



4 March 2026

Committee Chair: Councillor S Wilson

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor M Brady

Committee Members: Aldermen - J McGrath and S Ross

Councillors – J Burbank, S Cosgrove, P Dunlop, J Gilmour,
R Lynch, H Magill, T McGrann, V McWilliam,
M Ní Chonghaile, A O'Lone and M Stewart

Dear Member

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Community Development Committee will be held in the **Council Chamber, Mossley Mill** on **Monday 9 March 2026** at **6.30pm**.

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Baker".

Richard Baker, GM MSc
Chief Executive, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

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

For any queries, please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

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**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ON
MONDAY 9 MARCH 2026**

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 AC/TOU/011 SHARED IRELAND HERITAGE NETWORKS PROJECT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for officers to participate in the Heritage Council's Shared Ireland Heritage Networks project.

2. Introduction/Background

The Heritage Council was formed by the Government of Ireland in 1995. It is a statutory body whose mission is to develop a wide understanding of the vital contribution that heritage makes to social, environmental and economic well-being.

The Heritage Council regularly collaborates with organisations outside the Republic of Ireland on mutually beneficial heritage projects. An example of this is the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme, a collaboration between The King's Foundation, The Heritage Council, the Department for Communities' Historic Environment Division and Construction Industry Training Board NI, which aims to elevate individuals within the construction sector to the status of master craftspeople.

3. Shared Ireland Heritage Networks project

The **enclosed** letter has been received from The Heritage Council inviting the Council to participate in the newly formed Shared Ireland Heritage Networks project. This five-year programme is intended to support strong professional connections between those with responsibility for heritage within City, Borough and District councils in Northern Ireland and their counterparts in the Republic of Ireland by creating space for sustained professional connection, shared learning, and the gradual development of collaborative projects.

As an initial opportunity to support early connections under the programme, the Heritage Council is planning a heritage conference on 2 September 2026 in County Monaghan. This will provide an open forum for officers and Elected Members to meet and exchange experience.

The Shared Ireland Heritage Networks project has the potential to support and enhance existing Council heritage programmes, particularly the PEACEPLUS Our Historic Borough project.

4. Financial Position/Implication

If approved, the cost of attending the heritage conference and any other costs associated with the Council's involvement in the Shared Ireland Heritage Networks project will be covered by existing Tourism budgets.

5. Summary

The letter has been received from The Heritage Council inviting the Council to participate in the newly formed Shared Ireland Heritage Networks project, which is intended to support strong professional connections between those with responsibility for heritage in local government in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. As an initial opportunity to support early connections under the programme, the Heritage Council is planning a heritage conference on 2 September 2026 in County Monaghan for officers and Elected Members.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the invitation to participate in the Shared Ireland Heritage Networks project be accepted and that attendance of the Mayor, Chair of the Community Development Committee (or their nominees) and relevant officers be approved.

Prepared by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.2 ACTE/ED/TOU/062 TOURISM EVENT FUND GRANT AID

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for six Tourism Event grant funding awards for 2026/27.

2. Background

Historically, the Council has supported the delivery of large-scale tourism events in the Borough by external organisations through a Corporate Events Sponsorship Scheme. As part of the work associated with the establishment of the Council's Grant Funding Hub, this support is now delivered through an annual Tourism Event grant fund.

The Tourism Event fund provides grants of up to £15,000 to organisations who are able to clearly demonstrate economic and reputational benefits to the Council area by attracting large numbers of visitors to their event. These benefits would typically include bed nights / accommodation spend, ancillary spend such as hospitality, local retail and visitor attractions, and positive media/social media coverage that increases the attractiveness of the Council area as a visitor destination.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Tourism Event Grant Funding Programme was approved at the November 2025 Committee. The programme opened on 5 January 2026 for applications with a closing date of 13 February 2026.

4. 2026/27 Tourism Event Grant Fund Proposals

In total, six funding applications for 2026/27 were received and scored by officers, with all six applications totalling £90,000 achieving the required pass threshold. Application details are **enclosed** for the six events, which are:

- Shane's Castle May Day Steam Rally 2026
- Antrim and Newtownabbey Pipe Band and Drum Majors Championship 2026
- Whiteabbey Village Fair 2026
- Toome Fair 2026
- Halloween in Antrim 2026
- FarmFLiX #onThePull26

5. Financial Position

A budget of £75,280 is included in the 2026/27 Arts and Culture budgets for Tourism Event grant funding, and if all six applications were approved this budget would be overspent by £12,547.

The Community Festivals Fund Grant Aid Budget is currently underspent by £86,940 after the first call. It is recommended therefore that £12,547 is moved

from this budget into the Tourism Event grant budget to allow the six applications to be approved in full.

6. Summary

In total, six applications were received for Tourism Event grant funding for 2026/27 and assessed by a panel of officers. All six applications, totalling £90,000, have achieved the required threshold for funding. A budget of £75,280 is included in the 2026/27 estimates for this grant, and it is recommended that £12,547 is moved from the Community Festivals Fund budget to cover the additional spend.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

(a) the six successful Tourism Event grant applications for funding totalling £90,000 be approved; and

(b) £12,547 is moved from the Community Festivals Fund budget to the Tourism Event grant budget to ensure that the budget is not overspent.

Prepared by: Anna Boyle, Funding Unit Manager

Agreed by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance and Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance and Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.3 AC/EV/025 BALLYCLARE MAY FAIR

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 11 February 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

2. Background

Members are reminded that the role of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group is to promote, develop and organise the annual Ballyclare May Fair. The specific role of the May Fair Working Group is set out as follows:

- To advise the Council on the programme for the May Fair
- To organise delivery of the May Fair
- To promote participation in the May Fair by the Ballyclare community and wider Borough community
- To explore opportunities for sponsorship and additional funding for the May Fair
- To provide advocacy for the May Fair and achieve collaboration of a range of stakeholders into the design and delivery of the May Fair
- To contribute expertise, skills and knowledge from a range of sectors to the benefit and continuous improvement of this annual event so that Ballyclare DEA achieves maximum benefit from its delivery.

The Working Group meets monthly from September to June each year and reports to the Community Development Committee. Membership consists of all Ballyclare DEA Elected Members, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and up to five non-elected voluntary members who are actively involved in the local community.

3. Previous Decision of the Council

The revised Working Group Terms of Reference were approved at the December 2023 Community Planning Committee. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved at the February 2026 Community Development Committee meeting.

4. Working Group Meeting

Members are advised that the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group met on 11 February 2026 in Ballyclare Town Hall. The minutes of the meeting are **enclosed**.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 11 February 2026 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

Prepared by: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community and Culture

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.4 AC/GEN/008 FREE USE OF THE THEATRE AT THE MILL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the free use of the Theatre at the Mill by the Royal British Legion (RBL) for their Northern Ireland District Conference on 16 January 2027.

2. Introduction/Background

The Northern Ireland District Conference is the principal annual meeting of the Royal British Legion in Northern Ireland. It brings together Branch delegates, senior RBL leadership, the Veterans' Commissioner and representatives from the Armed Forces community to review the past year's work, set priorities for the year ahead and formally conduct District business.

The programme includes ceremonial proceedings, keynote briefings, governance updates, elections, awards presentations and opportunities for Branches to share good practice.

It is a significant civic event that strengthens the work of RBL Branches across the Borough and enhances the support provided to veterans and their families.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval was given at the June 2025 Committee for a revision to the Community Development Pricing Policy, which now requires all free use requests to be brought to the Committee for decision. This is the first time that the Royal British Legion has requested the free use of the Theatre at the Mill.

4. Request for Free Use

The Royal British Legion have requested the free use of the Theatre at the Mill on 17 January 2027 for their annual Northern Ireland District Conference. It is proposed that free use be given on the basis that the event contributes to the People, Prosperity and Performance corporate objectives by strengthening the capacity, skills and effectiveness of volunteers who support the Armed Forces across Northern Ireland; by bringing economic and tourism benefits from attendees who travel to Northern Ireland for the conference; and by visibly role-modelling excellence.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The direct staffing costs to the Council for facilitating this booking would be £540, and the potential lost income from a commercial hire would be £1,035.

6. Summary

The Royal British Legion have requested the free use of the Theatre at the Mill for their annual Northern Ireland District Conference on 16 January 2027.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request from the Royal British Legion for the free use of the Theatre at the Mill on 16 January 2027 for their Northern Ireland District Conference be approved at a cost of £540.

Prepared by: Katherine Gardiner, Arts and Theatres Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.5 AC/GEN/008 FREE USE OF THE COURTYARD THEATRE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to reject a free use application for the Courtyard Theatre from Louder Than Words for their production of Delicate: A New Musical.

2. Introduction/Background

Louder Than Words is a theatrical production company based in Newtownabbey who are hoping to bring their new show Delicate: A New Musical to the stage for the first time later this year. Based around the songs of Taylor Swift, Delicate: A New Musical is an original piece of theatre exploring themes of mental health and grief.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval was given at the June 2025 Committee for a revision to the Community Development Pricing Policy, which now requires all free use requests to be brought to the Committee for decision.

4. Request for Free Use

Louder Than Words have requested the free use of the Courtyard Theatre on 3 – 5 September 2026 to rehearse and perform Delicate: A New Musical. Although the production will not be for profit, Louder Than Words intend to charge an admission fee. Prior to the policy update referred to above where the Head of Service could consider requests for free use of theatres however the following clause applied:

Hire of a theatre for routine performing arts purposes not related to a specific fund raising or other 'special one off' occasion cannot be considered under this policy and normal community hire rates will apply to all such bookings.

Given this it is proposed not to approve this request given that it is for three days of use for a performing arts purpose and an admission charge will be applied.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The direct staffing costs to the Council for facilitating this booking would be £720, and the potential lost income from a commercial hire would be £1,130, however, it is proposed to offer this company the community rate of £734 for hire of The Courtyard Theatre, which will cover staff costs of facilitating this booking.

6. Summary

Louder Than Words productions have requested the free use of the Courtyard Theatre on 3 - 5 September 2026 to rehearse and perform Delicate: A New

Musical. It is proposed to offer Louder Than Words the community rate for hire of The Courtyard Theatre which will cover staff costs of facilitating this booking.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request for Louder Than Words to have free use of the Courtyard Theatre to rehearse and perform Delicate: A New Musical on 3 - 5 September 2026 be rejected on the basis that this is a theatrical performance with an admission fee, and that the hire of the venue at the community rate be approved.

Prepared by: Katherine Gardiner, Arts and Theatres Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.6 CP/GR/193 SOMME VISIT 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the minutes of the meeting of the Task and Finish Working Group held on 24 February 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that a delegation from the Council once again participated in a visit to the Somme Region from 30 June–2 July 2025, to mark the 1 July anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

The visit to France included educational visits to key sites where local regiments fought, and individuals from the Borough lost their lives.

The Elected Members in attendance were The Mayor Cllr Kirkpatrick, The Deputy Mayor Cllr Gilmour, Alderman Smyth, Cllr Cushinan, Cllr McWilliam, Cllr Ward and Cllr Webb. The visit was facilitated by experienced historian and former Elected Member Fraser Agnew, supported by two officers.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

Members are reminded that it was agreed at Community Planning Committee in September 2023 that the Somme Visit be delivered annually as part of the Council's Good Relations Programme.

It was also agreed that the Council delegation to the Somme visit in future years would operate as follows:

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and one Elected Member from each of the Political Parties and one Independent Elected Member would attend the Somme accompanied by appropriate Officers.

Any other Elected Member who wished to attend could do so at their own expense.

A proposed itinerary for the Somme visit in 2025 and 2026 was reported to the October 2024 Community Development Committee with arrangements for 2025 approved.

In response to Members feedback a meeting with Members was held in November 2025 to consider the arrangements for 2026. It was then agreed at Community Development Committee in December 2025 to establish a Task and Finish Working Group to develop arrangements for the 2026 visit to the Somme.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved at the February 2026 Community Development Committee meeting.

4. Somme Visit 2026

2026 marks the 110th anniversary of The Battle of the Somme so the visit in summer of 2026 has added significance.

Following a review of the 2025 visit, it was proposed to establish an Elected Member task and finish working group with those who plan to attend in 2026 with a focus on agreeing the proposed itinerary and other practical arrangements. It is also proposed that any Member with interest and/or experience of this annual visit can attend the task and finish working group.

The second meeting of the Task and Finish Working Group was held on Tuesday 24 February 2026 and the minutes of this meeting are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Financial Position/Implication

An allocation of up to £15,000 is included in the Community Development budget estimates for 2026/27.

6. Summary

A Task and Finish Working Group was established in early 2026 to plan the itinerary and arrangements for the 2026 visit to the Somme.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Task and Finish Working Group held on 24 February 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting be approved.

Prepared by: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community and Culture

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.7 CP/CD/444 ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY SENIORS' FORUM

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the provision of £15,000 financial assistance for the 2026/27 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum and the Quarter 3 performance report.

2. Introduction/Background

Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum aims to relieve poverty, advance education and promote the preservation and protection of health among seniors (50+) in the Borough and its environs. They provide facilities and programmes in the interests of social welfare for the education, recreation and leisure time for senior citizens. Officers have continued to work with the Forum and Community Planning partners (NIHE, PHA, NHSCT) to manage the service level agreement.

3. Previous Decision of Council

It was agreed at the March 2025 Community Development Committee to provide funding of £15,000 through a service level agreement for the 2025/26 financial year to Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum. Officers have continued to work with the Forum and Community Planning partners (NIHE, PHA and NHSCT) to manage the service level agreement and performance of this Group.

Members are also reminded it was agreed at the July 2022 Council Meeting that a quarterly performance report be provided to the Community Planning Committee, from September 2022 onwards.

4. Financial Position/Implication

Members are advised provision of £15,000 financial support for the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum has been provided for in the 2026/27 Community Development budget. Other Community Planning partners have also indicated their financial commitment to continue to support this group as outlined below:

Community Planning Partner	Financial contribution to Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum 2026/27
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	£15,000
Public Health Agency	£15,000
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	£15,000

A draft Service Level Agreement between Council and Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum for 2026/27 has been developed and is **enclosed** for Members' approval.

The Quarter 3 report is also **enclosed** for Members' information and is based upon performance measures in the 2025/26 Service Level Agreement. Members are advised that the Quarter 3 targets have been met.

5. Governance

Officers continue to work with the Forum and Community Planning partners to manage the Service Level Agreement and performance of this Group. A quarterly performance report will be provided to Officers for the purposes of performance management. Quarterly Performance reports are provided to the Community Development Committee,

6. Summary

Members are advised a revised Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum for 2026/27 has been developed with the provision of £15,000 financial assistance.

Other Community Planning partners have also confirmed their financial commitment to continue to support this group.

7. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the provision of £15,000 financial assistance for the 2026/27 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum be approved and the Quarter 3 performance report be approved.

Prepared by: Conor Cuning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.8 CP/CP/113 BARNARDO'S - THE THRIVE PROJECT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the provision of £28,000 financial assistance for the 2026/27 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority (EA) on behalf of the THRiVE Project.

2. Introduction

The THRiVE Project is a collaboration of local parents, schools, community and voluntary organisations and statutory agencies working together to help children and young people in Macedon and Threemilewater DEA's to achieve their full potential and have the best start in life.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded it was agreed at the March 2025 Community Development Committee, to provide £25,000 financial assistance for the 2025/26 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority on behalf of the THRiVE Project with a quarterly performance report brought to future meetings of the Committee.

Members are also reminded that the provision of an additional £3,000 financial assistance for the 2025/26 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority on behalf of the THRiVE Project and the 2025/26 Quarter 1 Performance Report, based upon performance measures in the Service Level Agreement, were approved at the September 2025 Community Development Committee.

It was approved at the June 2025 Community Development Committee that the Head of Community Development replace the Elected Members nominated to serve on the THRiVE Project Board from both the Macedon DEA and the Threemilewater DEA with immediate effect.

4. Financial Position/Implication

Members are advised provision of £28,000 has been made in the 2026/27 Community Development budgets in order to continue to provide support for the THRiVE project.

Other Community Planning partners have indicated their financial commitment, however contributions have not been confirmed, though they are likely to be similar to their 25-26 contributions which are outlined below:

FUNDER	2025/2026	2026/2027 predicted
DE/DOJ	£114,000	£114,000
EA	£32,622	£32,000
ANBC (Proposed)	£28,000	£28,000
NHSCT	£29,000	£30,160
PHA	£56,000	£53,200

TEO	£30,000	£30,000
Barnardo's	£25,000	£25,000
TOTAL	£314, 622	£312, 360

A draft Service Level Agreement between Council and Education Authority (THRiVE Project) for 2026/27 has been developed and is enclosed for Members' approval.

5. Governance

In June 2025 the Head of Community Development replaced the Elected Members nominated to serve on the THRiVE Project Board from both the Macedon DEA and the Threemilewater DEA.

Officers continue to work with the THRiVE Project and Community Planning partners to manage the performance of the Project. Quarterly performance reports will continue to be reported to the Community Development Committee.

6. Summary

Members are advised that a revised Service Level Agreement between the Council and the EA for the THRiVE Project for 2026/27 has been developed for Members' approval.

Provision of £28,000 has been made in the 2026/27 Community Development budgets in order to continue to provide support for the THRiVE project.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the provision of £28,000 financial assistance for the 2026/27 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority on behalf of the THRiVE Project be approved with a quarterly performance report to be brought to future meetings of the Committee.

Prepared by: Will McDowell, DEA Engagement Coordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.9 CP/CD/481 THE KING'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the provision of assistance to Community Group representatives to attend a Royal Garden Party in either Buckingham Palace on 6, 8 or 12 May 2026 or the Palace of Holyroodhouse on 30 June 2026.

2. Background

Members are reminded of the three local groups; Community Relations Forum, Mallusk Community Action Group and Sensory Kids who were awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in November 2025.

In February 2026 a Presentation and Celebration Event for Mallusk Community Action Group was hosted by the Council, with the remaining two events planned to take place on 26 and 27 March 2026.

There is an established precedent that recipients of this award are then invited to attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace or The Palace of Holyroodhouse.

3. Previous Council decision

Members are reminded that the provision of financial assistance, for two representatives from each of the five groups awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in 2024, of up to £225 per person to attend a Royal Garden Party was approved at the March 2025 Community Development Committee.

4. Request for Funding

All three groups have informed Officers that they have been invited to send two representatives to a Royal Garden Party in either Buckingham Palace on 6, 8 or 12 May 2026 or the Palace of Holyroodhouse on 30 June 2026.

5. Financial Implication

The total approximate cost per person for flights, transfers and accommodation for one night is £300 per person and it is proposed that Council contributes up to a maximum of £225 per person, similar to last year to support groups to attend.

Provision for the total cost of £1,350 has been included in the 2026/27 Community Development budget.

6. Summary

Two representatives from each of the three groups who were awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in 2025 have been invited to attend a Royal

Garden Party in either Buckingham Palace on 6, 8 or 12 May 2026 or the Palace of Holyroodhouse on 30 June 2026.

The total cost per person is approximately £300 and it is proposed that Council provides financial assistance of up to a maximum of £225 per person similar to last year.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that financial assistance up to a maximum of £1,350 for the three groups awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in 2025 to attend a Royal Garden Party in Buckingham Palace in May or the Palace of Holyroodhouse in June 2026 be approved.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.10 CP/CD/476 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT AID PROGRAMME - SMALL GRANTS FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS 2025/26

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to the Community Development Small Grants Funding Programme awards being recommended.

2. Background

The Small Grants Programme provides financial assistance to groups within the Borough of up to £1,000 towards seeding costs, public and employer's liability insurance, small items of equipment or an activity.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Small Grants Programme, was approved by the Council in October 2014 as part of the Council's Community Development Grant Aid Programme.

Members are advised that groups who apply for a small grant are not permitted to apply for any other funding available under the wider Community Development Grant Aid Programme during the course of the 2026/27 financial year.

In December 2019 Members agreed that from 1 April 2020 all Small Grants be assessed on the basis of Pass/Fail against eligibility criteria and not subjected to a scored assessment process. All proposed awards are subject to a signed disclosure from the group confirming that all appropriate supporting documentation is in place and can be provided on request or the offer of funding will be withdrawn.

4. Financial Implication

Members are reminded that the total budget for the 2026/27 Community Development Small Grant Aid Programme is £20,000.

During the month of February, 4 applications were received and assessed by Officers, with all 4 applications totalling £3,999.71 recommended for approval, details of which are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Summary

It is proposed to award 4 Small Grants to the successful applicants as outlined. The Community Development Small Grants will remain open as a rolling programme with applications being reported to the Community Development Committee on a quarterly basis.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the 4 Small Grant applications requesting a total of £3,999.71 be approved.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.11 CD/TD/107 ELEVATE - COMMUNITY RENEWAL AND RESILIENCE FUND

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to the Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Funding Programme awards being recommended for 2026 - 28.

2. Background

The Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Fund is available to financially support areas identified as the most deprived Super Output Areas (SOA's) of the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM), excluding Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in the Borough.

The programme is partially funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) as part of existing Areas at Risk (AAR) arrangements for Carnmoney, Mossley and Monkstown areas only.

Neighbourhood Renewal areas which are already in receipt of monies through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme are not eligible for this funding.

3. Previous Decision of Council

It was approved at the September 2025 Community Development Committee that the Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Fund be launched as a competitive open grant call for multiyear funding for 2026-28 for organisations working within identified areas of deprivation, excluding Neighbourhood Renewal areas which are already in receipt of monies through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme.

The Grant guidance notes were approved at the November 2025 Committee.

4. 2026-2028 Elevate – Community Renewal and Resilience Fund Proposals

A call for the Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Fund Proposals for 2026-27 and 2027-28 opened on 1 December 2025 and closed on 23 January 2026.

A total of 15 two-year funding applications for 2026-28 were received, with 11 applications, totalling £377,436.63 achieving the required pass threshold, details of which are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Financial Position

The contribution committed by the Council in 2025-26 to the Newtownabbey AAR Projects was £60,170, a similar allocation is included in the 2026-27 Community Development budget.

The contribution committed by the Council in 2025-26 for Antrim AAR was £111,210, a similar allocation is included in the 2026-27 Community

Development budget.

A Letter of Offer from DfC to confirm their 2026/27 contribution to the project is anticipated to be for the same amount of £76,395.38

The 11 grant applications recommended for approval total £186,994.50 for 2026-27 and £190,442.13 for the 2027-28 financial year. If the 11 applications are approved, there would be a remaining budget of £60,780.88 for 2026-27 and £57,333.25 for 2027-28.

6. Summary

Following a call for applications in December 2025, 15 applications were received for the Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Fund 2026-28 and assessed by a panel of officers.

The required threshold for funding was achieved by 11 applicants seeking a total of £186,994.50 for 2026-27 and £190,442.13 for 2027-28 with a remaining budget of £60,780 for 2026-27 and £57,333.25 for 2027-28.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- (a) the 11 successful Elevate – Community Renewal and Resilience Fund applications, totalling £186,994.50 for 2026-27 and £190,442.13 for 2027-28 be approved;**
- (b) a second call for applications be opened on 3 April 2026 and closed on 15 May 2026.**

Prepared by: Anna Boyle, Funding Unit Manager

Agreed by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance and Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance and Governance and Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.12 CP/GR/205 GOOD RELATIONS ACTION PLAN 2026/27

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the Good Relations Action Plan 2026/27.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded since 1998, all Northern Ireland public bodies have a legal duty to promote good relations between people from different community, religious and racial backgrounds. In 2013, the Northern Ireland Executive furthered their commitment to good relations with the release of Together Building A United Community (T-BUC) strategy to improve community relations and continue the journey towards a more united and shared society.

The Council's Good Relations Programme aims to improve day to day relationships by reducing all forms of prejudice, promoting equality and encouraging a society in which different cultures and traditions are understood, respected and accepted.

The Good Relations Action Plan reflects the aims and objectives of the central T-BUC strategy. It outlines how government, stakeholders, community and individuals will work together to achieve change against the following key priorities:

1. Our Children and Young People;
2. Our Shared Community;
3. Our Safe Community; and
4. Our Cultural Expression.

Annually The Executive Office (TEO) invites Local Councils to submit an application for funding through the development of a Good Relations Action Plan.

3. Good Relations Action Plan 2026/27

Members are advised that TEO have invited Councils to submit a Good Relations Action Plan for 2026/27. A copy of the draft plan is **enclosed** for Members' approval.

The draft plan reflects the priorities identified within the Together Building a United Community Strategy, and the Council's Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026-31.

4. Financial Position/Implication

Members are advised that TEO requires match funding of a minimum of 25% from local Councils towards the overall Good Relations budget. The total amount required to enable implementation of the Good Relations Action Plan in 2026/27 is £171,000.

An amount of £128,250, equating to 75% of the Good Relations Action Plan budget will be requested from TEO. Provision of the remaining 25% (£42,750) has been included in the 2026/27 Community Development budgets for the delivery of the plan.

5. Summary

The Executive Office has invited the Council to submit an annual Good Relations Action Plan for 2026/27 through the District Council Good Relations programme. The total amount required to enable implementation of the Good Relations Action Plan in 2026/27 is £171,000. Officers have requested 75% from TEO and 25% included in the 2026/27 Community Development budgets.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Good Relations Action Plan 2026/27 be approved.

Prepared by: Jen Cole, Good Relations Coordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.13 CP/CP/243 ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (EVAWG) – CHANGE FUND 2026-2028

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to proposed financial awards under the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Change Fund 2026-28.

2. Background

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) is one of the Programme for Government priorities and The Executive Office (TEO) has been mandated to coordinate a cross sectoral response that is intersectional and delivers across the whole of government and society in Northern Ireland.

The EVAWG Strategic Framework was developed by TEO with a public consultation exercise on the Strategic Framework and Action Plan carried out between July and October 2023.

On 5 September 2024, the Executive agreed its draft Programme for Government (PfG) for 2024 to 2027 with Ending Violence Against Women and Girls one of the nine priorities of the PfG.

The EVAWG Strategic Framework 2024 – 2031 was then launched by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister on 16 September following a Ministerial Statement to the Assembly.

TEO are providing the Council £320,000 for 2026-28 to deliver the EVAWG Action Plan of which £86,000 per annum has been allocated to a local Change Fund Community Grant Programme. This Change Fund will support groups and organisations in the Borough to deliver projects which support EVAWG, focused on outcomes of the EVAWG Strategy:

The Change Fund community grant funding programme offers funding in tiers as follows:

- Tier 1 – Grants up to £1,000 and £5,000
- Tier 2 – Grants up to £5,001 and £15,000
- Tier 3 – Grants up to £15,001 and £25,000

Applications were accepted from community and voluntary sector organisations who are not for profit organisations and support a wide range of social, environmental and economic outcomes. Organisations can be registered charities and eligible organisations could include, not only community groups but also sports, youth, arts and faith organisations as examples.

Projects must be delivered in the financial year 2026-28.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that it was agreed at the November 2024 Community Development Committee that the request from TEO to work in partnership in relation to the delivery of the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework and Action Plan be approved.

This included the acceptance of Momentum Funding of £50,000 from TEO to provide awareness raising activities from January 2025 to 31st March 2025 and the launch of the Change Fund in January 2025 with successful projects commencing from 1 April 2025.

At the December 2024 Committee it was agreed that outline proposals for the EVAWG Momentum Funding be approved for delivery by the end of March 2025. At this meeting it was also agreed to deliver an EVAWG Community Change Fund community grant programme to support delivery of projects in 2025/26.

At the Committee in February 2025 7 successful applications to the Change Fund with a total combined value of £109,486.10 were approved for delivery in 2025/26

At the December 2025 Committee the delivery of a second EVAWG Change Fund Community Grant Programme from April 2026 to March 2028 was approved, with a call for applications to be made in late January 2026, the outcome of which to be reported back to the March 2026 Committee Meeting.

4. Call for Applications 2026-28

A call for applications under the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls – Change Fund for the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2028 opened on Monday 23 January 2026 and closed on 23 February 2026.

To support applications to this programme, Officers delivered grant workshops and offered one-to-one support to all groups upon request.

In total 18 applications were received and assessed by a panel of Officers with 5 successful applications totalling £84,682 in year 1 and £81,682 in year 2 achieving the required 60% pass threshold, details of which are enclosed for Members' information.

5. Financial Implication

The total budget for the 2026-28 Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Change Fund is £86,000 per annum as provided for in the 2026/27 estimates.

The total amount requested from the 5 applications that successfully achieved the 60% pass threshold is £84,682 in year 1 and £81,682 in year 2. It is proposed to reprofile the underspend of £1,318 in year 1 and £4,318 in year 2 to cover

costs towards EVAWG awareness sessions within the Momentum Funding element of the action plan.

Members are reminded that funding is subject to satisfactory annual monitoring and evaluation.

6. Summary

In total 18 applications to the EVAWG Change Fund Community Grant Programme 2026-2028 were received and assessed by a panel of Officers with 5 applications totalling £84,682 in year 1 and £81,682 in year 2 achieving the required 60% pass threshold.

There is a budget allocation of £86,000 (per annum) designated for this grant call. It is proposed to fund all successful applications.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that

- (a) the 5 successful applications to the EVAWG Change Fund Community Grant Programme totalling £84,682 in year 1 and £81,682 in year 2 for the delivery of projects in 2026-28, be approved;**
- (b) the underspend of £1,318 in year 1 and £4,318 in year 2 be reprofiled to cover costs towards EVAWG awareness sessions within the Momentum Funding element of the Action Plan.**

Prepared by: Anna Boyle, Funding Unit Manager & Stefanie Buchanan, Community Development Manager

Agreed by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance & Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance & Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.14 CP/GR/206 GOOD RELATIONS AUDIT AND STRATEGY 2026-2031

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval of the Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026–2031 and the accompanying Rural Needs Impact Assessment and Section 75 screening.

2. Introduction/Background

The Executive Office has invited the Council to submit a new Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026–2031 through the District Council Good Relations programme.

The Audit and Strategy is developed through a process of engagement aims to reflect the Government's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. It outlines how the Government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change against the following key priorities:

- Our children and young people
- Our shared community
- Our safe community
- Our cultural expression

The Council's Good Relations Programme aims to improve day to day relationships by reducing all forms of prejudice, promoting equality and encouraging a society in which different cultures and traditions are understood, respected and accepted.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that the Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2020–2025 was approved at the March 2021 Community Planning Committee.

4. Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026-2031

Members are advised Lara Goodall Consulting were appointed through a procurement process and delivered the commission utilising the following engagement process:

- Desktop research
- Online surveys
- Facilitated focus groups and workshops
- Engagement with Elected Members
- Engagement with Council Officers and key stakeholders
- Engagement with individuals and groups across each of the Borough's DEAs

The findings from the Audit have informed the development of a strategic framework for the period 2026–2031. The Strategy 2026–2031 is structured around the following thematic priorities:

- Our Children and Young People
- Our Shared Community
- Our Safe Community
- Our Cultural Expression

Each theme is supported by high-level objectives and outcomes, with an associated Action Plan identifying priority actions, delivery partners and indicative timescales. The draft Audit & Strategy 2026-31 is **enclosed** for Member's approval.

5. Financial Position

Members are advised that the Good Relations Action Plan 2025/26 included a budget of £10,000 to commission the delivery of the Good Relations Audit & Strategy 2026-2031.

6. Governance

Subject to Members' approval, the Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026–2031 and associated Action Plan will provide the strategic framework for the Council's Good Relations programme for the next five years.

Progress against the annual Action Plan will be monitored through existing governance arrangements and reported to Members as appropriate.

7. Equality and Screening

As part of the Council's responsibilities to identify and address potential Section 75 implications and promote equality of opportunity and good relations as required by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Audit and Strategy has been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and have been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment. A copy of the Section 75 Equality Screening Form is **enclosed** for Members' information

In addition, the Rural Needs Act places a duty on public authorities and local Councils to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. A Rural Needs screening exercise completed and is **enclosed** for Members' information.

8. Summary

The Executive Office has invited the Council to submit a new Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026–2031 through the District Council Good Relations programme.

The Strategy has been developed following engagement with Members, officers, stakeholders and local communities. The Strategy provides a framework to guide the Council's Good Relations work and support the development of a more cohesive, inclusive and shared society.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026–2031 and the accompanying Rural Needs Impact Assessment and Section 75 screening be approved.

Prepared by: Conor Cunning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.15 AC/GEN/008 FREE USE OF THE COURTYARD THEATRE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the free use of the Courtyard Theatre by Gaelscoil Éanna for their annual Talent Show on 4 June 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

Gaelscoil Éanna is an Irish Medium Primary School in Glengormley with more than 230 pupils. The school was established in 2007 and is focused on the development of children through an education which nurtures self-confidence and identity, and which is based on the Irish language and culture, music, sport and drama.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval was given at the June 2025 Committee for a revision to the Community Development Pricing Policy, which now requires all free use requests to be brought to the Committee for decision. Previously, the Head of Service had delegated authority to approve one-off requests for free or discounted use that met certain criteria and contributed to the Council's Community Plan; under this policy, Gaelscoil Éanna was granted a 75% discount on the use of the Courtyard Theatre in May 2025.

4. Request for Free Use

Gaelscoil Éanna have requested the free use of the Courtyard Theatre on 4 June 2026 for their annual Talent Show.

Through this Talent Show, the school intends to promote performance skills and showcase the variety of talents their students possess. This would be a private event aimed at parents and family members of the students. The school intends to charge a small entry fee to cover the cost of the production.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The direct staffing costs to the Council for facilitating this booking would be £540, and the potential lost income would be £518.

6. Summary

Gaelscoil Éanna, a Glengormley-based Irish Medium Primary School, have requested the free use of the Courtyard Theatre for their talent show on 4 June 2026.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request from Gaelscoil Éanna to have free use of the Courtyard Theatre on 4 June 2026 for their annual talent show be approved at a cost of £540.

Prepared by: Katherine Gardiner, Arts and Theatres Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.16 COMD/CD/005 CAPITAL PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT GRANT FUND PROGRAMME 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to proposed financial awards under the Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Programme.

2. Background

The Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Programme provides financial assistance to support groups within the Borough that have been established for at least 10 years to update, enhance and improve their community facilities or equipment, providing they can clearly evidence need, particularly where financial need is limited from other funding sources.

A pass threshold of 60% applies to applications to the Programme and groups are not required to demonstrate match funding. Members should also note that proposed awards are subject to the receipt of all relevant supporting documentation, or the offer of funding will be withdrawn.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that the Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Fund was approved by Council in October 2023 with a further update including the outcome of the Section 75 Equality Screening and Rural Proofing exercises approved at the March 2024 Community Planning Committee.

At the November 2025 Community Development Committee delivery of the 2026/27 Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Fund Programme was approved.

4. 2026/27 Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Programme

The first call for applications to the 2026/27 Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Fund opened on Monday 5 January 2026 and closed on Friday 13 February 2026. To support applications to this programme, Officers delivered an online grant workshop and offered one-to-one support to all groups upon request. The opportunity was promoted on the Council's social media channels.

A total of 15 applications were received and assessed by a panel of Officers with 5 applications (2 Capital Premises and 3 Equipment) totalling £38,127.92 achieving the required 60% pass threshold, details of which are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Financial Implication

Members are reminded the total budget available for the Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Fund for 2026/27 is £120,000 with an indicative allocation of £45,000 for premises and £75,000 for equipment.

6. Summary

The Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Programme approved by the Community Development Committee in November 2025 opened for applications on 5 January 2026 and closed on the 13 February 2026.

It is proposed to award 5 Grant awards, at a total cost of £38,127.92 and open a second call for applications on 3 April 2026 which will close on 15 May 2026.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- (a) the 5 successful applications for funding under the Capital Premises and Equipment Grant Fund totalling £38,127.92 be approved;**
- (b) a second call for applications be opened on 3 April 2026 and closed on 15 May 2026.**

Prepared by: Kerry Brady, Grants and Funding Support Officer

Agreed by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance & Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance & Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.17 AC/GEN/008 FREE USE OF THE COURTYARD THEATRE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the free use of the Courtyard Theatre by the Carnmoney Colts for an awards celebration on 20 June 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

The Carnmoney Colts are a local cross community grass roots football team based in Newtownabbey, with many young players drawn from disadvantaged backgrounds. Their aim is to develop players, promote teamwork, increase young people's health, contribute to social cohesion and build friendships.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval was given at the June 2025 Committee for a revision to the Community Development Pricing Policy, which now requires all free use requests to be brought to the Committee for decision. This is the first time the Carnmoney Colts have requested the free use of a culture facility.

4. Request for Free Use

The Carnmoney Colts have requested the free use of the Courtyard Theatre on the afternoon of 20 June 2026 for their inaugural awards celebration. The event would take place from 2pm – 5pm and would be free of charge for invitees (coaching staff, players and their parents).

The club is in a poor financial state and would not be able to afford to hire the theatre at the community rate. The Colts do not own their own pitch, and spend most of their income on hiring pitches to play on.

5. Financial Position/Implication

If this request is approved, the potential lost income from a commercial booking would be £408. As the event takes place during office hours, there would be no additional direct costs to the Council for facilitating it.

6. Summary

The Carnmoney Colts football club have requested the free use of the Courtyard Theatre for an awards celebration on the afternoon of 20 June 2026.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request from the Carnmoney Colts to have free use of the Courtyard Theatre for an awards celebration on 20 June 2026 be approved.

Prepared by: Katherine Gardiner, Arts and Theatres Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

3.18 CP/CD/486 BONFIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members and seek approval for the delivery of the Bonfire Management Programme in 2026.

2. Background

The Council operates a Bonfire Management Programme which seeks to achieve the following key objectives in relation to bonfire sites and family fun events:

- To work with and support local communities to bring about improvements in bonfire management, particularly in terms of inclusivity, safety and increased family atmosphere.
- To further reduce the adverse health and environmental impacts of bonfires including the illegal disposal of waste.

The Programme, in the longer term, aims to:

- Reduce the use of flags, images and effigies.
- Promote wider cultural links throughout the Borough.
- Tackle sectarianism, racism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice.

There are 26 recognised bonfire sites included within the Bonfire Management Programme, with 4 sites on Council owned land namely:

- Rathcoole – Rathmullan Drive
- Doagh – Anderson Park
- Rathfern
- Randalstown - Neillsbrook

The full details of all 26 sites are **enclosed** for members' information, with two sites highlighted in green, indicating they are unlikely to participate in this year's program.

In 2025 the Council supported the delivery of 23 family fun events associated with bonfire sites with funding of £3,500 per event used by officers to organise the various events in partnership with local groups. Attendance at each of the events ranged from 100 to 300.

3. Previous Decision of Council

At the Community Planning and Regeneration Committee in May 2018 the Equality Screening for the Bonfire Management Programme 2018 was approved. As the programme has not changed significantly since this time this outcome remains valid.

The 2025 Bonfire Management Programme including aspects of governance and funding conditions and an estimated budget of £171,000 was approved at the February 2025 Community Development Committee.

At the September 2025 Council meeting it was approved that due to the final inspection being carried out, no sanction be applied in relation to the four sites where flag burning incidents occurred in 2025 and no sanctions be applied in 2026 to the Neillsbrook bonfire site given the presence of asbestos. It was also approved that the current programme remains in place.

The Bonfire Management Programme was first approved by the Community Planning and Regeneration Committee in February 2016 and has been reviewed on an annual basis since this time.

4. Bonfire Management Programme 2026

Officers deliver the Bonfire Management Programme in partnership with the PSNI, NIFRS and NIHE and meet with representatives as part of the ongoing review of the programme. There is a consensus from these agencies that the programme has achieved significant progress, this includes:

- A reduction in the number of bonfires taking place.
- Seven bonfires have moved from a traditional bonfire to use of a beacon.
- Tangible environmental improvements in the management of bonfire sites in terms of environmental issues and waste have been achieved.
- The NIFRS have reported a reduction in the number of bonfire related call outs from the inception of the programme.
- The PSNI have reported a reduction in the number of bonfire related incidents they have dealt with since the inception of the programme
- There has been a significant reduction in any issues of fly-tipping relating to bonfire sites and delivery of prompt post event clean ups has significantly improved.

Officers also met with bonfire group representatives in September 2025 as well as Elected Members, to discuss the delivery of the programme in 2026.

It was generally agreed, that the Bonfire Management Programme has achieved progress and remains fit for purpose in the absence of any legislative framework or guidance being developed by Executive Departments.

5. Proposed Dates for the 2026 Bonfire Management Programme

In preparation for the delivery of the 2026 Bonfire Management Programme, copy **enclosed** for Members' information, Officers are preparing online registration packs for completion by all potential participating sites. Applications will open online on Thursday 2 April 2026 and close on Monday 13 April 2026.

Sign up events have been scheduled to take place in Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic Centre on Wednesday 22 April and Thursday 23 April 2026 respectively. The collection date has been proposed as Friday 15 May 2026.

Interagency site inspections, which will be carried out by Officers and Statutory Partners, are proposed as follows:

Pre-Collection Inspection – Thursday 14 May 2026 (Council Officer Only)
First Inspection – Friday 29 May 2026
Second Inspection – Friday 19 June 2026
Final Inspection – Friday 10 July 2026
Family Fun Event Visits – Saturday 11 July 2026

Early indications suggest that 24 sites will sign up to participate in this year's programme. This will be an increase from 23 sites in 2025 with Stiles anticipated to join the Bonfire Management Programme in 2026.

6. Financial Position

Members are advised that £84,000 for the family fun events and £87,000 for the provision of beacons including maintenance and repair has been included in the Community Development Estimates for 2026/27 for the delivery of the programme.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) has indicated that they may be in a position to provide £50,000 of funding, similar to that awarded in 2024 and 2025 towards the cost of the programme, which would reduce the cost to the Council to £121,000. A formal letter of offer is yet to be received.

7. Governance

To be eligible for the Council's funding support to deliver family fun events bonfire groups must meet the following criteria in full:

- a) Be properly constituted and include a decision-making process and aims and objectives and activities that are acceptable to the Council.
- b) Must ensure that appropriate insurance cover where required is taken out and maintained for the duration of the Event. It is the responsibility of the Group to seek advice on any insurance liabilities relating to the event/activity. Evidence of this shall be presented to the Council if requested.
- c) Produce an annual statement showing the Group's financial position for the relevant period.
- d) Agree to the Council's monitoring, evaluation and training requirements as appropriate.
- e) Be one of the Bonfire Sites recognised by the Council (List of recognised groups/sites at Appendix A Bonfire Management Programme 2026). No new sites will be included, as agreed when the Programme was initially approved.

The programme also contains funding guidance and terms and conditions as well as clauses in relation to any non-compliance and potential impact upon funding.

Officers are aware that at some sites there are still issues relating to the burning of flags on bonfires. Officers have raised this with groups on an ongoing basis, who have expressed their frustration that despite their best efforts they have been unable to eliminate this entirely.

8. Equality Screening

As part of the Council's responsibilities to identify and address potential implications and promote equality of opportunity and good relations, as required by the Northern Ireland Act 1988, the Bonfire Management Programme has been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and has been screened out for the need of an EQIA. At the Community Planning and Regeneration Committee in May 2018 the Equality Screening for the Bonfire Management Programme 2018 was approved. As the programme has not changed significantly since this time this outcome remains valid.

9. Summary

The Council has been delivering the Bonfire Management Programme since 2016 and the programme has achieved significant progress to date with officers and group representatives committed to achieving further improvements.

The Bonfire Management Programme, including significant dates and activities is proposed for delivery in 2026 including aspects of governance and an estimated programme budget of £171,000. The budget of £171,000 has been included in the 2026/2027 Community Development budgets for the delivery of this programme. An estimated £50,000 in financial assistance from the NIHE is anticipated in the coming months which if secured will reduce the Council's contribution to £121,000.

10. Recommendation

Members approve the proposed 2026 Bonfire Management Programme, including the aspects of governance, funding conditions and the estimated budget of £171,000.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 CP/GEN/019 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SECTION - PARTNERSHIP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the various minutes of the Partnership Meetings led by the Community Development Section which have been held in recent months.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are advised that the quarterly update Partnership Minutes as listed below can be viewed in the electronic folder called "**Partnership Minutes for Members' Information**" on I pads.

Community Development		
File Ref	Date of Meeting	Name of Partnership
D/Gen/91	-	Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey
D/DP/67	04.11.2025	Rathcoole Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
D/CSP/48	-	Antrim and Newtownabbey Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)
D/DP/67	30/10/2025	Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
CP/GR/43	31.01.2025 30.04.2025 16.06.2025 03.09.2025 03.10.2025	Traveller Issues Local Government Partnership

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the update on Partnership Minutes be noted.

Prepared by: Wendy Donaldson, Business Support Supervisor

Agreed and approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.2 AC/GEN/068 THE JOYCE TORPEDO RETRIEVAL BOAT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the development of a partnership between the Council and a local veterans' group in relation to the Joyce Torpedo Boat which is located at The Gateway Visitor Centre, Antrim Loughshore Park.

2. Introduction/Background

The Joyce was a torpedo retrieval boat that operated on Lough Neagh during the Second World War. The Council acquired the boat from its private owner in 2021 and it is now on display on land adjacent to The Gateway Visitor Centre, Antrim Loughshore Park.

3. Previous Decision of Council

A proposal was approved at the November 2025 Committee to establish an officer Working Group with local veterans in relation to the Joyce, with the terms of reference for the group and a partnership agreement to be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

4. Partnership Agreement with Veterans' Group

Following discussions between officers and the veterans' group, the following proposals have been agreed:

- Members of the veterans' group will attend the Joyce from 12pm – 3pm daily each weekend in June, July and August in a heritage residency to engage with visitors and provide information on the history of the Joyce and Royal Navy activity on Lough Neagh
- Members of the veterans' group will participate in educational tours and talks at the Gateway and Lough Neagh arranged by officers and Park Rangers
- Members of the veterans' group will work with officers to identify and remedy any maintenance issues that arise with the Joyce
- Members of the veterans' group will work with officers on the wider PEACEPLUS Our Historic Borough programme, particularly in relation to the heritage trail exploring Antrim and Newtownabbey during the two world wars

5. Financial Position/Implication

The veterans' group will provide their time and knowledge on a voluntary basis with no cost to the Council.

6. Summary

Following discussions with a local veterans' group, officers have developed a plan for volunteers to share their knowledge of the Joyce Torpedo Retrieval Boat and the wider history of the Royal Navy on Lough Neagh with the public.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Philip Magennis, Culture and Events Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay Director of Community and Culture

4.3 CP/GR/200 DISTRICT COUNCIL GOOD RELATIONS PROGRAMME 2025-2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Letter of Variance that has been received from The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the 2025/26 District Council Good Relations Programme.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded since 1998, all Northern Ireland public bodies have a legal duty to promote good relations between people from different community, religious and racial backgrounds. In 2013, the Northern Ireland Executive furthered their commitment to good relations with the release of Together Building A United Community (T-BUC) strategy to improve community relations and continue the journey towards a more united and shared society.

The Council's Good Relations Programme aims to improve day to day relationships by reducing all forms of prejudice, promoting equality and encouraging a society in which different cultures and traditions are understood, respected and accepted.

The Good Relations Action Plan reflects the aims and objectives of the central T-BUC strategy. It outlines how government, stakeholders, community and individuals will work together to achieve change against the following key priorities:

1. Our Children and Young People;
2. Our Shared Community;
3. Our Safe Community; and
4. Our Cultural Expression.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that The Executive Office (TEO) District Council Good Relations Programme funding 2025/26 of £108,562.50 and the Good Relations Action Plan 2025/26 were approved at the May 2025 Community Development Committee.

Members are reminded that a letter of variance totalling £128,562,50 was received from The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the 2025/26 District Council Good Relations Programme. This was noted at the September 2025 Community Development Committee.

Members are reminded that a further letter of variance totalling £158,562.50 was received from The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the 2025/26 District Council Good Relations Programme. This was noted at the November 2025 Community Development Committee.

Members are reminded that a further letter of variance totalling £171,262.50 was received from The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the 2025/26 District

Council Good Relations Programme. This was noted at the January 2026 Community Development Committee.

4. Key Issues

Members are now advised that correspondence **enclosed** has been received from TEO offering financial assistance totalling £205,262.50 towards The District Council Good Relations Programme for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

The additional £34,000 on the original funding offer is designated to support activities which are aligned with the Good Relations Action Plan and T: BUC Priorities. No additional match funding is required from the Council.

Members are advised that this offer of funding has been accepted by TEO's deadline of 9 March 2026.

5. Financial Implication

The Executive Office requires match funding of a minimum of 25% from local Councils towards the overall Good Relations budget. The Councils contribution of £36,187.50 towards the overall Good Relations budget was included within the approved 2025/26 Council estimates for the delivery of the plan.

The additional funding allocation of £34,000 does not require any additional match funding from Council resources.

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

The 2025/26 Good Relations Action Plan has been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and has been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment.

In addition, a Rural Needs screening exercise has been completed.

7. Summary

The Council has received a revised offer for funding of £205,262.50 from TEO for the costs associated with the District Council Good Relations Programme for 2025/26. No additional match funding is required.

The additional £34,000 is designated to support activities which are aligned with the Good Relations Action Plan and T: BUC Priorities.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the offer of District Council Good Relations Programme funding from The Executive Office of £205,262.50 be noted.

Prepared by: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.4 ACTE/ED/TOU/062 SUPERCUP NI

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members about SuperCup NI.

2. Introduction/Background

SuperCup NI is an international youth football tournament that has been running for more than 40 years, and which has received financial support from the Council since 2022. It is one of the most prestigious youth football tournaments in the world, and has been an important milestone in the early development of world-famous footballers including David Beckham, Wayne Rooney, Sergio Busquets and Gerard Pique.

3. Previous Decision of Council

In January 2025 the Committee approved a proposal to award SuperCup NI £50,000 per annum to support the tournament in 2025, 2026 and 2027. This funding is made through the Tourism Flagship Event Grant Funding Programme.

4. SuperCup NI 2025

Officers recently met the organisers of the 2025 competition to review results.

The 2025 SuperCup NI was one of the most successful in the tournament's 42-year history, as record-breaking crowds were attracted to a spectacular week of elite youth football. From Sunday 27 July to Friday 1 August 2025, the tournament brought together 62 elite boys' and girls' teams from across the world, with more than 66,000 fans attending over 150 matches contested by more than 1,200 of the brightest young players across five age groups.

Hosted at 17 venues across Causeway Coast and Glens, Antrim and Newtownabbey and Mid and East Antrim, the tournament was opened by Gareth McAuley MBE and drew global attention with appearances from football legends including Wayne Rooney, Michael Carrick, Stuart Dallas, Corry Evans, Steve Lomas and Keith Gillespie. Five venues in Antrim and Newtownabbey hosted the Girls' Premier and Junior Sections of SuperCup NI 2025.

The tournament overall is estimated to have delivered a direct economic benefit to the region of £4.6 million, with media / social media coverage reaching 852 million people globally.

In Antrim and Newtownabbey specifically, the tournament delivered strong sporting, economic, and community benefits for the Borough, showcasing high-quality facilities across multiple venues and generating positive visitor spend. Strong local attendance and engagement reinforced the Borough's reputation as an attractive and capable host destination for major sporting events.

In terms of accommodation 1,500 bed nights were generated by teams alone for five providers in the Borough, with an estimated £1.2m in direct visitor spend. In addition, 279 media pieces were generated about the competition's partnership with the Council with an estimated media reach of 67.3 million.

The SuperCup NI 2026 tournament will take place from 26-31 July, and the draw for both the boys and girls competitions, for the first time, will take place at Theatre at the Mill (on a date to be confirmed). The organisers have indicated that the draw will rotate to the other Council areas involved with SuperCup NI annually.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The Council is providing £50,000 in support for SuperCup NI 2026 from the Tourism Flagship Event Grant Funding Programme.

6. Summary

The 2025 SuperCup NI was one of the most successful ever, attracting more than 66,000 visitors and delivering an overall direct economic benefit of £4.6 million including an estimated £1.2 million in direct visitor spend in Antrim and Newtownabbey.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Any Other Relevant Business (AORB) may be taken at this point.