



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 6.30PM

In the Chair: Alderman P Barr

Members Present: Alderman – W DeCourcy
Councillors – J Bingham, T Girvan, M Goodman, P Hamill, R Lynch, N McClelland, V McWilliam, M Magill, M Maguire and B Webb

Non-Committee Members Present: Alderman J Smyth

Officers Present: Director of Finance & Governance – S Cole
Director of Organisation Development – A McCooke
Head of Finance – J Balmer
Head of Governance – L Johnston
Head of Communication & Customer Services – T White
Head of IT – G Smyth
Borough Lawyer – P Casey
ICT Officer – A Cole
Members Services Manager – V Lisk
Governance Support Officer – B Thompson

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the September Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee and reminded all present of recording requirements.

A special welcome was made to Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance.

1. APOLOGIES

Alderman Agnew and Councillor Kells.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.1 – Alderman Smyth and Councillor McClelland
Item 3.11 – Councillor Hamill

3. REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED

Having declared an interest in the next item, Councillor McClelland and Alderman Smyth left at this point of the meeting.

3.1 HR/GEN/23 ONUS WORKPLACE CHARTER AWARDS 2018

The Onus Workplace Charter Awards Ceremony is in its 9th year, and to date over 800 organisations have supported one of their 'Pathways' Initiatives. The Awards are given to organisations who have demonstrated their commitment to support those affected by domestic violence or abuse. Churches, community groups, schools and a range of businesses are recognised by the Onus Workplace Charter Awards.

Members were reminded that Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council currently holds the Gold Award Workplace Charter and Safe Borough status and the Council also hosted the event in 2017.

Onus has invited the Council, at no cost, to attend this year's event at Lagan Valley Island in Lisburn on Wednesday 14 November 2018.

To demonstrate the Council's commitment to supporting the work of ONUS and our part in supporting victims of domestic violence or abuse alongside Community Partners, it was proposed that we accept the invitation to attend and that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy and Governance Committee, or their nominees, attend the event as an approved duty, together with the appropriate Officers.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy and Governance Committee, or their nominees, attend the Onus Workplace Charter Awards 2018 event as an approved duty, together with the appropriate Officers.

ACTION BY: Fiona Gunning, Organisation Development Officer

Councillor McClelland and Alderman Smyth returned to the meeting.

3.2 F1/FIN/10 AMENDMENT TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members were reminded that Council approved the Financial Regulations in May 2018.

The Financial Regulations provided a framework through which the Chief Executive can satisfy herself that proper financial administration was being achieved. The aim of these Regulations was to help ensure that high

standards of propriety and best value are achieved. All the Council's Members and employees have a duty to promote these aims, not just by following Financial Regulations but in their general approach.

It was necessary to review the Financial Regulations regularly to ensure that this was maintained, and to seek approval for those amendments required. To provide greater clarity for officers, an amendment has been made Section 22 – Disposal of Assets. A copy of the proposed updated Financial Regulations was circulated for approval.

Officers responded to Members' queries in relation to the regulations.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Maguire and agreed that

the updated Financial Regulations be approved.

ACTION BY: John Balmer, Head of Finance

3.3 G/GEN/013 CONSULTATION: DEVOLUTION WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND

Members were advised that correspondence had been received from NILGA inviting Councils to corporately respond to a consultation on 'Devolution within Northern Ireland'. A copy of the correspondence was circulated for Members' attention.

The consultation report examined evidence for an extension of the responsibilities of local government in Northern Ireland (NI) through devolution from Stormont. The context is a drive towards greater power for cities and regions across the UK, the absence of a functioning Assembly, the proposed Augmentation review as specified in the Local Government Act (2014) and the EU (Withdrawal) Bill. Devolution, in the report is defined as - the transfer to Councils of direct responsibility for services and the scrutiny by Councils of matters which remain the direct responsibility of NI Executive or its agencies.

Eight questions were considered as part of the consultation and a draft response was circulated for Members' attention.

The closing date for the consultation will be 28 September 2018.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the consultation response be approved.

ACTION BY: Helen Hall, Head of Performance and Transformation

The Chairperson advised that Item 3.11 would be taken at this point of the meeting.

Having declared an interest in the next item, Councillor Hamill left at this point of the meeting.

3.11 G/MSMO/27 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Members were advised that an application under the approved Elected Member Development Policy had been received from Councillor Paul Hamill for retrospective approval for the NILGA Leadership programme which had already commenced. The cost of the programme was £995.

In accordance with the Elected Member Development Policy guidelines, this application had been considered by the Member Development Working Group and it recommends that the application be approved.

Members were advised that the policy entitles each Member to £375 (per annum) which can be used on training and development activities and which directly relates to their roles and responsibilities.

A copy of the application form was circulated.

An evaluation report will be provided to Committee on completion of the course.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the Member Development Working Group recommends that retrospective approval be given for the NILGA Leadership programme application from Councillor Hamill at a cost of £995.

ACTION BY: Fiona Gunning, Organisation Development Officer

Councillor Hamill returned to the meeting.

3.4 FC/FA/8 ANNUAL REPORT OF PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS & TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Members were reminded that the Council approved the Prudential Indicators for 2017/18 to 2019/20 and the Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18 on 30 January 2017.

Under the Prudential Code and the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services the Council is required to monitor and review its prudential indicators. The key objective of which is to ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council are affordable, prudent and sustainable and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice.

The Council's Treasury Management Policy requires mid - year and annual reports on treasury management activities.

This report compared the approved Prudential Indicators with the outturn position for 2017/18 and the annual report on the Council's borrowing and investment activities for 2017/18.

A copy of the annual report was circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Maguire and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.5 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE AND “DISPUTED INVOICES”

Introduction

The purpose of this report was to provide additional detail on the systems in place to monitor payment performance especially with regard to disputed invoices. (Appendix 1 was circulated).

The report followed from Members' queries on Prompt Payment performance reported to the Policy & Governance Committee on 10 April 2018.

The report was presented under the following headings;

- Background and Guidance
- ANBC Current Procedure
- Impact of Current Procedure
- Prompt Payment Performance
- Going Forward

Background and Guidance

The Department for Communities (DfC) issued revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments in November 2016.

This guidance requested Councils to record additional categories of information in the quarterly return to DfC. These are to include the number of invoices that were disputed and the average number of days it takes to pay an invoice.

There are two basic definitions:

1. Measurement of Payment period
2. Definition of Disputed/Invalid Invoices

1. Measurement of Payment period

The measurement of Prompt Payment Performance as set out in the guidance was calculated based on **valid** invoices as follows:

(a/b) multiplied by 100

Where

a = number of invoices for commercial goods and services paid within X days of receipt of a valid invoice (where X is 30 calendar days or 10 working days) and;

b = total number of valid invoices.

The invoice received date is the date the invoice is received in the Council's specified address ie Council's finance department and the payment date is the date when payment reaches the supplier's bank account.

2. Definition of Disputed/Invalid Invoices

Guidance issued by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCRs) states an 'invalid' or 'disputed' invoice as an invoice which fails to contain all the information requested and/or is not submitted to the correct payment address (electronic or postal).

Per the guidance the reasons for a disputed invoice include:

- the absence of a Purchase Order (PO)
- the absence of a unique invoice number,
- an incorrect amount or VAT payable,
- issues with the quantity or quality of the goods or service delivered (this could include failure of suppliers to meet targets/agreements set in performance related or outcome based contracts).

Failure of a Council officer to promptly approve an invoice due for payment is not seen as sufficient justification for failing to regard the invoice as valid and undisputed.

The guidance states that when an invoice is in dispute (incorrectly rendered), every effort should be made to resolve all invoice related disputes quickly. Where the Council disputes an invoice, the supplier should be immediately notified of the dispute and of the reason why a dispute has been raised.

Statutory guidance published by the Cabinet Office, says that Council should take no more than 7 calendar days from receipt (i.e. received at the designated payment address) to confirm invoices as valid and undisputed. The statutory guidance also suggests (as a model contract term) that in the event of an undue delay (i.e. not confirming an invoice as valid and undisputed within the suggested 7 calendar days), the invoice shall be regarded as valid and undisputed.

ANBC Current Procedure

Council's current procedure for calculating payment days is as follows:

- All invoices received by post, email and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) are date stamped when received in the Accounts section of Finance.
- All invoices are checked and registered on the finance system including those requiring a purchase order number. The finance system is checked for a purchase order number, if no order number is quoted on the invoice this will be recorded as part of the check. The registered date is the date the invoice is received in Accounts.
- Payment runs are completed on a Tuesday and Friday. Payment is currently done via internet banking as a faster payment. The Council's bank account is debited on the day the payment is made and the majority of suppliers should have funds in their bank account the same day.
- Payment days are calculated from the date received by the accounts section (registered date) to the payment date (date funds credited to supplier bank account).

Issues with declaring Invoices Disputed/Invalid

Approximately a third of invoices received would fail a strict 'validation' check especially regarding the presentation on the invoice of a valid purchase order number. In order to avoid sending invoices back to suppliers, Council officers currently undertake the process of assigning a purchase order number to the invoice as part of the weekly review of invoices registered not yet paid. Registering all invoices received is beneficial for finance staff when dealing with supplier queries eg the supplier is chasing payment, it is easy for finance staff to advise the supplier what stage of the payment process the invoices are at and what is causing the delay eg waiting on a purchase order number from the officer or a delivery on purchase order.

Sending invoices back to suppliers would also be administratively burdensome such as keeping a record of the invoices returned to suppliers, dealing with additional queries from suppliers chasing payment and receiving duplicate invoices from suppliers. For those invoices received via OCR this would involve deleting the invoice from the finance software when the supplier re-submits the invoices with the purchase order number included. These invoices will have to be manually scanned and indexed as OCR will not accept the same invoice number from the supplier therefore reducing the benefits of using OCR.

It is the current preference that good invoicing from suppliers is promoted through supplier contract management. The Council has corresponded with suppliers a number of times advising them on the importance of following the Council's Terms & Conditions for the payment of invoices. Finance staff also proactively work with budget holders within the Council to process invoices efficiently.

Council's current financial software systems are unable to record 'invalid' or 'disputed' invoices either when received or when deemed to be 'invalid' by the relevant officer. It is assumed that all invoices are valid when received. There is provision in the software to record notes against specific invoices as to the reasons for delay in payment but not to amend neither its status from valid to invalid nor the payment period to be the period from when made valid to date of payment. This would be further complicated by the stipulation within the guidance that there are only 7 days to declare an invoice as invalid.

Council's current system of reporting is therefore pragmatic – recording all invoices from date of receipt to date of payment.

Impact of Current Procedure

At any given point in time there will exist a body of invoices that require officer intervention to trigger payment.

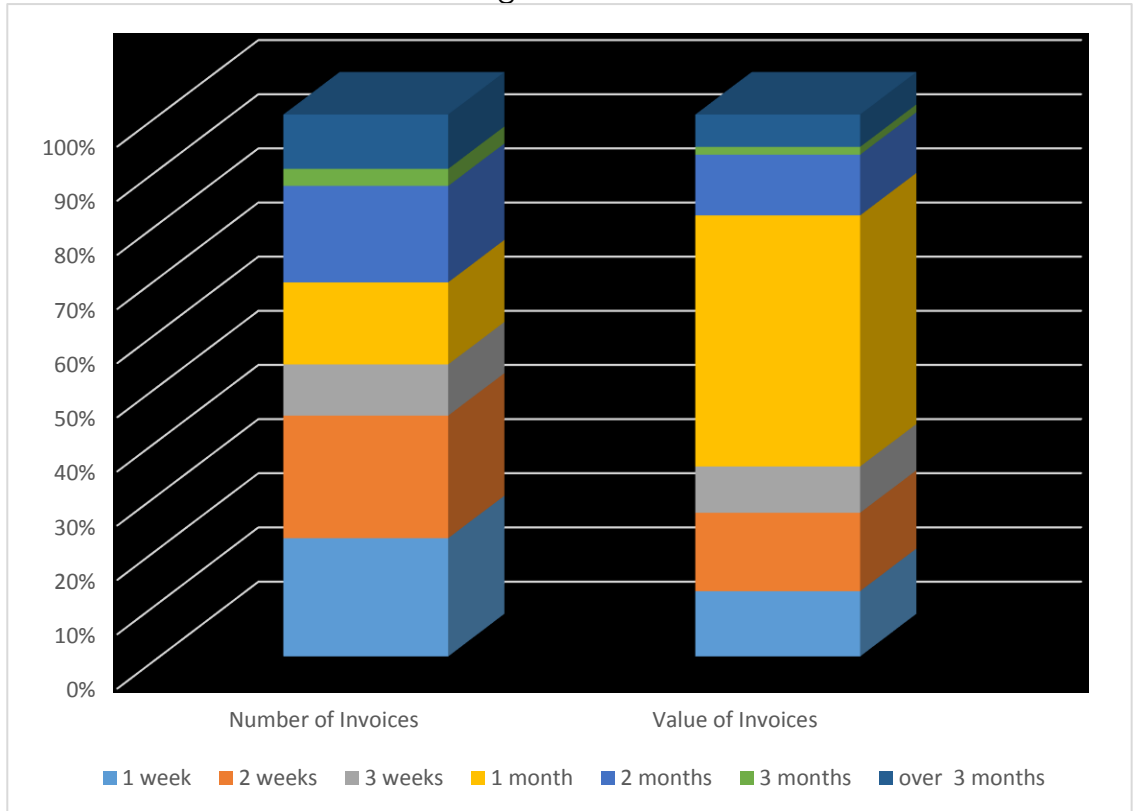
By way of example as at 25 May 2018, 1016 invoices totalling £2.6m were registered on the system awaiting payment authorisation.

The main reasons these invoices had not been paid were as follows;

- Purchase order needs status changed to delivered for goods/services received
- Purchase order number required - invoice from supplier has not quoted a valid purchase order and the invoice has been registered with no purchase order number
- Invoice is in Clearing (delivery on the purchase order does not match the net amount on the invoice), authoriser to add a note to approve the payment for Accounts to manually clear the invoice for payment
- Invoice received from supplier and goods/services not yet received or only partly received.
- Query on the invoice eg quantity invoiced does not match quantity delivered and credit note requested from supplier before invoice can be paid.

The invoices registered for payment in this period are presented graphically as follow;

- Number of weeks from the date registered and value of invoices



The graphs show that approximately 55% of invoices outstanding at a given point in time are less than 1 month old.

If additional time of one working day was built into the calculation to allow for the time spent on validation of disputed invoices, modelled outcomes predict that the % paid within 10 days would improve by approximately 3% and the % payable within 30 days by only 0.5%. Therefore, it is deemed not a significant benefit for the Council to pursue this.

Prompt Payment Performance

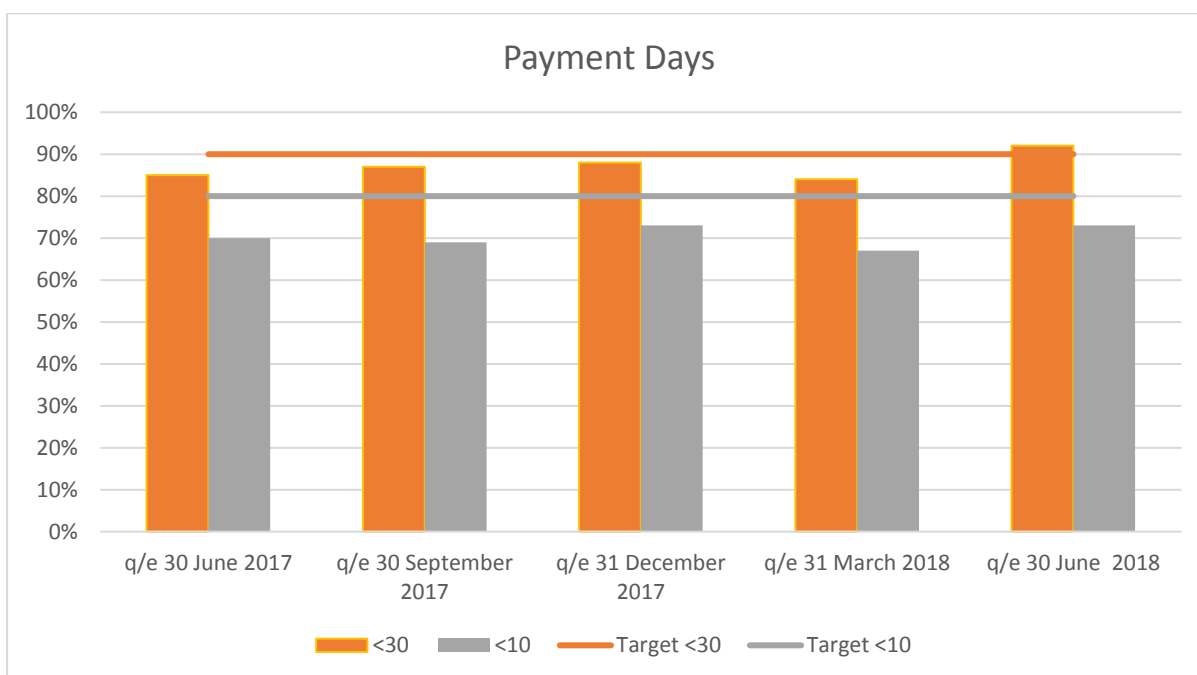
The Council has set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

The results for 2017/18 and the first quarter of 2018/19 financial year are as follows:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 30 June 2017	6,384	85%	70%
q/e 30 Sept 2017	5,980	87%	69%

q/e 31 Dec 2017	6,367	88%	73%
q/e 31 March 2018	7,546	84%	67%
q/e 30 June 2018	6,143	92%	73%

The performance presented graphically highlights the performance metrics for 2017/18 and the first quarter of 2018/19.



During the first quarter of 2018/19 the target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days has been met and performance for the 10 day target has improved to the same performance as quarter ending December 2017.

The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland is published quarterly by the Department for Communities (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the quarter ended 30 June 2018 is shown in Appendix 1; the Council's performance ranked against the other Councils for 2017/18 and the first quarter of 2018/19 is set out in the table below.

Period	% Paid Within 30 Days - Ranking	% Paid Within 10 Days - Ranking
q/e 30 June 2017	3rd	Joint 4th
q/e 30 Sept 2017	3rd	2nd
q/e 31 Dec 2017	4th	2nd

q/e 31 March 2018	7th	3rd
q/e 30 June 2018	Joint 2nd	3rd

The table shows the ranking against the other Councils for the quarter ended June 2018 has improved from the previous quarters for the % paid within 30 days and the ranking for the % paid within 10 days has remained the same as the previous quarter.

The Council recognises the importance of paying its suppliers promptly. As previously reported, to improve performance the Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software implemented in quarter 4 of 2016/17 is now well embedded. The aim was to register 60% of invoices received via OCR by 31 March 2018. In quarter 1 of 2018/19, 52% of invoices received were registered via OCR. The Council will continue to work to increase this to the target level.

Going Forward

Through discussion with other Councils, none of the current financial systems in use have the facility to record and measure 'disputed' invoices. Any figures that are returned to the Department are for known suppliers where there is a specific problem eg insolvency or contract management issues. The Department have been made aware of the inconsistency in reporting and are considering for future returns.

We will keep under review our processes especially in relation to return of 'invalid' invoices to suppliers and on the impact that this is having on our reported performance.

We will continue to strive to sustain both achievement of the 30 day target and to further improve the 10 day performance whilst maintaining a high level of good governance and internal control in relation to supplier payments.

Members thanked Council Officers for their attention to this considerable improvement, and questioned whether the current DfC targets were achievable.

Officers answered Members' queries and advised that a further report, which would include comparative information referenced within the Local Government Auditor's Report 2018, would be provided for the September Audit Committee.

Councillor Webb requested that Officers include estimated number of disputed invoices in future reports.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the report be noted and a further report be provided for the Audit Committee.

ACTION BY: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

3.6 CCS/EDP/7 QUARTERLY SCREENING REPORT

Members were advised that in line with the Council's Equality Scheme it was agreed to provide quarterly updates on the screening of policies under Section 75. Within the Scheme, the Council gave a commitment to apply screening methodology to all new and revised policies. Where necessary and appropriate, these new policies would be subject to further equality impact assessment.

The policies noted below have been screened between April and June 2018.

POLICY	SCREENING DECISION
Enhanced Accessible Changing at Antrim Forum and Valley Leisure Centre	1
Valley Leisure Centre and Antrim Forum Reception Refurbishment and Access Control and Sixmile Leisure Centre Access Control	1
Car parking resurfacing at Antrim Forum	1
Sixmile Leisure Centre replacement and upgrade of equipment	1
Valley Leisure Centre Health Suite refurbishment	1
Improving access and safety at Crumlin Glen (Economic Appraisal)	1
Homespun youth drama bursary	1
Bonfire Management Programme	1
Dunnanney Centre key holder policy	1
Public Realms improvement scheme: Fountain Street, Antrim	1
Upgrade of pitch facilities at Sixmilewater caravan park	1

- | |
|--|
| <p>1 Screened with no mitigation
 2 Screened with mitigation
 3 Screened and EQIA required</p> |
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Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Bingham and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.7 CCS/EDP/9 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FOR EQUALITY COMMISSION

Section 75 requires public authorities to have due regard for the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, men and women generally, persons with a disability and persons without and persons with dependants and persons without.

The Council's Equality Scheme describes certain arrangements that as a public authority Council has set-up and is obliged to apply and follow as a means of fulfilling the duties imposed on it by Section 75(1) and (2) i.e. the duties to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

This includes arrangements for training staff, assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted. On an annual basis Council must provide a progress report to the Equality Commission to outline how those arrangements have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in supporting the Council to comply with the Section 75 duties. The progress report for 2017 to 2018 was circulated in Appendix 1 for Members' information.

The Director of Organisation Development responded to Members' questions on the report.

Proposed by Councillor Magill
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.8 HR/HR/019 AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

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

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts

The use of agency staff is subject to a rigorous approval process, which requires the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team.

There is budgetary provision for the majority of posts filled via departmental salary budgets, salary contingency and grant funding.

The table below provides an update for Members on the use of agency staff as at July 2018 as compared to July 2017.

Reason for Agency Worker	July 2018	Position Covered	July 2017	Comments
Additional Resource	4	Cleaner, Sentry Hill (Post to be filled permanently) 2 x On Call Recreation Assistant/Leisure Attendant, Sixmile Receptionist, VLC	20	Reduction in on call cover and additional resource requirement
Seasonal Work	81	39 x Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Operative 40 x Summer Scheme Leaders Caravan Park Attendant Youth Intervention Coordinator	77	
Filling Funded Posts	4	3 x Affordable Warmth Project Officer Grange Community Project Officer	5	No requirement for agency workers within PCSP
Covering Sickness/Leave/ Maternity Leave/ Shared Parental Leave	9	4 x Waste Management Operative, ESD 2 x Waste Management Driver, ESD Household Recycling Attendant Heritage Gardener HRC Attendant	12	Reduced requirement for cover in these areas
Covering vacancies until structures filled	25	Receptionist, Clotworthy 2 x System Support Assistant Hook-Loader, Bruslee 2 x Team Leader Parks, CSD 2 x Grounds Maintenance Operative Greenkeeper, Parks Central Services Supervisor Waste Management Operative, CSD 2 x Waste Operatives, ESD 2 x Waste Management Operative/Driver, ESD 2 x Driver Site Operatives, Recycling HGV Refuse Collection Driver 2 x Conferencing Administrator Arts Development Officer Parks Ranger Graphic Designer Waste Management Assistant Grounds Maintenance Operative, ESD	29	Categorisation ongoing
Covering career breaks/ secondments	11	2 x Driver Site Operative, Recycling 2 x Grounds Maintenance Operative Clerical Officer, Waste Capital Projects Officer Admin Assistant, Planning PCSP Administration Officer 2 x Tackling Deprivation Officer (Job share) HR Officer	4	Increase of 7 due to current secondment arrangements
TOTAL	134		147	

The table above excludes limited ad-hoc agency cover, which is necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice.

Appendix 1 circulated sets out expenditure on agency workers in July 2018. The cost of agency staff has reduced for the period of 1 April 2018 to 31 July 2018 at 4.71% of all staffing costs compared to 6.12% for the same period last year.

Officers responded to Members questions and it was agreed that a report to the Audit Committee would include comparative information from the Local Government Auditor's Report.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.9 CCS/EDP/017 INCLUSIVE PLAY PARK PROVISION PROGRESS REPORT

Members were reminded that a report was made to the February Policy and Governance Committee, providing an update on the progress on the Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2016-2020 and Equality Action Plan (EAP) 2017-2021. The purpose of this report was to provide an update on wheelchair accessible swings and in particular in relation to Lillian Bland Park, as requested.

The Council had approved plans to upgrade the provision of inclusive play within Lillian Bland and Rathcoole Play Parks. These projects are underway and both are expected to start on site in late January 2019 (to be completed by April 2019). The upgrades will include a wheelchair accessible swing, accessible roundabout and a bespoke inclusive play plane for Lillian Bland Play Park and a wheelchair accessible trampoline, swing and roundabout for Rathcoole.

Members were reminded that the Council recently opened the new Antrim Loughshore Play Park, and the response to it and the accessible play provision at V36 had been very positive (feedback circulated in Appendix 1).

Approximately 113 RADAR Keys have been issued for easy access to the wheelchair swings, all of which have been issued free of charge. Radar keys are widely recognised and are used throughout the UK and Ireland for access to a range of facilities, including accessible toilets.

Following a review of inclusive play provision across the Borough a report will be presented to the October Operations Committee including recommendations for additional equipment.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.10 FI/ICT/4 DIGITAL PROJECTS PROGRESS REPORT

Members were reminded that the Digital Strategy was approved in March 2017, with a previous update report issued in May 2018.

There has been progress achieved since the last progress report in May 2018, with 12 digital projects due for completion with the next 6 months and a further 7 due within 12 months. To date 11 of the digital projects identified within the Digital Strategy have been completed.

There are several key projects and the progress was noted as follows:

LEISURE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

To fully support the new Leisure Pricing Strategy introduced in October 2017, a new Leisure Management System has been purchased.

The new Leisure Management System was delivered in June 2018 and is now fully operational across all Leisure Centres.

The new system has also provided a much superior online booking solution for our users.

RESIDENTS' APP

Development of the Citizen App is now well underway and our App development partner, Scaffold Digital, is working closely with key stakeholders to ensure the finished app is as functional and transactional as possible.

The App will not only deliver key news about Council and Council events, but will provide access to booking leisure services, request Council services and provide personalised information about waste collection and local amenities.

The Citizen App will be delivered in two phases, Phase one will be delivered in September 2018 with phase 2 being a full public release in December 2018.

WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

Simply Zesty have been appointed as our Web partner and they are currently developing the new site.

The redevelopment is intended to bring a fresh new feel to the Council website, while making it easier to navigate and more centred around what our customers require.

During 2017-18, the current website attracted over 1 million visits, while social media channels had a combined following of 17,000 users.

This project is on course to be delivered for October 2018.

The circulated Digital Projects Progress Report (appendix 1) provided more detail on all the ongoing digital projects.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.12 CCS/CPRM/5 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING UPDATE BACKGROUND

The continued innovative use of technology is key to the ongoing success of the Council's Communication and Marketing Plan.

This report provided an update on some of the digital tools utilised to date, and outlines ongoing plans for the months ahead.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Social Media

Social platforms are proving extremely popular with many residents choosing to send their requests and enquiries through social media. This engagement is important as it ensures that we are taking part in a two way conversation with residents.

Sprout Social is used as a tool used for scheduling social media posts and for tracking customer requests. It also provides us with competitor analysis which shows that, this year, the Council has been at the top end of engagement rankings and at the top of the 11 Councils in terms of audience growth. Sprout Social will continue to inform our social media strategy.

It is important that the Council shares and engages with its customers through digital channels. Customers use a range of different digital platforms and monthly data is analysed to ensure that we are using the best social media platforms for various messages or campaigns.

The table below summarises our online performance:

	Current numbers	Target for 2018/19
Facebook	12,700	14,000
Twitter	7,230	9,000

Website Hits	911,586 <i>(2017/18)</i>	850,000 <i>985,200 hits expected if we continue at same rate as we have in the first 4 months</i>
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Website

Website hits are increasing with the busiest month being May of the year to date. This was due to online Summer Scheme bookings, however many of these users are being signposted to the website through Council's social media posts.

The new corporate website project is currently underway and is scheduled for delivery in October 2018. Officers are working with the appointed supplier to profile our customers and their online behaviour, which will inform website design. The Council's Digital Panel, made up of volunteer residents, will also provide feedback on the website during the design phases.

When completed, the new website will connect to our new Residents' App and social media channels.

Residents' App

The development of the Residents' App is underway, which will be launched in two phases. Phase 1 is due for completion in early autumn and it will include online bookings for leisure and theatre bookings, bulky collections, and a 'my Council' facility to view local amenities etc.

Feedback from Phase 1 will inform the second project phase, which is due for completion in mid-December and will include full integration with the Council's new website for latest news, events and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Event Advertising

A recent Communications Survey with residents indicated that residents depend on a combination of Borough Life (76%), social media (57%) and the Council's website (36%) for information on events, offers, classes and courses. There is a clear movement away from relying on traditional print media such as newspapers and leaflets for information, thus underpinning the direction of our External Communications Strategy.

A recent Jobs Fair event held in June at the Valley Leisure Centre attracted over 1700 visitors. Linked to the event, a new Antrim and Newtownabbey Jobs Facebook page was launched and has a steady growing audience of 500 likes. Low cost social media advertisements, and other regular posts, were the main thrust of the marketing and promotion campaign for this successful event.

Another example of using low cost social media advertising was for the PCSP Community Safety Day event in March 2018. Traditionally around 40-50 people attended this event. To bolster registrations, a paid for promotion

costing £40 ran for 7 days on Facebook, resulting in over 200 attendees, and demand was such that a waiting list has been created.

Bloggers

As a part of the #iRecycleRight campaign, Council engaged the use of bloggers for the first time. A blogger creates content inspired and curated by their personal interests and daily activities. Because of their audience reach, bloggers are social influencers, commanding large influencer outreach across social influence channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other emerging social media channels.

The five bloggers posted tips and videos and some took on a challenge to double their recycling in one week. The campaign is ongoing and feedback to date shows a reach of over 10,000 people on some of the individual bloggers' pages.

Emergency responses and weather warnings

Weather emergency notifications/service disruption updates are also popular and have effectively supported local and regional communication. The Council has developed closer working relationships with statutory partners, helping to deliver key and consistent messages in the event of severe weather and emergencies.

During and immediately after the recent flash flooding, Council Officers were able to communicate up to date information on weather reports, areas affected by flooding, support those affected by flooding and signpost support available including the Department for Communities Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme.

Age Friendly online

The Pensioners Parliament survey recently showed that 84% of older people have an email address, 43% were on Facebook and 3% on Twitter. Results from the Council's recent Communication survey informed us that 26% of respondents were over the age of 65.

There are many advantages to older citizens being digitally active, including economic benefits, maintaining family and friend connections, encouraging community participation and reducing social isolation.

Officers will continue to use Borough Life and digital channels to communicate with this audience. In addition, Borough Life now features an Age Friendly section in each edition which is supported by age friendly targeted social media posts and paid for promotions through the relevant channels.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Future developments in the months ahead include the:

- launch of a new website in October 2018
- launch and development of an Instagram channel in September 2018
- development of a digital newsroom in January 2019

- further development of closer working with other key statutory partners and stakeholders to share and direct on line followers to important information/local and regional campaigns/online services

Officers advised that details of advertising costs would be provided to the next Committee Meeting.

Officers to send an email reminder of the social media training to Members.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill

Seconded by Councillor Maguire and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Fiona Gunning, Organisation Development Officer

3.13 G/DPFI/003 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGISTRATION UPDATE

The EU has created a new data protection regime - the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – to harmonise data protection law across the EU to ensure that organisations face more consistent data protection compliance requirements. The GDPR is also designed to address technological and societal changes that have taken place over the last 20 years. The new legislation became effective on **25 May 2018**.

In the UK the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), has been replaced by a new Act, the Data Protection Act 2018, which must be read in conjunction with the GDPR. The Council, as a Data Controller, is required to ensure that it complies with the new legislation.

Progress is ongoing as follows:

- Audits of Personal Data processed by sections were carried out across all Council Sections prior to the new legislation coming into effect. These are being reviewed in conjunction with the 6 monthly review of Information Asset Registers (IARs). Information Governance Team members have liaised with their identified section administration contacts to assist and ensure the reviews are completed in a timely manner. Any issues raised are escalated to the Information Governance Manager (IGM) for further advice and assistance. All reviews are to be completed by the end of August. Each Head of Service and the Information Governance Manager will meet in September to discuss the IARs and the Audit of Personal Data. At this meeting any new information assets will be considered to ensure records are complete and comprehensive. Practical steps will also be discussed to ensure effective GDPR implementation to meet the particular requirements of the service.
- Privacy notices, which are used to advise individuals how their information is used by the Council, continue to be uploaded to the Council website at <http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/Council/GDPR> and to NetConsent.

- A working group was established to consider the practical application of GDPR and is scheduled to have its fourth meeting on 26 September. It is proposed that it should now meet every 2 months rather than monthly.
- Guidance on Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) has been prepared by the IGM. A DPIA is a tool to help organisations identify the most effective way to comply with their data protection obligations and meet individual's expectations of privacy. The IGM and ICT are liaising regarding screening of digital projects for the need for DPIA.
- New contracts involving data processing now include wording relating to GDPR. Contract documentation has been updated and processes put in place to ensure that all contracts which involve third party data processing are identified and dealt with appropriately.
- Guidance on the distinction between third party data processing and data sharing has been prepared by the IGM.
- The Borough Lawyer is progressing the preparation of a standard data sharing agreement template to be used by the Council.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam

Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Bingham

Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the following Committee business be taken In Confidence.

ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

3.14 IN CONFIDENCE G/HSWB/4 ECONOMIC APPRAISAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SOFTWARE

The Council needs to ensure that all health and safety Accident reports, Risk assessments and Audit & inspection findings are identified, recorded and evaluated on an ongoing basis. This is essential in order to fulfil our legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, and associated legislation.

Council's current Health and Safety system provider have advised that they are no longer in a position to continue to support and maintain the system used by Council beyond March 2019. While the hosting of the existing

databases can be supported throughout 2018/19, all their clients are being encouraged to identify and make alternative arrangements.

An Economic Appraisal (circulated) has been completed identifying two possible options for Council:-

1. Do Nothing
2. Replace Existing Software System

An alternative software solution would provide an integrated solution for a multiuser cloud based platform providing Council staff and stakeholders with a fully functioning:

1. Accident/Incident Database
2. Risk Assessment Management Tool required to record and communicate various risk assessments across all Council functions while managing associated actions to reduce residual risk.
3. An Audit & Inspection Software solution capable of recording results of internal audits and generating reports for all bodies involved.

A provisional review of possible suitable replacement packages suggests that replacement software is estimated in the region of £████████ per annum. In line with the Council's Digital Strategy and in particular the 'Digital Workforce' pillar – “*Staff will have the digital tools, skills and information to deliver better and more responsive services*”, this investment will enhance the Council's ability to streamline 'back office' processes, reinforce good governance, culture change and generate efficiencies.

Officers would highly recommend Option 2 be progressed.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

Members approve Option 2 – the replacement of Health and Safety Software.

ACTION BY: Elaine Girvan, Corporate Health and Safety Manager

3.15 IN CONFIDENCE ICT/GEN/019 CORE SERVER REPLACEMENT

The core ICT server infrastructure of Council comprises of 6 main servers operating across our 2 data centres in Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic Centre. These 6 servers are now over 4 years old and in order to maintain a high level of performance, resilience and reliability, are due for replacement.

This capital expenditure will enable Council to fulfil its vision to be “the most digitally advanced Council in Northern Ireland”.

The circulated Economic Appraisal outlined the current need and options considered and the associated costs of each option.

Total capital cost: £████████

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

Committee authorise the capital expenditure for core server replacement.

ACTION BY: Paul Allan, ICT Manager

3.16 IN CONFIDENCE FI/ICT/38 ROLLING ICT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

The ICT Replacement programme of Council will help provide robust and reliable computer equipment to ensure continuity of service delivery.

Aging computer hardware does not provide the high level of service and reliability to the users required for the Council to maintain service levels and meet customer expectations. The ICT replacement programme will provide robust and reliable computer hardware. Without this rolling replacement program, service levels diminish and business continuity is put at risk.

The life expectancy of new PC hardware is much longer and new equipment will be purchased with a 5-year warranty. Economic Appraisal was circulated.

The capital costs are as follows:

PC / Laptop Replacement - £████████

Total capital cost: £████████ (included in the capital budget)

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

that Committee authorise the capital expenditure for the rolling ICT replacement program.

ACTION BY: Paul Allan, ICT Manager

3.17 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/79 EXTENSION OF THE PROVISION OF TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT SERVICES

Contract Period: 4 December 2017 to 30 November 2018 (with an option by the Council to extend for a further three periods of 12 months, subject to review and performance)

At the Council meeting held on 30 October 2017, the framework for the above service was awarded to Premiere Employment Group Limited, Kennedy Recruitment Limited, Grafton Recruitment Limited, MPA Recruitment Limited and Brook Street Bureau Limited.

The framework is due to expire on 30 November 2018 (with an option by the Council to extend for a further three periods of 12 months, subject to review and performance).

Having reviewed the contract, the Contract Manager is initiating research into the possible use of other purchasing organisations' frameworks available to the Council and a period of supplier engagement.

In order to facilitate the required time to finalise the research and complete supplier engagement an extension of a further period to 30 June 2019 was requested.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

the contracts with Premiere Employment Group Limited, Kennedy Recruitment Limited, Grafton Recruitment Limited, MPA Recruitment Limited and Brook Street Bureau Limited be extended for a further period to 30 June 2019.

ACTION BY: Julia Clarke, Procurement Officer

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

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

4. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

(a) Alderman Smyth requested that health checks for staff and Members be explored.

(b) Councillor Hamill requested that discounted leisure membership for on-call staff be explored.

ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

There being no further business the Chairperson thanked the Members for attending and the meeting ended at 7:23 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.