



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD
AT MOSSLEY MILL ON MONDAY 31 MARCH 2025 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Mayor (Councillor N Kelly)
- Members Present** : Aldermen – L Boyle, L Clarke, J McGrath, M Magill, P Michael, S Ross and J Smyth
- : Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, A Bennington, J Burbank, M Cooper, S Cosgrove, H Cushinan, P Dunlop, R Foster, J Gilmour, AM Logue, R Lynch, H Magill, B Mallon, A McAuley, T McGrann, E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, M Ní Chonghaile, L O'Hagan, A O'Lone, S Ward, B Webb and S Wilson
- Members Present (Remotely)** : Aldermen – Bradley, T Campbell and M Cosgrove
- : Councillors – S Flanagan, M Goodman and R Kinnear,
- In Attendance (In person)** : Lena Grimes, Community Planning Sergeant - PSNI
- Officers Present** : Chief Executive - R Baker
Director of Economic Development and Planning – M McAlister
Director of Community Development – U Fay
Director of Sustainability, Operations – M Lavery
Director of Parks and Leisure, Operations – M McDowell
Director of Organisation Development (Interim) – H Hall
Deputy Director of Finance – J Balmer
Deputy Director of Governance – L Johnston
Borough Lawyer and Head of Legal Services – P Casey
Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Health and Wellbeing) - A Briggs
ICT Systems Support Officer – C Bell
ICT Helpdesk Officer – J Wilson
Member Services Manager – A Duffy

1 BIBLE READING, PRAYER AND WELCOME

The Deputy Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting and advised Members of the audio recording procedures.

The meeting opened with a Bible reading and prayer by Councillor Foster.

The Mayor, Alderman Boyle and Councillors Burbank, Cushinan, Goodman Logue, McAuley, McGrann, McLaughlin, Ní Chonghaile, O'Hagan and O'Lone joined the meeting at this point.

MAYOR'S REMARKS

The Mayor took to the Chair and welcomed all present to the meeting.

The Mayor expressed his sincere condolences on the sad passing of the Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, Alderman Beth Adger MBE.

2 APOLOGIES

Councillor – M Brady

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 16.2 - Alderman McGrath

Item 4.3 of the Operations Committee – Alderman Smyth

Items 3.4, 3.5 and 3.8 of the Economic Development Committee – Alderman Smyth

The Mayor advised that the presentation from the Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) would be taken at this point of the meeting.

Councillor Burbank left and returned to the Chamber during the presentation.

11 PRESENTATION

11.1 MULTI AGENCY SUPPORT HUB (MASH)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this presentation was to provide Members with an update on the ongoing work of the Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH).

2. Background

Members were reminded that at the Community Development Meeting on 12 June 2024, it was requested that the Multi-Agency Support Hub be invited to present at a future Council meeting.

The Antrim and Newtownabbey MASH, is led by the Council and included representation from a range of key statutory organisations including:

- Policing and Community Safety Partnership
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Youth Justice Agency
- Northern Health & Social Care Trust
- Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
- Northern Ireland Probation Board

The Mayor welcomed Alison Briggs, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Health and Wellbeing) and Lena Grimes, Community Planning Sergeant (PSNI) to the meeting. During their presentation a (copy of which was circulated) they updated Members on the issues and added benefits of MASH and responded to Members' queries.

The Mayor and Members thanked Alison and Lena for their presentation, and they left the meeting.

Moved by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Cushinan

RESOLVED - that the presentation be noted.

NO ACTION

4 MINUTES OF THE ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

Moved by Councillor McGrann
Seconded by Councillor Webb and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Meeting of Monday 24 February 2025 be taken as read and signed as correct.

5 MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Ní Chonghaile and

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Operations Committee Meeting of Monday 3 March 2025 be approved and adopted.

6 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor O'Lone
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy and Governance Committee Meeting of Tuesday 4 March 2025 be approved and adopted.

7 MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Alderman McGrath
Seconded by Councillor Cooper and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Community Development Committee Meeting of Monday 10 March 2025 be approved and adopted.

8 MINTUES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Economic Development Committee Meeting of Tuesday 11 March 2025 be approved and adopted.

9(a) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 1

Moved by Councillor Archibald-Brown
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday 18 March 2025 Part 1 be taken as read and signed as correct.

9(b) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 2

Moved by Councillor Archibald-Brown
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday 18 March 2025 Part 2 be approved and adopted.

10 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor Ward
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting of Wednesday 19 March 2025 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Cooper left and returned to the Chamber during Item 12.

12 NOTICE OF MOTION

Proposed by Councillor Logue
Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan

“That Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council endorses the proposal for the Northern Health Trust’s emergency staff to pilot body-worn cameras in the emergency department, in order to reduce the amount of violence and aggression incidents against healthcare staff “

RESOLVED – the Motion was declared carried.

ACTION BY: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

Alderman Clarke left and returned to the Chamber during Item 13.

13 NOTICE OF MOTION

Proposed by Councillor O'Lone
Seconded by Councillor McGrann

"This council recognises that the cost-of-living crisis continues to have a deep impact on workers and families and our most vulnerable;

acknowledges that planned cuts announced by the UK Government to the welfare benefits system are an attack on the most vulnerable in our community and we must stand together against them;

notes the concern that since coming into office this UK Government has targeted the most vulnerable by cutting winter fuel payments and entitlement to Personal Independence Payment;

In voicing our opposition to these cuts ;

This Council will publicly outline its opposition as the voice of Antrim and Newtownabbey citizens and as a voice for the groups and organisations working in this field; we will write to the UK Government outlining our opposition and calling for them to reverse this decision; to give public expression of our opposition to these cuts".

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Alderman Magill

that an amendment be made to the Motion to include the removal of the words "*as the voice of Antrim and Newtownabbey citizen and as a voice for the groups and organisations working in this field*".

Proposed by Councillor O'Lone
Seconded by Councillor McGrann

"This council recognises that the cost-of-living crisis continues to have a deep impact on workers and families and our most vulnerable;

acknowledges that planned cuts announced by the UK Government to the welfare benefits system are an attack on the most vulnerable in our community and we must stand together against them;

notes the concern that since coming into office this UK Government has targeted the most vulnerable by cutting winter fuel payments and entitlement to Personal Independence Payment;

In voicing our opposition to these cuts ;

This Council will publicly outline its opposition and will write to the UK Government outlining our opposition and calling for them to reverse this decision; to give public expression of our opposition to these cuts”.

RESOLVED – the amended Motion was declared carried.

ACTION BY: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

14 ITEMS FOR DECISION

14.1 EL/207 APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCE – MAY DAY STEAM RALLY, SHANE’S CASTLE ESTATE, ANTRIM

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report was to seek Members’ approval for an Occasional Outdoor Entertainments Licence for May Day Steam Rally, Shane’s Castle Estate, Antrim.

2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Entertainments Licence for the following area.

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Ian Duff	Shane's Castle Estate, Castle Road, Antrim, BT41 4NE	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind Number of persons No greater than 5000 Friday 2 nd May 2025 17:00hrs to 23:00hrs Saturday 3 rd May 2025 17:00hrs to 23:00hrs Sunday 4 th May 2025 11:00hrs to 23:00hrs	EL 207	New Application (Grant)

		Monday 5 th May 2025 11:00hrs to 23:00hrs		
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In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainments Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application must be considered at the Operations Committee meeting. While we aimed to present these reports to the Operations Committee, time limitations necessitate that this report be considered by Full Council.

Council could decide the following:

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

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

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Entertainments Licence for the above premises for the previously noted hours. This was a family event with camping facilities on site and entertainment provided. Tickets were pre-paid and purchased online, however if remaining tickets were available they could be purchased at the gate on the day of the event.

The event organiser and the safety officer Ian Duff would co-ordinate the event and liaise with various government bodies through a Safety Advisory Group, including PSNI, NIFRS, DFI and Ambulance Service. The event would be contained within a secure perimeter on Shane's Castle Estate; however, the event area and entertainment area would not be enclosed by barriers. An occasional liquor licence would be applied for by the event organiser for the sale and consumption of alcohol within the entertainment area.

The proposed days and hours were detailed below:

Friday 2nd May 2025

17:00hrs to 23:00hrs

Saturday 3rd May 2025

17:00hrs to 23:00hrs

Sunday 4th May 2025

11:00hrs to 23:00hrs

Monday 5th May 2025

11:00hrs to 23:00hrs

4. Summary

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

Moved by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and

RESOLVED - that an Entertainments Licence (Occasional Licence) be granted to the applicant, Ian Duff - May Day Steam Rally, Shane's Castle Estate, Antrim with the following conditions:

- **that all relevant licensing requirements are met.**
- **that statutory consultees have no objections to approval.**

ACTION BY: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

14.2 **EL/218 APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCE – 57 BARNISH ROAD, RANDALSTOWN, BT41 2EJ**

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report was to seek Members approval for an Occasional Entertainments Licence for Tír na nÓg GAC Sports hall, 57 Barnish Road, Randalstown, BT41 2EJ

2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Entertainments Licence for the following area.

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Anthony Martin	57 Barnish Road, Randalstown, BT41 2EJ	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind Number of persons No greater than 600 Saturday 26 th April 2025 19:00hrs to 02:00hrs	EL 218	New Application (Grant)

In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainments Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application must be considered

at the Operations Committee meeting. While we aim to present these reports to the Operations Committee, time limitations necessitate that this report be considered by Full Council.

Council could decide the following:

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

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

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Entertainments Licence for the above premises. This grant would be an Occasional Entertainments Licence for a ticketed event held for the club members and local community on 26th April 2025. The event entails a game show and live entertainment on the night. The event would be held on the main sports hall.

The proposed days and hours were detailed below:

Saturday 26th April 19:00hrs to 02:00hrs

4. Summary

Application for an Occasional Entertainments Licence had been received from Mr Anthony Martin for Tír na nÓg GAC of 57 Barnish Road, Randalstown, BT41 2EJ. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainments Licence applications a decision by Members was required on the granting of the licence.

Moved by Councillor O'Lone
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and

RESOLVED - that an Entertainments Licence (Occasional Licence) be granted to the applicant, Mr Anthony Martin for Tír na nÓg GAC situated at 57 Barnish Road, Randalstown, BT41 2EJ with the following conditions:

- **that all relevant licensing requirements are met.**
- **that statutory consultees have no objections to approval.**

ACTION BY: Kelly Squance, Environmental Health Officer

15 ITEMS FOR NOTING

15.1 G/MSMO/14 MOTION – DERRY CITY AND STRABANE DISTRICT COUNCIL – BOYCOTT OF DONALD TRUMP’S WHITE HOUSE ON SAINT PATRICK’S DAY

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report was to advise Members of correspondence received from Derry City and Strabane District Council.

2. Background

Correspondence had been received from Derry City and Strabane District Council regarding a Motion adopted by that Council and requested support.

A copy of the letter was circulated for Members' information.

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Alderman Magill and

RESOLVED - that the correspondence from Derry City and Strabane District Council be noted.

NO ACTION

15.2 G/MSMO/14 MOTION – FERMANAGH AND OMAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL – DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report was to advise Members of correspondence received from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

2. Background

Correspondence had been received from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council regarding a Motion adopted by that Council and requested support. A copy of the letter was circulated for Members' information.

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Alderman Magill and

RESOLVED - that the correspondence from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council be noted.

NO ACTION

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct the following business 'In Committee'.

Members were advised that the live stream and audio recording would cease at this point.

Alderman McGrath left and returned to the Chamber during Item 16.1.

16 ITEMS IN COMMITTEE

16.1 **IN CONFIDENCE** CD/GEN/005 CAPITAL PROJECTS PRIORITISATION SCHEME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to present to Members a draft project prioritisation scheme for approval.

2. Background

At the March 2025 Policy and Governance Committee Members were provided with an update on the entirety of the capital programme and the other progress of specific capital projects.

There were schemes to the value of £9.41m currently under construction. In addition, Officers were preparing stage 2 projects for final investment decision by Council.

Stage 2 - Projects Currently at Final Business Case, Planning & Procurement

Table 1 below listed the projects that were at the 'Full Business Case' stage. The completion of the Full Business Case allowed planning approval to be sought and a procurement exercise for a contractor or supplier to be completed.

The Council approval at the conclusion of this stage was the Investment Decision, allowing the appointment of the winning tenderer, thereafter contract management and construction.

The value of schemes currently at this stage total £7.8m.

Project	Project Budget £	External Funding £	Est Cost to Council £	Expected On-Site	Expected Completion
Glengormley Environmental Improvement Scheme	████████	████████	████████	Jan-26	Nov-27
Car Park Resurfacing Programme (Estate)	████████	-	████████	Oct -25	Dec-25

Lifecycle Projects priority)					
Craigmore HRC – site remodelling (Estate Lifecycle Projects priority)	██████	-	██████	May-25	July-25
Ballyearl Drainage Scheme (Estate Lifecycle Projects priority)	██████	-	-	July-25	Oct-25
3G Pitch Ballyclare, Cloughan Project	██████	-	██████	Oct-25	Oct-26
Total	██████	██████	██████		

Completion of this work on stage 2 projects would allow these projects to move to Stages 3 – Projects under construction following Council approval.

Stage 1: Completion of an Outline Business Case

There were a significant number of projects at stage 1 as shown below in Table 2.

The completion of an Outline Business Case provided evidence for the viability, sustainability, scope / scale and affordability of the project. At the completion of Stage 1, a preferred option emerged.

Table 2 below lists projects where scoping and feasibility work had started on the project.

Project	Project Budget £	Expected On-site	Expected Completion	Notes
Valley LC - Essential upgrading works	██████	tbc	tbc	Awaiting scope / design
Castle Gardens Café Refurbishment	██████	tbc	tbc	Awaiting scope / design
Steeple House & Gardens Refurbishment	tbc	tbc	tbc	HLF funding for feasibility development received, OBC to be developed
Queenspark Avenue, Glengormley	██████	tbc	tbc	In consultation with NIHE. Business case to be developed

Whiteabbey Public Realm Scheme	tbc	tbc	tbc	Business case to be developed. Traffic survey complete
Valley Park New Cemetery	tbc	tbc	tbc	Business case to be developed.
Sustainability Projects	tbc	tbc	tbc	PID to be developed
3G Pitch, The Diamond, Rathcoole and Community Hub Building	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Hazelbank Park – Phase 2 – Pavilion and Visitor Facilities	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Play Parks Development	tbc	tbc	tbc	Schemes to be developed from play park audit
Jordanstown Loughshore Park Café extension	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Mossley Mill Plant Room	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
AF 2G pitch – floodlight replacement	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Cranfield Jetty	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Mossley Pavilion and Pitches	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Mossley Mill – Heritage Masterplan	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Peace Plus Projects	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case
Illumination Schemes (8no.)	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc
Carmony Cemetery - Columbarium and Welfare Facilities	████████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review

These projects required to be prioritised to ensure the capital plan remained affordable and deliverable in the medium term and would take into account the duration, cost, scale and funding of projects.

3. Prioritisation of the Capital Programme

In support of this process, a draft multi-dimensional scheme prioritisation matrix had been developed to assist Members in determining priorities for capital investment. The Scheme was set out in Table 3 below.

Proposed Prioritisation Matrix

The matrix below showed the four areas for prioritisation consideration. Each main area was then subdivided into three more specific factors. A weighting was then attached to each specific factor.

Table 3

Community Benefit/Need	Local (10)	Strategic (10)	Sustainability (5)
Impact	Financial (20)	Environmental (10)	Economic (10)
Risk	Business (10)	Health & Safety (10)	Funding (10)
Other Issues	Legal (10)	Technical (5)	Equality (5)

Explanation was provided below for each factor.

Community Benefit/Need:

- Local Benefit/Need was where the local community i.e. a Ward, an estate or the immediate community gain a social benefit and improved quality of life in response to need.
Weighting - 1 to 10 where 10 represented a high benefit to the local community.
- Strategic Benefit/Need was where the population catchment of the Borough gained a social benefit and improved quality of life in response to need.
Weighting - 1 to 10 where 10 represented a high benefit to the Borough in general.
- Sustainability was the rating given to the sustainability of a capital project i.e. a project that directly meets a need, was self-financing or where the capital input generated on-going growth or participation by the community without additional support from Council.
Weighting - 1 to 5 where 5 represented a high sustainability factor.

Impact

- Financial Impact – Capital - concerns the ease or difficulty in how Council could finance a particular project and its impact on rates e.g. project initiation may be dependent on the realisation of capital from other council assets, borrowing from government loan funds, Council reserves or directly from the annual budget.
Weighting – Schemes would be scored according to net cost to Council according to the table below.

Net Cost £'000	Financial Impact - Capital
	10
	9
	8
	7
	6
	5
	4
	3
	2
	1
	0

- Financial Impact – Revenue – was the predicted impact a capital project would have on an on-going basis to the Councils Revenue budget. In some instances, there would be no or low on-going recurrent expenditure, instances where there could be a net benefit and others where the provision was intended to be a service to the community at large and therefore would invariably incur an annual deficit.
Weighting - 8 to 10 where there was potential for recurrent net income to Council, 5 to 7 where the project had low recurring revenue costs or was cost neutral and 1 to 4 where there was an on-going recurrent net cost to Council.
- Environmental Impact was where a capital project had the potential to protect or improve the local environment.
Weighting - 1 to 10 where 10 represented a high positive impact on the environment either at local, Borough or national level.
- Economic Impact was an estimate of the potential economic benefit to the Borough. This could be through increased tourism, increased employment, higher disposable income, increased profit for business.
Weighting - 1 to 10 where 10 represented high economic benefit either at local or Borough level.

Risk

- Business Risk was where capital input would have a positive effect on the ability of Council to discharge its functions.
Weighting - 1 to 10 points where 10 represented a high positive effect.
- Health and Safety Risk was where inaction would jeopardise the health and safety of users and staff.
Weighting - 1 to 10 where 10 represented a high health and safety risk to customers and/or staff.
- Funding Risk was where failure or delay in a capital programme would result in loss of external funding.
Weighting factor – schemes would be scored according to percentage funding estimated:

% Funding	Score
	10
	9
	8
	7
	6
	5
	4
	3
	2
	1
	0

Other Issues

- Legal Issues and Planning issues was an assessment of the legal issues and potential planning difficulties associated with advancing a scheme e.g. land issues.
Weighting - 1 to 5 where 5 represented minimal legal issues or planning issues/difficulties associated with a capital project.
- Technical Issues was an estimate of the technical difficulty associated with a project and also the impact on in-house resources either directly designing and managing a project or through the use of consultants.
Weighting - 1 to 5 where 1 represented complex technical issues and/or high consultant or in-house technical support to advance a project.
- Equality Issues defined whether a project caters for all equality categories or was confined to certain categories, balances previous schemes and advances promotion of equality and/or good relations in the Borough.
Weighting - 1 to 5 where 5 represented a project that made a major contribution to the promotion of equality and/or good relations at local or Borough level.

The matrix would be applied to Stage 1 projects. A team would be formed and trained to use the matrix and outcomes would be tabled for members review and further consideration.

In response to Members' queries the Chief Executive responded that a report would be brought to the next Operations Committee Meeting which would include the appointment of the Contactor and that terms of scheduling specific projects could be discussed at this meeting. He confirmed that the heat map used to prioritise the supply and demand for Council's facilities and services was being fed into the capital prioritisation process and would be discussed in detail at the forthcoming Corporate Workshop scheduled in May 2025.

Moved by Alderman Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Webb and

RESOLVED - that the draft prioritisation scheme for capital projects be approved.

ACTION BY: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

16.2 IN CONFIDENCE OD/OD/006 AGILE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS – WORK SMART INITIATIVE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the Agile Working, Work Smart Initiative (One Year Pilot) effective from 1 April 2025.

2. Introduction

Building upon the Council's success as winners of the APSE UK Council of the Year 2024, the Work Smart Initiative aims to enhance our employee value proposition, while addressing key challenges reflected in employee attrition and retention data, without detriment to service provision.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded that in December 2024 it was agreed that Officers would begin engagement on the introduction of Agile Working Arrangements, Work Smart Initiative.

4. Engagement

Engagement Sessions were held with each Directorate Heads of Service and Line Managers on the operational management of the Initiative's options as outlined below: -

Option A - One Day Work-from-Home: eligible employees may work remotely one day per week with prior approval, ensuring no disruption to team or service needs (continuous review, and could be withdrawn at any point).

Or

Option B - Compressed Hours: employees may choose to complete their weekly hours over fewer days (continuous review and could be withdrawn at any point).

Option C - Occasional Location Flexibility: Managers on occasion could grant employees to work in an alternative location based on circumstance. This could be used for example to facilitate home working before or after a medical appointment or external meeting.

5. Feedback

The following options were deemed operationally manageable at this time.

Option A – one day work from home and Option C – occasional location flexibility.

Option B – Compressed Hours would remain as an option through a flexible working arrangement.

6. Work Smart Initiative Implementation (Pilot)

Work Smart Initiative guidelines would be developed and shared, along with toolkits to support managers in implementing the initiative across their teams, as appropriate.

The initiative was dependent on meeting business requirements, maintaining high performance standards and the availability of IT equipment, including secure connectivity.

Each Section would have the responsibility to ensure the Work Smart initiative was tailored to work effectively within their unique team dynamics. Participation in the initiative was voluntary, and Teams do not need to adopt the initiative.

This Initiative would be reviewed regularly to ensure there was no adverse impact to the productivity of the Service areas.

A report would be brought back to Members upon completion of the pilot scheme, providing an update on its outcomes and effectiveness.

7. Governance

The Work Smart Initiative had been equality screened, a copy of which was (circulated) for Members' information.

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Webb and

RESOLVED - that the Agile Working, Work Smart Initiative (One Year Pilot), inclusive of Option A and Option C, become effective from 1 April 2025, and where operationally practicable, be approved.

ACTION BY: Katherine Young, Organisation Development and Employee Engagement Manager

16.3 **IN CONFIDENCE** FI/PRO/TEN/590 **PROVISION OF MEDICAL REFEREE SERVICES FOR THE CREMATORIUM**

CONTRACT PERIOD 1 MAY 2025 – 30 APRIL 2027 WITH AN OPTION TO EXTEND FOR UP TO A FURTHER 12 MONTHS, SUBJECT TO PERFORMANCE, REVIEW AND AVAILABLE FUNDING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to obtain approval for the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced organisation to provide medical referee services for the Crematorium for the contract period.

2. Introduction/Background

The Crematorium undertakes up to forty-five services per week. In accordance with The Cremation (Belfast) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1961, the Council was required to have Medical Referees complete the relevant documentation before a body was committed for cremation. The contract also included the services of medical referees in emergency situations. The annual cost of the contract was approximately £ [REDACTED].

This tender opportunity was made available on eSourcingNI on 12 February 2025. One tender response was opened via the eSourcingNI Portal on 7 March 2025 and referred to the evaluation panel for assessment. The tender was evaluated on a two-stage basis as follows:

STAGE 1 – SELECTION STAGE

The tender was evaluated on a pass/fail basis for tenderer's professional conduct, economic and financial standing, technical capacity experience and capability of referees, management systems and practices, General Data Protection Regulations, and declarations and form of tender. The tender met the requirements of Stage 1 of the evaluation process and proceeded to Stage 2.

STAGE 2 – AWARD STAGE

Quality & Commercial Assessment

The tender was evaluated on the basis of implementation/set-up (20%), proposals for service delivery (25%), contract management (10%), resilience and business continuity (15%), and cost (30%) and the recommendation was as follows:

Supplier	Quality Assessment (out of 70%)	Cost Assessment (out of 30%)	Total % Score	Estimated Cost Per Annum (£) (excl. VAT)
Dr Nicholas Smith & Colleagues	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	84%	£ [REDACTED]

While there was only one tenderer, the prices were in line with market rates and the officers were content that they represent value for money.

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED - that having achieved a score of 84%, Dr Nicholas Smith & Colleagues be appointed at the tendered rates for the period of 1 May 2025 – 30 April 2027, with an option to extend for up to a further 12 months, subject to performance and review.

ACTION BY: Melissa Kenning, Procurement Manager

MOTION TO PROCEED 'OUT OF COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor McGrann
Seconded by Councillor Foster and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct any remaining business 'In Public'.

Members were advised that the audio recording would restart at this point.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded at 7.47pm.

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.