



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD IN ROUND TOWER CHAMBER, ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE
ON MONDAY 13 APRIL 2026 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Alderman J Smyth
- Committee Members
(In person)** : Aldermen L Clarke
Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, R Foster, J Gilmour,
A McAuley, V McWilliam, L O’Hagan, M Stewart and
S Ward
- Committee Members
(Remote)** : Aldermen - L Boyle
Councillors - N Kelly, AM Logue, E McLaughlin
- Non Committee
Members
(In person)** : Councillors – A O’Lone and B Webb
- Non Committee
Members:
(Remote)** : Alderman Ross
- Officers Present** : Chief Executive – R Baker
Director of Environment Services and Sustainability –
M Lavery
Head of Parks Operations - P Mawhinney
Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing – C Kelly
Borough Lawyer and Head of Legal Services – P Casey
ICT Systems Support Officer – C Bell
Member Services Officer – C McGrandle

CHAIRPERSON’S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the April Operations Committee meeting and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

1 APOLOGIES

Alderman Bradley

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.10 – Alderman Smyth
Item 3.16 – Councillor A McAuley

The Chairperson advised at this point that Item 3.12 would be taken first.

Alderman Boyle and Councillor Logue joined the meeting during Item 3.12.

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.12 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN ANNUAL ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE - COTTER'S PARK, 48D CLONKEEN ROAD, RANDALSTOWN, BT41 3JL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for Cotters Park, 48D Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL.

2. Introduction

An application had 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 James Alexander	Cotters Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown BT41 3JL	Dancing, Singing, Music, Entertainment of a like kind Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence Thursday – Sunday 14:00hrs – 01:00hrs Number of persons – no greater than 31	EL213	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:

- Grant the licence;

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

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

3. Main Report

A valid application had been received for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above-named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval was required before the licence can be granted.

The current application seeks to consider the licensing of events held within a communal welcome building known as "The Lookout", which was situated on the lake at the centre of the Cotter's Park site.

This report was being brought to Members following the recent deferral by the Operations Committee on 2 March 2026.

Criteria for deciding to grant an application in accordance with The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985

In considering any application for the grant of a licence, Members must have regard to the following:

- i. Any observations submitted by the appropriate PSNI Sub-Divisional Commander and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.
- ii. Whether the applicant had any relevant convictions or other matters which would preclude the grant of the Entertainments Licence; A licence may not be granted if the applicant had been convicted of an offence of either providing unlicensed entertainment, or providing entertainment otherwise than in accordance with the licence terms and conditions, within 5 years preceding the date of the application.
- iii. Any oral or written representations made by or on behalf of the applicant.
- iv. Any oral or written representations received during the statutory consultation period; and
- v. Any other public safety and/or public order considerations.

In consideration of points i to v above, members were asked to note the following:

- i. No objections have been received from PSNI nor from Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.
- ii. There were no relevant convictions to consider.

- iii. Members were advised that the applicant was given the opportunity to attend in person or submit a written statement in support of their application. The applicant had chosen not to provide oral evidence but had submitted a detailed written statement in support of their application, a copy of which was (circulated).
- iv. No representations were received within the statutory 28-day consultation period.
- v. No evidence had been received of substantiated public safety or public order concerns relevant to this application. Council had not received evidence of or substantiated complaints of this nature from PSNI.

As part of the application determination process, consideration had also been given to the potential adverse noise impacts on neighbouring properties from activity on site.

For members' consideration, the following documents and information were circulated in relation to the application

- An officer briefing for Members (circulated)
- A copy of the Council's document: "*Conditions and Management Rules for Places of Indoor and Outdoor Entertainment*" (circulated)
- Planning decision notice dated 22 August 2025 (circulated)
- Council Borough Lawyer advice when considering this application (circulated)

Additional supporting documentation pertaining to the effective management of noise was submitted by the applicant, as follows:

- Noise Management Plan (circulated)
- Independent Acoustic Report (circulated)
- Site Management and House Rules - governing the use of the communal building (circulated)

The applicants Noise Management Plan, Site Management and House Rules aim to minimise any potential for disturbance arising from entertainment, with measures including, for example;

- enforcement of quiet hours between 23:00hrs and 07:00hrs.
- prohibition on guests congregating anywhere outdoors on site.
- prohibition on personal amplified speakers; and
- restriction of entertainment activity to the designated communal building only- "The Lookout".

Officers were satisfied that reasonably practicable measures have been identified and implemented to effectively manage the operation of the premises and to minimise the potential for adverse impact on neighbouring residential properties.

The application was subject to a 28-day public and statutory consultation period. The public consultation closed on 14 January 2026. Members were advised that no public representations or objections were received during the statutory period.

Members were advised that where a decision was made to refuse the grant of the licence, the applicant shall be entitled to appeal the decision under Schedule 1 (13) of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. Any appeal must be made to the County Court within 21 days, beginning with the date on which the person in question would be notified of the refusal of the application.

Members should note that should they have concerns remain regarding the grant of this application, there was scope for the imposition of further controls which may include limiting the hours of entertainment, or issuing the licence for a shorter duration, for example six months, to allow for further review.

4. Summary

An application for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr James Alexander in respect of Cotter's Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL. In accordance with Council procedures for the determination of Entertainment Licence applications, approval by Members was required prior to the licence being granted.

The Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing addressed queries and provided clarification to Members in relation to the Noise Management Plan and acoustics report previously carried out at Cotter's Park.

Members raised concerns in relation to the entertainment licence application process. The Head of Environmental Health advised that, in accordance with the relevant legislation, the applicant had complied with the application process.

Following discussion, Members agreed that the entertainment licence be granted with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions.

Proposed by Councillor O'Hagan
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and agreed that

an Annual Entertainment Licence was granted to the applicant Mr James Alexander - Cotters Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL for a period of six (6) months, with a reduction in the hours of entertainment from 2pm until 11pm, subject to the Councils standard licencing requirements and additional special conditions.

- a) That all relevant licensing requirements were met as detailed in the Councils Document – "Conditions and management rules for places of indoor and outdoor entertainment"
- b) That the applicant complies fully with all conditions of the Planning Permission granted for the site, dated 22 August 2025.
- c) That all dancing, singing, music and entertainment of a like kind shall take place within the communal welcome building known as "The Lookout" only.

- d) That noise arising from entertainment shall not be audible beyond the site boundary.
- e) The licensee must ensure that the agreed Noise Management Plan, Acoustic Report and Site Rules were fully implemented and in operation during licensed hours.

Where a licence was granted, the licensee was responsible for ensuring strict adherence to all standard terms and conditions, as well as these additional special conditions.

On the proposal being put to the meeting and a recorded vote being requested by the Chairperson, Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Proposal Members viz 2	Against the Proposal Members viz 11	Abstentions Members viz 1
Alderman Boyle Councillor O'Hagan	Aldermen - Clarke and Smyth Councillors – Archibald-Brown, Gilmour, Kelly, Logue, McAuley, McLaughlin, McWilliam, Stewart and Ward	Councillor Logue

On the proposal put forward, 2 Members voted in favour, 11 against and 1 abstention.

The proposal was declared not carried.

A further proposal was then put to the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Archibald-Brown
Seconded by Alderman Clarke that

an Annual Entertainment Licence was granted to the applicant Mr James Alexander - Cotters Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL for a period of three (3) months with a reduction in the of hours of entertainment from 2pm until 10pm, subject to the Councils standard licencing requirements and additional special conditions.

- a) That all relevant licensing requirements were met as detailed in the Councils Document – “Conditions and management rules for places of indoor and outdoor entertainment”
- b) That the applicant complies fully with all conditions of the Planning Permission granted for the site, dated 22 August 2025.
- c) That all dancing, singing, music and entertainment of a like kind shall take place within the communal welcome building known as “The Lookout” only.
- d) That noise arising from entertainment shall not be audible beyond the site boundary.

- e) The licensee must ensure that the agreed Noise Management Plan, Acoustic Report and Site Rules were fully implemented and in operation during licensed hours.

Where a licence was granted, the licensee was responsible for ensuring strict adherence to all standard terms and conditions, as well as these additional special conditions.

On the proposal being put to the meeting and a recorded vote being requested by the Chairperson, Members voted as follows:

In favour of the Proposal Members viz 12	Against the Proposal Members viz 0	Abstentions Members viz 2
<p>Aldermen - Boyle, Clarke and Smyth</p> <p>Councillors – Archibald- Brown, Gilmour, Kelly, Logue, McAuley, McWilliam, O’Hagan, Stewart and Ward</p>		<p>Councillor Logue</p> <p>Councillor McLaughlin</p>

On the proposal put forward, 12 Members voted in favour, 0 against and 2 abstentions.

The proposal was declared carried, it was agreed that:

an Annual Entertainment Licence was granted to the applicant Mr James Alexander - Cotters Park, 48d Clonkeen Road, Randalstown, BT41 3JL for a period of three (3) months with a reduction in the of hours of entertainment from 2pm until 10pm, subject to the Councils standard licencing requirements and additional special conditions.

- a) That all relevant licensing requirements were met as detailed in the Councils Document – “Conditions and management rules for places of indoor and outdoor entertainment”
- b) That the applicant complies fully with all conditions of the Planning Permission granted for the site, dated 22 August 2025.
- c) That all dancing, singing, music and entertainment of a like kind shall take place within the communal welcome building known as “The Lookout” only.
- d) That noise arising from entertainment shall not be audible beyond the site boundary.
- e) The licensee must ensure that the agreed Noise Management Plan, Acoustic Report and Site Rules were fully implemented and in operation during licensed hours.

Where a licence was granted, the licensee was responsible for ensuring strict adherence to all standard terms and conditions, as well as these additional special conditions.

ACTION BY: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

3.1 PK/REG/012 APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Council approval for the renewal of place approval for the Maldron Hotel, Belfast International Airport as a venue 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 was to be prominently displayed at the proposed venue for a period of three weeks to allow for the submission of any public objections.

No objections were received during the public notice period. Additionally, each of the premises has been formally inspected and deemed suitable to progress to the approval stage.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The venue was previously granted approval by Council in March 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the Maldron Hotel, Belfast International Airport be re-approved as a venue 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.

ACTION BY: Paula Redpath, Registrar

3.2 PK/GEN/217 CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF TEMPLEPATRICK ACTION GROUP ASSOCIATION AND DONEGORE GIRLS BRIGADE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the installation of a commemorative disc recognising the Templepatrick Action Group Association's 20th anniversary and the Donegore Girls' Brigade's 70th anniversary in 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

Templepatrick Action Group Association and the Donegore Girls' Brigade would mark significant milestone anniversaries in 2026, celebrating their 20th and 70th anniversaries respectively.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Council had previously approved the placement of celebratory and anniversary discs throughout the borough in recognition of the significant achievements or milestones of local individuals, clubs, and community organisations.

4. Financial Implication

The installation of the two anniversary celebratory discs is estimated to cost approximately £350. The proposed location for the Templepatrick Action Group Association disc is at the Templepatrick Surgery, while the disc recognising the Donegore Girls' Brigade is proposed for installation within Parkgate Village.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

approval be granted for the installation of the anniversary celebratory discs recognising Templepatrick Action Group Association and Donegore Girls' Brigade.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

3.3 **PK/GEN/035/VOL5 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES SUB GROUP MINUTES**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the most recent Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 19 March 2026.

2. Summary

At the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting on 19 March 2026, Members considered a detailed report which provided a range of updates from the Parks section. The minutes of the meeting were circulated for Members' consideration.
Proposed by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

the minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 19 March 2026 be approved.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Councillor O'Lone left the meeting at this point.

3.4 **WM/S/003 SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP MINUTES**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the minutes of the Sustainability Working Group.

2. Background

The meeting of the Sustainability Working Group was held on 26 March 2026 and a copy of the minutes were (circulated) for Members' approval.

At the meeting, Members were updated on the following:

- 1) New staff who have joined the Sustainability Directorate;
- 2) Update on the DAERA First Adaptation Report;
- 3) External Environmental Management System Audit update;
- 4) Carbon Literacy Training for Elected Members;
- 5) Events and Campaigns Update
 - a. Christmas Toy Scheme 2025
 - b. Winter Woolies Campaign 2025
 - c. Big Spring Clean 2026
 - d. Family Reuse Fayre

As those Members who attended the Sustainability Working Group meeting were not present in the Chamber, it was agreed that the minutes would be circulated to allow other Members to approve them. It was further agreed that membership of the group would be reviewed in order to allow the minutes to be approved at the Operations Committee meeting.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Councillor Archibald-Brown and agreed that

the minutes of the Sustainability Working Group held on 26 March 2026 be circulated to the Members who attended the meeting to approve them.

ACTION BY: Claire Evans, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer

3.5 **PT/CI/073 DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS 2026/27**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the Environmental Services and Sustainability and Estates and Recreation Business Plans 2026/27.

2. Background

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services.

Specifically, the duties in the Act relate to Section 84(1), 85(2) and 85(9) whereby the Council had a statutory duty to make arrangements to:

- Secure continuous improvement.
- Secure achievement of its improvement objectives; and
- Exercise its functions so that any Departmental specified standards were met.

3. Previous Decision of Council

In January 2025 the Council approved a strategic performance framework as part of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 (draft for consultation).

4. Business Planning

Business planning plays a vital role in the Council's performance management and delivery processes. It offers a more efficient and cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluating performance while improving overall visibility.

The purpose of the Directorate Business Plans were to:

- Demonstrate how each of the Directorates were supporting and achieving Council's priorities.
- Provide a clear sense of purpose of the Directorate and the challenges it faces.
- Illustrate how it is aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Measure performance and hold ourselves to account to ensure we deliver for the Council and its residents.

Business Plan for; Environmental Services and Sustainability and Estates and Recreation were circulated for approval.

5. Financial Position/Implications

As agreed, as part of the Council's rate setting process.

6. Governance

Progress reports on the Council's Directorate Business Plans 2026/27 would be reported quarterly to CLT and biannually to relevant Committees.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the Environmental Services and Sustainability and Estates and Recreation Business Plans 2026/27 be approved.

ACTION BY: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

3.6 **EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – RANDALSTOWN YOUNG FARMERS ANNUAL BBQ, JAMES HUGHES FARM, 47 CADDY ROAD, RANDALSTOWN, BT41 3DL**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the Randalstown Young Farmers annual BBQ, James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL.

2. Introduction

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

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Ms Erin Crawford	James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind. Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence Saturday 9 May 2026 20:30hrs – 01:00hrs Number of persons – no greater than 1000	EL063	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:

- Grant the licence;
- Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- Refuse the licence;
- 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 would be taken.

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval was required before the licence can be granted.

Members were advised that this event had been occurring annually at the same venue for several years, and there have been no previous issues or concerns regarding this event.

4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence had been received from Ms Erin Crawford for the Randalstown Young Farmers annual BBQ, James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was needed on the granting of the licence.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor Archibald-Brown and agreed that

an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence is granted to the applicant Ms Erin Crawford, Randalstown Young Farmers annual BBQ, James Hughes Farm, 47 Caddy Road, Randalstown, BT41 3DL with the following Conditions.

- **That all relevant licensing requirements were met**
- **That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval**

ACTION BY: Katie Kinnear, Environmental Health Officer

3.7 **EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – STRAID YOUNG FARMERS ANNUAL BBQ, CULLYBURN EQUESTRIAN CENTRE, 18 CULLYBURN ROAD, NEWTOWNABBEY, BT36 5BN**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for Straid Young Farmers annual BBQ, Cullyburn Equestrian Centre, 18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN.

2. Introduction

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

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Gareth Baird	18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey , BT36 5BN	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind. Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence Saturday 30 May 2026 21:00hrs – 01:00hrs	EL023	New Application

		Number of persons – no greater than 800		
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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:

- Grant the licence;
- Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- Refuse the licence;
- 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 would be taken.

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval was required before the licence can be granted.

Members should note that this event taken place annually at the same venue for several years and no previous issues or concerns have been reported.

4. Summary

An Application for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr Gareth Baird for the Straid Young Farmers annual BBQ, Cullyburn Equestrian Centre, 18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was needed on the granting of the licence.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam

Seconded by Councillor Archibald-Brown and agreed that

an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence is granted to the applicant Mr Gareth Baird for Straid Young Farmers annual BBQ, 18 Cullyburn Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BN with the following conditions.

- That all relevant licensing requirements were met
- That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval

ACTION BY: *Katie Kinnear, Environmental Health Officer*

3.8 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – LYLEHILL YOUNG FARMERS ANNUAL BBQ, SHANE’S CASTLE ESTATE, ANTRIM, BT41 4NB

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members’ approval for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the Lylehill Young Farmers annual BBQ, Shane’s Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB.

2. Introduction

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

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Ms Zara Jones	Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind. Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence Saturday 6 June 2026 19:00hrs – 01:30hrs Number of persons – no greater than 500	EL070	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:

- Grant the licence;
- Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- Refuse the licence;
- 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 would be taken.

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval was required before the licence can be granted.

Members were advised that this event had been occurring annually at the same venue for several years, and there have been no previous issues or concerns regarding this event.

4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence had been received from Ms Zara Jones for the Lylehill Young Farmers annual BBQ, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was needed on the granting of the licence.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

an Occasional Indoor Entertainment Licence is granted to the applicant Ms Zara Jones, Lylehill Young Farmers annual BBQ, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB with the following Conditions.

- **That all relevant licensing requirements were met**
- **That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval**

ACTION BY: Katie Kinnear, Environmental Health Officer

3.9 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – MAY DAY STEAM RALLY, SHANE'S CASTLE ESTATE, ANTRIM, BT41 4NB

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence, held by Mr Ian Duff for May Day Steam Rally, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim, BT41 4NB

2. Introduction

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

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Ian Duff	Shane's Castle Estate, Castle Road, Antrim, BT41 4NB	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind. Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence Friday 1 May 2026 17:00hrs – 23:00hrs Saturday 2 May 2026 17:00hrs – 23:00hrs Sunday 3 May 2026 11:00hrs – 23:00hrs Monday 4 May 2026 11:00hrs – 23:00hrs Number of persons – no greater than 5000	EL207	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:

- Grant the licence;
- Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- Refuse the licence;
- 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 would be taken.

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval was required before the licence can be granted.

This was to be a family orientated event with camping facilities on site and entertainment provided. Tickets were pre-paid and purchased online; however, if

tickets remain available, they may be purchased at the gate on the day of the event.

The applicant and event organiser, Mr Ian Duff would act as Safety Officer and would coordinate the event, liaising with relevant agencies through a Safety Advisory Group. This would include PSNI, NIFRS, DFI and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service. The event would be contained within the perimeter of Shane's Castle Estate; however, the event area itself would not be circulated by barriers.

The entertainment element of the event had successfully operated without incident for the past two years since its introduction.

4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr Ian Duff for May Day Steam Rally, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was needed on the granting of the licence.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and agreed that

an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence be granted to the applicant, Mr Ian Duff for May Day Steam Rally, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim with the following conditions

- **That all relevant licensing requirements were met**
- **That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval**

ACTION BY: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

Having declared an interest in Item 3.10, the Chairperson handed over the chair to the Vice Chairperson at this point, while remaining in the Chamber.

3.10 EH/EHS/LR/001 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL (OUTDOOR) ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – REHABILITY, 7-8 NORFOLK COURT, ANTRIM, BT41 2SF

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Entertainment Licence for an outdoor event, held by Rehability on land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU.

2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional (Outdoor) Entertainment Licence for the following location

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Wiliam Gould	Land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind. Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence Saturday 2 May 2026 13:00hrs until 18:00hrs Number of persons – no greater than 300	EL213	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:

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

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

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence for the above named premises. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members' approval was required before the licence can be granted.

Members should note that this applicant was successfully granted an application for this charitable event in 2024 and 2025. The event would follow the same purpose and format as previous years. The location had been changed, enabling the event to proceed without the requirement of a road closure order.

4. Summary

An application for an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr William Gould of Rehability, 7-8 Norfolk Court, Antrim, BT41 2SF to be held on land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was needed on the granting of the licence.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

an Occasional Outdoor Entertainment Licence be granted to the applicant Mr William Gould of Rehability for Land adjacent to Somerset Gardens, Antrim, BT41 2SU with the following conditions.

- **That all relevant licensing requirements were met**
- **That statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval**

ACTION BY: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

The Chairperson, Alderman Smyth resumed the Chair at this point.

3.11 WM/S/002 DAERA FIRST ADAPTATION REPORT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the proposed response to the draft DAERA First Adaptation Report being submitted to DEARA on 31 March 2026.

2. Background

Under The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, specified public bodies were required to submit their first climate change adaptation reports by 31 March 2026, covering a four-year period. These regulations, made under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, require public bodies, including councils, to include the following within their first adaptation report:

- . An assessment of current and projected climate impacts on the organisation's functions;
- Details of actions and plans to manage identified climate risks, including implementation timescales;
- A progress assessment of actions from the previous reporting period (not applicable for this first submission).

Public bodies must also demonstrate that they have had due regard to:

- The latest UK Climate Change Risk Assessment – Northern Ireland Summary (CCRA);
- The Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP);
- Opportunities for cross-border and cross-sector coordination of adaptation actions.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) was responsible for these regulations and, in preparation for submission for the First Adaptation Report, they created an online portal for public bodies to submit their information which opened on the 23rd February 2026.

3. Summary

A response had been drafted, in conjunction with other departments and submitted into the portal in preparation for Councils submission for this first adaptation report and a PDF version of the document was circulated for Members' approval along with appendices including best practice case studies from across Council (circulated).

The response set out the Borough's high-level climate adaptation objectives, identifies key climate-related risks and opportunities, and demonstrates alignment with the UK CCRA3 Northern Ireland Summary. It also outlines the actions proposed to address these risks and shows how these actions correspond with NICCAP3. All objectives, targets and actions referenced have been drawn from publicly available strategic documents, including the Corporate Plan, Community Plan, Local Development Plan and the Climate Change Action Plan.

Due to the strict submission date of 31 March 2025, DAERA had permitted Local Authorities to submit a draft response and would allow any amendments to be submitted after the approvals process at the end of April.

Officers have submitted the draft response and supporting documentation.
Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

Members approve the draft response to the DAERA First Adaptation Report.

ACTION BY: Claire Evans, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer

Alderman Clarke left the meeting during Item 3.13.

3.13 EH/EHS/EP/01 CONSULTATION ON AMENDMENTS TO THE LANDLORD REGISTRATION REGULATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the draft response to the Department for Communities (DfC) consultation on draft regulations and an Equality Impact Assessment relating to the Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

2. Background

Members were reminded that The Landlord Registration scheme was introduced through 'The Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014' to establish a central database of landlords who rent within the Private Rented Sector.

Northern Ireland Councils have enforcement powers to act against non-compliant landlords. In March 2023 it was agreed that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) would act as the lead council in the preparation for and transfer of the functions under the Landlord Registration Scheme within Northern Ireland.

In September 2023, a Programme Board was established to oversee the delivery of the project with representatives from the Department for Communities, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Belfast City Council, to oversee the transfer of these functions from DfC to local councils by March 2025.

This scheme operates on a cost neutral basis with all services offered by this scheme being funded from the registration fee only.

Amendments to the Regulations aim to link landlord registration with the standards required in private rented properties in Northern Ireland.

Amendments would also be made to reflect that as of 1 March 2025, Lisburn and Castlereagh Council have been appointed as landlord registrar on behalf of all Councils in Northern Ireland.

3. Key Issues

The Department for Communities had launched a 12 week public consultation commencing on **2 March 2026**. It was proposed that Council would submit the draft response attached for Members' information (circulated). The consultation was available at the following link:

[Consultation on Amendments to the Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2014.](#)

The proposed amendments aim to link landlord registration with the standards required in private rented properties in Northern Ireland. Landlords would be required to give more information on their properties and standards at the point of registration. It was anticipated that these changes would make the Scheme a more effective tool for improving landlords' knowledge of, and compliance with, their legal duties.

Landlords would be asked to confirm whether they were compliant with existing legislation relating to the safety and standards of their properties, including the following:

The fitness for human habitation standards;

- Energy Performance Certificate requirements (providing a valid EPC to a tenant or prospective tenant was a requirement under The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008);
- Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- Electrical Safety Standards for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004.

Amendments would also be made to reflect that as of 1 March 2025, Lisburn and Castlereagh Council have been appointed as landlord registrar on behalf of all councils in Northern Ireland.

A draft consultation response highlights the following main points:

- Council considers that the requirement for landlords to provide more information on their properties and standards at the point of registration was a welcome amendment;
- Council suggests that landlords should be required to provide evidence that they were meeting these standards as part of the registration process;
- Council welcomes legislative confirmation that Lisburn and Castlereagh Council have been appointed as landlord registrar on behalf of all Councils in Northern Ireland.

4. Equality and Rural Screening Requirements

In order to establish whether there may be adverse differential impacts, DfC had carried out a detailed Equality Impact Assessment for the Draft amendments, a copy of which was available at:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/amendments-landlord-registration-scheme-regulations-northern-ireland-2014-screening>

5. Summary

The Department for Communities had consulted on draft regulations to amend the Landlord Registration Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014. The proposed amendments aim to link landlord registration with the standards required in private rented properties in Northern Ireland. Landlords would be required to give more information on their properties and standards at the point of registration.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the draft consultation response be approved.

ACTION BY: Liam Nicholas, Environmental Health Manager

3.14 PK/GEN/022 NORTHERN IRELAND AMENITY AWARDS 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on Council's submission for the Northern Ireland Amenity Awards 2026 competition.

2. Background

The Northern Ireland Amenity Council was established to promote the protection, enhancement, and long-term stewardship of the physical environment. The Amenity Council plays a central role in advancing initiatives such as the 'Best Kept' programme and leads the Northern Ireland Amenity Awards, which have served as a benchmark for similar environmental competitions across the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, and Europe, including well-known schemes

such as 'Tidy Towns' and 'Entente Florale'. Entries to these awards were traditionally submitted by local authorities, housing associations, community organisations, and residents' groups, reflecting a broad commitment to environmental improvement and civic pride.

Over the past number of years, Council had achieved considerable success in in this award programme, consistently demonstrating high standards across its services and initiatives. Building on this strong track record, Council intends once again to submit applications for forthcoming award opportunities, with the aim of maintaining and further enhancing its recognised position of excellence. Traditionally, the same towns and villages were submitted for both the Ulster in Bloom and Northern Ireland Amenity Award competitions to ensure consistency and maximise the impact of each entry.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Previously, entries for the Northern Ireland Amenity Competition were approved through the Operations Committee meetings. Last year, Council further demonstrated its commitment to this initiative by submitting a total of 12 entries, showcasing the dedication, accomplishments, and community led efforts of various local groups and organisations across the Borough.

4. Submission for 2026

It was proposed that the following locations be nominated for consideration and inclusion in the 2026 Northern Ireland Amenity Awards competition. These proposed entries reflect a diverse range of sites across the Borough, each demonstrating significant community involvement, environmental stewardship, and a commitment to enhancing local environmental standards.

Antrim	Ballyclare	Crumlin	Toome
Templepatrick	Ballynure	Parkgate	Killead
Randalstown	Doagh	Burnside	Ballyeaston
Carnmoney	Whiteabbey		

The Head of Parks Operations responded to Members' queries regarding the Awards and confirmed that a report on the affiliated costs would be brought back to a future committee meeting. He also confirmed that he would enquire as to whether a hamlet was eligible to enter the Awards and report back to Members.

Proposed by Councillor Archibald-Brown
 Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

Members approve the entries for the Northern Ireland Amenity Awards 2026 competition.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

3.15 WM/WM/040 RETHINKING OUR RESOURCES: NORTHERN IRELAND RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY CONSULTATION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the draft response to Rethinking our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Strategy by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

2. Background

Members would be aware from previous report to Operations Committee in February that DAERA opened a consultation on the draft Rethinking Our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Management Strategy. The draft strategy aims to integrate policy reforms, modern technology, and partnerships to ensure long-term sustainability and adaptability. It focuses on controlled wastes from households, commercial and industrial premises, and category 3 animal by-products, contributing to recycling targets and Net Zero commitments. The strategy provides both long-term plans and short-term actions to drive significant environmental change.

Officers have prepared a draft response to the consultation (circulated) in line with other waste bodies including arc21, LARAC and Council Waste Forum. It was felt that the proposed Strategy lacked clarity in terms of SMART objectives, detail on implementation of actions, funding and resources available for local authorities and solutions to barriers identified including the lack of infrastructure to ensure proximity of processing waste.

Council had raised concerns that the Department's response to 2024 Rethinking Our Resources consultation was yet to be published and this had resulted in a further lack of clarity on future requirements for household and commercial waste services.

3. Summary

The draft Consultation Response to Rethinking our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Strategy consultation by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) (circulated) details Council concerns to proposals and provides clarity on expectations of DAERA moving forward. The draft response needs to be submitted to DAERA by 8 May 2026.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the draft response to Rethinking our Resources: Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Strategy be approved.

ACTION BY: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

3.16 PK/GEN/177 BELFAST HILLS PARTNERSHIP – “JOURNEY 30X30” PROJECT AT RATHFERN

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to advise Members of the pilot biodiversity project that aims to protect and effectively manage land and sea for nature by 2030. The project would be delivered by the Belfast Hills Partnership on land located beside the Sovereign Centre in Newtownabbey.

2. Background

Members would be aware that Council was a key partner in the Belfast Hills Partnership. This Partnership was originally established with the legacy Newtownabbey Borough Council in 2004 and had continued under Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council since its formation in 2015.

The Partnership delivers a broad range of initiatives focused on enhancing local sites, protecting and restoring biodiversity, and fostering community engagement across all age groups. These efforts help ensure that both residents and visitors can access, enjoy, and benefit from the natural landscape within Antrim and Newtownabbey section of the Belfast Hills.

3. Key Considerations for the Project

The Journey to 30x30 project was a pilot initiative being delivered across the Belfast Hills to support the global commitment to protect and effectively manage 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030, as set out in the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Belfast Hills cover approximately 4,400 hectares across three council areas. A specific section of land at Rathfern had been selected as part of this project, as illustrated in the circulated map.

Within the overall Belfast Hills landscape, approximately 60% of the land was privately owned. The project therefore aims to work collaboratively with landowners, community groups, and local stakeholders to support nature recovery in a manner that was inclusive, responsible, and beneficial for both people and wildlife.

The project focuses on the diverse habitats found within the Belfast Hills, including upland heath, blanket bog, woodland, species-rich grasslands, and freshwater environments such as ponds and rivers. A central aim was to strengthen ecological connectivity by supporting the development of Nature Recovery Networks that allow species to move more freely across the landscape and improve long-term ecosystem resilience. Activities would focus on three key site types farmland, quarries, and community sites demonstrating how biodiversity conservation can be integrated into a variety of land uses.

Community engagement was a core element of the project. Through workshops, events, and volunteering opportunities, local people would be encouraged to

contribute their knowledge and participate in shaping the future management of the Belfast Hills. Information gathered through community engagement would inform habitat management planning and support environmentally informed decision-making.

The project would also deliver practical conservation actions, including habitat restoration and management, wildlife surveys, ecological monitoring, and training for volunteers and community groups. In addition, later phases would address environmental pressures within the landscape such as fly-tipping, invasive species, wildlife crime, habitat degradation, and pollution through targeted engagement and awareness initiatives.

4. Financial Implications for Council

The Journey to 30×30 was a fully funded project supported by the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). There would be no financial cost to Council associated with supporting or assisting in the delivery of this project.

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Parks Operations confirmed that the pilot scheme was funded through DAERA and advised that, if successful, Belfast Hills would seek to roll the initiative out to other areas. He further confirmed that arrangements would be made for the Council to liaise with national media in order to promote the project.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

Members approve support for the 30×30 pilot biodiversity project on land located beside the Sovereign Centre in Newtownabbey.

ACTION BY: Nadine Campbell, Parks Development Manager

The Director of Environment Services and Sustainability advised that Item 4.2 would be taken at this point due to Council requiring a decision from Members.

4.2 EH/EHS/002 ANIMAL WELFARE SERVICE JUDICIAL REVIEW OUTCOME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an update on the Judicial Review of Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and to seek funding for the continued delivery of the service in 2026/27.

2. Background

Since April 2012, councils have held responsibility for the statutory enforcement of the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011, in relation to non-farmed animals, namely companion animals and equines.

The Northern Region consists of Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council (ANBC), Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (CCG), and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council employs the animal welfare staff and manages the service on behalf of all three councils. A service level agreement is in place between the councils.

The Animal Welfare Service across the 11 councils had been fully funded, approximately £1.25M, by DAERA until August 2023. However, at that point DAERA advised that it was no longer able to continue funding support for councils in relation to non-farmed animal welfare services.

A Judicial Review was subsequently lodged in the High Court by Belfast City Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, on behalf of SOLACE, to challenge DAERA's decision to cease funding. On 23 January 2026, the court ruled in favour of the Council's, finding that the Permanent Secretary's August 2023 decision and the Minister's April 2024 decision to cut funding for certain animal welfare services were **unlawful** because the Environment and Rural Affairs Assembly Committee (AERA) was not notified in advance. DAERA must now inform the Committee before making any similar 2026/2027 funding decisions and notify councils thereafter. High Court awarded full legal costs to the Councils in relation to the Judicial Review.

The Judicial Review did not result in any funding being awarded or restored to councils for the years in which funding had been withdrawn.

By Order of the Court, the DAERA Minister was also required to refer the decision to change Animal Welfare funding back to the AERA Committee for further consideration. A copy of the Judicial Review is (circulated) for Members' information.

3. Previous Decision of Council

In November 2023, June 2024 and September 2025, Members agreed that Council approved the use of Council funds to finance the Animal Welfare Service during 2023-2024, 2024-2025 2025 -2026 to enable continued service delivery at a cost of approximately £140,000.

4. Key Issues

Councils were awaiting the DAERA Minister to bring forward the outcome of the Judicial Review to the AERA Committee at the earliest opportunity so that MLAs can consider the decision to cease Animal Welfare funding.

In the absence of DAERA funding, Councils within the Northern Region have been asked for their support for the continuation of service delivery as per the current model to end March 2027. For Council this had already been accounted in estimates 2026/27 budget. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have asked Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council and Causeway Coast & Glens Brough Council to commit to the 2026/27 costs to enable continued service delivery within the Northern Region on the basis of the three councils sharing all costs equally.

Enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (NI) 2011 in respect of companion animals and equines is Council's statutory duty. The future delivery model for this service is currently under consideration and further report would be brought back to members when the outcome of AERA committee discussions is known. Elected Members would be kept informed as to ongoing discussions and proposals regarding future changes in the service delivery model and related cost implications.

Mid and East Antrim would continue to manage the sub regional delivery model, awaiting the outcome of any final decision on external funding reinstatement.

5. Summary

In April 2024, DAERA advised Council that it was withdrawing financial assistance for the Animal Welfare Service. However, no funding had been available since 2024. NI councils have sought a judicial review of DAERA's decision and a Court Decision found in favour of Councils. The DAERA Minister would bring the matter in front of the AERA Committee for review.

At present, MEA provides this service for Council and had requested confirmation that Council wish to continue the agreement in 2026-27. Given that this was a statutory duty of Council and the current arrangement was deemed to be the most efficient way to deliver service, Officers recommend approval of the funding request. Monies have been included in the 2026-27 budget for this service

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the report be noted and that Council approves the current delivery mechanism for the Animal Welfare Service through Mid and East Antrim Borough Council at an estimated cost of £140,000 in 2026-2027.

ACTION BY: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 PK/CEM/011 CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE NORTHERN IRELAND STATISTICS AND RESEARCH AGENCY (NISRA) AND REGISTRAR GENERAL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND – UPDATE ON THE DEATHS, STILL-BIRTHS AND BABY LOSS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2026.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on correspondence received in relation to the Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Act (NI) 2026, and to outline the implications for services delivered within Council's Bereavement Services section.

2. Background

Correspondence (circulated) from NISRA provides an update on the legislative position regarding the remote registration of deaths and still-births, as well as the

electronic transfer of documents previously enabled under the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Temporary arrangements introduced in March 2020 allowed registrations to be completed without the physical attendance of an informant and permitted digital sharing of documentation. Although originally intended as short-term measures, these processes have become well-established and have proven effective and efficient.

To formalise these arrangements, the Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Act (Northern Ireland) 2026 now places remote registration on a permanent legal footing and amends the existing Births and Deaths Registration Order (NI) 1976 and Civil Registration Regulations (NI) 2012.

The Act also revokes previous Coronavirus-related provisions. New regulations, the Deaths and Still-Births (Signing of Certificates) Regulations (NI) 2026 would shortly take effect to provide the statutory framework for signing relevant medical certificates.

These changes largely reflect the temporary processes already in use, and Councils registration office were well positioned to continue remote service delivery. All provisions would commence on 23 March 2026, after which no further Coronavirus Extension Orders would be required.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.3 EH/EHS/015 SUMMARY OF TEST PURCHASE EXERCISES CARRIED OUT THROUGHOUT THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to inform Members of the outcomes of test purchasing activities carried out across the Borough during the 2025/26 regarding the sale of age restricted products.

2. Background

Under current legislation, it was an offence to sell cigarettes, tobacco, nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes and e-liquids), and butane cigarette lighter refill aerosol canisters to persons under the age of 18.

The Public Health Agency funds the employment of Tobacco Control Officers (TCOs), who operate on behalf of district councils across Northern Ireland. Their role includes promoting compliance with tobacco control legislation and providing guidance to retailers on regulatory requirements.

TCOs were required to undertake a minimum of 100 advisory visits per year, including at least 70 test purchase exercises, to monitor compliance with age-restricted sales legislation.

Members were also reminded that it was illegal to permit the use, sale, or hire of sunbeds by persons under 18. Operators of sunbed premises were further required to provide prescribed health information and appropriate protective equipment, including eyewear.

Environmental Health Officers carry out advisory visits and routine inspections of sunbed premises to ensure compliance. The Public Health Agency recommends that all sunbed premises were subject to a test purchase exercise at least once every two years.

3. Key Issues

Tobacco control test purchase exercises were conducted in April, May, September, and October 2025, and February 2026, across **72 retail premises** within the Borough. Overall compliance was high, with **69 premises (96%)** adhering to legislative requirements. **3 premises (4%)** were non-compliant, all involving the sale of vape products to underage individuals. Appropriate follow-up action, including staff training and written warning was taken to address these breaches and support improved compliance.

A separate test purchase exercise was undertaken in July 2025 at **9 premises** selling butane cigarette lighter refill aerosol canisters. All **9 premises (100%)** were compliant; however, one premises indicated a willingness to sell the product but stated it was out of stock. An advisory visit was subsequently carried out to reinforce legal obligations.

Test purchase activity was also undertaken at sunbed premises. In July 2025, **5 premises** were visited to assess compliance with underage access restrictions: **4 premises (80%)** were compliant, and **1 premises** was closed at the time of inspection. A further exercise in February 2026 assessed an additional **10 premises** for compliance with the provision of health information leaflets, display of statutory notices, and the provision and use of protective eyewear. **8 premises (80%)** were compliant, and **2 premises (20%)** were non-compliant; these were issued with Fixed Penalty Notices of £250 each, in line with the Council's enforcement policy.

The (circulated) report details the test purchasing activities undertaken during this period

4. Summary

During the 2025/26 financial year, the Environmental Health Section carried out test purchase exercises across the Borough in relation to:

- The sale of age-restricted products, including cigarettes, tobacco, nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes and e-liquids), and butane cigarette lighter refill aerosol canisters; and

- The use, sale, and hire of sunbeds by persons under 18, including compliance with requirements to provide prescribed information and protective eyewear.

Overall levels of compliance were high, with the majority of premises meeting their legal obligations. Where non-compliance was identified, enforcement action was taken in accordance with the Council's enforcement policy, ranging from advisory guidance and written warnings to the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
 Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that
the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

- 5.1 In response to a Member's query in relation to the work to the sauna and steam room renovations at Sixmile Leisure Centre, the Chairperson confirmed that someone would revert with an update.

ACTION BY: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

- 5.2 In response to a Member's query in relation to the litter on Stiles Way, Antrim, the Director of Environment Services and Sustainability Operations confirmed that a Dfl contractor was due to clear this area by the end of the week.

- 5.3 In response to a Member's query in relation to Bring Banks, particularly the one in Green Walk, Rathcoole where a substantial amount of waste had been left, the Director of Environment Services and Sustainability confirmed that he would return to the Member and other Members within the Macedon DEA to confirm what action had been taken.

ACTION BY: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

- 5.4 Following a request from a Member regarding enforcement action taken in relation to littering, fly tipping and dog fouling, the Director of Environment Services and Sustainability confirmed that a report would be brought back to a future committee detailing this.

ACTION BY: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

- 5.5 The Director of Environment Services and Sustainability confirmed that Council would provide CCTV footage to the PSNI if requested and that he would get a member of the leisure team to contact the Member to discuss the specifics of the act of vandalism at Crumlin Leisure Centre.

ACTION BY: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

- 5.6 In response to a Member's query in relation to the Ulster Way at the Valley, the duck pond, trollies in water, fallen down trees and walkway, the Head of Parks Operations confirmed that work was due to be completed at the pond at the

Vallely Park but were awaiting a long reach excavator in order to complete the necessary works before September.

In response to a further concern from the Member regarding the Ulster Way at Braden Glen where there were reported trees lying, rubbish and trollies in the water, the Head of Parks Operations confirmed that Council would only remove a tree when it blocks a pathway and would leave in situ as a habitat when a tree falls naturally. He further confirmed that litter picking was undertaken regularly but that he was happy to visit the site and investigate the reports before returning to the Member.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, the Head of Parks Operations

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed

that the following Committee business be taken In Confidence and the livestream and audio recording would cease.

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 IN CONFIDENCE WM/arc21/4/VOL 11 arc21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the February Joint Committee meeting.

2. Introduction

The arc21 Joint Committee meets on a monthly basis and each month the papers were reviewed by the Operations Committee.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

All previous papers have been noted.

4. Main Report

The papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting were (circulated) for Members' information:

- 26 February 2026

Members were reminded that these documents were confidential and may be legally privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure so therefore Members should not disclose this information to any third party and the information must be kept secure.

5. Summary

The main issues from the February meetings were:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

6.2 IN CONFIDENCE PK/GEN/055 CARNMONEY HILL ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS AND POTENTIAL DISPOSAL OF 6.16 ACRES OF COUNCIL-OWNED LAND WITHIN THE CARNMONEY HILL AREA

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

[REDACTED]

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed

that the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further Committee business, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.55 pm.

MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and legal advice.