



27 April 2022

Committee Chair: Councillor A Logue

Committee Vice-Chair: Alderman M Girvan

Committee Members: Aldermen – F Agnew, T Burns, L Clarke, J McGrath and J Smyth  
Councillors – A Bennington, M Brady, R Foster, J Gilmour, N Kelly, J Montgomery, R Swann and R Wilson

Dear Member

**MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in the **Council Chamber, Mossley Mill on Tuesday 3 May 2022 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacqui Dixon".

Jacqui Dixon, BSc MBA  
**Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council**

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

### **1 APOLOGIES**

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

### **3 PRESENTATION**

3.1 Health Intervention Action Plan

### **4 ITEMS FOR DECISION:**

4.1 Marine Litter Capital Grant

4.2 Price Reduction of 3G Soccer Pitches during Period of Grass Pitch Maintenance

### **5 ITEMS FOR NOTING:**

5.1 Government Response to Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging Consultation

5.2 Big Spring Clean 2022

5.3 Hazelbank Pavilion

5.4 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA): Environmental Challenge Competition

5.5 Affordable Warmth Scheme 2022-2023 Budget

5.6 Consultation on Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) System and Operator Approval

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

6.1 arc21 Joint Committee Papers

6.2 Transition to Low, Ultra Low and Zero Emission Fuels

### **7 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

## REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON TUESDAY 3 MAY 2022

### 3 PRESENTATION

#### 3.1 L/LEI/SD/018 PRESENTATION - HEALTH INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN

Members are reminded that one of the key themes of the Council's Leisure Strategy (2017-2030) is Programming and Participation. Through innovative and effective programming, the aim is to provide sustainable participation across age groups, and be receptive to tackling wider health issues by providing more opportunities for vulnerable and inactive groups. An update was provided to Members at the February meeting of Committee, in relation to funding secured for two specific programmes – Exercise for Mental Health and Teen Fitness.

Following discussion at the meeting, it was highlighted that a wider, comprehensive programme of health interventions is in place and to this end a Health Intervention Action Plan is being developed for consideration by Committee. A presentation setting out the proposed programme will be given by Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure. Following discussion of the presentation, it is proposed that a draft Plan will be brought to Committee for consideration in June.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the presentation be noted and any amendments, additions or suggestions fed into the draft Plan for consideration by Committee in June.**

Prepared by: Matt McDowell, Deputy Director of Operations (Parks and Leisure)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

## 4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 4.1 WM/SC/01 MARINE LITTER CAPITAL GRANT

Members are reminded that Council recently secured £40,000 of funding from Live Here Love Here's Marine Litter Capital Grant Scheme for the purchase and installation of unique contactless water fountains, solar powered compaction litter bins and two-minute litter pick boards for both Lough Shore Parks in the Borough. Match funding of £40,000 was provided by Council.

The water fountains and solar powered bins were installed in March 2022 but have both already had a positive impact in the Parks. The water fountains have already saved the equivalent of 2,000 plastic bottles in the first 4 weeks of operation and the solar bins, due to their closed apertures, have completely eradicated incidents of littering through birds removing waste from bins and scattering around the base of the bins. The sensors in the bins have also been very effective in saving time and resources as the bins are only emptied when they are approaching being full. For example, previously the bin at the entrance to Rea's Wood in Antrim had to be checked every day on foot around 500 metres of path whereas the new bin sensor means that bin levels can be checked via an app and the bin is emptied only as and when required - usually every 2-3 days.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful has announced a further release of funding through the Marine Litter Capital Grants Scheme up to a maximum of £40,000 of funding at 50% of project costs for 2022/2023. The application process opens on 9 May 2022.

In line with the Council's Litter Action Plan and the successful installation of the equipment listed above, a further application for four water fountains and fourteen additional solar bins for other eligible 'marine environments' in the Borough is being submitted. The terms and conditions of the funding programme remain the same with Council match funding to be provided from in year Waste budgets (2022/23). It is proposed that the water fountain be located at the Newtownabbey Way and the River Maine in Randalstown with 2 portable units for Council sponsored events at Garden Show Ireland and the Halloween Spooktacular event at V36 subject to a successful application. The solar bins would be added to those already installed at the 2 Lough Shore Parks and Hazelbank to replace existing litter bins.

**RECOMMENDATION: that approval be given for match funding of £40,000 for an application to Live Here Love Here's Marine Litter Capital Grant Scheme for water fountains and solar bins.**

Prepared by: Tara McAleese, EMS and Sustainability Officer

Agreed by: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Contracts and Michael Laverty, Deputy Director of Operations (Waste and Fleet)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

#### **4.2 L/GEN/005 VOL 2 PRICE REDUCTION OF 3G SOCCER PITCHES DURING PERIOD OF GRASS PITCH MAINTENANCE**

Members are reminded that grass playing pitches enter a period of rest and maintenance from May to September each year in order to ensure their availability during the playing season and can withstand the rigours of the winter weather.

In May 2021, approval was given for 3G pitches to be made available at the same rate as grass pitches during the summer months - due to the delay in the season caused by restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Officers have this year seen increased demand through leisure bookings for use of grass pitches for summer leagues and pre-season friendlies which unfortunately cannot currently be accommodated due to the maintenance schedule.

To resolve this issue this summer season and going forward, it is proposed that 3G pitches can be booked at the same rate as grass pitches during the months of June, July and August. The price is for a two-hour duration which allows adequate time for a match to be played, and would be £42 for adults or £21 for juniors.

**RECOMMENDATION: that approval is given to amend pricing for 3G pitches, to that of grass pitches as set out above.**

Prepared by: Matt McDowell, Deputy Director of Operations (Parks and Leisure)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

## 5. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### 5.1 WM/WM/40 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PACKAGING CONSULTATION

Members are reminded that Department for the Environment, Farming, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), in conjunction with the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and the Department for Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland consulted on Extended Producer Responsibility in April 2021. The Governments have now collated and analysed the feedback to the consultation and published a response, **enclosed**). This response sets out changes in the proposed Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme as a result of the consultation process. EPR is being introduced to ensure that producers pay the full net cost recovery for the management of the collection and disposal of all packaging waste that they place on the market. This will move the cost of collecting, treating and disposing of packaging waste away from local ratepayers and Council and place it with the packaging producers in order to encourage them to reduce their use of packaging and to use packaging which is easier to recycle.

In response to the consultation on EPR, Council stated the following:

- In general supportive of the EPR scheme;
- It would be preferable for the introduction of the scheme to be in 2023 but the timescale was challenging and a prudent approach was recommended with a possible phased approach;
- Support for a mandatory, producer-led takeback obligation on sellers of filled disposable paper cups with larger businesses starting by the end of 2023 and all businesses by the end of 2025;
- Proposed a single agreed cross product label to indicate whether a product is recyclable to assist public understanding;
- A new kerbside recycling collection service proposed for plastic film from 2026/27 and while Council welcomed increased recycling, the limited processing and end markets for this material currently available meant we were unable to support this proposal at present;
- The 'necessary costs' payable to Council to include the cost of collection of packaging materials within the scope of this new legislation (except the DRS materials). These materials to be collected through wheelie boxes/blue bins, household recycling centres, black bins or street sweeping and litter picking operations. The Council supported payment linked to good practice and collected on a quarterly basis;
- Support for the proposal that packaging waste from businesses to be covered by the Regulations.

As a result of the consultation process the four Governments have agreed to the following changes in the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme initially proposed:

1. EPR will be implemented in a phased manner from 2024 rather than in 2023 as per Council response. This means from 1 April 2024 Council will

receive payments for the collection and treatment of household packaging waste and packaging in street bins managed by local authorities;

2. In England and Northern Ireland there will not be payments for packaging waste that has been littered but Scotland and Wales are considering steps to obligate producers for these costs and are developing proposals;
3. Packaging waste from businesses will not initially be included in EPR but a cross-sector taskforce will be established to develop options on the best method to include this waste stream;
4. All compostable and biodegradable packaging will be required to be given the “do not recycle” label, allowing time to build evidence that it can be safely collected and composted separately;
5. The EPR scheme will be reviewed after two years of its operation when the work of the business waste taskforce (see point 3) and progress in reducing the volumes of packaging in street bins and littered on the ground will be addressed.

As previously reported, Council had been made aware by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful there were concerns that ground littered packaging waste would not be eligible for funding and Members had asked for the issue to be raised with the DAERA Minister. The notification that ground littered packaging waste is not eligible in England and Northern Ireland under EPR was received before the letter was sent to the Minister and as a result the letter was amended to request that this decision was reconsidered and any proposed measures planned for Scotland and Wales to be assessed to ascertain whether they are applicable to Northern Ireland.

While a detailed response to the Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers which was consulted on at the same time as EPR, is expected soon, the Government paper does state that England, Wales, and Northern Ireland would implement an “all-in” DRS for single-use drinks containers containing between 50ml and 3L of liquid in line with the approach in Scotland. The materials covered will be steel and aluminium cans, and plastic bottles with England and Northern Ireland including glass bottles in the scope of EPR rather than DRS. This decision to exclude glass was as a result of concerns of glass quality being adversely affected by the reverse vending machines required for DRS.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.**

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

Agreed by: Michael Laverty, Deputy Director of Operations (Waste and Fleet)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

## 5.2 WM/SC/01 BIG SPRING CLEAN 2022

Members are reminded that the Litter Action Plan, approved in November 2021, included support for the Big Spring Clean 2022 and the potential to reward volunteers with vouchers for use in local businesses. The Big Spring Clean is Northern Ireland's largest community clean-up campaign and the weekend of 6 – 8 May is designated as the 'Big Spring Clean Weekend'.

Officers have been seeking volunteers to participate in the Big Spring Clean in the Borough and approached a number of businesses seeking support. Henderson Foodservice has responded to offer the following:

- 100 reusable "Take Me Home" cups for volunteers;
- Branded water bottles made from recycled materials for any children involved in the event;
- A number of loaded loyalty cards with the value of an agreed number of drinks. These would be purchased by Council, in advance, at a subsidised rate (£1.50 per drink), and provided to volunteers as part of the initiative and can be used at any Henderson outlet displaying the Barista branding.

At the time of writing, there are over 100 volunteers enrolled to carry out a litter pick during the Big Spring Clean 2022 and it is proposed to provide a loyalty card with the value of 2 drinks for the first 250 volunteers.

Enforcement Officers have also been engaging with organisations like McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Tim Hortons to encourage them and participate in spring cleans.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.**

Prepared by: Leanne Smits, Waste Education & Awareness Officer

Agreed by: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Contracts and Michael Lavery, Deputy Director of Operations (Waste & Fleet)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations



### 5.3 PK/GEN/173 HAZELBANK PAVILION

Members are reminded that following approval of a short-term let of Hazelbank Pavilion by Abbey Sure Start in 2018 and subsequent extensions, current arrangements are due to end in July 2022. Officers have recently been advised that the group will be moving to new facilities at Abbots Cross Primary School and will be vacating the Pavilion in July.

In relation to the capital project, which includes redevelopment of the Pavilion as a café, new play park, replacement toilet provision and maze and rose garden, the business case is currently being developed for consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.**

Prepared by: Matt McDowell, Deputy Director of Operations (Parks and Leisure)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

#### **5.4 PK/GEN/107, PK/GEN/151, PK/BIO/019 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DAERA): ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE COMPETITION**

Members are reminded that in 2021, Council secured funding through the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs' (DAERA) Environmental Challenge Competition for the construction of paths in the Valley Park project (part of the Mallusk/Hightown to Gideon's Green route) as well as for a section of the Doagh to Larne Greenway through Ballyclare. The Fund reopened briefly for applications on 2 March, closing on 30 March.

Due to the tight timescales involved an application was submitted for a project which has been identified as having significant biodiversity value - creation of a wetland area in Threemilewater Park. Officers had previously highlighted an area known locally as 'Nelly's Dam' highlighted on the map enclosed, as having potential for wetland development, however, an initial site visit undertaken by an ecologist indicated that a feasibility study would be needed by a qualified hydrologist to assess whether there would be an adequate supply and retention of water to ensure the sustainability of a wetland feature.

In addition, a formal ecological appraisal would be required so that further ecological advice can be provided on the profile of the wetland, the protection of existing ecological assets and the biodiversity enhancement of the site.

As a result, the application was submitted seeking funding for these two studies, estimated to cost in the region of £25,000 in total.

Should the application be successful and the studies return favourably, Officers will update Committee with a detailed specification and associated budget for the wider wetland project and any potential for external funding.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.**

Prepared by: Elaine Upton, Countryside Officer

Agreed by: Matt McDowell, Deputy Director of Operations (Parks and Leisure)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

## 5.5 EH/PHWB/003 AFFORDABLE WARMTH SCHEME 2022 – 2023 BUDGET

Members are reminded that the Affordable Warmth Scheme is funded by the Department for Communities. The scheme aims to support the most vulnerable in terms of heating and energy efficiency. Under the Scheme, the number of referrals required to be submitted by Council for 2021/2022 totalled 360, or 30 per month.

Correspondence has been received from the Department for Communities, **enclosed**, regarding the Affordable Warmth Scheme Budget and Referrals for the current financial year, 2022-2023. The correspondence indicates that due to uncertainties surrounding funding of the Scheme, the referral rate for 2022/2023 will be 30 per month for May and June dropping to 20 per month for the remainder of the year, equating to a total of 260 referrals for the financial year.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.**

Prepared by: Alison Briggs, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Health & Wellbeing)

Agreed by: Clifford Todd, Deputy Director of Operations (Environmental Health, Property and Building Services)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

## 5.6 WM/WM/40 CONSULTATION ON REFORMS TO THE PACKAGING WASTE RECYCLING NOTE (PRN) AND PACKAGING WASTE EXPORT RECYCLING NOTE (PERN) SYSTEM AND OPERATOR APPROVAL

As stated in the report on the Government response to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), no agreement has been achieved for payments under the EPR scheme for non-household (business) packaging waste resulting in the Governments deciding to delay the implementation of EPR for this waste stream.

The delay in this new payment mechanism, means that that existing scheme Packaging Recycling Notes (PRNs) and Packaging Export Recycling Notes (PERNs), which were going to be revoked and replaced by EPR, now need to be retained. PRNs and PERNs were introduced to allow for additional payment, based on supply and demand market fluctuations, by packaging producers to the waste collection and reprocessing sector when they recycled designated wastes like paper, card, plastics, and wood to encourage an increase in recycling rates.

The current PRN and PERN scheme has been criticised by the National Audit Office for the volatility and unpredictability of prices, a lack of transparency, and a reliance on export markets. As a result, the Governments are consulting on a number of changes to the current scheme including:

- A mandatory requirement for all reprocessors and exporters that recycle or export packaging waste to register with a regulator;
- Additional reporting requirement for accredited exporters including the submission of evidence to demonstrate that a waste shipment has reached the stated waste treatment destination;
- Mandatory requirement for inspections of overseas waste treatment facilities;
- Increased powers to the relevant regulator, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, to allow greater monitoring and powers to sanction when required.

The PRN and PERN scheme does not directly affect Council and the consultation is technical in nature and therefore it is proposed to let arc21 respond on behalf of the member councils. The arc21 response has not been finalised and will be reported to Committee in June 2022 for completeness.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.**

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

Agreed by: Michael Laverty, Deputy Director of Operations (Waste and Fleet)

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations