremations, coupled with the limited capacity of burial space, demand was likely to increase for the provision of interment of ashes.

Council currently provide a Garden of Remembrance in Carnmoney, Ballyclare and Mallusk cemeteries for the interment of ashes, however, there is no provision in the Antrim area. Having assessed potential locations in the Antrim area, Sixmile Cemetery was identified as the most suitable location, providing adequate space for 160 plots and potential for further expansion to meet any future demand.

In order to progress the matter, an Economic Appraisal had been completed and was circulated together with a Section 75 Screening Form. An EQIA was not required.

The Appraisal considered a number of options and following assessment recommends Option 2: Development of a Garden of Remembrance at an estimated cost of [REDACTED]

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

approval be given for the Economic Appraisal for the development of a Garden of Remembrance together with the Section 75 Screening Form as set out in Option 2, Development of a Garden of Remembrance at an estimated cost of [REDACTED].

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

5.6 **IN CONFIDENCE** PK/BIO/019 CONFIRMATION OF FUNDING - GREENWAYS AND ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECTS

Members were reminded that approval was given in July 2022 for submission of a number of projects of Greenway and Active Travel schemes to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) for potential funding.

New applications for projects were submitted as set out in the maps circulated aim to further develop sections of, (i) part of the Mallusk/Hightown to Gideon's Green route and (ii) Doagh to Larne Greenway – Ballyclare Section. Despite Officer's submitting the application for sections of the Mallusk/Hightown to Gideon's Green route to be considered as an Active Travel project and therefore attract 100% funding, the Department had deemed this a Greenway project and as a result attracts 50% funding.

A Letter of Intent had now been received from DfI in the amount of [REDACTED], (50% of project costs). The total estimated cost of the projects at the time of submission was [REDACTED]. The offer is subject to completion and submission of business cases (circulated) by 27 September 2022. Due to the short turnaround required to meet the deadline, Officers had written to the Department to request an extension to allow for Council approval. The profile of spend for each project is as follows:

Project	Project Cost	DfI Funding (@50%)	Council contribution
Mallusk/Hightown to Gideon's Green	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Doagh to Larne Greenway	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
TOTAL:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Members were advised that the Letter of Intent and above costs also include part of the Ballyclare section of Greenway, including the bridge at Memorial Park that was previously approved by Council in 2021 for funding through the same scheme. The Department had indicated that the Business Case for this section of the Ballyclare Greenway project be resubmitted for consideration, given that they were unable to provide a response within 2021/22.

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

approval be given;

- (i) for the Business Cases relating to the DfI Letter of Intent for Mallusk/Hightown Gideon's Green route and the Ballyclare Section of the Doagh to Larne greenway as set out above,**
- (ii) for total match funding by Council of [REDACTED], subject to final approval of the Business Case by DfI**

ACTION BY: Elaine Upton, Countryside Officer

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
 Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further Committee business, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 19.07 pm.

MAYOR