



1 October 2025

Committee Chair: Alderman J Smyth

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor L O'Hagan

Committee Members: Aldermen – L Boyle and P Bradley

Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, M Cooper, R Foster,
J Gilmour, N Kelly, AM Logue, A McAuley,
E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, M Stewart and S Ward

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Monday 6 October 2025 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Baker", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

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

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

For any queries please contact Member Services:
Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 Data-Share Agreement with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Agreement for Animal Welfare Services
- 3.2 Application for the Grant of an Occasional Entertainments Licence – Marquee on Land to the rear of the Five Corners, 249 Rashee Road, Ballyclare, BT39 9JN
- 3.3 Application for the Grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence – Knags Bar and Grill, 375 Antrim Road, Glengormley, BT36 5EB
- 3.4 Application for the Renewal of Premises for Civil Marriages/Civil Partnership Ceremonies
- 3.5 Scheme of Delegation
- 3.6 Consultation on Local Authority and District Council Guidance on Grey Market Goods in the United Kingdom
- 3.7 Climate Change Mitigation Report
- 3.8 Draft Response to Northern Ireland's Draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027
- 3.9 Newtownabbey Rotary Club – Crocus Planting
- 3.10 Small Woodland Grant Scheme – Tree Planting Proposal for 2025
- 3.11 Bird Ringing Proposal for Threemilewater Conservation Park
- 3.12 Northern Ireland Water – Essential Site Sewage Works at Valley Park
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- 4.1 Air Quality Monitoring
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- 4.3 Ireland's Best Kept Town and Green Flag Awards 2025

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6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 arc21 Joint Committee Papers

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REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY 6 OCTOBER 2025

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 EH/EHS/002 DATA-SHARE AGREEMENT WITH MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL AGREEMENT FOR ANIMAL WELFARE SERVICES

1. Purpose

A Data-Sharing Agreement (DSA) between Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (MEABC), and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council is required to facilitate the secure and lawful exchange of information for the investigation and enforcement of duties under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011 and the Dogs Order (NI) 1983. This agreement ensures compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that Councils have statutory responsibility for the investigation and enforcement of animal welfare and dog control legislation. To carry out these functions effectively, Council often needs to share personal and sensitive data between enforcement partners.

The proposed DSA formalises the arrangements for lawful and proportionate data-sharing between the three Northern Region Councils. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (MEABC) will act as the coordinating lead authority for the agreement.

The draft agreement has been reviewed by the Legal and Governance teams of the participating councils, who have confirmed that the document is legally robust, compliant with data protection requirements, and suitable for adoption.

3. Key Issues

A formal Data-Sharing Agreement (DSA) (**enclosed**) is required to regulate the sharing of personal and sensitive data between councils, ensuring compliance with data protection legislation. The agreement facilitates the exchange of information such as officer statements, veterinary reports, dog licensing data, CCTV and photographic evidence, conviction records and other intelligence relevant to enforcement.

It sets out strict requirements for data security, handling and retention, including the use of secure transfer methods, maintaining audit trails, and restricting access to authorised officers only. The legal basis for sharing is provided under UK GDPR, specifically Article 6(1)(e) – Public Task, and Article 9(2)(g) – Substantial Public Interest.

The DSA also establishes processes for managing subject access requests (SARs), Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests, alongside clear procedures for handling breaches, complaints, and staff training responsibilities. The agreement will be reviewed annually, with a comprehensive review every three years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation

4. Summary

The Animal Welfare Data-Sharing Agreement establishes a clear and secure framework for the sharing of personal and sensitive data between MEABC, CCGBC, and ANBC.

It supports statutory enforcement functions under the *Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011* and *Dogs Order (NI) 1983*, while ensuring compliance with data protection legislation, safeguarding individual rights, and maintaining public confidence in the Councils' handling of sensitive information.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members the signing of the Animal Welfare Data Sharing Agreement be approved.

Prepared by: Mark Sloan, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

3.2 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCE – MARQUEE ON LAND TO THE REAR OF THE FIVE CORNERS, 249 RASHEE ROAD, BALLYCLARE, BT39 9JN

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report is to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Entertainment Licence for a marquee on land to the rear of The Five Corners, 249 Rashee Road, Ballyclare, BT39 9JN.

2. Introduction

An application has been received for the grant of an Occasional Entertainment Licence for the following location

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Connor McNeill	Marquee located on land to the rear of The Five Corners, 249 Rashee Road, Ballyclare, BT39 9JN	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind Licence for not more than 14 particular days (to be specified in advance) in a 12-month period. Times to be specified in advance, but no later than 23.00 hrs on any given date. Number of persons – no greater than 250	EL221	New Application

In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application must be considered at the Operations Committee meeting.

Council can decide the following:

- I. Grant the licence;
- II. Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- III. Refuse the licence;
- IV. Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

If Council makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

3. Main Report

An application has been received for the Grant of an Entertainment Licence (Occasional Indoor) for the above-named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval is now required in advance of granting the licence.

Members are advised that the applicant has recently acquired the premises Five Corners, 249 Rashee Road, Ballyclare, BT39 9JN and has previously applied for a transfer of the pre-existing indoor annual licence into their name. This has now been completed.

This new application has been submitted to authorise events within a marquee situated to the rear of the premises Five Corners, 249 Rashee Road, Ballyclare, BT39 9JN. Fourteen such events are proposed by the applicant, with dates and times to be notified in advance to Environmental Health. No event will extend beyond 23:00 hours on any given day.

Members are further advised that an unlicensed entertainment event took place in the outdoor area adjacent to the premises at 249 Rashee Road on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 August. In response, Licensing Officers engaged with the applicant to ensure full understanding of all Entertainment Licensing requirements for outdoor activities. A formal written warning was issued, and an Entertainment Licence application was subsequently submitted. Since then, the applicant has fully cooperated, working closely with Licensing Officers and providing all necessary documentation.

4. Summary

Application for an Entertainments Licence (Occasional Indoor) has been received from Mr Connor McNeill for 14 unspecified dates (within a 12-month period) at land to the rear of The Five Corners, 249 Rashee Road, Ballyclare, County Antrim, BT39 9JN. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that an Entertainment Licence (Occasional Licence) be granted to the applicant, Mr Connor McNeill – The Five Corners, 249 Rashee Road, Ballyclare, BT39 9JN - subject to the following conditions.

- a) **That all relevant licensing requirements are met.**
- b) **That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval.**

- c) That at least 21 days' advance notice is given to Environmental Health prior to the events being held.**
- d) That documentation requested by the Licensing Officer is provided in advance of any event being held.**

Prepared by: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

3.3 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN ANNUAL INDOOR ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCE – KNAGS BAR AND GRILL, 375 ANTRIM ROAD, GLENGORMLEY, BT36 5EB

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for an Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for Knags Bar and Grill, 375 Antrim Road, Glengormley, BT36 5EB.

2. Introduction

An application has been received for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for the following location

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Kevin McCourt	Knags Bar and Grill, 375 Antrim Road, Glengormley, BT36 5EB	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind Annual Indoor Licence Monday – Sunday 12:00hrs – Midnight Number of persons – no greater than 80	EL067	New Application

In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application must be considered at the Operations Committee meeting.

Council can decide the following:

- I. Grant the licence;
- II. Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- III. Refuse the licence;
- IV. Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

If Council makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

3. Main Report

An application has been received for the Grant of an Entertainment Licence (Annual Indoor) for the above-named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval is now required in advance of granting the licence. Members should note that the applicant previously held an Entertainment Licence for this venue, however, chose not to renew following the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. Summary

Application for the Grant of an Entertainment Licence (Annual Indoor) has been received from Mr Kevin McCourt for Knags Bar and Grill, 375 Antrim Road, Glengormley, BT36 5EB. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that an Entertainment Licence (Annual Indoor) is granted to the applicant Mr Kevin McCourt, Knags Bar and Grill, 375 Antrim Road, Glengormley, BT36 5EB, subject to the following Conditions:

- a) That all relevant licensing requirements are met**
- b) That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval**

Prepared by: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

3.4 PK/REG/005, PK/REG/004, PK/REG/010 APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the renewal of place approvals for Sentry Hill, Barnabys Restaurant, and the Dunadry Hotel as venues where Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership ceremonies may be conducted.

2. Background

In accordance with the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act 2004, Council is responsible for approving applications for temporary place approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

As part of this process, a Notice of Interest must be displayed in a prominent location at the proposed venue for a period of three weeks to allow for any public objections to be submitted.

No objections were received during the public notice period. In addition, each of the premises has been formally inspected and deemed suitable to proceed with the approval process

3. Previous Decision of Council

All three venues were previously granted approval by Council in October 2022.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that Sentry Hill, Barnaby's Restaurant, and the Dunadry Hotel and Gardens be re-approved as venues to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, and for the registration of Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

Prepared by: Paula Redpath, Registrar

Agreed by: Emma Thompson, Bereavement Services Manager and Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

3.5 EH/EHS/LR/011 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members that, further to a review of the Scheme of Delegation, it has been necessary to add legislation in order to streamline the process for dealing with complaints.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that the Council operates a Scheme of Delegation to ensure that decisions relating to Environmental Health can be taken efficiently, transparently, and at the most appropriate level of responsibility. The Scheme specifies which functions are retained by Council and which legislative powers are delegated to senior officers.

In the context of Environmental Health, delegated powers enable authorised officers to exercise functions under relevant legislation without unnecessary referral to Council. This approach is essential to:

- Streamline service delivery- by reducing delays in matters such as regulatory functions, enforcement, and complaint resolution;
- Ensure accountability- by clearly defining the responsibilities of senior officers.

By maintaining and regularly reviewing the Scheme of Delegation, Council ensures that its decision-making processes remain effective, legally compliant, and responsive to the needs of residents and stakeholders.

3. Key Issues

Following a review of the Scheme of Delegation, it has been necessary to incorporate additional legislation in order to streamline the process for handling complaints. New additions are highlighted in red and any amendments highlighted in purple (**enclosed**).

Legislative updates are;

New additions:

1. The Official Controls (Animal, Feed and Food) Regulations (NI) 2019
2. The Dangerous Dogs (Compensation and Exemption Schemes) Order (NI) 2024
3. The Organic Product Regulations (NI) 2020
4. The Solvent Emissions Regulations (NI) 2004

Amended legislation:

1. The Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (as amended)

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the revised Schedule of Delegated Functions for the Director of Sustainability and Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing be adopted.

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

Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Sustainability

3.6 EH/EHS/FC/004 CONSULTATION ON LOCAL AUTHORITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL GUIDANCE ON GREY MARKET GOODS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for a Council response on draft guidance for enforcement authorities of Grey Market goods in the UK.

2. Background

The Food Standards Agency has launched a consultation seeking views on guidance designed to support local authorities and district councils in identifying and addressing non-compliant food products, referred to as *Grey Market goods*. These are foods not intended for the UK market, which may contain unauthorised or excessive additives, fail to meet UK compositional standards, or omit allergen information in the prescribed format. The draft guidance sets out how councils can use existing food law to take proportionate and effective enforcement action when such products are identified.

Details of the consultation can be found at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/consultations/consultation-on-local-authority-and-district-council-guidance-on-grey-market-goods-in-the-united-kingdom>

3. Key Issues

Council welcomes the draft guidance but considers that further clarification and strengthening is required in several key areas. The response is very technical due to subject matter and some of the key issues are:

- **Detaining goods** – More clarity is needed on when to use different legal powers and what options are available (e.g. returning, destroying, or treating products).
- **Allergens and labelling** – Direction is needed on how to deal with products containing allergens that are not labelled in English, and whether these should be removed from sale.
- The guidance does not take account of Northern Ireland legislative differences or data sharing mechanisms.
- **Withdrawals and recalls** – Guidance should be stronger, as some businesses delay or refuse to take unsafe products off the market. A “Permit to Trade” system could be considered, and the FSA should play a more active role in urgent cases.
- **Enforcement tools** – Councils would welcome the option of Fixed Penalty Notices for simpler offences like labelling breaches.

A copy of the draft Council response (**enclosed**) is included for Members' information.

4. Summary

Council broadly welcomes the draft guidance as a valuable step in clarifying enforcement options for Grey Market goods. However, important issues remain, particularly around NI legislative context, clarity on detention powers, mechanisms for intelligence sharing, and ensuring effective recall and withdrawal processes.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft consultation response be approved.

Prepared by: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Commercial)

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

3.7 WM/S/001 CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION REPORT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the submission of Council's Climate Change Mitigation Report.

2. Background

Under The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, the first climate change mitigation reports are due by 31st October 2025. These regulations, established under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, mandate that public bodies, including Council, submit a climate change mitigation report on a 3-yearly basis.

For this first reporting round, Council's mitigation report will:

- set the baseline year for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) covering the financial year beginning 1st April 2024 and ending 31st March 2025;
- contain the amounts and sources of GHG emissions for that financial year;
- contain the proposals and policies for reducing emissions in the exercise of its functions and the timescales for implementation.

The submission has been drafted in conjunction with all Council departments and has been reviewed by both the Corporate Leadership Team and Sustainability Working Group. A copy of the draft submission (**enclosed**) is available for Members' information.

Council's submission requires the following:

- evidence of high level, climate mitigation objectives;
- a diagram outlining the carbon emissions that we are responsible for reporting on;
- the carbon emissions statement and a breakdown of specific targets and actions that are already in place or intended to take place in the future to reduce our GHG emissions.

All of the objectives, targets and actions have been taken from publicly available documents, such as the Corporate Plan, Community Plan and the Climate Change Action Plan.

3. Summary

In compliance with the Climate Change Regulations, Council is required to submit a Climate Change Mitigation Report. The report sets out how Council will reduce its carbon emissions and will be submitted every three years.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft Climate Change Mitigation Report be approved.

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

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

3.8 WM/S/002 DRAFT RESPONSE TO NORTHERN IRELAND'S DRAFT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2023-2027

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the response to the consultation on Northern Ireland's Draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027.

2. Background

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 sets an ambitious target to reduce Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050. The Act requires the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to prepare and publish a Climate Action Plan every five years.

This plan sets out policies and proposals to achieve required reductions in emissions and the actions to enable this to happen. The focus of this draft Climate Action Plan is on meeting the first carbon budget, 2023-2027.

Council Officers have attended dedicated topic Workshops to consult on findings and have drafted a response to the consultation which is due for submission 8 October 2025.

3. Key Information

Members will be aware that Council is a member of Sustainable NI who drafted a wide ranging and robust response on behalf of the sustainability sector. Council's response (**enclosed**) builds on Sustainable NI's submission, however it is proposed not to comment on actions or targets outside of Council's remit i.e. agriculture, forestry, fisheries and soil quality.

The proposed response emphasises the need for financial packages and support of all households to prevent inequality in achieving the actions set out in the plan. In addition, the important role of local government in decision making and implementation of actions is highlighted.

Key points:

- support for the emphasis on renewable energy deployment and grid strengthening but note that delays in planning and insufficient grid capacity remain significant barriers;
- Council supports active travel funding and EV infrastructure expansion, however, have noted that the plan should take account and prevent a rural-urban equity gap. The CAP should prioritise affordable public transport, bus electrification, and targeted support for all households to access low-carbon mobility;
- local authority buildings should be eligible for government retrofit funding schemes, recognising our leadership role and visibility in the community;
- Council support mandatory commercial recycling and improved and harmonised kerbside recycling services for households, with legislative changes and funding to enable Local Council or Government to

- implement and enforce them; and
- recommend that the Climate Action and Green Growth governance are merged into a single integrated Climate & Sustainability Programme Board. This will reduce duplication, align economic and climate objectives, and ensure just transition principles are embedded from the outset.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft response to the Northern Ireland's Draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027 be approved.

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

Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Sustainability

3.9 G/MSMO/067 NEWTOWNABBEY ROTARY CLUB - CROCUS PLANTING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Newtownabbey Rotary Club to plant crocuses at Hazelbank Park as part of their efforts to support Polio awareness.

2. Background

Council have supported Newtownabbey Rotary Club over the last number of years through their crocus planting initiative. In 2019, the club established a commemorative crocus bed at Jordanstown Special Needs School, marking the start of their local commitment. In 2021, they expanded the project by adding crocus planters at the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice in Glengormley. Continuing their efforts in 2022, they planted a commemorative crocus bed in V36. Each year, these plantings serve as visual symbols of the Rotary Club's dedication to the eradication of Polio.

3. Benefits to Council

Council has supported Newtownabbey Rotary Club's crocus planting initiative for several years, contributing to both community engagement and enhancement of local parks and open spaces. In addition to their aesthetic appeal, crocus plantings enhance biodiversity in each area, while also raising awareness for an important cause of the global fight against Polio.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that approval be granted for Newtownabbey Rotary Club to plant crocuses at Hazelbank Park as part of their ongoing efforts to promote Polio awareness.

Prepared by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

3.10 PK/BIO/046 SMALL WOODLAND GRANT SCHEME- TREE PLANTING PROPOSAL FOR 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Small Woodland Grant Scheme and to seek approval for the proposed sites identified for tree planting in 2025.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded of Council's commitment to tree planting through the One Million Trees initiative and its ongoing efforts to encourage participation from residents, community groups, schools, and other key stakeholders.

To support the delivery of the initiative, Officers will be submitting an application to the Small Woodland Grant Scheme. This scheme, administered by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), provides financial assistance to landowners for the creation of new native woodlands covering an area of 0.20 hectares or more.

The grant includes an annual payment for woodland establishment over a ten-year period. The scheme is designed to enhance biodiversity, support ecosystem services, mitigate climate change, and improve water, soil, and air quality.

3. Key Issues on Sites

Through the Small Woodland Grant Scheme, 100% of eligible costs are covered for the supply and planting of native tree species at approved locations.

For the 2025 programme, it is proposed that a total of 2,492 native trees will be planted across two sites:

- Allen Park, and
- Church Road, Newtownabbey, in an area adjacent to Valley Leisure Centre

Site plans for both proposed locations are **enclosed** for Members' reference.

In the course of site selection, a number of other Council-owned lands were identified as potentially suitable for future planting initiatives. These included Gideons Green, Sentry Hill, and Burneys Lane. While initial assessments were positive, further detailed investigation and environmental appraisal are required before these sites can be confirmed as feasible planting locations.

Other areas considered included Caulside Park and Hazelbank Park. However, these did not meet the specific eligibility criteria of the Small Woodland Grant Scheme and therefore could not be progressed within the current programme.

Notwithstanding this, officers remain committed to identifying and developing further opportunities for woodland creation and biodiversity enhancement across the Borough, and these sites will be revisited as part of ongoing environmental improvement initiatives.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended the proposed tree planting locations for the Small Woodland Grant Scheme 2025 at Allen Park, Antrim, and Church Road, Newtownabbey be approved.

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks

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

3.11 PK/GEN/116 BIRD RINGING PROPOSAL FOR THREEMILEWATER CONSERVATION PARK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the use of Threemilewater Conservation Park as a designated site for participation in a bird ringing scheme.

2. Introduction

Council Officers were recently approached by a representative of the British and Irish Ringing Scheme, organised by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), to explore the potential of Threemilewater Conservation Park as a site for bird ringing activities.

Bird ringing is a well-established scientific method used to monitor wild bird populations. It involves the safe and ethical capture of birds, which are then fitted with a lightweight, uniquely numbered metal ring typically on the right leg.

Researchers record key biometric data such as body weight and wing length to assess the health and condition of each bird. The main objectives of bird ringing are to collect long-term data on survival rates, breeding success, population trends, and movement patterns. Where relevant, the data also provides insights into shifts in migratory behaviour.

3. Key Issues for the Site

Threemilewater Conservation Park has been recognised for its rich biodiversity and regularly attracts a wide variety of bird species. Notably, the site supports a high density of summer-visiting species such as Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler, which is particularly significant given the park's relatively compact size.

Threemilewater Park may also be suitable for participation in the Constant Effort Sites (CES) Scheme, which is the first national standardised ringing programme under the BTO. Operating since 1983, the CES Scheme involves the systematic use of mist nets at fixed locations, at regular intervals, throughout the breeding season.

Currently, approximately 120 CES sites are active across Britain and Ireland. The scheme provides robust long-term data on adult and juvenile abundance, productivity, and adult survival rates for 24 species of common songbirds.

4. Environmental overview

It is proposed that bird ringing sessions be conducted during the early hours of the morning and in discreet areas of the site to minimise disturbance to both the public and local wildlife. These sessions not only facilitate the capture of

new birds for study but also enable the recapture of previously ringed individuals. Such data provides valuable insights for ornithological research and supports long-term bird conservation efforts.

Trained and licensed ringers are adept at recognising signs of excessive stress in individual birds. In the rare cases where a bird exhibits signs of significant distress, it is promptly released without being ringed, prioritising the bird's welfare above data collection

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that approval be granted for Threemilewater Conservation Park to be designated as a site for participation in the bird ringing scheme.

Prepared by: Nadine Campbell, Parks Development Manager

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

3.12 CE/GEN/078 NORTHERN IRELAND WATER – ESSENTIAL SITE SEWAGE WORKS AT VALLEY PARK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for Northern Ireland Water (NI Water) to carry out construction works at Valley Park, as part of its wastewater infrastructure rehabilitation project within the Mill Road catchment area.

2. Introduction

Correspondence has been received from NI Water, formally requesting access to Valley Park to undertake essential works as part of the Mill Road Catchment and Remediation Project. The correspondence is **enclosed** for Member's reference.

Following previous surveys of the wastewater network, NI Water has identified the need for sewer rehabilitation works on existing infrastructure located within Valley Park. These works are considered critical to maintaining the integrity and performance of the local wastewater system.

3. Site Investigation

As part of the pre-construction phase, **NI Water** is requesting access to the park in order to undertake a series of preparatory works. These works will include:

- The construction of temporary access routes through the park, including along the existing path adjacent to the motorway.
- The installation of up to four maintenance bays to facilitate activity within the existing tree line.

Maps outlining the proposed work areas have been provided by NI Water and are **enclosed** for Members' reference.

NI Water has confirmed that all works will be undertaken in a manner designed to minimise disruption to park users and the surrounding environment. The extent of land required will be restricted to the minimum necessary to complete the works safely and efficiently.

4. Proposed Works

The planned works involve the temporary modification of existing access routes and the creation of new temporary paths to support the rehabilitation of the sewer network. The duration of the works is estimated to be up to four months, from mobilisation to demobilisation. Subject to Council approval and NI Water contract finalisation, the proposed timeline for these works is from December 2025 to March 2026.

5. Key Considerations

While NI Water holds statutory powers under the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 to access land for essential works, it is also seeking formal Council consent to proceed. This approach reflects NI Water's commitment to maintaining transparency and partnership with Council throughout the process.

The proposed works will result in temporary disruption to Valley Park, including:

- Restricted access or temporary closure of certain areas during construction
- Visual and landscape impacts
- Noise and general disruption associated with excavation and construction activity

NI Water has committed to minimising disruption where possible and will take appropriate measures to maintain public access to unaffected areas of the park. Importantly, NI Water has also committed to restoring all impacted areas upon completion of the project, helping to ensure long-term environmental and community benefits.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that Council grants approval to Northern Ireland Water to undertake the proposed rehabilitation works on the existing wastewater infrastructure within Valley Park.

Prepared by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

3.13 WM/WM/033 REQUEST FOR LIVE HERE LOVE HERE SUPPORT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to set out Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's request for financial support for the Live Here Love Here programme.

2. Background

As Members will be aware, Council funds Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) who manage a number of environmental awareness programmes including Live Here Love Here, Eco Schools and the Green Flag accreditation. For the last four years Council has contributed £21,000 per annum and last year this funding helped deliver the following:

- Over £13,000 of support for 10 community environmental projects;
- 95 groups participating in the Adopt a Spot programme;
- 64 schools visits through the Eco School programme;
- 28 Green Flags in the Borough.

This year, KNIB has requested an increase in funding to £26,250, an increase of £5,250 on the previous four years, with 50% of the funding ringfenced for Live Here Love Here projects and the other 50% to support local community groups delivering environmental projects through their Small Grants scheme. In 2024-25, over 85% of the monies returned to projects in the Borough as direct funding.

3. Financial Implication

If the request for funding of £26,250 is approved, it would be included in the 2026-27 estimates with the cost split between the Sustainability and Parks and Leisure Directorates.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that financial support of £26,250 to Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful for 2026/27 be approved.

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

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

3.14 PK/GEN/212 OUTSCAPE - WALKING FOR ALL PROGRAMME

1. Purpose

This report seeks approval for the proposed delivery of the Walking for All programme through PEACEPLUS via Outscape.

2. Introduction/Background

Outscape (formerly Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland) is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes responsible outdoor recreation in a safe, inclusive, and sustainable way.

Through the PEACEPLUS Programme, under Theme 4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities – Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion, Outscape has secured €7,536,957 to deliver a three-year programme in partnership with councils across Northern Ireland. The proposal includes the appointment of a Walking for All Officer in each participating Council area. While Outscape will fund salary and associated administrative costs, Councils would act as the employing authority and provide office accommodation and support.

The Officer posts will be fixed term, linked to the funding period. Their role will focus on recruiting, training, and supporting volunteer Walk Leaders to deliver regular walking sessions within rural communities.

The Walking for All programme aims to create a coordinated and strategic approach to walking initiatives across Northern Ireland. Governance will be provided by a steering group comprising key stakeholders, including the Public Health Agency, Sport NI, local Councils, and Health and Social Care Trusts.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that, in November 2023, Council approved in principle participation as a named partner in Outscape's PEACEPLUS application for the 'Walking for All' programme, and agreed that, if successful, the Council would act as the employing authority for the Walking for All Officer, while also providing office space and administrative support as an in-kind contribution.

4. Financial Position/Implication

There are no financial implications for Council, as all recruitment and employment costs will be met externally by Outscape.

5. Commencement

The programme is scheduled to commence in January 2026 for a fixed term of 36 months. Redundancy costs have been factored into the salary budget to ensure there is no additional financial liability to Council at the end of the post.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that approval be granted for the delivery of the Walking for All programme through the PEACEPLUS Programme via Outscape, and that a Walking For All Officer be recruited on a fixed-term contract to support its implementation.

Prepared by: Nadine Campbell, Parks Development Manager

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 EH/EHS/008 AIR QUALITY MONITORING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the findings of the 2024 Air Quality monitoring in the Borough.

2. Background

Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) operates under the Environment Order (NI) 2002, providing the framework for managing air quality by Northern Ireland's local authorities. This report delivers the results of monitoring conducted in 2024.

3. Key Issues

Members are reminded that Council is responsible for reviewing the state of air quality in the Borough. To assist this process an Air Quality Strategy (AQS) has been devised for the UK. This sets down standards and objectives for the air quality pollutants causing the problems and allows councils to review air quality in their area against these.

LAQM requires Council to review and assess a range of air pollutants against the objectives set by the AQS, using a range of monitoring, modelling, and other methodologies.

Council has designated one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) - the Antrim Road, Glengormley. This area was identified as air quality testing indicated that the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), commonly associated with vehicle pollutants, were above the UK's annual mean target. This station provides live data accessible via the following link;

<https://www.airqualityni.co.uk/site/NWT5>

Levels of NO₂ are required by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to be monitored on an hourly basis to ensure that the 1-hour mean and annual mean legislative objectives are not being exceeded.

[A summary of the results for 2024 are as follows:](#)

- The NO₂ annual mean for 2024 was 33 µg m⁻³ which did not exceed the AQS objective of 40 µg m⁻³.
- The NO₂ 1-hour AQS Objective was not exceeded for any period of time.

Historical data shows that NO₂ emissions in 2020 and 2021 were lower due to reduced traffic flows during the Covid-19 pandemic. Levels subsequently increased as restrictions were lifted, but remain below pre-2020 levels, likely due to improvements in vehicle technology resulting in reduced emissions, increased use of public transport and changes in commuting practices.

4. Summary

Air quality monitoring within the Borough in 2024 show that levels of NO₂ remain below the AQS objective of 40 µg m⁻³. The NO₂ 1-hour AQS Objective was not exceeded for any period of time during 2024

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Liam Nicholas, Environmental Health Manager

Agreed by: Colin Kelly Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty Director of Sustainability

4.2 WM/WM/037/VOL2 HARMONISATION OF WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the Harmonisation of Waste Collection Services in the Borough.

2. Background

Members will be aware that Officers are actively working on the Harmonisation of Waste Collection Services across the Borough along with key stakeholders including, third party waste companies, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and dedicated consultants. Officers have continued to provide Members with a monthly update on how the project is progressing.

3. Key Information

Deliveries of wheelie boxes and black bins commenced week commencing (w/c) 8 September to allow additional time to complete the deliveries and mop-up any missed areas. This enabled first up-lifts of blue bins as timetabled on w/c 15 September and then first collection of Wheelie Boxes in these areas w/c 22 September as planned. At the time of writing, no significant issues with the delivery, uplift and collection of the wheelie boxes had been reported.

To enable ongoing service efficiencies through this roll-out Members will be aware that change of collection days or weeks was previously approved. At present Bryson Recycling use their fleet of bin lorries to collect black bins one week and then blue bins the next week from the same properties. Once the wheelie box collections have commenced there is no requirement for the vehicles on blue bin collection weeks and it would not be efficient to have these vehicles idle for a week.

As a result, during week commencing 27 October 2025 approximately 10,000 households will see a week change for the collection of their black bin. The week change will be done by collecting the black bin two weeks in a row and then every fortnight thereafter.

Residents will be advised with letters directly to their household notifying them of this change and contingencies have been put in place to assist with missed collections during this period. There will also be social media posts advising residents of the change.

Delivery of the communication plan is ongoing throughout the rollout/collection, with billboards, adshels and ongoing social media to further highlight the project. Residents due to receive their notifications of swap over in October will have started to received their direct 2nd letter from Royal Mail w/c 29 September. This letter will indicate their roll-out will be within the next few weeks and will provide them with further information on the system, collection days and what can be recycled in each container.

External monitoring is being provided by WRAP with Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) funding. The WRAP Officers have been assessing and monitoring the roll-out and collection service and Council Officers will be involved in this process so this level of contract management can continue in order to improve service standards.

An updated timescale of all actions and a visual demonstration are included (**enclosed**) for Members' information.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report is noted.

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

Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Sustainability

4.3 PK/GEN/022, PK/GEN/057 IRELAND'S BEST KEPT TOWN AND GREEN FLAG AWARDS 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Ireland's Best Kept Town Competition and the Green Flag Awards for 2025.

2. Ireland's Best Kept Town

Ireland's Best Kept Town is a prestigious all-island competition that brings together top-ranking towns and villages from the Republic of Ireland's Tidy Towns initiative and Northern Ireland's Best Kept competition. This year awards ceremony was held at Farmleigh House, Phoenix Park, Dublin, on June 17, 2025.

Randalstown was one of just 14 finalists selected from nearly 1,000 eligible towns and villages across the island. Competing in the Small Town category, Randalstown secured a place among the top four an impressive achievement that highlights the town's dedication to community pride, environmental stewardship, and overall presentation.

3. Green Flags

The Green Flag Award is an internationally recognised accolade that signifies excellence in the management, maintenance, and community involvement in parks and open spaces. The programme in Northern Ireland is managed by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. To earn Green Flag status, a site must have a management plan that meets strict criteria, including horticultural standards, cleanliness, environmental management, biodiversity, community involvement, and safety.

This year, a total of 20 council-managed sites and 12 community spaces across the Borough have been awarded the internationally recognised Green Flag accreditation.

Among the new recipients are Ballyclare Cemetery and Neillsbrook Fold, both of which have shown exemplary dedication to enhancing the social and environmental benefits that parks and green spaces bring to our communities.

In addition to these Green Flag achievements, local volunteer Áine Gilchrist from Monkstown Village Community Garden has been honoured with the prestigious 'Pollinator of the Year' Award. This accolade recognises her exceptional efforts in promoting biodiversity and creating pollinator-friendly environments.

Park / Open Space	Green Flag Awarded by Type
Antrim Castle Gardens	Heritage
Sentry Hill Historic House	Heritage
Antrim / Belmont and Six Mile Cemetery	Council - Parks

Antrim Lough Shore Park and Gateway	Council – Parks
Ballyclare Cemetery	Council - Parks
Ballynure Old Graveyard	Council - Parks
Jordanstown Loughshore Park, Hazelbank Park & Gideon's Green	Council – Parks
Kilbride Cemetery	Council – Parks
Lilian Bland Park	Council – Parks
Mallusk Cemetery	Council – Parks
Mill Race Trail	Council – Parks
Newtownabbey Way	Council – Parks
Randalstown Riverside Walk	Council – Parks
Rashee Cemetery	Council – Parks
Sixmilewater Park	Council - Parks
Valley Park (V36 and Glas-na-Braden Glen)	Council – Parks
Wallace Park	Council – Parks
Crumlin Glen	Council – Parks
Threemilewater Park	Council – Parks
Whiteabbey Glen	Council – Parks
Clotworthy Courtyard at Antrim Castle Gardens	Community
Duneane Community Garden	Community
Cranfield Church and Holy Well	Community
Ballyeaston Church Ruin	Community
Elevation Randalstown	Community
Toome Linear Park	Community
The Sovereign Complex, Rathfern	Community
Monkstown Village Community Garden	Community
Neilsbrook Fold	Community
Monkstown Village Community Garden	Community
Maine Fold - Randalstown	Community
Sentry Hill Community Garden	Community

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

4.4 PK/BIO/019/VOL4 DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE CORRESPONDENCE – GREENWAY PROJECTS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on recent correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure regarding proposed Greenways funding for the 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 financial years.

2. Background

Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) Active Travel Team outlines upcoming grant funding opportunities for Greenway projects during the 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 financial years. The correspondence is **enclosed** for Member's reference.

In recent years, Council Officers have worked collaboratively with DfI's Active Travel Team to advance a range of priority Greenway and Active Travel schemes across the Borough. This partnership has played a key role in progressing strategic infrastructure projects that promote sustainable transport and enhance community connectivity.

DfI is now offering funding for up to 50% of total capital costs, spread over two financial years. Eligible projects must incur at least 50% of expenditure by March 31, 2026, with the remainder in 202/26.

3. Difference between Active Travel and Greenway Projects

Both Active Travel and Greenway initiatives support walking, cycling and wheeling, but they are delivered through separate DfI programmes with different focuses. Active Travel funding supports urban and commuter routes such as cycle lanes, footways and crossings, usually led by DfI or in partnership with Councils.

Greenway funding supports longer-distance, traffic-free routes connecting towns and villages, typically led by Councils with DfI grant aid. In essence, Active Travel focuses on everyday transport, while Greenway funding supports recreational and inter-urban connectivity.

4. Active Travel and Greenway Projects in the Borough

Significant progress has been achieved on two strategic routes within the Borough. The Mallusk/Hightown to Gideon's Green Active Travel Route has emerged as a vital link within the Borough's expanding active travel network. Furthermore, funding has recently been secured to complete the final 400-metre section of path at Valley Park for this project and will largely complete the connection along the Mallusk/Hightown to Gideon's Green Route.

In parallel, work has continued on the Doagh to Larne Greenway. A major milestone in this project has been the recent completion of a new shared-use

bridge at Memorial Park, Ballyclare, which has significantly improved accessibility and safety for both pedestrians and cyclists.

5. Key Issues

Due to ongoing land availability issues, particularly along the Doagh to Larne Greenway route, the project has been unable to progress. The required land agreements remain unresolved and are unlikely to be secured within the Department for Infrastructure's current funding timeframe. Given the strict deadlines for the 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 funding cycles, submitting an application now would carry a high risk of non-delivery. In addition, no other suitable or available land within the Borough has been identified to support a viable Greenways funding application at this time.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

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

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

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