



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE CHAMBER, MOSSLEY MILL
ON WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2025 AT 6.30 PM**

In the Chair	:	Councillor S Wilson
Committee Members (In person)	:	Alderman – S Ross Councillors – M Brady, S Cosgrove, P Dunlop, J Gilmour and H Magill
Committee Members (Remote)	:	Councillors - R Lynch, T McGrann, V McWilliam, M Ní Chonghaile, A O'Lone and M Stewart
Non-Committee Members	:	Councillors – M Cooper and B Webb
Non-Committee Members (Remote)	:	Councillor L O'Hagan
In Attendance (In Person/Remote)	:	Robert McQuiston, Project Co-Ordinator, Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum
Officers Present	:	Head of Community Development – R McKenna Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events – S Goldrick Head of Corporate Affairs – J McIntyre IT Systems Support Officer – C Bell Member Services Officer – S Fisher
Officer Present (Remote)	:	Borough Lawyer – P Casey

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed Members to the December meeting of the Community Development Committee and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

1 APOLOGIES

None

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 4.2 – Councillor H Magill

3 PRESENTATION

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

1. Purpose

A short presentation (circulated) was given by Robert McQuiston, Project Coordinator from the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum. The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an update on the work of the Senior's Forum across Antrim and Newtownabbey.

2. Introduction/Background

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

The Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors' Forum Quarter 1 and 2 2025-26 performance report was approved at the November 2025 Community Development Committee with a request that the Forum reach out to seniors in the Antrim, Crumlin and Randalstown areas.

Following the presentation, the Chair and Members thanked Mr McQuiston for his presentation and service to the Borough.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and agreed that

the presentation be noted.

NO ACTION

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 PT/CI/066 BUSINESS PLAN 2025/2026, PERFORMANCE REPORTING TEMPLATE QUARTER 2

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the Quarter 2 update on the Community and Culture Departmental Business Plan.

2. Background

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

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

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

In June 2025, Council approved a strategic performance framework as part of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26.

4. Business Planning

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

The purpose of the Directorate Business Plans was to:

- Demonstrate how each of the Directorates are supporting and achieving Council's priorities.
- Provide a clear sense of purpose of the Directorate and the challenges it faces.

- Illustrate how it was 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 Quarter 2 Performance Report for the Community and Culture Directorate 2025/2026 was circulated for approval.

5. Financial Position / Implications

The Business Plan was being delivered within the approved budgets for 2025/2026.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

the Quarter 2 update on the Community and Culture Departmental Business Plan, be approved.

ACTION BY: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Having declared an interest in Item 4.2, Councillor Magill left the Chamber.

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Background

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

Groups who applied for a small grant were not permitted to apply for any other funding available under the wider Community Development Grant Aid Programme during the course of the 2025/26 financial year.

In December 2019, Members agreed that from 1 April 2020 all Small Grants were to be assessed on the basis of Pass/Fail against eligibility criteria and not subjected to a scored assessment process. All proposed awards were subject to a signed disclosure from the group confirming that all appropriate

supporting documentation was in place and could be provided upon request or the offer of funding would be withdrawn.

4. Financial Implication

The total budget for the 2025/26 Community Development Small Grant Aid Programme was £15,000 in the 2025/26 Community Development budgets.

Between September and November 2025, 7 applications were received and assessed by Officers, with 3 applications totalling £2,375.00 recommended for approval, details of which were circulated for Members' information.

5. Summary

It was proposed to award 3 Small Grants to the successful applicants as outlined.

Community Development Small Grants would remain open as a rolling programme with applications being reported to the Community Development Committee on a quarterly basis.

Proposed by Councillor Lynch

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the 3 Small Grant applications requesting a total of £2,375.00 be approved.

ACTION BY: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Councillor Magill returned to the Chamber.

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

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the successful recipients of the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in 2025.

2. Background

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service was established in 2002 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II and was the equivalent of an MBE for volunteer led groups that make an outstanding impact in their local community.

Following the passing of Her Majesty the Queen in September 2022 the Awards were suspended however, it was announced in February 2023 that the scheme would continue as the King's Award for Voluntary Service with an annual announcement of winners to be made on the King's birthday on 14 November.

3. Previous Decision of Council

It was approved at the October 2024 Council meeting that two organisations would be nominated for the King's Award for Voluntary Service in 2025. The groups nominated were as follows:

- Mallusk Community Action Group
- Sensory Kids

4. King's Award for Voluntary Service 2025

On 14 November 2025, the recipients of the King's Award for Voluntary Service were announced, with 16 groups from Northern Ireland recognised. Among them were the two organisations nominated by the Council: Mallusk Community Action Group and Sensory Kids. In addition, the Community Relations Forum would also receive the award following an external nomination.

5. Financial Implication

As for previous recipients of the King's Award for Voluntary Service, it was proposed that the Council supports the delivery of a celebration event for all three groups when they would be formally presented with their awards by the Lord Lieutenant early in 2026.

Provision of £10,000 for the King's Award for Voluntary Service 2025 had been made in the 2025/26 Community Development budget.

6. Summary

The King's Award for Voluntary Service was the highest honour awarded to volunteer-led groups that made an outstanding impact in their local community.

Three organisations from the Borough had been awarded the King's Award for Voluntary Service in 2025: Community Relations Forum, Mallusk Community Action Group and Sensory Kids.

It was proposed that Council would support the delivery of a celebration event for all three groups early in 2026.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

the delivery of a celebration event to formally present three organisations with their King's Award for Voluntary Service, at a cost of no more than £10,000, be approved.

ACTION BY: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

4.4 CP/CP/237 WOMEN'S SUB COMMITTEE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the draft minutes of the Women's Sub Committee meeting held on 6 November 2025 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

2. Introduction/Background

A motion to establish a stand-alone 'Women's Sub Committee' made up of female representatives of the Council to discuss and promote women's issues, build the skills and confidence of local women and to encourage women to become more involved in local politics was approved at the August 2023 Council meeting.

3. Previous Council Decision

The Terms of Reference for the Women's Sub Committee were approved at the November 2023 Community Planning Committee and provide the framework for the meetings. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved at the September 2025 Community Development Committee meeting.

4. Working Group Meeting

The Women's Sub Committee met on 6 November 2025; the minutes of the meeting were circulated.

5. Financial Position

There were no financial implications to Council.

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

A comprehensive review of all Council working groups was undertaken and Section 75 Equality Screening and Rural Proofing would be carried out as part of this review.

7. Governance

The specific role of the Women's Sub Committee was set out in the Terms of Reference which were approved at the November 2023 Community Planning Committee.

8. Summary

The Women's Sub Committee was made up of female representatives of the Council to discuss and promote women's issues, build the skills and confidence of local women and to encourage women to become more involved in local politics.

A Member requested that her thanks to the Director and her team for all their work in their support of the Sub-Committee be noted. The Head of Community Development confirmed that the invite list for future meetings would be reviewed with the Director with the view to extending invitations to Group Leaders and/or other Members.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Councillor Lynch and agreed that

the draft minutes of the Women's Sub Committee Meeting held on 6 November 2025 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

ACTION BY: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community and Culture

Councillor O'Lone joined the meeting during Item 4.5

4.5 CP/GR/193 SOMME VISIT 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the establishment of a task and finish working group to develop arrangements for the annual visit to the Somme in 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

A delegation from the Council once again participated in a visit to the Somme Region from 30 June- 02 July 2025, which marked the 1 July anniversary of the Great War Battle of the Somme. The visit to France included educational visits to key sites where local regiments fought, and individuals from the Borough lost their lives at this time.

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

3. Previous Decisions of Council

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

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

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

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

4. Somme Visit 2026

2026 would mark the 110th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme so the visit in summer of 2026 would have added significance.

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

An overview of the proposed itinerary for 2026 would be provided at a future Community Development Committee meeting. It was proposed that Group Party Leaders would nominate their Elected Member representatives. To ensure value for money, as well as securing preferred accommodation, all bookings for the 2026 Somme Visit would be made early in 2026. Therefore all attendees, both nominated and those who wish to accompany at their own expense, must be made known to Good Relation Officers by 12pm on Friday 9 January 2026 via a confirmation email to goodrelations@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

5. Financial Position/Implication

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

6. Summary

Elected Members for the 2026 Somme Visit would be sought from Group Party Leaders, and any other Elected Member who wished to attend, covering their own travel and subsistence costs, should advise Officers of their intention no later than Friday 9 January 2026.

The Head of Community Development clarified that the task and finish working group would include Members nominated for the 2026 visit and other interested parties and that feedback had already been received from those on the 2025 visit. A Member also commented that this should be reviewed at the start of the next mandate for the Council term.

Proposed by Alderman Ross

Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

the establishment of a task and finish working group to develop arrangements for the 2026 annual visit to the Somme be approved.

ACTION BY: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

4.6 AC/EV/025 BALLYCLARE MAY FAIR

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 19 November 2025 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

2. Background

The role of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group was to promote, develop and organise the annual Ballyclare May Fair. The specific role of the May Fair Working Group was set out as follows:

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

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

3. Previous Decision of the Council

The revised Working Group Terms of Reference were approved at the December 2023 Community Planning Committee. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved at the October 2025 Community Development Committee meeting.

4. Working Group Meeting

The Ballyclare May Fair Working Group met on 19 November 2025 in Ballyclare Town Hall. The minutes of the meeting were circulated.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Stewart and agreed that

the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 19 November 2025 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

ACTION BY: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community and Culture

4.7 COMD/GR/006 GOOD RELATIONS GRANT AID PROGRAMME 2025-26

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval in relation to the Good Relations Grants Funding Programme awards being recommended.

2. Background

The Good Relations Grant Programme provides financial assistance to groups within the Borough of up to £2,000 towards activities, events and programmes that align with the aims of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan.

The Good Relations Grant Programme opened for applications on 1 April 2025 and would close on 31 December 2025.

All Good Relations Grants would be assessed against eligibility criteria and a scored assessment process. Applicants would be required to score a minimum of 60% for an application to be recommended for approval.

3. Previous Decisions by Council

The Good Relations Grant Programme was approved at May 2025 Community Development Committee as part of the Council's revised Good Relations Action Plan 2025-26.

4. Key Issues

During the months of August-November 2025, six applications were received and assessed by Officers, with one successful application totalling £2,000 recommended for approval. One previously approved application had since been withdrawn.

The project details were circulated for Members' information.

All proposed awards would be subject to a signed disclosure from the group confirming that all appropriate supporting documentation was in place and could be provided on request or the offer of funding would be withdrawn.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The total budget for the 2025/26 Good Relations Grant Programme within the 2025/26 Community Development budget was £5,000.

6. Summary

It was proposed that the Good Relations funding award for £2,000 to the successful applicant as outlined.

Good Relations Grants 2025/26 would remain open until 31 December 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

the Good Relations Grant application requesting £2,000 be approved.

ACTION BY: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer

4.8 **COMD/MCPR/001 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for a Social Media Policy for Employees which was intended to provide guidelines on how the Council regulates and manages the use of social media by employees, casual and agency workers of the Council.

2. Background and Introduction

The Marketing, Communications and PR Section of the Community and Culture Directorate is responsible for all aspects of managing social media for the Council. The vast majority of employees of Council would be regular users of social media, as was the case for wider society.

This Policy reinforced the effective and responsible use of social media so as not to expose Council or individuals to risks to reputation, security of information or to jeopardise compliance with legal obligations. By providing this guidance, Council was offering a safeguard to employees, casual and agency workers (hereafter referred to as employees).

This policy applied to employees' personal use of social media. A separate protocol was in place for employees who had access to Council-owned social media accounts. The policy aligned with the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees.

3. Social Media Policy for Employees

The aim of this policy was to ensure:

- that employees were fully aware of their responsibilities to Council when using social media* in a personal capacity and follow the Code of Conduct and all other related policies
- that Council information remains secure and was not compromised through the use of social media
- that employees and the Council would be protected from any risk to reputational damage as a result of employees' use of social media

*The term social media covers a multitude of digital software applications, including but not exclusively social networking (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, LinkedIn), blogging (e.g. Blogger and WordPress), multi-media sharing (e.g. YouTube, Flickr, Pinterest), information sharing (e.g. Wikipedia), review and opinion sites (e.g. Trip Advisor, Google My Business), messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp, Snapchat) and forums (e.g. Mumsnet). The absence or lack of explicit reference to a specific social media platform does not limit the extent of the policy. The Policy was circulated for Members' information.

4. Finance

There would be no financial implications arising from the development or implementation of the Social Media Policy for Employees.

5. Equality Screening

As part of the Council's responsibilities to identify and address potential Section 75 implications and promote equality of opportunity and good relations as required by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the policy had been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and had been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment. A copy of the Section 75 Equality Screening Form was circulated.

In addition, the Rural Needs Act places a duty on public authorities and local Councils to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. A Rural Needs screening exercise is not necessary.

6. Governance

The Director of Community and Culture and the Director of People and Organisational Transformation had responsibility for reviewing this policy regularly to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. The Marketing, Communications and PR Section of the Community and Culture Directorate monitor social media use continually as part of their remit, provide alerts in relation to any and all issues of concern. The Policy would be kept under review with any updates or changes to be brought back to the Committee.

7. Summary

A Social Media Policy for Employees had been developed to provide clarity for Elected Members and officers regarding all aspects of employees' personal use of social media. This would ensure that employees were fully aware of their responsibilities to the Council when using social media in a personal capacity, that Council information remains secure and that employees and the Council were protected from any risk to reputational damage as a result of employees' use of social media.

A Member commented that section 5.11 should be reviewed, and the wording amended. Following comments from Members, the Chairperson agreed that clarification would be sought on the appropriate placement of this policy within the committee structure.

Proposed by Councillor Ní Chonghaile

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the Social Media Policy for Employees be approved for immediate implementation and the wording within section 5.11 of the policy be amended.

ACTION BY: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.9 **COMD/CP/001 INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY 2025**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the International Men's Day event held at Mossley Mill on 19 November 2025.

2. Introduction/Background

International Men's Day was a global awareness day for many issues that men face including, abuse, homelessness, suicide and violence and is celebrated annually on 19 November.

It celebrates worldwide the positive value men bring to society, their families and their communities. This day would highlight positive role models and raises awareness of men's well-being. The theme for 2025 was 'Celebrating Men and Boys'.

3. Previous Decision of Council

At the January 2025 Council meeting, a notice of motion relating to International Men's Day was declared carried. The motion stated that the Council recognises the importance of highlighting men's mental health and well-being, aligned to International Men's Day on 19 November 2025. In this regard it was agreed that the Council delivers a workshop type event to support male staff and Elected Members and also light up Antrim Civic Centre and Mossley Mill blue on 19 November 2025.

At the Community Development Committee in November 2025 an update on International Men's Day 2025 was noted and it was agreed that a further report on the delivery of an annual event to mark International Men's Day be brought back to the Committee.

4. International Men's Day 2025

A workshop was held in the Linen Suite, Mossley Mill on Wednesday 19 November 2025 between 9.30am and 12noon hosted by local BBC sports journalist Thomas Niblock. The event celebrated positive role models and special guests in attendance were Daryl Clarke of Monkstown Boxing Club and Jonny Murphy former international rugby star turned baker.

A post event survey was carried out with those in attendance asked to provide their feedback. The report was circulated for Members' information and shows that 20.83% rated the event as 'Very Good' and 79.17% as 'Excellent'.

Given the positive impact of the event it was proposed that an event for International Men's Day be delivered on an annual basis with the detailed proposal for the event in 2026, including funding arrangements, to be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

5. Finance

This event was supported by funding from The Executive Office (TEO) as part of their regional commitment to the EVAWG strategy which identified the importance of positive male role models in communities.

6. Governance

Delivery of the event was agreed as part of the motion to the Council in January 2025.

7. Summary

A motion to the Council in January 2025 requested delivery of a workshop event to mark International Men's Day 2025. An event was held in Mossley Mill on Wednesday 19 November 2025 and hosted by BBC sports presenter Thomas Niblock with special guests Daryl Clarke and Jonny Murphy. The event took the form of a live podcast celebrating the contribution of men as positive role models through an open and honest discussion about the role of men and boys as positive influencers whilst recognising the many challenges faced in particular to health and well-being.

A post event survey was carried out with those who attended and 20.83% rated the event as 'Very Good' and 79.17% as 'Excellent'. It was proposed to hold an event for International Men's Day on an annual basis with the detailed proposal for the event in 2026, including funding arrangements, to be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

In response to questions from Members regarding an ongoing programme of activity on men's mental and physical health, the Head of Community Development advised that Officers would bring a report back to the Committee and he would review the detail of the earlier Council motion.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop

Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

(a) the post event survey on the International Men's Day 2025 event be noted.

(b) an event for International Men's Day be delivered annually and that a detailed proposal for the event in 2026, including funding arrangements, be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

ACTION BY: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

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

Community Development		
File Ref	Date of Meeting	Name of Partnership
D/Gen/91	17.12.2024	Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey
D/DP/67	01.07.2025 16.09.2025	Rathcoole Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
D/CSP/48	25.06.2025	Antrim and Newtownabbey Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)
D/DP/67	26.06.2025 11.09.2025	Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
CP/GR/43	-	Traveller Issues Local Government Partnership

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

the update on Partnership Minutes be noted.

NO ACTION

5.2 CP/CD/483 IPB PRIDE OF PLACE AWARDS 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the successful recipients of the IPB Pride of Place Awards 2025.

2. Background

The Annual IPB Pride of Place Awards in association with Co-operation Ireland, recognised the efforts and endeavours of communities throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to make their place the best place in which to live. The 2025 Pride of Place Awards were held in the Limerick Strand Hotel, Limerick on Friday 7 November 2025.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

It was agreed at the April 2025 Community Development Committee that the Council nominate three groups to take part in the 2025 IPB Pride of Place Awards competition namely:

- Dalaradia Cultural and Historical Society (Community Tourism Initiative)
- Rathenraw Youth Scheme (Community Youth Initiative)
- The Shed, Antrim (Creative Communities)

4. IPB Pride of Place 2025

On Friday 7 November 2025 the annual IPB Pride of Place Awards took place at the Limerick Strand Hotel, Limerick and was attended by The Mayor, Mayors Consort, Deputy Mayor, Councillor Roisin Lynch, the Community Services Co-ordinator and two representatives from each of the three groups nominated.

Rathenraw Youth Scheme was named runner up in the Community Youth Initiative Category while Dalaradia Cultural and Historical Society and The Shed Antrim each received a Certificate of Recognition in the Community Tourism Initiative and Creative Communities Categories.

5. Summary

The Annual IPB Pride of Place Awards in association with Co-operation Ireland, aimed to recognise the efforts and endeavours of communities throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to make their place the best place in which to live.

The Council nominated three groups from the Borough for the 2025 Awards with Rathenraw Youth Scheme named as Runner Up in the Community Youth Initiative Category.

Proposed by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.3 CP/CP/224 DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS – TIMMS REVIEW OF PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to inform Members of the Department for Work and Pensions update on the Timms Review of Personal Independence Payment.

2. Introduction/Background

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had provided new information on the Timms Review of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), which aimed to ensure that PIP accurately reflected the reality of disabled people's experiences and supports their ability to live independently and participate fully in society.

On 30 October 2025, the Minister of State for Social Security and Disability, Sir Stephen Timms MP, announced that Sharon Brennan and Dr Clenton Farquharson CBE had been appointed as Co-chairs of the Review.

The Review would report to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by Autumn 2026, with an interim update expected before that date.

3. Key Issues

Correspondence which had been received from the Department for Communities (DfC) regarding the Department for Work and Pensions – Timms Review of Personal Independence Payment was circulated.

The Timms Review would examine how PIP could better meet the needs of people with disabilities. It would consider both the role of PIP in promoting independence and inclusion, and how assessments could help unlock wider support.

The process would be co-produced with people with disabilities, their representative organisations, and other experts to ensure a system that promotes better health, higher living standards, and greater independence.

The DWP had also launched an Expression of Interest to recruit 12 members to a Review Steering Group. The Steering Group would lead on co-production and strategic direction, ensuring the review reflected the voices and lived experiences of disabled people. It would oversee a programme of participation and gather evidence from a range of sources and methodologies to inform its recommendations.

Full details, including the updated Terms of Reference and Expression of Interest process were available on <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-timms-review>

DfC would continue to engage with stakeholders throughout the course of the review.

3. Summary

The Department for Work and Pensions had launched the Timms Review of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to ensure the benefit accurately reflected the real-life experiences of people with disabilities and supported them to live independent, fulfilling lives.

The review would be co-produced with people with lived experience and organisations, guided by a newly formed Steering Group.

The Department for Communities would continue to monitor progress and maintain stakeholder engagement as the review develops.

Proposed by Alderman Ross
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

the Department for Work and Pensions update on the Timms Review of Personal Independence Payment be noted.

NO ACTION

5.4 CP/TD/107 ELEVATE – COMMUNITY RENEWAL AND RESILIENCE FUND

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with updated Grant guidance notes with maps to identify boundaries and eligibility criteria for the Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Fund 2026/27.

2. Introduction/Background

The Areas at Risk (AAR) programme is delivered across six Super Output Areas in the Borough. Historically the Newtownabbey AAR programme had been part funded by the Department for Communities (DfC), whilst the Antrim AAR programme fully funded by the Council.

3. Previous Council Decision

At the November 2020 Community Planning Committee, the move to an open competitive Areas at Risk programme was approved. However, this was placed on hold by Members in January 2021 due to ongoing impact of COVID-19 and the DfC People and Place review of Neighbourhood Renewal and Areas at Risk. It was agreed that a Council review of AAR be deferred until after the DfC review was completed.

The Areas at Risk Programme for 2025/2026, including total funding of £238,130, was approved at the March 2025 meeting of the Committee.

It was approved at the September Community Development Committee that the Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Fund would be launched as a competitive open grant call for in 2026/27 for organisations working within the identified areas of deprivation, excluding Neighbourhood Renewal areas which are already in receipt of monies through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme.

The Grant guidance notes were approved at the November 2025 Community Development Committee when officers were asked to bring maps of the areas back to a future meeting of the Committee so boundaries could be easily identified.

The offer of funding of £76,395.38 which was an increase of £9,645.38, from DfC for the costs associated with the Areas at Risk Programme, for the period of 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, was approved at the October Community Development Committee.

4. Super Output Areas – Boundary Maps

Eligibility to the Fund was limited to identified Super Output areas identified within the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NINIS), excluding Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

The Grant guidance notes had been updated to include maps identifying the boundaries of the Super Output areas identified within the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NINIS), and updated copies were for Members' information.

5. Financial Position

The contribution committed by the Council in 2025/26 to the Newtownabbey Areas at Risk Projects was £60,170, a similar allocation would be included in the 2026/27 Community Development budget estimates.

The contribution committed by Council in 2025/26 for Antrim AAR was £111,210, a similar allocation would be included in the 2026/27 Community Development budget estimates.

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

6. Equality Screening and Rural Needs

As part of Council's responsibilities to identify and address potential Section 75 implications and promote equality of opportunity and good relations as required by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the policy had been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and had been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment. This was reported to the September Community Development Committee.

In addition, the Rural Needs Act placed a duty on public authorities and local Councils to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. A Rural Needs screening exercise was completed and reported to September 2025 Community Development Committee.

7. Governance

The grant programme would be managed through the Council's Grant Funding Unit and would align with the Council's Funding Policy and Financial Regulations.

Organisations who met the eligibility criteria based on location and project proposals meeting the grant criteria would proceed to scoring stage.

DfC funding would be ring-fenced to grant applications within the current agreed areas only and reported on in line with current processes and procedures.

8. Summary

The Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience programme would be launched in December 2025 as a competitive open grant call for organisations working within the identified areas of deprivation, excluding Neighbourhood Renewal areas which are already in receipt of monies through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme.

The Grant guidance notes had been updated to include maps identifying the boundaries of the Super Output areas identified within the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NINIS).

Following a request from a Member, the Head of Community Development agreed to circulate clearer maps.

Proposed by Alderman Ross

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the updated Elevate Community Renewal and Resilience Fund Grant guidance notes for 2026/27, be noted.

ACTION BY: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

- 6.1** Following a request from a Member to consider the option for Coach Parking accessed from the rear of Antrim Civic Centre to facilitate visits to the Round Tower in Steeple Park, the Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events confirmed that options would be reviewed and coach access facilitated if operationally feasible.

ACTION BY: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

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

7 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

- 7.1 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/612 FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROVISION OF PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES**

CONTRACT PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2026 – 31 DECEMBER 2027 WITH THE OPTION TO EXTEND FOR UP TO A FURTHER 24 MONTHS (SUBJECT TO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to obtain approval for the appointment of suitably qualified and experienced organisations to provide photography services for the contract period.

2. Introduction/Background

The Council utilised photographers to capture images that would be used in local and regional media, corporate and promotional literature, and on the Council's website and social media accounts.

This tender consisted of two lots:

- Lot 1 Press Photography
- Lot 2 Non-Press Photography

For each lot, the Council would appoint the highest scoring tenderers, up to a maximum of 5, to the framework. Photographers would be rotated on a job-by-job basis based on the creative context of the assignment and end use of the imagery.

Photographers appointed to Lot 1 would be asked to photograph and issue images or press releases for the launch of events, initiatives, campaigns, official openings and meetings under the direction of Council's Marketing and Communications team. Where appointed to Lot 2, the photographers would be responsible for capturing images from internal meetings and training, head shots, landscape photography and other stock photographs for use by the Council. The annual spend for this contract, across both lots, would be approximately £[REDACTED]

3. Procurement Process

This tender was procured in accordance with good practice laid out in the Procurement Act 2023. The opportunity was made available on eSourcingNI on 15 October 2025.

Five tender responses were opened via the eSourcingNI Portal on 5 November 2025 and referred to the evaluation panel for assessment. The tenders were evaluated on a three-stage basis as follows:

STAGE 1 – COMPLETION AND COMPLIANCE

The tenders were checked for completion and compliance and to ensure that no mandatory or discretionary exclusion grounds were applicable. All tenders met the requirements of this stage and proceeded to Stage 2.

STAGE 2 – CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

The tenders were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for:

- financial capacity
- management systems and practices
- General Data Protection Regulation
- declarations and form of tender

The tenders met the requirements of Stage 2 of the evaluation process and proceeded to Stage 3.

STAGE 3 – AWARD STAGE

Quality and Commercial Assessment

LOT 1 – PRESS PHOTOGRAPHY

The tenders were evaluated on the basis of:

- turnaround time (10%)

- quality of service (10%)
- evidence of media success in regional press (20%)
- experience of the photographer/team (25%)
- cost (35%)

The quality scores for all tenders exceeded the agreed quality threshold and officers are content that the tenderers could deliver a high-quality contract in accordance with all aspects of the specification. Full details of the evaluation methodology for this lot were circulated.

It was recommended that the companies listed were appointed to deliver press photography at the rates listed:

Tenderer	Quality Assessment (out of 65%)	Cost Assessment (out of 35%)	Total % Score	Cost for a 1 Hour Shoot (£) (excl. VAT)
Pacemaker Press International	████	████	████	████
Aurora Photographic Agency	████	████	████	████
McAuley Multimedia Ltd	████	████	████	████
Press Eye Ltd	████	████	████	████

LOT 2 – NON - PRESS PHOTOGRAPHY

The tenders were evaluated on the basis of:

- turnaround time (10%)
- quality of service (10%)
- experience of the photographer/team (45%)
- cost (35%)

The quality scores for all tenders exceeded the agreed quality threshold and officers are content that the tenderers could deliver a high-quality contract in accordance with all aspects of the specification. Full details of the evaluation methodology for this lot were circulated.

It was recommended that the companies listed were appointed to deliver non-press photography at the rates listed:

Tenderer	Quality Assessment (out of 65%)	Cost Assessment (out of 35%)	Total % Score	Cost for a 1 Hour Shoot (£) (excl. VAT)
Pacemaker Press International	████	████	████	████

Aurora Photographic Agency	████	████	████	████
McAuley Multimedia Ltd	████	████	████	████
Bradley Quinn Photography	████	████	████	████

4. Social Value

Social Value in procurement was implemented by the Executive in June 2022 and incorporates all aspects of sustainable procurement including ethical and sustainable supply chains, community benefits and wealth building, job and skills creation and efforts to decarbonise. It was a mandatory requirement for the above threshold contracts. This procurement exercise does not meet the requirements for social value criteria to be applied.

Proposed by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

having achieved the scores detailed above, the tenderers be appointed to the framework for their respective lots for the period of 1 January 2026-31 December 2027, with an option to extend for up to a further 24 months at the tendered rates.

ACTION BY: Melissa Kenning, Procurement Manager

7.2 **IN CONFIDENCE** CP/CP/243 **ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS – CHANGE FUND 2025/2026**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members in relation to additional funding from The Executive Office (TEO) for ongoing work in relation to Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) and seek approval for the delivery of the 2025/26 EVAWG Momentum Fund Action Plan and a further EVAWG Change Fund Community Grant Programme and Momentum Action Plan for 2026 to 2028.

2. Background

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

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

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

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that it was agreed at the November 2024 Community Development Committee that the request from TEO to work in partnership in relation to the delivery of the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework and Action Plan be approved. This included the acceptance of Momentum Funding of £50,000 from TEO to provide awareness raising activities from January 2025 to 31 March 2025 and the launch of the Change Fund in January 2025 with successful projects commencing from 1 April 2025.

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

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

4. EVAWG Funding Update April 2025 to March 2028

TEO had recently invited Council to make a submission for additional EVAWG Momentum funding for the current financial year 2025/26. The aim of the Fund was to increase investment by the Council in community based and local approaches to EVAWG with the aim of helping to end violence against women and girls. The total amount required to enable implementation of the Momentum funding Action Plan by end March 2026 was £85,675. A copy of the draft plan was circulated in for Members' approval.

Within this plan it was proposed to allocate £15,000 to support the 7 Change Fund community projects due to be completed by the end of March 2026. Each group would be invited to submit an expression of interest for additional funding to enhance their project. Given the extremely tight time scales it was proposed that the Director of Community and Culture has delegated authority to approve this additional funding, with details to be reported back to the Committee in March 2026.

Further correspondence had been received from TEO regarding continuation of the EVAWG Change Fund and Momentum funding to March 2028 – a copy of which was circulated for Members' information. The

letter advises that subject to budget approvals the TEO propose to extend the local Change Fund in its current form from April 2026 to March 2028. They had indicated that the Council should anticipate funding of £160,000 for each financial year for both delivery of a further Change Fund grant programme and Momentum funding activity. They had asked that in order to ensure continuity within communities to end violence against women and girls that a call for applications should be made in early 2026 to allow delivery to commence from April 2026 onwards.

The Change Fund is intended to mobilise grassroots action, support innovative delivery and maximise the impact of community led initiatives. Projects supported by the Change Fund as previously must include a focus on Outcome 1 of the EAWG Strategy:

- Changed attitudes, behaviours and culture – so that everyone in Society understands what violence against women and girls is, including its root causes and plays an active role in preventing it.

Funded projects must demonstrate how project proposals increase awareness and understanding of what violence against women and girls was, including its root causes.

In addition to Outcome 1, projects could also demonstrate how their project proposals contribute to Outcomes 2 and/or 3 as follows:

Outcome 2 – Healthy, respectful relationships – everyone in society was equipped and empowered to enjoy healthy, respectful relationships.
Outcome 3 – Women and girls feel and are safe everywhere – organisations and institutions across government and society embed the prevention of violence against women and girls in all that they do, so that women and girls feel and are safe everywhere.

The Change Fund community grant funding programme would offer funding in tiers as follows:-

- Tier 1 – Grants up to £1,500
- Tier 2 – Grants up to £10,000
- Tier 3 – Grants up to £25,000

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

Projects must be delivered in the financial years 2026/2027 and 2027/28.

TEO had also advised that Council could also allocate up to 40% of its overall funding to deliver its own EAWG Momentum activity. Given the Councils indicative allocation of £160,000 for each financial year this

potentially provides for £96,000 for the Change Fund and £64,000 for the Councils Momentum funded activity over each of the two financial years.

Council was required to submit an Action Plan outlining proposals for the Momentum funding by 8 December 2025 to allow for issue of a letter of offer early in 2026.

It was proposed that the Council opens an EAWG Change Fund community grant programme in late January 2026 the outcome of which would be reported to the March 2026 Community Development Committee. At this meeting the final funding details in relation to both the Change Fund and Momentum funding activity in relation to EAWG would be reported to Members.

5. Finance

In response to their offer of additional funding an amount of £85,675 had been requested from TEO for the delivery of an additional EAWG Momentum Funding Action Plan. There is no financial contribution required from the Council.

The indicative budget allocation for the Council for ongoing EAWG activity from April 2026 to March 2028 is £160,000. It was proposed to allocate 60% of this for the delivery of a Change Fund Community Grant Programme with the remaining 40% to be allocated to delivery of activity by the Council under the Momentum funding heading.

In relation to the Momentum funding Officers are developing an Action Plan for submission to TEO by 8 December 2025 outlining the Councils proposals for this funding element, which would include a 10% management fee.

6. Summary

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EAWG) was one of the nine Programme for Government 2024-2027 priorities. An additional amount of £85,675 had been requested from TEO for the delivery of an additional EAWG Momentum Funding Action Plan from 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026.

The Executive Office had also asked the Council to continue partnership working beyond the current financial year from April 2026 to March 2028 with an indicative funding allocation of £320,000. It was proposed that approximately 60% of this funding was allocated to the delivery of a Change Fund Community Grant Programme which would open for applications on the same basis as previously approved for delivery of projects from April 2026 onwards. Officers would submit an Action plan to TEO by 8 December 2025 outlining proposals for use of the remainder of this funding under Momentum funding. The outcome of both the Change Fund and the Momentum Funding Action Plan would be reported back to the March 2026 Committee Meeting.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Community Development advised that the current funding had to be fully committed by March 31 2026, but there were indications of commitment for a two-year funded programme from 1st April 2026 – 31st March 2028.

He further advised that although the timeline was tight, there were established mechanisms through delegated authority to support established initiatives identified by the Women's Sub-Committee and Delivery Partners. He also clarified that there were plans to fund further events targeted towards males and a report would be brought back to Committee outlining the 2-year Momentum Funding Action Plan.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Alderman Ross and agreed that

- (a) the 2025/26 EAWG Momentum Funding Action Plan be approved and the Director of Community and Culture be given delegated authority to allocate some of the funding to the 7 organisations delivering Change Fund projects following an expression of interest call.**
- (b) the delivery of an EAWG Change Fund Community Grant Programme from April 2026 to March 2028 be approved, with a call for applications to be made in late January 2026, the outcome of which would be reported back to the March 2026 Committee Meeting.**
- (c) the submission of an EAWG Action Plan to TEO outlining the Councils proposals for delivery of EAWG activity from April 2026 to March 2028 under Momentum funding be noted, with the outcome reported back to the March 2026 Committee Meeting.**

ACTION BY: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Ní Chonghaile 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 7.26pm.

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.

