



1 November 2023

Committee Chair: Councillor J Burbank

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor V McWilliam

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

Councillors R Foster, J Gilmour, AM Logue, H Magill,  
A McAuley, E McLaughlin, M Ní Chonghaile,  
L O'Hagan, L Smyth and M Stewart

Dear Member

### **MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Monday 6 November 2023 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Majella McAlister".

Majella McAlister  
**Deputy Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council**

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

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

Tel: 028 9448 1301

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

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# REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2023

## 4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 4.1 L/LEI/AP/008 DEVELOPMENT OF A CRICKET PITCH AT ALLEN PARK

Members are reminded that in 2021, the Council approved £21,500 in financial support for Muckamore Cricket Club to extend the height of the ball stop fence on the secondary cricket pitch at their facility in Antrim. The proposed work was estimated to cost £27,500 and aimed to mitigate a health and safety risk to the new neighbouring housing development, ensuring that matches for all age groups could be played with no restrictions applied to the game. Further assessments from structural engineers stated that, due to ground conditions, the budget should be increased to an estimated £100k, with no guarantee of success.

Currently, the Club has six senior mens' teams, a ladies' section, and several youth teams. The inability to use the secondary cricket pitch significantly impacts the Club's ongoing development. Measures put in place by the Club include bowling to only one end of the wicket, and also relocating matches to other, less suitable venues.

Local DEA Members and Officers have been liaising closely with the Club on the matter, and have found a possible solution through unused land at Allen Park. It is proposed that the area seen on the plan (**enclosed**) be developed into a cricket pitch at a cost of £23,000, which will include the creation of an artificial wicket, purchase of sight screens, a portable scoreboard, and a small shelter for the teams to congregate. The pitch will be maintained by the Parks team based at Allen Park and available for the Club or any other group to book in the normal manner through the leisure booking team, with the Club given priority booking rights. It is also proposed that a match rate of £90 and a training rate of £30 be applied to bookings.

#### **RECOMMENDATION: that approval be given to**

- i. develop a cricket pitch at Allen Park at a cost of £23,000: and**
- ii. include the booking rates as set out above within the Leisure Pricing Schedule**

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

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

## 4.2 PK/GEN/212 PEACE PLUS: 'WALKING FOR ALL' PROGRAMME

Correspondence; a copy of which is (enclosed) has been received from Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI) requesting that the Council agrees in principle to become a partner in a Peace Plus application for the "Walking for All" programme. ORNI is a not-for-profit organisation that facilitates responsible outdoor enjoyment, making it easier for people to embrace the outdoors responsibly.

The aim of the Walking for All programme is to develop a coordinated approach to walking programmes across Northern Ireland, led by a steering group consisting of relevant stakeholders including Public Health Agency, Sport Northern Ireland, Councils, and Health Trusts. The programme will train and support volunteers, enabling them to become walk leaders and organise regular group walks in rural communities with populations of 18,000 or less. This will benefit participants by increasing physical activity, promoting social interaction, and enhancing mental well-being, ultimately complementing the Council's other health intervention programmes.

ORNI has identified Peace Plus as a potential funding source, and intends to apply under Theme 4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities – Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion. This funding is expected to sustain the programme for three years.

The proposal is to assign a 'Walking Coordinator' to each Council area in Northern Ireland. ORNI will fund the salary and other administrative costs, while the Council will act as the employing authority and provide office space and administrative support. The Coordinators' role will be a temporary position for the duration of the funding, with its main function to recruit potential 'Walk Leaders' and provide training and support, enabling the Leaders to conduct walks in their rural communities.

**RECOMMENDATION: that approval be given, in principle, to be a named partner in Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland's application to Peace Plus for the "Walking for All" programme and, if successful, to act as the employing authority for the member of staff funded to deliver the programme, alongside office space and admin support as an 'in kind' cost.**

Prepared by: Elaine Upton, Parks Development Officer

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

#### 4.3 PK/GEN/035/VOL4 URBAN GRASS CUTTING

Members are reminded that since 2016, the Council has annually approved an arrangement with the Department for Infrastructure to provide additional urban grass cuts in high-traffic areas throughout the Borough. In addition to the two cuts that are the agreed responsibility of the Department, an additional five cuts are provided with the costs incurred by the Council. For Members' reference, the specific locations included in the arrangement are set out in the [enclosure](#).

The Department has recently contacted Officers and advised that, due to an increase in costs within their new Environmental Contract, costs for the 2024 grass cutting season have increased from £10,000 per cut to £16,000 per cut, resulting in the total payable to the Department increasing from £50,000 to £80,000.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the arrangement with the Department for Infrastructure to provide an additional five urban grass cuts in 2024 at a total cost of £80,000 be approved.**

Prepared by: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Parks & Leisure Operations

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

#### **4.4 PK/GEN/035/VOL4 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES SUB GROUP**

At the most recent Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting on 3 October 2023, Members considered a detailed report. Arising from the meeting a series of recommendations were made for consideration by the Operations Committee. The minutes of the meeting are enclosed for Members' consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 3 October 2023 be approved.**

Prepared by: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Parks & Leisure Operations

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

#### 4.5 PK/GEN/177 BELFAST HILLS PARTNERSHIP

Members will be aware that the Council is a key partner in the Belfast Hills Partnership. This partnership was initially formed with the legacy Newtownabbey Council and later continued with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council following its establishment in 2015. The Partnership undertakes a wide range of programmes including habitat and species surveys, environmental improvement schemes, native tree propagation, tree planting, and community engagement.

Within the Borough, recent projects have included infrastructure works on Carnmoney Hill, tree-planting at Glas-Na-Braden Wood, outreach with local schools, and events held at the Valley Park and Glas-Na-Braden Glen. The Partnership's Annual Report is **enclosed** for Members' reference. Council provides practical and financial assistance to the Partnership, most recently. In November 2022, an annual contribution of £14,463 was approved for a three-year period.

Correspondence has been received from the Partnership, a copy of which is **enclosed** requesting that the Council consider an increase in funding of £4,393 per annum due to significant cost increases. If approved, the annual amount payable to the Partnership for the next two years will be £19,036.

**RECOMMENDATION: that an increase of £4,393 to the annual financial support provided to Belfast Hills Partnership, totalling £19,036 per annum for 2024/25 and 2025/26, be approved.**

Prepared by: Elaine Upton, Parks Development Officer

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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



#### 4.6 WM/WM/032 POLICY FORUM FOR NORTHERN IRELAND CONFERENCE

The Policy Forum for Northern Ireland has organised an Online Conference on “The next steps for the development of a circular economy in Northern Ireland” to be hosted on Friday 26 January 2024.

The Online Conference will be a timely opportunity for key stakeholders and policymakers to discuss priorities, strategies, challenges and opportunities for driving forward waste reduction, and overcoming barriers to the development of a circular economy.

A summary of the current agenda is **enclosed** for Members' information.

It is proposed that The Chair and Vice-Chair or their nominated substitutes attend along with one officer at a rate of £260 per delegate.

**RECOMMENDATION: that attendance of the Chair and Vice-Chair, or their nominated substitutes at the Policy Forum for Northern Ireland Conference, along with one officer, at a total cost of £780, be approved.**

Prepared by: Gillian McGrath, PA to the Director of Sustainability

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

#### 4.7 WM/S/002 MARINE LITTER GRANT APPLICATION

Members will be aware that the Council was previously successful in securing almost £75,000 grant funding from Live Here Love Here's Marine Litter Capital Grant funds. The funding was previously matched by the Council and was used to buy and install the following equipment:

- Litter pick action boards to assist public and community groups litter pick across Council Loughshore sites and Castle Gardens;
- 30 solar litter bins for Hazelbank, Jordanstown Loughshore and Antrim Loughshore Park;
- 8 contactless water fountains installed in sites across the Borough; and
- 2 portable contactless water fountains to be available for use at Council events, like Garden Show Ireland and Spooked Out at V36, to increase the sustainability of the events.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful has announced the release of further funding through the Marine Litter Capital Grants Scheme again up to £40,000 for 2023/2024, with applications closing on 9 November 2023. In line with the Council's Litter Action Plan and Plastic Pledge, it is proposed that the Council applies for further funding to deliver a period poverty reusable products scheme and reusable nappy scheme.

These schemes will not only tackle marine litter problems from sanitary waste, but will reduce the amount of plastic going to landfill. The application and delivery of the schemes will be in partnership with the Community Planning and Environmental Health teams. Similar to the terms and conditions of 2022/23 funding, the Council must match the funding awarded by 50%.

It is envisaged that the Council will apply for approximately £30,000 with £15,000 coming from existing Waste Management budgets.

**RECOMMENDATION: that an application for further Marine Capital Funding to tackle marine litter in the Borough be approved and, if successful, that match funding of £15,000 be provided by the Council.**

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

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

#### 4.8 WM/WM/037/VOL2 REFUSE AND RECYCLING PUBLIC HOLIDAY COLLECTIONS 2024/25

The arrangements for refuse and kerbside recycling collections for Public Holidays in 2024 are set out below for consideration. The proposed alternative collection days for 2024 are:

<b>Public Holiday</b>	<b>Legacy Antrim Households</b>	<b>Legacy Newtownabbey Households</b>
St. Patrick's Day Monday 18 March 2024	No change 18 March 2024 (Monday)	No change 18 March 2024 (Monday)
Good Friday Friday 29 March 2024	No collection required	No change 29 March 2024 (Friday)
Easter Monday Monday 01 April 2024	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Friday to catch up. 02 April 2024 (Tuesday)	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Saturday to catch up. 02 April 2024 (Tuesday)
Easter Tuesday Tuesday 02 April 2024	As above (Wednesday)	As above (Wednesday)
May Day Monday 06 May 2024	No change 06 May 2024 (Monday)	No change 06 May 2024 (Monday)
Spring Bank Holiday Monday 27 May 2024	No change 27 May 2024 (Monday)	No change 27 May 2024 (Monday)
12th July Friday 12 July 2024	No collection required	No service. Collection rescheduled for this day to 13 July 2024 (Saturday)
13th July Monday 15 July 2024	No change 15 July 2024 (Monday)	No change 15 July 2024 (Monday)
Summer Bank Holiday Monday 26 August 2024	No change 26 August 2024 (Monday)	No change 26 August 2024 (Monday)
Christmas Day Wednesday 25 December 2024	No Service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week, through to Friday to catch up. 27 December 2024 (Friday)	No Service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week. 27 December 2024 (Friday)
Boxing Day Thursday 26 December 2024	As above (Saturday)	As above (Saturday)
Friday 27 December 2024	No collection required	As above (Monday)
Monday 30 December	No change	As above

2024	30 December 2024 (Monday)	(Tuesday)
Tuesday 31 December 2024	No change 31 December 2024 (Tuesday)	As above (Thursday)
New Year's Day Wednesday 01 January 2025	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Friday 3 January 2025 to catch up. 02 January 2025 (Thursday)	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Saturday 11 January 2025 to catch up. 03 January 2025 (Friday)

\* Legacy Antrim collections are Monday-Thursday, legacy Newtownabbey collections are Monday-Friday.

In order to simplify the communication message from the Council to the public regarding alternative collection dates, all affected bin collections, in both legacy Antrim and Newtownabbey, will be moved to the next available collection day until catch up is achieved on a free day e.g. Friday or Saturday.

For information, the previously agreed arrangements for the 2023 Christmas holiday period are detailed in the table below.

<b>Public Holiday</b>	<b>Legacy Antrim Households</b>	<b>Legacy Newtownabbey Households</b>
<b>APPROVED November 2022</b>		
Monday 25 December (Christmas Day) 2023	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week. 27 December 2023 (Wednesday)	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week. 27 December 2023 (Wednesday)
Tuesday 26 December (Boxing Day) 2023	No service. As above. 28 December 2023 (Thursday)	No service. As above. 28 December 2023 (Thursday)
Wednesday 27 December 2023	As above (Friday)	As above (Friday)

Thursday 28 December 2023	As above (Saturday)	As above (Saturday)
Friday 29 December 2023	No collection required.	As above 02 January 2024 (Tuesday)
Monday 01 January 2024 (New Year's Day)	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week, through to Friday 05 January 2024.  02 January 2024 (Tuesday)	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week, through to Saturday 13 January 2024.  03 January 2024 (Wednesday)

Residents in the Borough will be advised of these alternate arrangements via the usual means of the Borough Life, bin stickers and leaflets, social media, and via the Council's website.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the collection arrangements for refuse and recycling bin collections for Public Holidays in 2024, as set out above, be approved.**

Prepared by: Catherine Cunningham, Waste Contracts Manager

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

#### 4.9 EH/EHS/002 ANIMAL WELFARE – SERVICE DELIVERY UPDATE

Members are reminded that since April 2015, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (MEA) has acted as a Sub-Regional Lead Council responsible for the delivery of the Animal Welfare Service across the Northern Region (Mid and East Antrim; Antrim and Newtownabbey; and, Causeway Coast and Glens) with 100% funding from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

At the September Operations meeting, Members were advised that the Permanent Secretary of DAERA informed Northern Ireland Councils that due to budgetary constraints, they would no longer be able to provide funding as they had done for the past 11 years, highlighting that Councils had the statutory responsibility for the welfare of non-farmed animals.

Consequently, there will be no allocation of funds (formally £1.25 million) to Northern Ireland Councils in this current financial year. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is currently reviewing the Department's decision on behalf of the 11 Councils including the option of a Judicial Review.

While Fermanagh and Omagh's legal challenge is ongoing, MEA is continuing to deliver the joint service and is content to do so until at least March 2024 with Council and Causeway Coast and Glens paying their allocation of costs. This would equate to approximately £140,000 for Council. MEA has sought confirmation from Council and Causeway Coast and Glens that the necessary funds will be transferred to them if DAERA does not provide the required funding. As this animal welfare service to non-farmed animals is a statutory requirement, it is proposed to acknowledge MEA's request and confirm that the Council will pay this contribution if required.

As Members will be aware, Officers have been reviewing annual expenditure to estimate the end of year outturn. Due to the uncertainty of the funding from DAERA it was felt prudent to include the £140,000 contribution in the current outturn projection.

**RECOMMENDATION: that the use of Council funds to finance the animal welfare service during 2023/24 to enable continued service delivery at a cost of approximately £140,000 be approved, and that Mid and East Antrim Council be notified of this decision.**

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

#### **4.10 PK/BIO/012 NORTHERN IRELAND FOREST SCHOOL ASSOCIATION – FOREST SCHOOLS PROGRAMME**

Members may be aware that the Council contributes 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 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 2022-2023, NIFSA successfully delivered a training programme across seven schools and nurseries in the Borough.

Correspondence has been received from NIFSA (**enclosed**), requesting a contribution of £7,000 to support the Programme for the 2023/2024 academic year. All schools and nurseries within the Borough will be invited to register their interest by completing an online form, with one from each District Electoral Area then selected to participate.

**RECOMMENDATION: that a contribution of £7,000 to support the delivery of the Northern Ireland Forest Schools Programme within the Borough be approved.**

Prepared by: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Operations, Parks and Leisure

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

## 5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

### 5.1 PK/PG/005 ACCESS AND INCLUSION FUNDING PROGRAMME 2023/24

Members are reminded that at the October Operations Committee, approval was granted to submit applications for the Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Funding Programme. The Department expressed a particular interest in receiving applications for sensory gardens and accessible equipment for play parks, as well as projects that would positively impact sustainability and address climate change. Two Council-led projects were submitted for consideration and have been subsequently approved for funding by the Department.

1. Installation of a sensory garden at Memorial Park, Ballyclare
2. Purchase and installation of additional accessible equipment for play parks

In addition, Officers collaborated closely with the external organisation 'All About Us - ASD Teens,' but unfortunately, their application was unsuccessful as it did not align with the scope of the funding objectives for this year. Parkview Hockey Club had also expressed an interest in applying to the fund but opted not to complete an application at this time.

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

Prepared by: Elaine Upton, Parks Development Officer

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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



## 5.2 PBS/PS/2 & PK/PG/005 PLAY-PARK AUDIT 2023

Members are advised that in 2016, following the convergence of the two legacy Councils, an audit of play-park provision was undertaken. Based on the information from the audit, Council's 34 play-parks were ranked in terms of their condition and the value of works required to improve the facilities as necessary. A workshop for Members was subsequently facilitated to discuss the options to proceed.

Since the 2016 audit, the Council has developed a new play-park at Antrim Loughshore, with a further new development scheduled to be completed at Belfast City Playing Fields, Mallusk, in spring 2024. Members may also be aware of the potential to develop a play-park in the Mayfield area of Glengormley, although no further detail is available at this time.

A similar audit of play-parks has been conducted over the past number of months with the aim of providing an updated position and recommendations for action. The audit surveyed the condition of every piece of equipment, surface, and ancillary items such as fencing and gates, etc. Each play park has been categorised, then ranked according to its current condition and the value of works required to improve the facilities as necessary. It is intended to again schedule a workshop in the coming weeks for Members to discuss options on how to deliver on the recommendations made from the audit, before a final report is brought forward to Committee for approval.

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

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

### **5.3 PK/GEN/021 & PK/GEN/022 & PK/GEN/030 ULSTER IN BLOOM/NI AMENITY COUNCIL BEST KEPT/BITAIN IN BLOOM**

Members are advised that the Council submits nominations annually to the Ulster in Bloom and the Northern Ireland Amenity Council Best Kept Competitions. Ulster in Bloom is coordinated by the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and aims to showcase partnership working between local community groups and Councils in relation to horticulture and 'in bloom' displays.

In addition to horticulture, the other two scoring criteria include environment and community, which aim to instil local pride, create awareness of the environment, and attract involvement from a range of ages and abilities.

#### **Ulster in Bloom**

In 2023, the Council submitted nominations for 16 towns and villages from across the Borough, and in what was the most successful year to date, achieved the following results:

- Ballynure: Winner Best Small Village
- Randalstown: Winner Best Small Town
- Antrim: 2nd place in Best Town
- Ballyeaston and Toome: 3rd place Best Small Village

Additionally, Antrim was nominated for a special award in the "Most Improved" category, while Richard Wallace from Ballynure and District Friendship Group won the "Community Champion Award".

#### **Northern Ireland Amenity Council Best Kept Awards**

The Northern Ireland Amenity Council has hosted the Best Kept Awards for over 60 years. As a charitable organisation, they collaborate with local Councils, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and their corporate sponsors, George Best City Airport, to enhance the appearance of towns, villages, housing areas, schools, and healthcare facilities.

In 2023, the Council submitted 17 nominations for these awards, achieving the following results at the awards ceremony that was recently held at Mossley Mill:

- Antrim – Winner of the Best Kept Large Town
- Randalstown – Winner of the Best Kept Small Town
- Ballynure – Winner of the Best Kept Small Village
- Neillsbrook - Best Kept Large Housing Area

In addition, Mallusk was the winner of The Welcome Award category, which is open to first-time entrants and those towns or villages that have been absent for 5 years. The Best Kept Community Achiever Award was won by Una Johnston from TIDAL (Toome).

Randalstown won the award for the "Best of the Best" / Best Overall, achieving the highest overall score in all sections of the competition."

**Britain in Bloom**

Members are reminded that the Council recently approved the nomination of Ballynure and District Friendship Group to represent NILGA in the 2023 Britain in Bloom Finals. At the recent award ceremony held in London, which was attended by Chair of Operations, Head of Parks Operations and members of the Group, Ballynure were awarded a Silver Gilt Medal. In addition to this achievement, Richard Wallace from the Group received a Community Champion Award.

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

Prepared by: Elaine Upton, Parks Development Officer

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

#### **5.4 EH/PHWB/017 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – HEALTH AND WELLBEING ANIMATION**

The Environmental Health team has created an animated presentation designed to showcase and highlight the main areas of work undertaken by the Health and Wellbeing section.

The animation highlights the “Making a Difference” branding that the Health and Wellbeing section use across all areas of its work. The focus of the animation is to increase awareness of the five core areas of work undertaken by the section. These areas encompass Age Friendly, Supporting the Most Vulnerable, Home Accident Prevention, Nutrition, and Tackling Poverty and Improving Energy Efficiency.

The animation will be used at community events and will prove an informative tool to residents, stakeholders and community groups about the work of the section. It has been created to allow small sections to be clipped and put out on social media channels.

The animation can be accessed at the following link:

<https://youtu.be/sa0XubbQTLg>

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

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

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

## **5.5 WM/WG/002 WINTER OPERATIONS**

### **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 at 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 on an annual basis in order to improve the delivery of the service. A copy of the updated Plan is (**enclosed**) for Members information and includes Appendix 2 that outlines the areas which will be gritted and when this will occur.

The Plan outlines the notification procedure for gritting operations which will 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 will 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 will be assessed and operations revised to reflect the increased risks to staff and public safety.

### **Community Winter Resilience Kits**

The 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 will 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 will also be supplied with health and safety guidance notes.

### **Community Grit Piles**

Following Members' requests last year, it is proposed to maintain the community grit piles this winter. A list of the locations is included in the Plan and grit will be supplied in the event of prolonged periods of adverse weather.

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

Prepared by: Gillian McGrath, PA to the Director of Sustainability

Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Sustainability and  
Matt McDowell, Director of Parks & Leisure Operations

## 5.6 L/LEI/001 UK ACTIVE AWARDS 2023

Members are reminded that Ballyearl Arts & Leisure Centre and Valley Leisure Centre were both shortlisted as finalists for the UK Active Awards 2023 in the category of Regional and National Leisure Centre of the Year. The Council was also shortlisted as a finalist for the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Award in recognition of the standard of inclusive programming that takes place across the Council's leisure centres.

Elected Members and Officers attended the Awards Ceremony on Thursday 26 October 2023 in Leeds, where Ballyearl Arts & Leisure Centre was announced as the winner in the category of both Regional and National Leisure Centre of the Year.

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

Prepared by: Vicki Kyles, Personal Assistant to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

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