



1 December 2021

Committee Chair: Councillor A Logue

Committee Vice-Chair: Alderman M Girvan

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

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in the **Council Chamber, Mossley Mill on Monday 6 December 2021 at 6.30pm.**

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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A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 Draft Rates Estimates Update 2022/23

4. ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 Consultation on Proposed Amendment to Technical Guidance Document F (Conservation of Fuel and Power)

4.2 Street Naming – Castle Road Randalstown

4.3 Consultation on Amending Options for the Assessment of Technical Competence under the Northern Ireland Waste Management Licensing and Permitting Regime

4.4 Muck and More Allotment Association – Request for Support

4.5 Recycling Centre Arrangements

4.6 Environmental Health Enforcement Policy

4.7 Consultation on Building (Prescribed Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022

4.8 The Reduction of Single-Use Plastic (Sup) Beverage Cups and Food Containers Consultation Draft Response

4.9 Refuse and Recycling Public Holiday Collection Arrangements 2022

4.10 Macmillan Move More – Offer of Match Funding

4.11 Live Here Love Here Funding Request 2022-23

4.12 Request for Eco-Schools Support 2022/23

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 Muddy Boots Evaluation

5.2 Best Kept Garden Competition 2021

5.3 Fairtrade Borough Status

5.4 Environmental Performance Update

5.5 Living with Water Programme

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 Cemetery Burial Capacity Update

7 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON
MONDAY 6 DECEMBER 2021**

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 FI/FIN/11 DRAFT RATES ESTIMATES UPDATE 2022/23

An update on the 2022/23 Estimates for the Operations Department will be presented at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: that the presentation be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Management Accountant

Agreed by: John Balmer, Head of Finance

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 PBS/BC/002 VOL 2 CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO TECHNICAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENT F (CONSERVATION OF FUEL AND POWER)

Correspondence has been received, **enclosed**, from the Department of Finance Building Standards Branch to invite responses to a consultation on Proposed Amendments to Part F of the Building Regulations Technical Guidance document. Part F (Conservation of fuel and power) of the Building Regulations sets minimum standards for building work with respect to carbon performance and energy conservation measures.

The Department is keen to improve standards of energy efficiency in Northern Ireland in the context of the Northern Ireland Assembly's declaration of a climate emergency. It is developing a Discussion Document for public consultation in the coming months which will provide further input on the relevant issues and seek to outline pathways towards very high efficiency standards for new buildings in the medium term. The proposals set out in the Consultation document are intended to provide an uplift to the requirements for new buildings as an interim 'stepping stone' measure.

The consultation document sets out a series of questions and proposed responses are **enclosed** for consideration.

The consultation document outlines three options to be considered:

Option 1: no change;

Option 2: require new buildings to better the current Target carbon dioxide Emissions Rate (TER) outputs by 25%, in the case of new dwellings, and 15%, in the case of new non-domestic buildings;

Option 3: require new buildings to better the current Target carbon dioxide Emissions Rate (TER) outputs by 40% in the case of new dwellings, 25% in the case of new flats, and 15%, in the case of new non-domestic buildings.

Options 2 and 3 also propose to uplift building fabric standards for new buildings.

The draft response sets out Option 3 as the preferred option as it has a better overall return on investment. It would deliver more carbon savings and better reductions in energy bills, albeit with higher build costs for developers.

A summary of the other key points is as follows:

- The document recognises that the proposed uplift in the thermal performance of building fabric will necessitate greater use of renewable energy technology. The proposals are unclear on circumstances where the existing utilities infrastructure is unable to accommodate such needs and the resulting impact on the proposed design with regard to building

regulations procedure and alternative means of compliance.

- Future uplifts to Technical Guidance Document F of the Building Regulations are proposed on a regular basis over the course of the next eight years to try to harmonise requirements with GB and RoI.
- The proposed changes will require a programme of training for Building Control staff to ensure consistent interpretation and effective application. The anticipated date of introduction of the proposed changes is April 2022.

RECOMMENDATION: that approval is given for the response to the Consultation on Proposed Amendments to Part F of the Building Regulations Technical Guidance document (Conservation of fuel and power) as set out.

Prepared by: Stephen Hipkins, Head of Property and Building Services

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.2 PBS/BC/003 VOL 2 STREET NAMING – CASTLE ROAD RANDALSTOWN

A development naming application was received from Joseph McLaughlin on behalf of JFM Construction Ltd regarding the naming of a residential development at Castle Road, Randalstown and accessed through an existing development, namely Castle Lodge. The development consists of 3No detached dwellings and a proposed nursing home. The development names and developer's rationale have been submitted as outlined below, with the developer's application, location map and site plan enclosed.

1. Castle Gate – Castle, due to the vicinity of Shanes Castle and off Castle Road. Gate, it is a small gated development.
2. Castle Hall – Castle, due to the vicinity of Shanes Castle and off Castle Road. Hall, it is a natural link that Hall is a small development near the main entrance.
3. Castle View - Castle, due to the vicinity of Shanes Castle and off Castle Road. View, in view of the nearby Shanes Castle.

Should the Council not wish to select one of the above names; the matter will be referred back to the developer via the Building Control section for further consideration.

RECOMMENDATION: that a name for the above development is approved.

Prepared by: William Richmond, Principal Building Control Surveyor

Agreed by: Stephen Hipkins, Head of Property and Building Services

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.3 WM/WM/40 CONSULTATION ON AMENDING OPTIONS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF TECHNICAL COMPETENCE UNDER THE NORTHERN IRELAND WASTE MANAGEMENT LICENSING AND PERMITTING REGIME

Correspondence has been received, **enclosed**, from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) seeking views on a Consultation on Amending Options for the Assessment of Technical Competence under the Northern Ireland Waste Management Licensing and Permitting Regime.

At present DAERA only recognises the Waste Management Industry Training and Advisory Board (WAMITAB) as an accredited provider of technical competence assurance. The consultation document proposes the addition of Energy and Utility Skills Ltd (EU Skills) as an accreditation provider. EU Skills has already received accreditation to operate in England, Wales and Scotland as an approved provider of assurance of technical competence and officers are unaware of any reasons to object to this proposal from DAERA to approve them.

There are only two questions in the consultation and it is proposed to answer them as follows:

1. *Do you agree with the proposal to add Energy and Utility Skills Ltd as an assessor of technical competence, for the purposes of waste management licensing and permitting in Northern Ireland? If not please explain why*

Proposed response: Yes.

2. *Are there any other bodies/organisations which would be potentially be suitable to act as an assessor of technical competence in respect of waste management licensing and permitting in Northern Ireland? Please provide evidence to support any suggestions.*

Proposed Response: Not aware of any other bodies/organisations.

RECOMMENDATION: that the response to the Consultation on Amending Options for the Assessment of Technical Competence under the Northern Ireland Waste Management Licensing and Permitting Regime as set out above, be approved.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.4 PK/GEN/127 MUCK AND MORE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION – REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

Members are advised that Muckamore Allotment Association based at Greystone Allotments, has request a letter of support in relation to a funding application for apple trees which with which they propose to develop a community apple orchard.

The funding opportunity is available through the 'Living Spaces and Places' strand of the National Lottery Community Fund on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure, which has an objective to create more sustainable and resilient outdoor spaces.

If successful, the Association aims to plant 51 apples trees, some in the communal grass area at the front of the allotment site and on 2 vacant allotment plots at the back of the site. The vacant allotment plots have proven to be too problematic to cultivate over the years, due to their liability to flood.

In addition, some practical support has been requested from Council for the creation of two trenches to be infilled with stones to assist with drainage before the trees are planted, and also for assistance with the planting of the trees. It is anticipated that this could be accommodated over the winter months

The development of an apple orchard would be of great benefit to the site in terms of community cohesion; fresh produce for the community; visual impact and the attraction of bees and other pollinators to the site, particularly during apple blossom time and would be included in Council's One Million Tree programme.

RECOMMENDATION: that Council agrees to provide a letter of support to the Muck and More Allotment Association in relation to their funding application and for the practical support as outlined.

Prepared by: Glenda James, Administration Supervisor

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.5 WM/WM/037/VOL2 RECYCLING CENTRE ARRANGEMENTS

Members are reminded, that an appointment system remains in place at O'Neill Road and Crumlin Household Recycling Centres (HRCs). The appointments were originally put in place in all HRCs order to ensure the safety of the public and staff and were retained at Crumlin due to its scale and the need to comply with social distancing and in O'Neill Road due to the need to manage heavy usage levels whilst protecting staff and customers. The use of staff to manage traffic at the Centres was suspended after four weeks when the traffic levels significantly reduced. In addition, marshals were put in place at Bruslee on Saturdays to manage traffic during restrictions, although there has not been a need to retain this.

Officers have kept the appointments under review on a monthly basis and in both cases the systems are working well and residents are familiar with the arrangements at Crumlin and O'Neill Road Recycling Centres.

In considering the current COVID situation together with the high levels of usage anticipated at the Centres over the festive period, a number of proposals are set out below for consideration:

- i. That the appointments system is retained in O'Neill Road and Crumlin until January when arrangements will be reviewed again.
- ii. That similar to Christmas 2020, an additional temporary waste recycling facility is put in place at the Valley Leisure Centre carpark in order to reduce traffic congestion at O'Neill Road and wider area between Monday 27 and Thursday 30 December from 9am - 5pm.

It is proposed that pre-booking will not be required and that proof of residency in the Borough will.

All waste will be comingled in the bin lorry and transferred to a materials recycling facility through existing Council contracts with as much waste as possible sorted and removed for recycling or recovery before final landfill. The service will be delivered using existing Council staff and resources.

- iii. Officers will monitor the remaining Centres and deploy additional resources if required, although this has not been necessary to date.

RECOMMENDATION: that approval is given for the arrangements for Recycling Centres as set out above.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.6 EH/EHS/LR/10 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Members are reminded that the enforcement activity carried out by the Environmental Health team is delivered in accordance with an Environmental Health Enforcement Policy, **enclosed**.

The policy sets out the principles and approach adopted in applying the legislation falling under the remit of Environmental Health to ensure effective, consistent and open enforcement.

As set out in the policy, it was agreed that a review would take place every two years to ensure that it satisfies current legal requirements and customer expectations. This review is now due and has now been completed (**enclosed**) for Committee's consideration.

The following amendments are proposed:-

- re-emphasise the responsibility for business operators to meet their legal requirements at all times
- provide electronic links to documents referenced in the policy
- reflect the change in job title of the Director of Operations
- reflect the addition of the post of Deputy Director of Operations (Environmental Health, Property and Building Services)
- reflect the change in job title of the Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

The revised policy has undergone Equality Screening and an Impact Assessment is not required.

RECOMMENDATION: that the revised Environmental Health Enforcement Policy is approved.

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.7 PBS/BC/002/VOL2 CONSULTATION ON BUILDING (PRESCRIBED FEES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2022

Correspondence has been received, **enclosed**, from the Department of Finance Building Standards Branch to invite responses to a consultation on proposed amendments to Schedules 1 and 2 of the Building (Prescribed Fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997.

Since their introduction in November 1997, the Fees Regulations have only been amended on one occasion, by the Building (Prescribed Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013. Although the fees for applications under Schedule 3 are based on the estimated cost of works and have risen as prices have increased, the fees set by Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 are 'fixed' and can only be changed through an amendment by the Department to the regulations.

Over time a 'drift' in the correlation between the application fee set by Schedules 1 and 2 and the actual cost to councils of processing building control applications has occurred. This has resulted in shortfalls in the fees income covering the cost of enforcement activity for the work set out in Schedules 1 and 2.

The Department has therefore proposed a review of the Fees Regulations to ensure that the level of fees charged by Councils for undertaking prescribed functions in respect of the building regulations follows the 'user pays principle'. This means that the person using the building control service meets the full cost of that service. However, to achieve this in line with the fees charged in other administrations in the UK, significant uplifts would be required, in some cases more than doubling the current fee level. Both the Department and councils recognise that such proposals would therefore need to be achieved in a phased approach.

The main changes proposed by the Department set out in the consultation document are as follows:

- To increase fees for Schedules 1 and 2 by 17.5% from 1st April 2022;
- To increase fees for Schedules 1 and 2 by a further 17.5% from 1st April 2023.

The proposed uplift to Schedules 1 and 2 relate to fees associated with a wide range of domestic construction activity.

To provide some practical context, the proposals would equate to the following increases in these common types of application:

	Current fee	April 2022	April 2023
• Single dwelling	£300	£352.50	£405
• Small domestic extension	£120	£141	£162
• Roofspace conversion	£216	£253.80	£291.60

A draft response to the questions set out in the consultation is **enclosed**, including the questions in relation to proposed fee increases.

RECOMMENDATION that approval be given to the draft response to the Consultation on Proposed Amendment to the Building (Prescribed Fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 as set out.

Prepared by: Stephen Hipkins, Head of Property and Building Services

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.8 WM/WM/40 THE REDUCTION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC (SUP) BEVERAGE CUPS AND FOOD CONTAINERS CONSULTATION DRAFT RESPONSE

Correspondence has been received, **enclosed**, from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) seeking comments on a Consultation on the Reduction of Single-Use Plastic (SUP) Beverage Cups and Food Containers in Northern Ireland. The aim is to reduce consumption of SUP and encourage a wider take up of Multiple Use and/or single-use non-plastic (SUNP) alternatives.

The Department is seeking stakeholders' views on the suggested policy options to ensure the most effective method of reducing the consumption of SUP beverage cups and food containers is found.

The consultation considers the range of SUP beverage cups and food containers which are available and defines beverage cups for purposes of the consultation as: Cups for beverages, including their covers and lids. These might include take-away coffee cups and lids, or milkshake cups and covers, for example. Definition of food containers for purposes of the consultation: Food containers, i.e. receptacles such as boxes, with or without a cover, used to contain food which: (a) is intended for immediate consumption, either on-the-spot or take-away, (b) is typically consumed from the receptacle, and (c) is ready to be consumed without any further preparation, such as cooking, boiling or heating, including food containers used for fast food or other meal ready for immediate consumption, except beverage containers, plates and packets and wrappers containing food. Food containers included in the Consultation are those that are filled at point of sale (e.g. plastic trays for chips, plastic boxes used at salad bars). Consumers would have a choice here to use a SUP food container or use an alternative.

Three policies are modelled for both SUP beverage cups and food containers:

- A ban on their use;
- A levy of 25p on each cup and 50p on each food container; and
- A voluntary scheme or schemes implemented by businesses that make use of SUP cups or food containers, which may comprise a range of charges for cups/food containers, discounts for MU cups/food containers and communication efforts. This is modelled as having the same effect as a 10p levy for a beverage cup and 25p for a food container.

A draft response, **enclosed**, has been included for Members' consideration.

The main points of the proposed response are as follows:

1. An initial levy on SUP items is proposed, similar to the Plastic Bag Levy scheme, due to the limited supply of alternatives to SUP. This option has been chosen rather than a ban or a voluntary scheme as this will achieve a reduction in the consumption of SUP items while providing suppliers time to develop other types of cups and containers.
The levy would be monitored for its effectiveness and the impact of other future legislation like the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and Extended

Producer Responsibility (EPR). Officers suggest that a full ban of SUP could be introduced if further mitigation is required.

2. The levy for SUP Beverage cups should start at 25p and for food containers at 75p, in line with modelled costs. These costs can be reviewed depending on impact on behaviour change.
3. Other materials such as metal, paper, and glass packaging should not be included in the scope of the scheme without further monitoring of the impact of measures carried out. These materials can be readily recycled by Council already, and could be managed under DRS and EPR.
4. Compostable packaging alternatives are available, however further work must be done to explore the correct method and infrastructure for recycling these alternatives.

Members are reminded that Council has taken decisive action to reduce the use of SUP across its sites and this has been incorporated into the Climate Change Action Plan. These initiatives include the use of recycled plastic waste sacks, supporting the National Refill Campaign for water bottles, supply of water bottles to leisure centre users and staff, and a pilot to encourage the use of paper and wooden utensils instead of plastics in local fast food establishments.

RECOMMENDATION: that the draft response to Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Beverage Cups and Food Containers in Northern Ireland be approved.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.9 WM/WM/37 REFUSE & RECYCLING PUBLIC HOLIDAY COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS 2022

The arrangements for refuse and kerbside recycling collections for Public Holidays in 2021 are set out below for consideration.

The proposed alternative collection days for 2022 are:

Public Holiday	Legacy Antrim Households	Legacy Newtownabbey Households
St Patrick's Day Thursday 17 March	No change 17 March 2022 (Wednesday)	No change 17 March 2022 (Wednesday)
Good Friday Friday 15 April	No Collection Required	No change Friday 15 April 2022 (Good Friday)
Easter Monday Monday 18 April	18 April 2022 (Friday)	No Service. Collections to be rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week through to Saturday to catch up. Collection due Tuesday)
Easter Tuesday Tuesday 19 April	No change 19 April 2022 (Tuesday)	As above (Collection due Wednesday)
May Day Bank Holiday Monday 2 May	No change 2 May 2022 (Monday)	No change 2 May 2022 (Monday)
Spring Bank Holiday Thursday 2 June	No change 2 June 2022 (Thursday)	No change 2 June 2022 (Thursday)
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Friday 3 June	No Collection Required (Monday to Thursday in legacy Antrim)	No change Friday 3 June 2022

12 July (Tuesday)	No service. Collections due Friday 15 July 2022	No Service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week through to Saturday to catch up (Wednesday)
13 July Wednesday 13 July	No change 13 July 2022 (Wednesday)	As above (Thursday)
Summer Bank Holiday (Late August) Monday 29 August	No change Monday 29 August 2022	No change Monday 29 August 2022
Christmas Day Holiday public holiday falls on Monday 26 December	30 December 2022 (Friday)	No Service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week through to Saturday to catch up (Tuesday)
Boxing Day Holiday public holiday falls on Tuesday 27 December	27 December 2022 (Tuesday)	As above (Wednesday)
Friday 30 December	As above. Rescheduled Christmas Day public holiday collection	31 December 2022 (Saturday)
New Year's Day public holiday falls on Monday 2 January	No Change Monday 2 Jan 2023	No Change Monday 2 Jan 2023

* Legacy Antrim collections are Monday – Thursday, legacy Newtownabbey being Monday – Friday.

For information Members may wish to note the already approved arrangements for the 2021 Christmas holiday period.

Public Holiday	Legacy Antrim Households	Legacy Newtownabbey Households
ALREADY APPROVED		
Christmas Day Holiday public holiday falls on Monday 27 December	31 December 2021 (Friday)	No Service. Collections rescheduled to Tuesday 28 December and each successive day of this week through to 31 December 2021 (Friday)
Boxing Day public holiday falls on Tuesday 28 December	28 December 2020 (Tuesday)	29 December 2021 As above
Friday 31 December	Rescheduled Christmas Day public holiday collection.	3 January 2021 (Saturday)
New Year's Day public holiday falls on Monday 3 January	No Change 3 Jan 2022 (Monday)	Rescheduled to Tuesday 4 January 2022 (Tuesday) Collections rescheduled for each successive day for this week through to Saturday to catch up

Residents in the Borough will be advised of their collection arrangements through the usual means of Borough Life, bin stickers, social media, and on the Council's website.

RECOMMENDATION: that the collection arrangements for refuse and recycling bin collections for Public Holidays in 2022 are approved.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.10 L/LEI/041/VOL 2 MACMILLAN MOVE MORE – OFFER OF MATCH FUNDING

Members are reminded that at the October Operations Committee meeting it was reported that following receipt of correspondence from MacMillan confirming that funding had been secured to continue the Move More initiative, through 50% funding for the Coordinator salary costs up to March 2024, Officers contacted MacMillan to review options for the delivery model of the programme.

Since the Committee meeting in October, MacMillan, has confirmed that the offer of funding is available only for the existing model –for salary costs only.

A Letter of Offer for £45,000 has been received representing 50% of the Coordinator salary (with no programme costs) for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 March 2024 at which point the funding will cease. The balance of salary costs to be met by Council during this period would be £45,000 plus management costs (mileage costs, for example), estimated at £4,500 giving a total cost of £49,500 as well as in kind management support.

The Programme, which was due to finish in December 2021 has been delivered in the Borough for people living with and beyond cancer since 2016. All costs between 2016 and 2019 were met by MacMillan. In 2019, the funding model changed and MacMillan requested that Councils consider continuing the programme, on the basis of increasing contributions: Council contributing 25% of the Coordinator's salary costs in year 1, 50% in year 2, and 75% in Year 3 up to December 2021

The delivery of the Programme was through a secondment opportunity to leisure staff for the Move More Coordinator role as this offered both a development opportunity for a member of staff and ensured that there would be no job loss when funding ended. A member of staff from Antrim Forum was subsequently seconded and has been in post since 2016.

In the meantime, on the understanding that the funding for the Macmillan Move More programme would cease in December 2021, an in-house Health Intervention Action Plan has been developed. The Plan is scheduled to be presented to the January meeting of Committee and will be launched thereafter and includes: Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS), Cardiac rehabilitation programme, Pulmonary rehabilitation programme, Falls prevention (Otago), Mental Health Intervention Programme and Active Pregnancy. This is a flexible programme which can expand to involve other areas to meet changing demands will sit alongside the cancer rehabilitation programme.

RECOMMENDATION: that approval is given to accept the Letter of Offer from MacMillan for £45,000 to cover salary costs for the Move More Programme Co-ordinator from 1 January 2022 to 31 March 2024, with match funding of £45,000 plus management costs as set out above.

Prepared by: Anna Boyle, Sport & Physical Activity Programmes Manager
and Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.11 WM/WM/33 REQUEST FOR LIVE HERE LOVE HERE SUPPORT 2022-23

Correspondence, **enclosed**, has been received from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) for financial support in the amount of £21,000 for the Live Here Love Here (LHLH) Programme for 2022-23. The correspondence goes on to request that Council's considers making a commitment to this level of funding for each of the next three years. KNIB is the environmental charity with the stated aim of making Northern Ireland a cleaner and more pleasant place in which to live. The LHLH Programme focuses on improving the local environment and building a sense of pride in local communities.

At least 50% of any financial contribution is available to support local environmental projects with 15 groups benefiting from the LHLH small grants scheme last year. Members are also reminded that an application by Council for a Marine Grant has been successful with £36,941 secured through LHLH.

LHLH also runs extensive advertising campaigns in the Borough and across Northern Ireland on issues like littering and dog fouling which raise public awareness, harmonising the message and supporting Council cleansing operations.

The correspondence highlights two options, (i) continuing with funding requests being received annually – this year being £21,000 or (ii) making a commitment to providing £21,000 annually for the next three years. In view of the importance of the work in addressing priorities such as recycling and anti-littering a three year commitment seems appropriate

RECOMMENDATION: that financial support in the amount of £21,000 be approved for 3 years being for 2022-23 through to 2024-2025.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

4.12 WM/WM/33 REQUEST FOR ECO-SCHOOLS SUPPORT 2022/23

Council has received a funding request, **enclosed**, from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) for the Eco-Schools Programme for 2022/23. KNIB co-ordinates the Programme, which aims to combine pupils learning with action on improving the environmental performance of the school.

The Eco-Schools Programme is extremely popular in Borough with 79 schools now registered and of these 46 schools achieving the highest level, Green Flag accreditation. In addition, Ballycraigy and Fairview Primary Schools are recognised as Ambassador Schools. In 2021-2022 £1,700 in financial support was agreed.

Many schools engage with the Council through Eco-school topics such as waste and recycling, biodiversity and climate change. A summary of the Eco-Schools engagement in 2020-21 **is enclosed**.

Last year, Council provided the requested £1,700 contribution to the Eco-Schools Programme. The correspondence indicates that due to increasing costs the basic option contribution has increased to £2,975. A second funding option is also available as highlighted below:

Option 1: Support of the Programme at a cost of £10,942 which includes Wheelie Big Challenge, Eco Schools and core running cost of the programme. (Wheelie Big challenge encourages pupils and teachers to investigate what happens to their waste in school and take practical action to improve things by actioning the 5 Rs – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair and Recycle).

Option 2: Support for the Eco-Schools Programme at a cost of £2,975 – which includes Eco Schools communication, training and development to all schools in the Borough.

In keeping with Council's commitment to Climate Change and the importance of the school setting in influencing young people's behaviours, Officers are proposing that Option 1 offers the most effective proposition. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful also offers an *Eco-Schools Award Ceremony at the cost of £5,000*. This is described as important to schools and pupils, reinforcing the importance of their work and introducing pupils to their local council's involvement and relevance in what they are doing in school. Organisation and promotion of Eco-School's Award Ceremony would be the responsibility of KNIB with the Council providing a venue for the event to be hosted in June 2022.

Members may wish to note that the funding is matched by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

RECOMMENDATION: that Council approves funding in the amount of £10,942 for the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools Programme including the Wheelie Big Challenge in 2022/23 and considers participation in the Eco-Schools Award Ceremony at an additional cost of £5,000.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

5.1 EH/PHWB/007 MUDDY BOOTS EVALUATION

Members are reminded that Muddy Boots online was launched in November 2020. Muddy Boots is a unique edible growing programme which has been designed and developed by council staff. The online experience was designed to enable and equip the public to 'grow your own from home' regardless of available space, ability, or experience.

The aim of the Muddy Boots online programme was to increase participation in growing activity amongst residents. It was also hoped that it would have a positive impact on fruit and vegetable consumption, using seasonal produce and reducing food waste. Growing your own food can also have a positive impact on both physical and mental wellbeing.

To date over seven hundred residents within the Borough have registered to use the comprehensive resources available via the website.

An evaluation of the Muddy Boots programme was undertaken in October 2021. From this evaluation:

- 85% of respondents rated their confidence to grow their own food as 'better' or 'much better' since using Muddy Boots resources.
- 90% found the resources available online 'useful' or 'extremely useful'.
- 51% reported knowledge and skills had increased 'a lot' or 'a great deal' and 54% responders rated their knowledge of seasonal growing outdoors as 'good' or 'excellent'.
- 97% of respondents are growing their own food with Muddy Boots.
- 100% of those growing with the Muddy Boots resources have said they intend to continue growing and 95% would recommend Muddy Boots to family and friends.

There was a wide range of vegetables, fruit and herbs grown by participants with 97% of those growing reporting that they are eating the produce they've grown.

A Muddy Boots Grower of the Year competition was launched in August 2021 as an opportunity for Muddy Boots participants to showcase their growing achievements in both words and pictures, with the winner receiving a £100 voucher to spend at their local garden centre. A copy of the winning entry is **enclosed**.

Muddy Boots is set to continue online along with ongoing developments to the programme so as to continue to meet the needs of the local community and encourage others to participate in edible horticulture.

RECOMMENDATION: that this report be noted.

Prepared by: Alison Briggs, Environmental Health Manager (Health and Wellbeing)

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

5.2 PK/BIO/032 BEST KEPT GARDEN COMPETITION 2021

This year's Best Kept Garden Competition received 121 entries, an increase of 40 from the previous year and the highest ever received.

This year's competition was open for entries between 2 June to 30 July, with shortlisting conducted in September by the Mayor and Members from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub Group. The award ceremony was held on 9 November in Mossley Mill with the winners as follows and pictures of the event enclosed:

Best Kept Garden	
1st Place	Molly Grattan
2nd Place	Colin Mitchell
Best Kept Front / container	
1st Place	William Crawford
2nd Place	Elizabeth English Wylie
Best Kept School	
1st Place	Riverside School
2nd Place	Duneane Primary School
Best Kept Commercial Premises	
1st Place	Dunadry Hotel & Gardens
2nd Place	McConnells Bar
Best Kept Community Planting	
1st Place	Whiteabbey Village Business Association
2nd Place	The Lock Keepers Cottage
ANTRIM	Riverside School
AIRPORT	Florence Faulkner
MACEDON	Whiteabbey Business Association
BALLYCLARE	McConnell's Bar
DUNSILLY	Wesley and Doreen McFetridge
GLENGORMLEY URBAN	Carnmoney Village Community Group
THREEMILEWATER	Molly Grattan

Officers are reviewing the categories with a view to proposing some specifically focusing on biodiversity. These will be considered by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub Group and reported through to Committee in due course.

RECOMMENDATION: that this report be noted.

Prepared by: Angela Ross, Parks Development Officer

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

5.3 WM/WM/24 FAIRTRADE BOROUGH STATUS

Members are reminded that Fairtrade Borough Status was conferred on the Borough through Fairtrade UK and Ireland. As a result of work by Council and the Fairtrade Steering Group this accreditation has been renewed for another two years.

Fairtrade helps small-scale farmers ensure they earn stable incomes and have long-term contracts with companies. In addition, they earn the Fairtrade Premium, which they invest as the farmer-owned co-operative democratically chooses, in projects that will benefit their business or community.

The Fairtrade Borough status recognises the strong support for Fairtrade, achieving five qualifying goals, including, a wide availability of Fairtrade products in local shops and catering outlets, and high levels of support from local people, businesses, Council, faith groups and schools. As part of Council's commitment to the Fairtrade campaign, there will be further promotion and support over the next two years.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

5.4 WM/WM/049 ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Members will be aware that Council has successfully implemented the Environmental Management System (EMS) which was re-accredited to ISO14001 standard in February 2021. In order to retain the ISO14001 accreditation, the EMS is audited annually by an independent external auditor.

The EMS must meet specific criteria including a commitment by Council to meeting the requirements of environmental legislation and regulations, preventing pollution and striving for continued improvement in environmental performance.

The auditor completed her annual audit in November and has congratulated the Council on the successful delivery of the ISO14001 standard and it was noted that the continuous improvement displayed by Council was impressive, especially given the restrictions placed upon Council and services during the pandemic and she also commented that staff continue to demonstrate a positive attitude to the EMS.

Planned projects to demonstrate continued improvement in environmental performance include the delivery of the climate change action plan, million trees project, trial of carbon reducing alternative fuels, and plastic prevention initiatives.

Another demonstration of Council's environmental performance was the achievement of a Platinum Award in the Annual Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking Survey 2021. The Survey is completed by Government and private organisations across Northern Ireland assessing their performance in areas including energy, transport, water and waste. Despite stricter criteria in 2019 and a lapse of entry due to COVID in 2020, Council maintained its Platinum Award.

Both the Environmental Management System and the Annual Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking Survey demonstrate the implementation of the priorities set out in the Climate Change Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

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

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

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations

5.5 PK/GEN/182 LIVING WITH WATER PROGRAMME

Correspondence, **enclosed**, has been received from the Department for Infrastructure further to Council's input to the Living with Water Programme.

The Final Plan and Consultation Report provided by the Department is also **enclosed** for Members' information.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Geraldine Girvan, Deputy Chief Executive of Operations