



25 February 2021

Committee Chair: Alderman P Brett

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor N Kelly

Committee Members: Aldermen - F Agnew, M Cosgrove and P Michael
Councillors - H Cushinan, S Flanagan, R Foster, P Hamill,
L Irwin, A McAuley, N Ramsay, S Ross, M Stewart and R Wilson

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE POLICY & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

A remote meeting of the Policy & Governance Committee will be held in The Chamber, Mossley Mill on Tuesday 2 March 2021 at 6.30pm.

All Members are requested to attend the meeting via "Zoom".

To ensure social distancing Chairperson of the Committee may attend the Council Chamber.

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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**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 2 MARCH 2021**

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 CCS/CPRM/033 COVID RECOVERY – MARKETING FOR RECOVERY

Members are advised that Officers will make a presentation at the meeting.

4. ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 FI/AUD/3 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Members are advised that the Department of Finance issued an update of the HM Treasury's Orange Book – Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts (through DAO (DoF) 04/20) which replaced the previous version issued (DAO 15/05) in October 2004. This Orange Book was tabled at the Audit Committee in June 2020.

Officers have undertaken a review of this guidance and have developed a Risk Management Strategy (**enclosed**) which is aligned to the five principles of risk management within the Orange Book and sets out the Council's approach to the effective management of risk.

The Council is exposed to a variety of risks which are threats that an event or action will adversely affect our ability to achieve our objectives. As such appropriate risk management processes are required to ensure risks are identified, assessed and treated.

These processes now involve a broader more practical look at risk management incorporating governance, leadership, integration, collaboration and continuous improvement. It also introduces the "three lines of defence" model which outlines clear roles and responsibilities for those involved in risk management.

Following approval of the Risk Management Strategy, Risk Management Procedures for the Council will be reviewed and updated to ensure that they are aligned with the Strategy and the five principles of Risk Management.

The Risk Management Strategy has been reviewed and approved by the Corporate Leadership Team in February 2020.

The Risk Management Strategy has been screened for the need for an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA). Both an EQIA and a DPIA are not recommended.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Committee approves the Risk Management Strategy.

Prepared by: Paul Caulcutt, Head of Internal Audit

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4.2 G/IG/7 REVIEW OF SECURE DESK POLICY

The purpose of the Secure Desk Policy is:

- to set guidelines in order to reduce the risk of a security breach, data being lost, fraud and information theft
- to create a culture of staff responsibility in relation to the handling and care of personal data and other confidential information
- to ensure that the Council adheres to the obligations placed upon it by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 as amended, replaced or extended from time to time and any other applicable legislation.

The policy is also designed to help reduce the amount of paper that is used by reducing unnecessary printing.

A review of the Council's policy is now required under a two-year review cycle.

The review has identified that no changes are required. The policy is enclosed.

RECOMMENDATION: that the reviewed Secure Desk Policy be approved.

Prepared by: Helen McBride, Information Governance Manager

Agreed by: Liz Johnston, Head of Corporate Recovery

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4.3 G-LEG-321-10 A6 TOOME BY-PASS: STOPPING-UP OF PRIVATE ACCESS

Members are advised that correspondence has been received from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) proposing to carry out a stopping-up of the roadway on the A6 Toome By-Pass under Article 68(1) of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993. A copy of the correspondence and map are enclosed for Members' information.

Council has no interest in the lands and officers have no issues with this proposal.

DfI Roads are requesting comments in relation to this proposal and have granted Council an extension after 2 March 2021 to make any comments on this matter.

The Committee's instructions are requested.

Prepared by: Deirdre Nelson, Paralegal

Approved by: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer & Head of Legal Services

4.4 HR/GEN/035 NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY – CALL FOR EVIDENCE – PROTECTION FROM STALKING BILL

Members are advised that correspondence **enclosed** has been received from the Northern Ireland Assembly in relation to the Protection from Stalking Bill.

The Committee for Justice would welcome any views/comments on the content of the Bill.

Written submission should be structured to address specific clauses of the Bill. If appropriate, it should include any amendments you wish to propose to the text of the Bill. Information regarding the Bill can be obtained from the Assembly's website <http://nia1.me/4fm> or can be provided on request by emailing the Committee at protectionfromstalkingbill@niassembly.gov.uk.

The closing date for written submissions is **16 April 2021**.

Members may wish to note the correspondence or respond on a corporate, individual or party political basis.

The Committee's instructions are requested.

Prepared and Approved by: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

4.5 FI/FA/8 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires the council, in carrying out its capital finance functions, to have regard to the current editions of the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes and the Prudential Code.

The council is therefore required to set out its Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy which sets out the council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

Copies of the above policy and strategies are **to follow**

RECOMMENDATION: that:

- i) the Treasury Management Policy be approved**
- ii) the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 be approved**
- iii) the Annual Investment Strategy 2021/22 be approved**

Prepared by: Ann Hamilton, Financial Controller

Agreed by: John Balmer, Head of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5. ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 G/MSMO/27 ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP MINUTES

Members are advised that a meeting of the Elected Member Development Working Group took place on Monday 1 February 2021 and a copy of the minutes is enclosed for Members' information.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Minutes of the Member Development Working Group Meeting held on Monday 1 February 2021 be noted.

Prepared by: Fiona Gunning, Organisation Development Officer

Approved by: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

5.2 HR/HR/019 AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

Members are reminded that agency staff are used across the Council to provide temporary cover for absence such as:

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts

The use of agency staff is subject to a rigorous approval process, which requires the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team and there is budgetary provision for the majority of posts filled via departmental salary budgets, salary contingency and grant funding.

The table appended provides an update for Members on the use of agency staff as at January 2021 as compared to January 2020. It excludes limited ad-hoc agency cover, which is necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice (see Appendix 1 **enclosed**).

Appendix 2, **enclosed**, sets out expenditure on agency workers in January 2021.

The cost of agency staff has decreased for the period of 1 April 2020 to 31 January 2021 at 3.9% of all staffing costs compared to 7% for the same period last year. Agency expenditure has significantly reduced following the release of agency workers in May 2020.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Pauline Greer, Human Resources Manager (Acting)

Approved by: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

5.3 CCS/COR/005 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – DIGITAL PLATFORMS - PERFORMANCE UPDATE 2020/21

Members are reminded that an update was provided in December which gave an overview on the use of digital platforms to communicate and engage with our residents and customers.

This report provides a further update on the progress made so far on the Council's current performance on digital communications, and includes benchmarking performance against other Councils.

TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE

The table below illustrates our organic growth rates as we come to the end of the financial year.

Channel	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	LinkedIn	Website hits
Current audience	25,407	9,516	3,652	737	2.25M
Target 2020/21	25,000	10,000	5,000	500	>2.3M

Targets set for Facebook, LinkedIn and website have all been achieved. Twitter is progressing slowly and will be close to the target by end of year.

As the content on Instagram is pictorial, with no events, Council initiatives and restricted movement through lockdown, there has been a slower increase in followers. Moving into the summer months and with the lifting of some restrictions, we plan to focus on increasing our followers on this platform particularly the younger age group (18-24 years old).

The target for hits to Council's website during 2020-21 is >2.3M. Since April we have registered 2.25M hits/visits from over 441k users, and it is anticipated that we will exceed this target for the year. Throughout lockdown the website and social media have formed the core communications with our residents.

Comparison with other Councils

Comparative figures are only available for Facebook. These show that Antrim and Newtownabbey is consistently in the top three Councils outside Belfast.

When compared against peers our key platform Facebook performs well, particularly on how our audience engages with our content and we have started to use this platform more to deliver much of Council's virtual content e.g. Mayor's Charity Musical Concerts and One World of Culture Celebrations.

This is something we want to retain and we remain mindful that the quality of our content (judged by engagement) has a key bearing on the amount of our audience that sees it (reach).

Our Marketing for Recovery Plan will be finalised and reported to the Council in April. The Digital Roadmap will enable us to use our current platforms to further engage our residents, businesses and visitors. This will complement the use of our core publication, Borough Life, which will very soon recommence.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Nicola McCullough, Media and Marketing Manager

Approved by: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

5.4 G/MSMO/002 POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY (TERM OF COUNCIL)

Members will be aware that memberships to external bodies, which are deemed to be positions of responsibility, are allocated in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and are normally agreed at the Annual Meeting.

In relation to arc21:

1. The Alliance Party's nominating officer has advised they will no longer be taking up the arc21 position of responsibility (position 54 in the Positions of Responsibility table).

Position 55 is a position for the DUP and the nominating officer from the DUP has advised that Councillor Bennington will take up this position.

2. In addition, Councillor Goodman has advised that Councillor Kinnear will be the nomination for Sinn Féin, in place of Councillor McGrann.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Liz Johnston, Head of Corporate Recovery

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5.5 HR/ER/002 LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Members are advised that the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) has concluded its consultation on the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees.

The Council participated in the consultation and its feedback is reflected in the final Code (**enclosed**).

A training programme will be delivered on the revised Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared & Approved by: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

5.6 HR/GEN/019 MANAGING ATTENDANCE

The purpose of this report is to update Members about the position relating to the management of attendance from April 2020 – January 2021 (summary enclosed).

April 2020 – January 2021 - Attendance Update

Excluding COVID-19 sickness absences, attendance has improved during this current financial year. The average days absence per employee was 6.68 against a target of 10.23 days, which represents 3.55 days within target.

The number of employees with 100% attendance was 84%, which marks an improvement when compared to the same period the previous year (64% of employees had full attendance). Our 100% attendance target this year is 60%

Employee Engagement and Wellbeing Strategy

The Council's Employee Engagement and Wellbeing Strategy continues to support its management of attendance.

Embedded within the Strategy is the clear understanding that health & wellbeing is about proactively avoiding illness, and optimising employees' physical and mental health. The Council has established a holistic approach, with a range of interventions across the organisation to include:

- Training for line managers on absence management
- Streamlining staff sickness reporting procedures
- Communication of occupational health service, employee assistance programmes and counselling
- Ongoing delivery of health events linked to the top three reasons for absence each year
- Monthly absence reporting to the Corporate Leadership Team
- Implementation of our Mental Health Toolkit
- Using our established network of Mental Health Champions
- 100% attendees get a letter of recognition for full attendance, from the Mayor
- Low cost staff leisure membership
- On-site access to cancer screening via the Action Cancer 'Big Bus' twice yearly.

HR Partners will continue to work with Heads of Service and Managers to monitor long term absence cases, to proactively accomplish employee health and wellbeing and improve the ongoing management of attendance.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared and Approved by: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

5.7 CCS/EDP/10 DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2020-2025

Members are advised that the Council is required to submit a Disability Action Plan (DAP) to the Equality Commission. The DAP is a statement of the Council's commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity for disabled people and compliments its Equality Scheme under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The DAP is designed to ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order through to 2016.

The Disability Discrimination Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life

These are collectively referred to as the "Disability duties".

Members are reminded that the Council approved a draft Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2020-2025 in November 2020, and this was subject to a 12 week consultation period. The consultation was promoted through the Council's digital channels and it was also issued to a consultee list of over 300 stakeholders. A total of 4 responses were received; 3 organisations and 1 individual. Appendix 1 **enclosed** summarises the feedback received and proposed responses.

The DAP has been updated to reflect the feedback and the final version highlighted amends in Appendix 2 **enclosed**.

RECOMMENDATION: that the consultation feedback is noted and that the final Disability Action Plan is approved.

Prepared by: Ellen Boyd, Customer Accessibility and Equality Officer

Approved by: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

5.8 G/MSMO/2 CHANGES IN NOMINATION, MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND EXTERNAL BODIES BY THE ALLIANCE PARTY

Following the resignation of Councillor Vicki McAuley, the Electoral Office have confirmed that Andrew McAuley has been returned to the Airport vacancy for the Alliance Party, effective from 24th of February 2021.

Following this confirmation, the Nominating Officer has advised of the following changes in Memberships to Committees, External Bodies and Working Groups with immediate effect:

Standing Committees	
Policy & Governance Committee	Councillor Andrew McAuley
External Bodies and Working Groups	
Peace IV	Councillor Andrew McAuley
Children and Young People Working Group	Councillor Andrew McAuley
Building Positive Relations working Group	Councillor Andrew McAuley
Belfast Hills Partnership	Councillor Andrew McAuley
Local Government Partnership on Travellers Issues	Councillor Andrew McAuley
DEA Member Engagement Group (Airport)	Councillor Andrew McAuley
Crumlin Town Team	Councillor Andrew McAuley

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Liz Johnston, Head of Governance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance