

April 22nd, 2022

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Wednesday, 27th April 2022 at 7:00 pm** in **via Zoom**.

Agenda

Virtual Meeting Guidance

[Guidance for virtual Council meetings.pdf](#)

Not included

Agenda

[C 27.04.2022 Agenda.pdf](#)

Page 1

1. Prayer

2. Apologies

3. Declarations of Interest

4 Mayor's Business

5 Mayor and Deputy Mayor Engagements for the Month (Copy attached)

[5. April 2022.pdf](#)

Page 5

6 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 30 March 2022 (Copy attached)

[C 30.03.2022 Minutes.pdf](#)

Not included

[C 30.03.2022 Minutes PM.pdf](#)

Page 8

7 Minutes of Committees

7.1 Planning Committee dated 5 April 2022 (Copy attached)

[Minutes PC.05.04.22.pdf](#)

Not included

[Minutes PC.05.04.22 PM.pdf](#)

Page 41

7.2 Environment Committee dated 6 April 2022 (Copy attached)

[EC.06.04.22 Minutes.pdf](#)

Not included

[EC.06.04.22 MinutesPM.pdf](#)

Page 79

- 7.3 Regeneration and Development Committee dated 7 April 2022 (Copy attached)**
- 📄 *RDC 07.04.22 Minutes.pdf* *Not included*
 - 📄 *RDC 07.04.2022 MinutesPM.pdf* *Page 102*
- 7.4 Corporate Services Committee dated 12 April 2022 (Copy attached)**
- 📄 *CS12.04.2022 Minutes final.pdf* *Not included*
 - 📄 *CS12.04.2022 Minutes final PM.pdf* *Page 117*
- 7.5 Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 13 April 2022**
- Copy attached
- 📄 *13.04.2022 CWB Minutes.pdf* *Not included*
 - 📄 *13.04.2022 CWB Minutes PM.pdf* *Page 126*
- 7.5.1. Arising from Item 21 - Queens Platinum Jubilee Grants**
- Report attached
- 📄 *7.5.1 Queens Platinum Jubilee Grants - April.pdf* *Not included*
- 8. Resolutions**
- 8.1. Newry Mourne & Down District Council – Increased Energy Costs**
- Correspondence attached
- 📄 *8.1. Resolution - nmd energy.pdf* *Not included*
- 8.2. Newry Mourne & District Council – Opposed to Planned Changes to Red Diesel**
- Correspondence attached
- 📄 *8.2. Resolution - nmd red diesel.pdf* *Not included*
- 8.3. Fermanagh & Omagh District Council - Continuing**

Healthcare Provision

Correspondence attached

[8.3. Resolution - Fermanagh DoH.pdf](#)

Not included

8.4. Fermanagh & Omagh District Council - Independent Review of all deaths with potential issues around domestic violence

Correspondence attached

[8.4. Resolution - Fermanagh Dom Violence.pdf](#)

Not included

8.5. Fermanagh & Omagh District Council - Recruiting staff within the hospitality and tourism sectors

Correspondence attached

[8.5. Resolution - Fermanagh Staff in Hospitality.pdf](#)

Not included

9. Request for Deputation from Padel Tennis

Report attached

[9. Deputation Request Report - Padel Tennis C 27.4.22.pdf](#)

Not included

9.1. Delegated Authority – Consultation on PRN and PERN

Report attached

[9.1. Delegated Authority - Consultation on PRN and PERN.pdf](#)

Not included

10. Grant of Entertainment Licence

Report attached

[10. Grant of Entertainment Licence DL.pdf](#)

Not included

11. Invitation from Irish Guards to Ceremony at Windsor Castle

Report attached

[11. Invitation from Irish Guards to Ceremony in Windsor.pdf](#)

Not included

12. Request to light up Council buildings for Foster Care Fortnight

Report attached

📎 **12. Request to light up Council buildings for Foster Care Fortnight.pdf**

Not included

13. Community Festival Funding

Report attached

📎 **13. Council Community Festival Funding 2022-23.pdf**

Not included

14. Sealing Documents

15. Transfer of Rights of Burial

16. Notice of Motion Status Report (Report attached)

Report attached

📎 **16. NOM Covering Report.pdf**

Not included

📎 **16. NOM Tracker April 2022.pdf**

Not included

17. Notices of Motion

17.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Adair and Edmund

That Council Task Officers to work with the woodland trust to develop and enhance community trails at Carrowood, Carrowdore as a potential peace plus project.

17.2. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors P Smith, Cooper and Cummings

That Council facilitates the Comber TT Soapbox Race by helping to organize insurance for the event.

17.3. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors McRandal and Douglas

That this Council recognises the environmental damage caused by modern day packaging, much of which is disposed of in landfill or as litter. This Council agrees that producers, not ratepayers, should be responsible for the net costs of managing packaging waste and that litter payments must be included in any Extended Producer

Responsibility scheme.

This Council tasks Officers with bringing back a report detailing what initiatives Council have undertaken to encourage businesses within the Borough to review, change and/or reduce the packaging they use. The report should include analysis of achievements and challenges encountered to date and outline further initiatives that could be undertaken to encourage businesses to change or reduce the packaging they use.

17.4. Notice of Motion submitted by Alderman Irvine and Alderman Keery

That this Council notes with the concern the recent decision taken to no longer lock playgrounds in the Borough. That a report is brought back on the matter that will look at maintaining a locking up schedule that will include the Bloomfield and Rathgill playparks.

17.5. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Dunlop and McKimm

This Council commends and recognises the extraordinary efforts of the Samaritans during the Covid pandemic and beyond. The ability of the volunteers to react quickly and effectively during the pandemic and to continue to offer support to anyone who needs a listening ear day or night, 365 days a year, is to be commended and congratulated. This Council recognises the mental health challenges facing our society, and agrees to light up our council buildings in green (the colour of the Samaritans) on the evening of 22 December by way of demonstrating that the Samaritans are always there for all within society

Circulated for Information

a) DfC Consultation Outcome Report – Intermediated Rent (Correspondence attached)

b) Department of Health – Health Inequalities Annual Report 2022 (Copies attached)

📎 a) *Intermediate Rent Consultation Outcome Report_2.pdf*

Not included

📎 b) *Health Inequalities NI Fact Sheet 2022.pdf*

Not included

***** IN CONFIDENCE *****

18. Tender Award to Deliver HGV Training on behalf of Ards and North Down Labour Market Partnership

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Report attached

 **18. Tender award to deliver HGV Training on behalf of Labour Market Partnership.pdf**

Not included

19. Notification of Application for a Liquor Licence - Copeland Distillery


*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Report to follow

20. Use of Council Land in Donaghadee and Millisle - BBC Drama Series Hope Street 2

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Report attached

 **20. Use of Council Land in Donaghadee Millisle - BBC Drama Series Hope Street 2 (002).pdf**

Not included

 **20. Appendix 1 - photo of filming locations in Donaghadee.png**

Not included

 **20. Appendix 2 - photo of filming location in Millisle.png**

Not included

 **20. Appendix 3 - car parking location in Donaghadee.png**

Not included

21. UNITE Industrial Action Further Update

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Report to follow

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

21 April 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of Ards and North Down Borough Council which will be held remotely via Zoom on **Wednesday, 27 April 2022 at 7.00pm.**

Yours faithfully

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Prayer
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Mayor's Business
5. Mayor and Deputy Mayor Engagements for the Month of April 2022 (Copy attached)
6. Minutes of Council meeting dated 30 March 2022 (Copy attached)
7. Minutes of Committees (Copies attached)
 - 7.1. Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee dated 5 April 2022
 - 7.2. Minutes of Environment Committee dated 6 April 2022
 - 7.3. Minutes of Regeneration and Development Committee dated 7 April 2022
 - 7.4. Minutes of Corporate Committee dated 12 April 2022
 - 7.5. Minutes of Community and Wellbeing Committee 13 April 2022
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 - 8.1 Newry Mourne & Down District Council – Increased Energy Costs (Copy letter attached)

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- 9.1. Delegated Authority – Consultation on PRN and PERN (Report attached)
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- 13. Community Festival Funding (Report attached)
- 14. Sealing Documents
- 15. Transfer of Rights of Burial
- 16. Notice of Motion Status Report (Report attached)
- 17. Notices of Motion
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- 19. Notification of Application for a Liquor Licence - Copeland Distillery (Report to follow)
- 20. Use of Council Land in Donaghadee and Millisle - BBC Drama Series Hope Street 2 (Report attached)
- 21. UNITE Industrial Action Further Update (Report to follow)

MEMBERSHIP OF ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Alderman Carson	Councillor S Dunlop
Alderman Gibson	Councillor Edmund
Alderman Girvan	Councillor Egan
Alderman Irvine	Councillor Gilmour
Alderman Keery	Councillor Greer
Alderman McDowell	Councillor Johnson
Alderman McIlveen	Councillor Kendall
Alderman Menagh	Councillor Kennedy
Alderman Smith	Councillor Mathison
Alderman Wilson	Councillor McAlpine
Councillor Adair (Deputy Mayor)	Councillor McArthur
Councillor Armstrong-Cotter	Councillor McClean
Councillor Blaney	Councillor McKee
Councillor Boyle	Councillor McKimm
Councillor Brooks (Mayor)	Councillor McRandal
Councillor Cathcart	Councillor Smart
Councillor Chambers	Councillor P Smith
Councillor Cooper	Councillor T Smith
Councillor Cummings	Councillor Thompson
Councillor Douglas	Councillor Walker

**LIST OF MAYOR'S/DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS
FOR APRIL 2022**

Friday 1 April

15:00 hours UNICEF Ukraine Fundraiser – Harbour and Company,
Donaghadee

Saturday 2 April

10:00 hours Starting Hospice Walk – Queen's Leisure Centre, Holywood
10:30 hours Home Nation Power Chair Disability Football – Ards Blair Mayne
19:00 hours Comber Rotary Club, Young Musician of the Year – Campbell
College, Belfast

Tuesday 5 April

12:50 hours Unfurling of Flag for IWBA – Opening of Irish Bowls for the Year
– Pickie Bowling Club, Broadway, Bangor

Wednesday 6 April

19:00 hours Rotary Club Charity Dinner – Donaghadee Golf Club

Thursday 7 April

15:30 hours Schoolchild's Visit/Tour of Town Hall – Bangor

Friday 8 April

14:00 hours 90th Anniversary Celebration for Movilla High School –
Donaghadee Road, Newtownards

Saturday 2 April

11:30 hours Unfurling of Flag and Opening of Green – Donaghadee Bowling
Club, The Commons, Donaghadee
13:15 hours Bangor International Choral Festival – St Comgall's Parish
Church – Brunswick Road, Bangor
17:30 hours Prizegiving at Bangor International Choral Festival – St
Comgall's Parish Church – Brunswick Road, Bangor

Monday 5 April

12:50 hours Unfurling of Flag for IWBA – Opening of Irish Bowls for the Year

– Pickie Bowling Club, Broadway, Bangor

Wednesday 6 April

19:00 hours Rotary Club Charity Dinner – Donaghadee Golf Club

Thursday 7 April

11:00 hours Photocall – Litter Pick with Children from Primary Schools – Conway Square, Newtownards

15:00 hours PR Photo – Promotion of Pipe Band Championships – Castle Park, Bangor

15:30 hours Schoolchild's Visit/Tour of Town Hall – Bangor

Friday 8 April

10:00 hours Action Mental Health Event – Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex – Newtownards

14:00 hours 90th Anniversary Celebration for Movilla High School – Donaghadee Road, Newtownards

Saturday 9 April

11:30 hours Unfurling of Flag and Opening of Green – Donaghadee Bowling Club – The Commons, Donaghadee

13:15 hours Bangor International Choral Festival – St Comgall's Parish Church – Brunswick Road, Bangor

17:30 hours Prizegiving at Bangor International Choral Festival – St Comgall's Parish Church – Brunswick Road, Bangor

Monday 11 April

10:30 hours **Deputy Mayor** – Launch of Intergenerational Week – Bryansburn Care Home, Bryansburn Road, Bangor

19:00 hours Donaghadee 'In Bloom' Meeting – Harbour & Co, Donaghadee

Tuesday 12 April

11:00 hours Ministerial Visit – Town Centre, Bangor

Wednesday 13 April

14:15 hours Unveiling of the Wall of Fame Plaque – Bangor Aurora Aquatic Wellbeing and Leisure Complex – Newtownards

15:30 hours Visit by Local Family – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor

Friday 15 April

12:00 hours Photoshoot at NI100 Park – Beside Somme Centre, Conlig

Thursday 21 April

19:30 hours Classical Concert with Eric Gentet – Rosemary Street Church, Belfast

Friday 22 April

11:30 hours In Bloom Press Launch – Next to Portaferry Sports Centre, Cloughey Road, Portaferry

14:00 hours Visit of Eric Gentet and Stephen Beet – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor

Sunday 24 April

15:30 hours Prizegiving – Irish Sailing Youth National Championships – Ballyholme Yacht Club, Seacliff Road, Bangor

Monday 25 April

13:30 hours **Deputy Mayor** – New Projects at Cairn Wood – Craigtantlet

Tuesday 26 April

11:00 hours Shoreline Probus Donaghadee – Bow Bells, Donaghadee

11:30 hours **Deputy Mayor** – PR Photo – In Bloom Tallest Sunflower Launch – Movilla High School, Newtownards

Wednesday 27 April

10:50 hours Soft Launch of Donaghadee Moat – Moat Street, Donaghadee

14:00 hours Photo Opportunity – Launch of the Heritage Trail – Outside Portaferry Castle

Thursday 28 April

12:00 hours Special Opening of Additional Accommodation at Killard School – North Road, Newtownards

17:30 hours Wardens 145 Years Celebratory Event – High Street, Newtownards

19:00 hours Exhibition of Old Mill House and Walled Garden, Helens Bay – North Down Museum, Town Hall, Bangor

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Ards and North Down Borough Council was held remotely using Zoom on Wednesday, 30 March 2022 commencing at 7.00pm.

In the Chair:	The Mayor (Councillor Brooks)	
Aldermen:	Carson Gibson Girvan Irvine (8.03pm) Keery	McDowell (7.11pm) McIlveen Menagh Wilson
Councillors:	Armstrong- Cotter(7.11pm) Adair Blaney Boyle Cathcart Chambers Cooper Cummings Douglas (7.15pm) Dunlop Edmund Egan (7.11pm)	Gilmour Greer Johnson Kendall Kennedy MacArthur Mathison McClellan (7.49pm) McRandal Smart P Smith T Smith Thompson Walker

Officers: Chief Executive (S Reid), Director of Organisational Development and Administration (W Swanston), Director of Finance and Performance (S Christie), Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning (S McCullough), Director of Environment (D Lindsay), Director of Community and Wellbeing (G Bannister), Corporate Communications Manager (C Jackson), Democratic Services Manager (J Wilson) and Democratic Services Officer (R King)

Also in attendance: Ms F Cassidy (Solicitor)

1. PRAYER

The Mayor (Councillor Brooks) welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked the Chief Executive to read the Council prayer.

NOTED.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman M Smith and Councillors McAlpine, McKee and McKimm.

Apologies for lateness were received from Aldermen Irvine and McDowell and Councillors McClean, Douglas and Egan.

NOTED.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor asked for any Declarations of Interest and the following were made:

Councillor Dunlop – Item 26 - Notification of Grant of Liquor Licence - Copelands Distillery

Councillor Greer – Item 10 - Request for Deputation from NI Housing Executive - Housing Investment Plan

Alderman McIlveen and Councillor MacArthur – Item 7.4.1 - Arising from Item 6 (a) - Education Authority Strategic Area Plan Consultation 2022-2027

NOTED.

4. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

The Mayor was sorry to hear that Councillor McAlpine had fallen and broken her leg. He wished her well for a full recovery after surgery.

It was with great sadness and regret that he advised Members of the recent sudden passing of a serving Council employee, Mr Ian Johnson. Ian was a Finance Officer and worked diligently for the Council for 22 years. The Mayor sent Council's deepest condolences to Ian's wife Mary and his wider family circle along with sympathies to his close work colleagues.

The Mayor had also been saddened to hear of the sudden passing of Samuel Crawford. The 28-year-old from Newtownards had been climbing Ben Nevis in Scotland on 8 March when he suffered fatal injuries. The Mayor passed on the Council's condolences to his family.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the Mayor's comments be noted.

5. MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ENGAGEMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2022

(Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor Engagements for the month of March 2022.

The Mayor referred Members to his List of Engagements undertaken for the month of March 2022. He thanked the Deputy Mayor for his help in representing the Council at those events he had been unable to attend.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the information be noted.

6. MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

The Deputy Mayor proposed, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the minutes be adopted.

In relation to Item 8.5 Community and Wellbeing Committee minutes

As a matter of accuracy, Councillor Kendall advised that her vote had not been recorded in respect of Item 13.1 within the above minutes.

Item 21.6 - Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Cathcart, Douglas, Blaney, Dunlop, McKimm and Alderman Irvine

Councillor T Smith pointed to the above Notice of Motion that had been brought forward and heard at the meeting. He was concerned that the revised Standing Orders would have prevented anyone bringing an amendment to that motion, given the requirement for advance notice.

He asked if the Standing Orders could be changed to allow for amendments to be brought without any notice period in those circumstances.

The Chief Executive recognised there was currently no provision for that within the Standing Orders and if desired, the Corporate Services Committee could consider the matter or a Member could bring forward a Notice of Motion.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the minutes be adopted.

7. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

7.1 Planning Committee dated 1 March 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the minutes be adopted.

7.2 Environment Committee dated 2 March 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

Councillor MacArthur proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the minutes be adopted.

C.30.03.2022 PM

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(Alderman McDowell and Councillors Egan and Armstrong-Cotter joined the meeting – 7.11pm)

Item 7 - NI Local Authority Municipal Waste Management Statistics – July to September 2021

Councillor P Smith had found the above minute to be a concerning read, noting that recycling levels had fallen below the statutory minimum target of 50%, and below the level of other Councils with the statistics showing a trend of 45% more waste per capita.

Whilst Kerbside recycling rates for the Borough were higher than average, which was to be welcomed, he felt that radical action was needed to address the reported figures.

He asked what the consequences would be for the Council in terms of failing to meet statutory targets and what the plan was to address the current trend.

The Director of Environment confirmed the statutory target of 50% and it was yet to be determined what the sanctions could be if there was ongoing failure to meet that standard. Members would be aware that officers over the last 18 months had brought a series of reports showing a reversal in fortunes compared with what had been achieved in the early years of the Council. The plan was to bring a briefing paper to the party group leaders forum looking at the core elements of waste management services – kerbside and HRC (Household Recycling Centre) models – to discuss options going forward. He hoped to bring forward a proposal to Council following that process.

The Director warned that the 50% statutory target for recycling would increase to 65% when wider UK targets were introduced and those reforms would also require Council to keep landfill waste below 10%. Those were challenging targets and would require a significant step change and reform in the shape and design of services with encouragement for the public to further embrace recycling and help the Borough achieve those waste reduction targets.

Councillor P Smith was glad to hear there were plans to rectify the situation but felt Council required radical action to stop the current trend particularly given the new UK targets that had been referred to. HRCs were a major problem, he felt, and it seemed to be bigger than just waste tourism. He asked how those HRC challenges would be addressed.

(Councillor Douglas joined the meeting – 7.15pm)

The Director confirmed the HRC model would be part of his briefing paper in the forthcoming review with party leaders. It had been reported that HRC volumes showed that Ards and North Down had taken in the same amount of waste as Belfast City Council, an area with twice the population of the Ards and North Down Borough. It showed in stark terms the severity of the problem that the Council was facing.

C.30.03.2022 PM

12

Alderman McIlveen asked if there was detailed information on volumes and types of waste coming in to the HRCs.

The Director confirmed Council had that information, and that the upcoming review with party leaders would look to design a model that would encourage people embrace recycling and ensure waste was going into the correct streams. The paper would also aim to address the issues around trade waste and changing patterns in terms of how that was arriving at the Borough's HRCs which was circumventing the permit system measures that applied to vans and trailers.

Alderman McIlveen's concern was that things were going wrong for Ards and North Down but not for other areas, so he hoped the report would address where council was going wrong and where others were going right.

In response, the Director advised that previously this Council was dealing with a different situation in terms of the type of waste coming in to its HRCs. Waste management steps that had worked well in the early years of the new Council were no longer working and it was the intention to address that.

Alderman McIlveen had also noted the DfI minister's recent decision to reject the plan for the long running Arc21 incinerator proposal and felt that had been a devastating blow to Council. Landfill was a growing problem but there were no alternatives aside from shipping it around the world which was not sustainable and damaging to the oceans. He was concerned that decisions were being made for party political reasons and were not addressing the core issues.

Councillor Greer understood that other Councils had been looking at 'energy from waste' contracts and that Arc21 was exploring that option. She asked for an update on that and if the Council could do anything in the shorter term.

The Director said that there was currently a procurement process to set up a residual waste contract due to the lack of options and landfill capacity. That interim contract would be very expensive with excessive gate fees compared with landfill and recycling. It was also the intention to promote segregation of waste and reduce the amount of residual waste.

Pointing to the waste tourism challenges, Councillor Edmund asked if access control would be considered, with a barrier system with HRC users being asked to provide proof of address for example. It was advised that access control would be considered in the forthcoming review process.

Councillor Boyle agreed that radical change was needed. He urged the larger parties to take the matter seriously during the upcoming review and expected small party and independent members to be consulted in that process too. He saw the logic of paying more to save more in employing additional staff for the type of access control steps suggested by Councillor Edmund. He disagreed that the Covid-19 Pandemic was a reason for the worsening figures though as all other Councils had faced the same challenges during the last two years.

Councillor Kendall asked for confirmation that Council would retain free and easy access to HRC sites for waste streams such as compostable items and recyclables and how Council could manage access to the sites to prevent people who should not be using it.

The Director added that the review to party leaders would look to retain high quality service to the legitimate user but also ensure value for money to the rate payer, dealing with climate emergency matters and meeting statutory targets.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the minutes be adopted.

7.3 Regeneration and Development Committee dated 3 March 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

(Alderman Wilson joined the meeting – 7.40pm)

Alderman McDowell proposed, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be adopted.

Item 26 – Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme

Councillor P Smith wished to raise queries in relation to the above minute but requested if the discussion could be brought out of confidence given the Department for Communities was to publicly release details of the funding programme.

The Director was content for this as the DfC had now confirmed the funding.

Continuing, Councillor P Smith welcomed that £2.2m of funding was now available which included a 10% contribution from Council. While the bulk of it was going to improvements for the Portaferry Public Realm scheme, a further 400k was going to other projects across the Borough and he was delighted that the Ballygowan Infrastructure project was receiving £175,000.

He asked for details on how the funding, particularly for the Ballygowan project, would be spent and what the process would be for taking the project forward.

The Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning explained that the Rural team within the Council's Regeneration service would work with all the village groups and Portaferry Regeneration (for the Portaferry Public Realm scheme) to discuss how the funds would be spent. There were some stipulations in relation to cycling and active travel and that the money would need to be spent by 2023. That would likely prevent any scheme requiring planning permission to be completed in time unless it was a simple application.

Councillor P Smith welcomed the consultation with the village groups to identify what would be involved and looked forward to the project developing.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Adair, thanked Council's Regeneration Officers for their work in securing the funding and recognised the extensive background work in creating a programme of 'oven ready' projects. He was delighted that his own DEA would benefit from seven projects and in particular welcomed the funding for the development of Portaferry Public Realm among the other projects in the Ards Peninsula.

(Councillor McClean joined the meeting – 7.49pm)

Councillor Boyle added his thanks to the officers and had been honoured to chair the steering group in Portaferry and represent the Council along with other DEA colleagues. He spoke of the previous setbacks in the scheme for Portaferry and was now delighted that the relevant Government departments were back on board in supporting the project. He had noted many visitors to Portaferry the previous weekend and looked forward to the projects progressing which would enhance Portaferry's tourist offer further.

Councillor Edmund echoed those comments and reflected on the hard work by members and officers. Alderman McIlveen looked forward to the exciting list of projects coming online and having lived in Ballygowan previously he looked forward to the developments there and hoped that a public realm scheme could be developed for the town in the future.

While welcoming the Covid Recovery Small Settlements funding, Councillor Thompson was disappointed that Millisle was not included in the programme. He recalled a previous meeting with Council officers which had looked at working up an improvement scheme for the village but unfortunately nothing had appeared. He hoped that a further meeting could be arranged to ensure that Millisle would not miss out in future.

In response, the Director advised that a meeting had taken place with the village group in Millisle the previous summer with discussions around working up a concept scheme. Unfortunately, the timing and Council's requirement to refocus its resources elsewhere on schemes such as the Covid-19 contingency funding, had prevented officers from being able to work up and turn around a scheme ready for planning permission. She hoped that continued work with the village group in Millisle would result in a shovel ready scheme for when future funding opportunities became available.

Item 3 - Evaluation Report, Tourism Events Programme 2021-2022

Councillor T Smith proposed an amendment, seconded by Alderman Keery, that the Donaghadee Lights Up festival and the Groomsport Music and Fireworks festival are both re-introduced to the Council's events line up for this year. The Council also addresses the funding discrepancy between Bangor and Newtownards over funding for their Christmas Switch-ons.

Speaking to his proposal, Councillor T Smith argued that removing both Donaghadee and Groomsport festivals from the Council's events calendar had been a ridiculous decision and said recent figures showed that Groomsport had attracted

9,000 visitors while 15,000 people had attended the event in Donaghadee. He felt both were well attended and cost effective in terms of cost per head and brought great benefits to traders in each area.

He believed the Council had shown it could find money for other things when needed, pointing to £5,000 found for Solace and £120,000 it was recommending spending on the purchase of equipment to broadcast Council meetings. He viewed it as a disgrace not to allow the two events in Groomsport and Donaghadee to go ahead. He also felt there was a discrepancy in funding for Christmas festivals in Bangor and Newtownards and did not feel it necessary for both to get the same level of funding given that the Newtownards festival would target 3,000 fewer visitors than the Bangor event. He felt that also needed to be addressed as part of his proposed amendment.

Unable to support the amendment, Councillor P Smith understood members wanting events in their own DEAs, but there was an events strategy that had been developed and it was right to accept the outworking of that. He also pointed to an example of a community organised event in his own DEA that had included a firework display. The event had been very successful and had benefited from grant aid administered by the Council. He was happy to provide some guidance to the proposer on that process.

(Alderman Irvine joined the meeting – 8.07pm)

Pointing to agreement of the District Rate, Councillor Greer agreed it was right to take a holistic approach to events that had already been agreed.

Councillor Boyle said he was tempted to call the amendment a weekly headline grabbing attempt and felt it made poor financial sense given the rates setting process had already been completed. He would have been more sympathetic had the member proposed for it to be considered in next year's rate setting process. In response to further points made by the proposer, he felt there had been clear explanations to where the Solace and meeting equipment money was coming from, adding that Councillors had also forfeited part of their allowance to become the lowest paid in Northern Ireland.

Alderman McIlveen agreed that the proposer of the amendment was seeking to grab headlines and believed that there was no way Councillor T Smith was expecting him to vote in favour of it given the Newtownards element. He dismissed it as another ridiculous amendment and felt there were many popular events that were non-Council run which had benefited from grant aid.

Summing up as the Chair of the Regeneration and Development Committee, Alderman McDowell said he would not be supporting the amendment, pointing to wider strategic aims of the Council and its events strategy. He felt there was no sense in trying to change that on a whim and urged Council to reject the amendment.

Councillor T Smith requested a recorded vote.

On being put to the meeting, with 4 voting FOR, 30 voting AGAINST, 2 ABSTAINING and 4 ABSENT the proposed amendment FELL.

The voting was as follows:

FOR (4)	AGAINST (30)	ABSTAINED (2)	ABSENT (4)
Aldermen	Aldermen	Councillor	Aldermen
Irvine	Carson	Brooks	Smith, M
Keery	Gibson	MacArthur	Councillors
Councillors	Girvan		McAlpine
Chambers	McDowell		McKimm
Smith, T	McIlveen		McKee
	Menagh		
	Wilson		
	Councillors		
	Adair		
	Armstrong-Cotter		
	Blaney		
	Boyle		
	Cathcart		
	Cooper		
	Cummings		
	Douglas		
	Dunlop		
	Edmund		
	Egan		
	Gilmour		
	Greer		
	Johnson		
	Kendall		
	Kennedy		
	Mathison		
	McClean		
	McRandal		
	Smart		
	Smith, P		
	Thompson		
	Walker		

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McDowell, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the minutes be adopted.

Councillor T Smith asked to be recorded as against that decision.

7.4 Corporate Committee dated 8 March 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

(Alderman McIlveen and Councillor MacArthur withdrew from the meeting having declared an interest in the next item – 8.18pm)

7.4.1 Arising from Item 6 (a) - Education Authority Strategic Area Plan Consultation 2022-2027
(Appendix II – III)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that Planning for Sustainable Provision, Northern Ireland's second regional Strategic Area Plan for the period 2022–2027 set out the strategic direction for how the future educational needs of children and young people would be addressed through area solutions, consistent with relevant policies and Ministerial priorities. It would shape proposed changes to education provision for the next 5 years.

The plan was developed in accordance with the Department of Education's Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools (Sustainable Schools Policy) and would address Ministerial priorities for Area Planning. The Area Plan reflected and referenced the policy and Ministerial priorities to create a vision, mission, and key themes for the next five years for primary and post-primary schools of all management types.

The Area Plan aimed to ensure that all pupils could access a broad and balanced curriculum in sustainable schools. The best educational interests of children and young people was the focus of the Area Plan, in particular the need to raise standards through a network of sustainable schools. The Area Plan set out the objectives and key themes through which this aim could be realised.

In preparing this Area Plan, the Education Authority collaborated with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools as the planning authority for Catholic maintained schools and engaged with sectoral support bodies representative of the Integrated (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education), Irish Medium (Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta) and controlled sector (Controlled Schools' Support Council).

In addition, the Education Authority engaged with Voluntary Grammar Schools and their Trustees, through the Governing Bodies Association and Catholic Schools' Trustee Service and other maintained schools (i.e., church schools) through the Transferors' Representative Council, all of whom were represented on each of the Area Planning Group structures. Account had also been taken of the contribution that FE Colleges make to the delivery of the 14-19 Curriculum offer.

A draft response to this consultation has been prepared for Council to consider.

RECOMMENDED that Council agrees to issue the attached consultation response.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Egan, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Alderman McIlveen and Councillor MacArthur returned to the meeting – 8.20pm)

Item 17 – UNITE Ballot on Strike Action **IN CONFIDENCE**

Councillor Cathcart indicated that he wished to speak on the above matter which was In Confidence and would therefore be deferred until the meeting had gone into committee.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Egan, that the minutes be adopted.

7.5 Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 9 March 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

Councillor Thompson proposed, seconded by Councillor Armstrong-Cotter, that the minutes be adopted.

Item 10 - Ards and North Down Social Supermarket

In relation to the above Item, Councillor Gilmour asked how much funding the Council had received for the Social Supermarket schemes and how that funding had been allocated. She had noted that the report mentioned that Council agreed to award £10,000 to Kilcooley Women's Centre (KWC) to contribute towards the cost of a social supermarket in Bangor. However, after that paragraph, she noted no further mention of a pilot in Bangor anywhere in the report, and no mention of further funding or what expectations Council would have of KWC in delivering a scheme.

The Director of Community and Wellbeing advised that the £10,000 had been awarded to KWC last year through DfC funding and it had been a contribution to a pilot scheme with KWC sourcing other funds and premises elsewhere. He explained that the Council's £10,000 contribution had gone towards central heating of the building.

The Director added that the Newtownards based pilot was a separate project this year through a fully funded DfC scheme valued at £82,000. Council was in the process of gathering information through a consultant, Blue Zebra, and looking to establish an operational model. A report with further details was due to be brought back to the April 2022 Community and Wellbeing Committee meeting.

In terms of the funding allocation for that project, the Director added that the consultant fee had been £15,000 with the remainder of the £82,000 going towards items such as capital investment, premises and revenue costs for running the pilot. There would be criteria and targets set against that funding.

Councillor Gilmour said she was disappointed by the lack of detail or information regarding the Bangor Social Supermarket pilot, noting that the report detailed how the Ards scheme was starting from scratch, looking for premises and delivery partners.

The nature of a social supermarket was that it was a step on from a foodbank so there needed to be a clear distinction. As the social supermarket worked on members paying a supplement, £5 for example and getting £20-25 worth of shopping in return. It was also crucial to the process in delivering access to wrap

around services for support such as budgeting, employment benefits and guidance, and there needed to be a holistic approach.

Councillor Gilmour was aware KWC had the wrap around service and had carried out research over a few years on how other social supermarkets worked and what models were used and the value of different approaches. Also, KWC would be based in the only Neighbourhood Renewal area of the Borough so would be able to help the most deprived residents.

She added that the cost-of-living crisis was impacting heavily upon households across the Borough. Nearly a third of people here would struggle to afford an unexpected bill of just £300, according to a survey by consumer publication Which. She was keen to be able to see a social supermarket up and running as soon as possible to help those in most need.

Councillor Gilmour proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that a report is brought back on the Bangor Social Supermarket pilot scheme outlining support (financial and other) to enable it to proceed, including timeframe, and what is expected from the organisation delivering it.

Speaking to the amendment, Councillor Gilmour added that she was keen to see social supermarkets up and running in the Borough as soon as possible and spoke of how vital they were to the community. Given the establishment of the KWC pilot and the financial support provided by the Council, she wondered if anything would be expected in return for the Council's contribution and if further contributions would be made to that project. She felt that the arrangement appeared to be very one sided and looked forward to receiving further information.

The seconder, Councillor Cathcart indicated at the outset that he no longer had a declaration of interest in this item, adding that he had been staggered by the Director's response to Councillor Gilmour's questions. He said that members had been informed that there would be two pilots set up in the Borough but was disappointed to see that one was getting £82,000 and the other getting £10,000, and he argued that it was an unfair trial and further stated that the Council had been utterly misled on the matter - a comment that he later withdrew.

He talked about the concept of a social supermarket and emphasised that it was about the wrap around support provided by them that made them different from a foodbank. There was already an established social supermarket in Kilcooley and it was a good opportunity for the Council to support that, but instead it had chosen to start one from scratch and he suggested that it was because the Council didn't want people going to Kilcooley. He welcomed the call for further information and encouraged the Council to look seriously where it was going with this.

Councillor T Smith asked why the £82,000 was not mentioned in the report that went to the March 2022 Community and Wellbeing Committee. The Director believed that the figure was unknown at the time or it could have been commercially sensitive but he was happy to discuss it at this meeting.

Councillor T Smith as a former resident of Kilcooley said he had some understanding of the level of need in the area and believed that if KWC could get its social supermarket up and running it would be a great help. He asked if there was any extra funding that could go to the KWC pilot.

The Director clarified that the Council had only provided a contribution to the total costs and that the KWC project had been in the pipeline for considerable time and he understood it should be ready to launch soon. He added that the DfC request was for the Council to pilot its own scheme.

Councillor T Smith said he had perhaps mistakenly taken it from the report that the Council was involved in both social supermarkets but now recognised that Council was responsible for the Ards pilot rather than the Kilcooley one. He wished both pilots every success as social supermarkets were desperately needed and asked how long it would take for members to receive information requested in the amendment. The Director would need to liaise with officers working on the project before advising of a timeframe.

Councillor Mathison spoke in support of the amendment feeling that it was important to get further information and see if further support could be provided to the KWC project. He noted the £15,000 consultant fees and asked for clarity around the procurement process that was followed in the appointment of that firm.

The Director advised that the usual tender process had not applied as this was a pilot scheme and the procedures were agreed with DfC and that had included the appointment of an independent consultant to help get the project established and up and running as quickly as possible. Hopefully if successful and if it was to become established, he suspected that the Council would move to more traditional processes for delivering that type of project. He also emphasised that while it was to be based in Newtownards the scheme was a Borough wide initiative.

Councillor Mathison said he had no intention to make it a Newtownards specific matter or delay setting up the project but indicated he would have liked to see more details of the process involved.

Councillor Boyle spoke in support of the amendment and was keen to have the situation cleared up given that there had been a claim that the Council had been misled.

The Director added that there had been no misleading and apologised if there had been any misunderstanding over the way the report had been presented. He would seek to follow up with Councillor Cathcart and clarify what he had been alleging if that was the appropriate process.

Councillor Cathcart said he wished to withdraw his earlier comment that the Council had been misled and explained that he had not believed there had been deliberate misleading but had found the information to be vague, as alluded to by other members.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Gilmour, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that that a report is brought back on the Bangor Social Supermarket pilot scheme outlining support (financial and other) to enable it to proceed, including timeframe, and what is expected from the organisation delivering it.

FURTHER RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the minutes be adopted.

7.6 Audit Committee dated 21 March 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Wilson, seconded by Councillor Armstrong-Cotter, that the minutes be adopted.

8. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 Consultation on Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol in NI (Appendix IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence from the Department of Health with details of the above consultation. Closing date for responses was 17 May 2022.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor T Smith, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the consultation document be noted.

8.2 Consultation on the temporary changes to Urgent and Emergency Care services at Lagan Valley Hospital, Lisburn (Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence from the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust detailing the above consultation which was due to close on 22 April 2022.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the consultation document be noted.

8.3 Consultation On Proposals to Raise The Eligibility Ceilings for the Debt Relief Scheme (Appendix VI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence from the Department for the Economy with details of the above consultation. Closing date for responses was 28 April 2022.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the consultation document be noted.

8.4 Consultation on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (Appendix VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence from the Department of Justice detailing the above consultation which was open from 11 March 2022 for 12 weeks.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the consultation document be noted.

**8.5 Consultation on Hub and Spoke Dispensing
(Appendix VIII)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence from the Department of Health with details of the above consultation. Closing date for responses was 8 June 2022.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the consultation document be noted.

**8.6 Consultation on the Introduction of Statutory Regulation of Pharmacy Technicians in NI
(Appendix IX)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence from the Department of Health detailing the above consultation. Closing date for responses was 16 May 2022.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the consultation document be noted.

**8.7 Consultation on the Review of Urgent and Emergency Care in Northern Ireland
(Appendix X)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence from the Department of Health detailing the above consultation. Closing date for responses was 15 June 2022.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Girvan, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the consultation document be noted.

9. COURSES AND CONFERENCES**9.1. National Association of Councillors Conference, Leisure & Tourism, The Royal Hotel, Scarborough, 8th-10th April 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 21 March 2022 from the Chief Executive detailing that the National Association of Councillors (NAC) was holding a Leisure & Tourism conference at the Royal Hotel, Scarborough, from the 8th – 10th April 2022. NAC had provided the following information:

“As we come out of the pandemic changes are happening in the Leisure & Tourism industry. Leisure & Tourism is an important contributor to the national and local economies of the UK.

This conference would look at ways local authorities operate leisure services and drive tourism. This sector provides essential jobs for the local population and this impacts on the majority of our Local Authority areas. Ways of supporting the industry need to be continued or in some cases increased to help protect this vital part of the economy.

This event would provide opportunities to hear quality speakers from Local Government & the Tourism industry, participate in Q&A sessions and contribute to conference workshops. The conference will benefit elected members from every tier of local government."

The event would cost £350 plus VAT per Member attending, accommodation was available at £70 plus VAT per night, and there would be the cost of flights in addition to this.

RECOMMENDED that Council considers whether it wishes to nominate a Member(s) to attend the NAC Conference.

RESOLVED on the proposal of Councillor T Smith, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the item be noted.

(Councillor Greer left the meeting having declared an interest in the next item – 8.49pm)

10. REQUEST FOR DEPUTATION FROM NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE - HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN

(Appendix XI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 23 March 2022 from the Chief Executive detailing that the NI Housing Executive had been in touch to seek a date to present their annual Housing Investment Plan to Council. They had sought a suitable date between 15 August and 28 October 2022.

RECOMMENDED that Council agrees to the deputation request from the NI Housing Executive and refers to this to Corporate Services Committee on 13 September 2022.

RESOLVED on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Mathison, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Councillor Greer returned to the meeting – 8.50pm)

11. RESOLUTIONS

11.1. Free School Meals (Appendix XII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence dated 11 March 2022 from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council seeking support for its request that the

Northern Ireland Executive introduce a scheme for all school children in Northern Ireland to receive a free school meal.

Councillor Boyle proposed, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that Council supports the Resolution.

Speaking to the proposal, Councillor Boyle felt it was right for Council to give its support and write to the appropriate Minister supporting the request from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. He had asked the Chief Executive how that action would likely progress, and it was suspected any progress on the matter would not take place until a new NI Executive was in place.

The seconder, Councillor T Smith added his support highlighting that many families who were not eligible for free school meals were struggling, and it was worth writing a letter to keep the matter on the radar. He felt Stormont had shown in the past that it could find money and the new Executive he believed could make it work.

Councillor Kendall highlighted the difficulties facing many in the current financial climate. She was content to support the proposal and looked forward to what might be received by way of a response.

Feeling the request had been vague, Councillor Mathison would have liked to have seen exactly what Fermanagh and Omagh District Council was seeking but he was supportive in principle of widening access to free school meals.

Alderman McIlveen took a similar view. He did wonder where Councillor T Smith believed the money would come from but felt that a letter would help. Given the scale of what was being requested though, he suspected whoever had brought the Notice of Motion at Fermanagh and Omagh District Council would be disappointed with the response.

Councillor P Smith felt while the resolution was a knee jerk proposal by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council it was one of their more sensible letters and agreed it was worthwhile asking the question around free school meals.

Councillor Gilmour spoke of the financial pressures on parents but also recognised there were some children from affluent backgrounds that would not present the same financial burden on the household and she wondered if it was necessary to provide a free meal for every child.

Councillor Thompson was also supportive while Councillor MacArthur as a former school principal supported the aspiration but warned that it would not be the panacea for all ills, pointing out that one of the problems was children not getting a breakfast before coming to school.

Councillor Egan felt free school meals would be a good long-term aspiration but that it was important to direct resources to address issues such as holiday hunger along with holding a review of who currently received free school meals.

Summing up, Councillor Boyle thanked members for their contributions. He looked forward to the budding MLAs within the Council taking on the matter in the Assembly and in particular respected the view of Councillor MacArthur as a former school principal. He believed that breakfast was the most important meal of the day and recognised that sadly some children were attending school without that. If they could be given a lunch in the absence of a breakfast though, he felt that it wouldn't be a bad Plan B. He recognised that every area of Northern Ireland had families in serious need and believed that it was right for the Council to lend its support to the resolution and start the ball rolling.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that the Council supports the resolution.

(The meeting went into recess at 9.08pm and resumed at 9.18pm)

12. REQUEST FROM UPPER ARDS ORANGE DISTRICT NO.11 TO USE CROMMELIN PARK, DONAGHADEE (FILE LP)
(Appendix XIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 2 March 2022 from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that the Council had received a request from the Upper Ards Orange District No. 11 to use Crommelin Park on Saturday 9th April from 4pm to 8pm to commemorate 100 years since the formation of Northern Ireland.

The parade would assemble in the park at 5pm where there would be a short platform address. It would then leave the park at 6pm and parade around Donaghadee then finish at Crommelin Park at 7.15pm. The organisers anticipated that approximately 500/600 people would be in attendance.

Officers had been consulted and had no issues. Officers had advised that the organiser needed to be aware that the event must be restricted to the hardstanding area.

In addition, permission needed to be subject to the following:

1. Receipt of a risk assessment and event management plan.
2. A bond of £500.00 must be paid prior to the event, which will be refunded following a satisfactory inspection of the area by a Council officer after the event has left the site.
3. Display public notices before the event to notify the public that said event is due to take place in the area. Signage to be agreed in advance with appropriate Council officer.
4. Public notices must be removed after the event within seven days.
5. Provide appropriate welfare facilities at own cost.

6. Provide evidence of relevant insurances and fully indemnify Council against all risks associated with the use of land or property.
7. Make good any damage caused during the use.
8. Put in place protective measures for areas where important natural heritage is present.
9. Arrange for the collection and subsequent removal, and where appropriate, recycling of all litter and other debris from the main event and adjacent areas during the event, as well as once the event has concluded, however, should the Council have to do any additional cleaning the costs will be recovered from the Organiser.
10. Organiser to put in place plans for recycling waste
11. Arrange for the prompt removal of any items used in connection with the event
12. Put in place plans to limit any negative impact on the public using the land at the same time as the event.
13. Provide evidence of permits/licences/registrations and approvals, where required.
14. Indemnify the Council against all claims which may result from the event or use of the area and provide the Council with a copy of the relevant insurance policy.
15. Ensure that only the designated area, or areas specified by Council officers are used for the event.
16. Ensure that adequate marshals are placed throughout the designated area so as members of the public are not endangered by the event.
17. Where electric supplies are being used this must be agreed in advance with Council officers. Additional costs may apply depending on the services required.
18. Comply with any other relevant legislative provision.
19. No petrol generators are to be used.

RECOMMENDED that the Council accedes to the request subject to the organisers agreeing to the conditions detailed above.

Proposed by Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor T Smith spoke to support the event and looked forward to what would be a great, and long overdue, night out. He could not think of a better way to celebrate the Centenary of Northern Ireland.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

13. ANNUAL SOMME PILGRIMAGE 2022 (FILE CX181)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 3 March 2022 from the Chief Executive detailing that On 1st July 2022 it would be the 106th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme and Members would be aware of the strong connection of this to the Borough.

The Council had participated annually in the commemoration events at the Thiepval Monument, Ulster Memorial Tower and the Memorial at Guillemont. This had usually also included wreath laying at the Menin Gate, Ypres and, in 2018, the dedication of a new memorial to the 36th (Ulster) Division and 16th (Irish) Division at Essigny Le Grand. There was also the opportunity to visit the Island of Ireland Peace Tower at Messines and lay a wreath in the honour of Edmund de Wind VC at Pozieres British Cemetery.

In line with previous years, it was recommended that the Council approves the attendance at the commemoration events from 30th June to 3 July 2021 of the Mayor (or if unable to travel the Deputy Mayor), another Member and an Officer.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. the Council approves the attendance at the annual Battle of the Somme Commemorations in 2022 of the Mayor (or if unable to travel the Deputy Mayor), another Member and an Officer.
2. the Council nominates the other Member.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendations be adopted.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that Councillor MacArthur attend as the additional member.

Councillor MacArthur said she would regard the opportunity to attend and represent the Council at the Somme Pilgrimage as a huge honour and would thank members for supporting her nomination.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendations be adopted and that Councillor MacArthur attends.

14. INFRASTRUCTURE 2050 – DRAFT INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR NI CONSULTATION (FILE RDP39)

(Appendix XIV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 10 March 2022 from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that as previously reported at the Regeneration and Development Committee on 3 March 2022, the Draft Infrastructure 2050 – Investment Strategy for NI Consultation Document had been released.

The Strategy set out the current state of NI's infrastructure, identified where it needed to be and proposed what was needed to get there. It defined the strategic investment priorities and demonstrated how to make best use of its resources. The strategy took a long-term view, looking forward to 2050.

The recommended Council response was attached.

RECOMMENDED that Council agrees the attached Council response to the Infrastructure 2050 Draft Investment Strategy for NI consultation.

Proposed by Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor P Smith, that the recommendation be adopted.

Alderman Irvine felt that the strategy was vitally important for the growth of Northern Ireland's economy and future prosperity and hoped that we would invest in the infrastructure. It was of huge importance that the country got this right.

Councillor P Smith was pleased to see that, in response to Question 6, Comber had been highlighted as an example of an area where infrastructure, in terms of roads and utilities had failed to keep up with the level of housing development. Given that there were further plans for development, he felt it was important for future planning in that regard and was pleased to see that the issue in Comber had been referenced in the document.

Alderman McIlveen spoke of the importance of the strategy and how it would inform planning matters going forward. He was pleased to see that coastal erosion and flooding issues had been referenced. He spoke of the work of his sister, Michelle McIlveen MLA on the matter in terms of her work in the NI Assembly, and the work of groups that had been set up within the Ards Peninsula where it was an incredibly important issue given the Ards Peninsula's exposure. The issue of coastal erosion did affect all of Northern Ireland's shoreline though and he hoped that other Councils were recognising the matter and the impacts of climate change. It would be a vital consideration in infrastructure projects going forward.

Councillor Boyle praised officers for their response to the consultation and agreed that coastal erosion was a massive issue and he had been part of the coastal erosion group referred to by Alderman McIlveen. He was pleased that the response had included some focus on rural living, particularly around flooding. He was aware of the need for investment in infrastructure.

Councillor Edmund explained the difficulties that he had observed, through his own involvement with the Ards Peninsula Group, in persuading organisations such as NI Fisheries in identifying and recording issues of coastal erosion around Northern Ireland's shoreline. He suspected that without the joined-up party approach established in the NI Assembly there wouldn't have been the investment on the Portaferry Road along the sea wall and that applied to other areas. He recalled that in 2014 the Peninsula lost the White Church Road and other hotspot areas in Ballyhalbert at a cost of almost £5m. He was glad to see the issue highlighted in the response.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor P Smith, that the recommendation be adopted.

15. PORTAVOGIE HARBOUR EIS TENDER AWARD (FILE RDP15)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 1 March 2022 from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that as previously reported the Council had been awarded a SEAFLAG grant of £250,000 to deliver an environmental improvement scheme at Portavogie Harbour. The planning application and tendering process was ongoing.

Due to a lengthy response period from the statutory consultees as part of the Planning process, the timeframe for the works to be completed was now extremely tight. The following was the draft timeline:

Seek Council approval for Delegated Authority to R&D Committee	30 March 2022
Report to R&D Committee on tender process	7 April 2022
Call-In Period Ends	Circa 20 April 2022
Voluntary Standstill Ends	Circa 25 April 2022
Award letter i.e. date of contract	Circa 26 April 2022
Pre-start meeting	W/C 02 May 2022
Contractor completion of procurement of materials [4weeks]	Assume completed by the 27 May 2022
Assume lead in time of 20 weeks [Street lighting columns are expected to the longest]	Assume W/C 10 Oct 2022
Assume site works start on site beginning of October 2022 ending in the middle of December 2022 – 10-week duration.	Assume start W/C 03 Oct 2022 with completion 09 Dec 2022

SEAGFLAG had advised that, as the programme spend had to be completed by 31 December 2022, there was no opportunity for extensions or increased grant.

It was important that the contract be awarded as quickly as possible to achieve the required deadline.

RECOMMENDED that Council agrees to grant delegated authority to the Regeneration and Development Committee to award the tender contract at its meeting of 7 April 2022, following the tender process.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

16. REQUEST TO LIGHT UP COUNCIL BUILDINGS FOR WORLD PARKINSON'S DAY (FILE LP37)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 10 March 2022 from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that the Council had received a request from Parkinson's UK (NI) to light up Council buildings blue on Monday 11th April 2022 and annually thereafter.

There were almost 4000 people living with Parkinson's in Northern Ireland and Parkinson's UK also had a group supporting those people and their families in our Borough - North Down Support Group.

This year, Parkinson's UK, right across the UK, was making a concerted effort to get as many buildings as possible to Light Up Blue to raise awareness of Parkinson's UK. They hoped that by lighting up a significant number of public buildings in Northern Ireland that people would wonder why and learn more about Parkinson's. They had a number of prominent buildings confirmed - and hoped that local press would take interest in the campaign. More information about the campaign could be found here: <https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/get-involved/world-parkinsons-day>

The current lighting up policy stated that requests for the lighting up of Council buildings were deemed eligible if they were from: -

- Charitable, community or other non-profit making organisations based in or with a significant connection to the Borough and which are celebrating a significant anniversary or occasion.

RECOMMENDED that Council accedes to the request and lights up Council buildings blue on 11th April 2022 and the date is added to the annual schedule.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Gilmour praised the work of Parkinson's UK (NI) in raising awareness of the condition and was personally aware of the impacts and care requirements, recalling that her late grandfather had suffered with the condition. Councillor Edmund spoke about his own family's experience of Parkinson's and how it stole people's lives.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Gilmour, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

17. SEALING DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED: - (On the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Smart)

THAT the Seal of the Council be affixed to the following documents:-

- (a) Development Agreement for lands at Hibernia Street, Holywood between Ards and North Down Borough Council and Robinson Family Limited
- (b) Contract for the purchase of land at Redburn Square, Holywood between Ards and North Down Borough Council and the Department for Infrastructure
- (c) Licence Agreement for works at the Harbour, Portavogie between Ards and North Down Borough Council and the Department for Infrastructure
- (d) Grant of Right of Burial Nos 14151 – 14184, all new purchases and PX6671

18. TRANSFERS OF RIGHTS OF BURIAL

There were no Transfers of Rights of Burials.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the information be noted.

19. NOTICE OF MOTION STATUS REPORT (FILE CG12172) (Appendix XV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 23 March 2022 from the Chief Executive detailing the attached Status Report in respect of Notices of Motion.

This was a standing item on the Council agenda each month and its aim was to keep Members updated on the outcome of Motions. Please note that as each Motion was dealt with it would be removed from the report.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.

20. NOTICES OF MOTION

20.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Adair

To mark the 400th anniversary of the building of Kirkistown Castle, Council tasks officers to work with the Department of Communities (Historic Monuments Division),

local community groups and schools, to deliver a community programme of events to mark this important milestone in the history of the village of Cloughey.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Community and Wellbeing Committee.

20.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Greer, Johnson, Kendall and McRandal

That Council writes to the Department for Infrastructure calling for the prioritisation of the resurfacing of Bridge Road South, Helen's Bay due to the appalling state of the current road surface and the recent injury of a child.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Corporate Services Committee.

20.3 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Walker and Alderman McDowell

That this Council - recognising the potential difference we could make to the lives of residents and businesses throughout our Borough if we were to have full responsibility for a Regeneration budget as envisaged in the Review of Public Administration - does agree to write to the Minister for Communities requesting that they undertake to devolve such powers to Local Councils within the period of the new Assembly Mandate. And further, that Officers are tasked to bring back a report outlining a programme of engagement with other Councils, SOLACE, and NILGA to present a united campaign to secure the Minister's support.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Alderman McDowell, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Regeneration and Development Committee.

20.4 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors MacArthur, Armstrong-Cotter, Dunlop, McClean and Egan

That this Council expresses its solidarity with the people of Ukraine in light of Russian aggression and congratulates the residents of our Borough on their unprecedented support for charities which are assisting those affected by this terrible war.

Further, that officers are tasked with putting together a report which outlines how this Council could assist in the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees in our Borough, including how they may receive wrap around support from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies.

Councillor MacArthur proposed the above Notice of Motion and that it be heard due to the urgency of the situation in Ukraine.

Councillor Armstrong-Cotter seconded the Notice of Motion.

The Mayor agreed that it was appropriate to hear the motion given the urgency of the situation in Ukraine.

Proposing, Councillor MacArthur thanked those elected members who had co-signed the Notice of Motion, adding that it was not being proposed for political reasons but in response to a significant humanitarian crisis in Europe, the like of which had not been seen since the end of World War II. She was speaking to the motion as an elected representative, a wife and mother who had been moved by what she had seen and heard on our news bulletins over the last few weeks. The situation in Ukraine and all that it entailed required a response as a collective Council body on behalf of the residents of the Borough and she therefore asked that, for the duration of the debate, members put aside their party-political allegiances and focus on what they could do together. She explained that the Notice of Motion was three-fold, firstly it sought to support Ukraine and its people, who, on the 24 February, just over a month ago, watched as missiles and airstrikes struck Kyiv followed by a ground invasion from Putin's army.

Putin's war and his aggression on a sovereign nation needed to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. There was no justification for reducing Ukraine to a wasteland by continued daily air strikes and rocket fire. There was no justification for the murder of Ukrainian citizens including women and children. A pastor that Councillor MacArthur followed on Facebook on 10 March said, 'Today Putin killed my brother and four of his friends. He was 40. He saved people from shelling by helping them to hide in the church basement. He provided them with all the necessary things he could. This is probably a crime in the eyes of the Russians. Three boys are left without a father, a wife without a husband, a mother without a son.'

Stories like that were unfortunately all too common although she would have suggested that the full horrors of what was going in Mariupol and other besieged Ukrainian cities was still to come to light. There was no justification for any of this including the displacement of over four million Ukrainians, mainly women, children and their pets.

Members of the Council had a duty to condemn this war but secondly, Council had a duty to act; it could help make the lives of those affected by this war just a little bit better.

On 27 February, just three days after war broke out, the residents of the Borough realising the terrible displacement of people into Poland, Romania and Moldova stepped up. Donation stations were made across the Borough including at Councillor MacArthur's own home and within a week, nappies, food, pet food, basic medical supplies, clothes, toiletries and much more had been donated. Children used their pocket money to buy toys, lorry drivers donated their time to drive, companies gave lorries free of charge, businesses donated whatever they could; the kindness of the people across this borough was overwhelming.

Councillor MacArthur recalled standing in Newtownards on Saturday 5 March 2022 totally in awe of the support received as local people with tears in their eyes just kept

coming with more aid and monetary donations. That morning her and other volunteers had filled three vans and one very large lorry and she wanted to thank the helpers who did the loading and driving including Councillor Cummings for all his help. The charity that Councillor MacArthur was working with, Hope For Youth Ministries, filled thirty one 40-foot containers and the contents of those lorries had now either been distributed to refugees in Poland or had since gone into Ukraine. To those who had donated in whatever way they could to Ukrainian aid charities she said thank you. This Council said thank you too. It was immensely satisfying to know that the little they had done, would now be in the hands of people who needed it immensely more and that filled her with joy.

But thirdly, the residents had stepped up not only with their donations, time and money, but more recently by offering their homes as a place of safety for Ukrainians under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Now was the opportunity for a timely and effective civic response from this Council.

It was still unclear how many Ukrainian refugees would come to the Borough or how long they would stay given that most families were now dispersed with the men by in large left behind.

The previous week, according to an Executive Office official, over 6,000 people in NI had registered an interest in the 'Homes for Ukraine Scheme'. This compared with 10,000 for Wales and 9,000 for Scotland so NI was up there in terms of willingness.

Earlier in the day Councillor MacArthur had spoken with a gentleman from the Borough who would be a Super Sponsor for 34 Ukrainians and another who was sponsoring 7 Ukrainians as a private individual. She had been advised that the Super Sponsor Scheme would open in NI soon. The Super Sponsor scheme would enable an organisation such as a Church to sponsor a group of people and then link them with families here in the Borough who had declared an interest but did not have the name of refugee. Councillor MacArthur had also been advised through the Executive office, that checks were being carried out both in the country of origin and in the homes of the sponsor family, the latter being done through the Access NI Scheme but this information was currently being drip-fed. Many charities and community groups were on standby ready and willing to help but they needed government at all levels to step up.

She explained that having spoken with Borough residents who were closely involved in the process, the following had been suggested and perhaps those would be considered in the report back to Council:

1. That the Borough would be willing to host a Welcome Centre should the demand be there – Welcome Centres were currently being proposed at designated venues across NI although she understood that locations had yet to be decided based on demand.
2. The Council would facilitate a round table forum where community, voluntary and statutory agencies could engage to share information and sign-post services. This was particularly important as church groups which may have become super sponsors would require advice and support around schooling, translation services, trauma, bereavement of a loved one still in Ukraine, work

opportunities and so on. It should also have been said that many of the groups that were sponsoring refugees were fully prepared to fund what they did but they were going to need support. The circumstances of individual sponsors would vary.

3. That Council would provide an online hub where local residents who were sponsoring families may find relevant information and connect in the easiest possible way with the appropriate services. She did not believe it would be acceptable just to provide a link to NI Direct, there would need to be more bespoke local links.

Council officers had stepped up in an amazing way when the Covid crisis hit our community. Councillor MacArthur was now asking them to step up once again so that this Council could be ready to support our residents and the people that they would sponsor in our Council area.

This motion asked for a report on how best that support could be given and whilst she appreciated that not all of the information which was needed was available to the Council's Chief Executive right now, she would ask that the appropriate government communication channels were used by a designated Council officer so that NI and the people of this Borough were not left behind in their desire to do the right thing for the Ukrainian people.

In closing, she wished to leave members with a biblical quote which was her driver to do the right thing and she trusted that members would get behind the Motion. 'For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me.' Matthew 25 v 35-36

As seconder, Councillor Armstrong-Cotter reserved her right to speak until later in the discussion.

Members spoke in turn to the condemn the Russian invasion in Ukraine and to support the Notice of Motion and thank the proposer.

Councillor Dunlop spoke of the devastating impact that the situation was having on the people of Ukraine and its implications on the future for everyone. He felt that members were obliged to do all they could to help.

Councillor Egan felt that the motion nicely built on what had already been agreed recently in terms of refugee support and Ards and North Down moving towards becoming a Borough of Sanctuary. She had been contacted by constituents all keen to help in whatever way they could, they included charities, church groups and residents wanting to provide their homes for refugees. It had been heartening to see the kindness and generosity.

Councillor Edmund emphasised that a staggering 25% of Ukrainians were now homeless and urged members to consider the numbers and efforts involved in helping that many people. He thanked Councillor MacArthur and all those named on the motion for bringing it.

Councillor McClean thanked Councillor MacArthur for bringing the motion. He gently disagreed with her claim that the motion was not political, believing that it was a political response to a political problem. He welcomed that the Notice of Motion identified ways in which the Council could help and he felt there was opportunity for Council to provide even more help in some circumstances. Continuing, he felt that the proposed action was of little cost to the Council and the show of solidarity and support, while small and humble, was exactly what the people of Ukraine would appreciate. He also welcomed the cross-party support from Council and would have liked to see that same resolve displayed by world leaders.

Alderman Irvine felt it clear that the Borough needed to stand four square behind the people of Ukraine and he praised the President of Ukraine, Vladimir Zelenskiy, for his resolve and courageous leadership. Putin needed to be defeated and the loss of Ukraine was unimaginable and did not bare thinking about. He hoped that the Council along with the kindness and generosity of people across the Borough would help those refugees coming to the Borough.

Councillor Cummings had been overwhelmed by the number of people that had come together in the square and the generosity displayed and it was that sort of response that gave the Council a real sense of pride in the citizens. He spoke of a pastor he knew who had a small Baptist church just 25 miles from the border of Ukraine. During the past month he had watched his role as pastor change along with the congregation and function of the church building, it now housed dozens of families and had brought a daily routine of schooling, play and refuge.

Councillor Boyle talked about some of the voluntary efforts that were taking place in Portaferry including the gathering of donations including washbags along with efforts to provide accommodation for five or six families in the village. He had also assisted a Ukrainian lady living in Portaferry in relation to a naturalisation passport application and speaking with her had given him further insight into the situation. He was pleased to hear about the work that Councillor MacArthur had been undertaking and would be in touch for advice in relation to providing accommodation for refugees. He had noted that the motion had the support of the large parties and if he had missed a request to support it then he apologised but the motion also had the support of the smaller party members and independents on the Council as well as the support of his own party, the SDLP.

Councillor Cooper added support and had been heartened by the poignant, eloquent, and heartfelt words within Councillor MacArthur's speech had struck home right across the board and had clearly emanated from her compassion. It was clear how much kindness and love there was across the Borough, shining a light in dark times. He felt there needed to be clear guidance as to what the Council could do and a report was much needed to avoid members scrambling around between departments. He spoke of the horror and desperation he had felt while watching events in Ukraine and hoped it would come to a swift end before more lives were lost.

Councillor Kendall added that she had stood at Belfast City Hall at a rally with Ukrainians and hearing them talk over the phone to their families and hear of their experiences was extremely emotional. The overwhelming response from residents in

the Borough had shown Ards and North Down was a Borough of Sanctuary. She hoped that the Council could help to make the refugee situation easier and she hoped for urgent peace in Ukraine.

Councillor Mathison felt that if there was ever an issue for bringing members together it was clearly this one. He was aware of charities, businesses and individuals wanting to help but they were unsure how they could. He referred specifically to Willowbrook Foods that had done great work in getting goods to the border areas but were now unsure how they could help the people they were encountering and how they could bring them back here. He felt that the report and its information would be helpful.

Councillor Thompson had been moved by the comments throughout the discussion. He had been disappointed with the Government scheme in how it had been rolled out and it had left people unsure of the process in bringing people into their homes. He was aware from a meeting with the Millisle Village Group there was a desire to have welcome centre there.

The Mayor explained that prior to the Covid-19 travel disruption, he would have normally visited Ukraine twice a year to see friends. Since the Russian invasion, he had been in communication with his friends on a daily basis and many of them were now fighting for their country. He spoke of his frustration that the West had not responded to the Russian aggression as it had done in previous invasions which were led by evil dictators – he pointed to the Falklands and Kuwait, and was ashamed of that. He said he had been asked by his Ukrainian friends if he would look after their children and spouses if they were killed in combat, which he had agreed to do. He was proud that the MPs and the Mayors in Ukraine were united in the country's approach, but emphasised he was ashamed of the West's response.

The seconder, Councillor Armstrong-Cotter praised her colleague, Councillor MacArthur, for her dedication and felt that what little the Borough could do, it should do all it could with a whole heart.

She reflected on the horrors that families in Ukraine were facing, protecting their children and having to see their husbands go to fight knowing they may never return. Her parents had hosted Ukrainian families in the past during their circuits of churches and she had thought about them and the bigger picture that the whole country was affected. She was heartened and proud to be from Northern Ireland and through all the Troubles here, the people had stood together to give people seeking refuge a home. She was aware of people with rental properties, churches with facilities and local businesses all wanting to help.

In her work, she had had the opportunity to speak with the Immigration Minister, Kevin Foster MP, and had outlined some of the difficulties Northern Ireland was having in providing accommodation in the Ukrainian refugee scheme. He had explained about matters such as safeguarding but it was clear that with 6,000 people in NI willing to open their homes, there needed to be more coordination and cooperation.

She was thankful for the Notice of Motion which would give the Council the ability to do what it could and support those looking to help. She had every confidence in Council officers and that Council could be a leading light in this.

Summing up, Councillor MacArthur thanked members for their support and knew the events had impacted everyone deeply. She too had friends in Ukraine with some managing to get family members out of the country. She would pass on information she had to Councillor Boyle.

Councillor MacArthur added that we owed a great debt of gratitude to the people of Poland who had opened their homes to over 4 million displaced people without any planning. That had been supported by donations from here of much needed aid. She looked forward to the report coming back and emphasised a quick turnaround was needed.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Armstrong-Cotter, that this Council expresses its solidarity with the people of Ukraine in light of Russian aggression and congratulates the residents of our Borough on their unprecedented support for charities which are assisting those affected by this terrible war.

Further, that officers are tasked with putting together a report which outlines how this Council could assist in the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees in our Borough, including how they may receive wrap around support from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies.

(Alderman Menagh left the meeting – 10.16pm)

20.5 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Boyle and Alderman Carson

That officers bring back a report with reference to the provision of flood lighting and creation of a running track around the Council owned facility and home venue to Cloughey FC, located at Calhame Park, Cloughey.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Alderman Carson, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Community and Wellbeing Committee.

Circulated for Information

- (a) NI Housing Council minutes and Members Bulletin March 2022
- (b) Northern Ireland Housing Executive Cavity Wall Insulation Action Plan 2022
- (c) Community Development and Health Network Strategic Plan 2021-24
- (d) Independent Review of Northern Ireland's Children's Social Care Services, Newsletter March 2022.

RESOLVED, that the items which were Circulated for Information be noted.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the public/press be excluded from the undernoted items of confidential business.

21. PROPOSED CHANGE TO EXISTING FLAGS POLICY (Appendix XVI)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

*****NOT FOR PUBLICATION*****

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

22. PLANT AND MACHINERY TENDER (FILE PCA18)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

*****NOT FOR PUBLICATION*****

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

23. TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY OF HOME SAFETY EQUIPMENT **(FILE CW6)** (Appendix XVII – XIX)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

*****NOT FOR PUBLICATION*****

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

24. LAND ADJACENT TO THE MAXOL FILLING STATION, **HOLYWOOD (FILE LP24)**

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

*****NOT FOR PUBLICATION*****

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

25. INVITATION FROM IRISH GUARDS TO COLOURS CEREMONY

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

*****NOT FOR PUBLICATION*****

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

26. NOTIFICATION OF GRANT OF LIQUOR LICENCE - COPELANDS DISTILLERY (FILE LQLIC)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

*****NOT FOR PUBLICATION*****

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

7.4 MINUTES OF CORPORATE COMMITTEE DATED 8 MARCH 2022 (CONTINUED)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

*****NOT FOR PUBLICATION*****

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Cooper, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 12.13am.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Planning Committee was held virtually on Tuesday, 5 April 2022 at 7.00 pm via Zoom.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Cathcart

Aldermen: Gibson Mcllveen (7.02 pm)
Keery

Councillors: Adair McClean
Brooks McRandal
Cooper (7.27 pm) Thompson
Kennedy (7.32 pm) Walker

Officers: Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning (S McCullough), Principal Planning and Technical Officer (G Kerr), Senior Professional and Technical Officers (A Todd, C Rodgers, P Kerr) and Democratic Services Officers (M McElveen and J Glasgow)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend were received from Alderman McDowell, Councillor McAlpine, Councillor McKee and the Head of Planning.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman sought Declarations of Interest at this stage.

Councillor Adair declared an interest in Item 4.9 - LA06/2021/0353/F - Adjacent to properties extending from 59 Harbour Road to 81 New Harbour Road, Portavogie.

NOTED.

(Alderman Mcllveen entered the meeting – 7.02 pm)

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF 1 MARCH 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Keery, seconded by Alderman Gibson, that the minutes be noted.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To accommodate the speakers in attendance, the Chairman advised that the applications would be taken in a slightly different running order.

4.1 LA06/2020/0714/O - Land between 45 Ballyhay Road and 11 New Line Road, Donaghadee - Erection of 2 No. detached dwellings and garages with associated site works (Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report.

DEA: Ards Peninsula

Committee Interest: A Local development application 'called-in' to Planning Committee from the delegated list w/c 07 March by a member of that Committee- Called in by Councillor Adair: *"I wish to call in the above application to give the committee the opportunity to consider loss of amenity of existing properties and lack of infrastructure in the area to accommodate further developments"*

Proposal: Erection of 2 No. detached dwellings and garages with associated site works

Site Location: Land between 45 Ballyhay Road and 11 New Line Road, Donaghadee

Recommendation: Approval

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer (G Kerr) outlined the detail of the application. She firstly noted that as this was an outline application it was the principle of development which was being considered with further details to be submitted with any reserved matters application. None of the statutory consultees had any objection to the proposal. There were 5 letters of objection from 3 addresses received in relation to the application which had been addressed in the case officer report.

The Officer detailed that the site was located in the countryside. There were no designations on the land. The area was characterised by agricultural land with dispersed dwellings and agricultural buildings. In the immediate area there were several dwellings and farm buildings at the junction of New Line and Ballyhay Road.

The site was part of grassed fields with a gravel area adjacent to an outbuilding. The site sloped slightly downwards from the roadside towards the rear of the site. There was hedging along the roadside boundary and timber fencing along part of the rear boundary. There were trees along the adjoining boundary with No. 11 New Line and the south-eastern boundary adjacent to the outbuilding was undefined.

It was considered that there was a substantial and continuously built-up frontage in accordance with Policy CTY 8 as there was a row of three buildings along New Line.

The site lay between a dwelling and outbuildings and a shed. At this location there was a line of three or more buildings along New Line – travelling north-west along New Line at the junction with Ballyhay Road there was a dwelling at No. 45 Ballyhay Road, an agricultural shed then the gap site and a dwelling with outbuildings beyond

at No. 11 New Line. The dwelling at No. 45 Ballyhay Road was considered to have frontage onto New Line as the plot on which it sat abuts the road along New Line. To provide some context, the Officer took Members through pictures of the site. Although an outline application, an indicative layout of the proposal was submitted. This demonstrated satisfactorily how two dwellings could be accommodated on the site which respected the existing development pattern along the frontage in terms of size, scale, siting and plot size. The proposed dwellings would be sited to front the road and although built slightly in front of the adjacent dwelling at No. 11 New Line, there was no established building line along the frontage and the agricultural shed and dwelling at No. 45 Ballyhay Road were built closer to the road. The rear boundary of the site would tie in with the rear boundary line of No. 11 New Line and No. 45 Ballyhay Road to ensure the proposed dwellings would have similar plot sizes.

As the application was for outline permission, full details of the height and design of the proposed dwellings had not been included. However, an indicative site section drawing had been provided which demonstrated the dwellings would have a maximum height of 6m above finished floor level. This height would be conditioned in any approval.

The adjacent dwelling at No. 11 New Line was single storey and the dwelling at No. 45 Ballyhay Road was 1 and a half storeys therefore the proposed height would tie in with the character along the frontage and aid integration of the proposed dwellings.

New hedging was to be planted behind the visibility splays. A landscaping plan would be conditioned to be submitted at the reserved matters stage and a condition added that all new boundaries shall be post and wire fencing with native species hedgerow planted on the inside to aid integration and soften any visual impact of the dwelling.

In finishing, the Officer stated that the recommendation was to grant outline planning permission.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

As there were no questions at that stage, the Chairman invited Mr Patrick O'Reilly (Agent) to address the Committee, speaking in support of the application.

Firstly, Mr O'Reilly confirmed that on behalf of the applicant he fully supported and was happy with the approval recommendation. The proposed development was a development opportunity under the Policy CTY8 of PPS21 and he endorsed the comments of the Case Officer's report. In respect of the flood risk, a flood risk assessment had been undertaken which fully engaged and dealt with any issues. The site would be designed in keeping with the area and the access would be safe. In terms of the objections, he was unsure as to where those had come from however he noted there may be some neighbouring properties that were not happy that development was occurring beside their property. The site was an infill opportunity, the dwellings would be built at low elevation and would not interfere with the area.

As there were no questions for Mr O'Reilly he was returned to the public gallery.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions for the Planning Officer.

Councillor Walker wished to make a couple of observations. He wondered why the application had been referred to the Committee if there were no questions to be asked. He appreciated the area was a gap site under the current policy however expressed concerns regarding what could be identified as a gap site and the future abuse of the countryside. He felt that was a matter which the Committee should look at in the future.

Councillor Adair concurred with Councillor Walker and expressed concern regarding the application. He welcomed the conditions that had been placed on the application however he was worried that such an application could set a precedent for the abuse of the countryside. The area was a very rural area, the road was narrow and he would be concerned regarding the impact such a development would have on the infrastructure in the area. Councillor Adair questioned if the current outline application could lead to an application for a larger development coming forward in the future.

The Planning Officer noted that there were instances in the countryside that a planning agent would look at and see as an opportunity for an infill development. Such instances needed to be assessed under CTY8. She had carried out a site visit and was in total agreement with the Case Officer that the site was an infill site which fulfilled policy required under CTY8. The gap could accommodate the maximum of two dwellings and therefore could not encourage further development of that site. Any other application that was submitted for that area would have to be assessed under the relevant policy.

Councillor Adair was reassured that two dwellings would be the maximum that could be seen for that site. If an application was brought forward further down the lane that would be considered as ribbon development and that would be discouraged.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Keery, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted and that Planning Permission be granted.

Councillor Adair wished to be recorded as against.

4.2 LA06/2020/0464/F - Lands at 101 Quarry Heights, Newtownards - Demolition of existing industrial buildings and replacement with 23 unit Social Housing development comprising 10no. 2 bedroom townhouses, 11no. 2 bedroom apartments (including 3 wheelchair needs GF apartments) and 2no. 1 bedroom apartments, associated access, parking and landscaping

DEA: Newtownards

Committee Interest: A Local development application 'called-in' to Planning Committee from the delegated list w/c 14 March by a member of that Committee- Called in by Alderman McDowell: *"I wish to call in Planning Application LA06/2020/0464/F land at 101 Quarry Heights Newtownards on the grounds of*

Traffic Safety and the site is situated in former Industrial Lands in a major Industrial Estate in Newtownards"

Proposal: Demolition of existing industrial buildings and replacement with 23 unit Social Housing development comprising 10no. 2 bedroom townhouses, 11no. 2 bedroom apartments (including 3 wheelchair needs GF apartments) and 2no. 1 bedroom apartments, associated access, parking and landscaping

Site Location: Lands at 101 Quarry Heights, Newtownards

Recommendation: Approval

The item had been withdrawn in advance of the meeting.

NOTED.

- 4.3** **LA06/2019/1007/F - Seacourt WWPS, Lands 20m North of 1 Seacourt Lane, Bangor - Retention of a fence and gate surrounding an existing pumping station (Retrospective)**
(Appendices II, III, IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report and two addendums.

DEA: Bangor Central

Committee Interest: A Local development application attracting six or more separate individual objections which are contrary to the officer's recommendation

Proposal: Retention of a fence and gate surrounding an existing pumping station (Retrospective)

Site Location: Seacourt WWPS, Lands 20m North of 1 Seacourt Lane, Bangor

Recommendation: Approval

The Senior Professional and Technical Officer (P Kerr) outlined the detail of the application. She recalled that the application was presented at Committee last September to allow NIW time to explore amendments/alternatives to the proposal. There were 65 objections from 55 addresses, 6 of those were received after the more recent amendments were re-advertised and re-neighbour notified, those raised no new issues and were largely concerning visual impact.

The Officer advised that she had engaged with NIW on numerous occasions after September Committee and they were fully aware of the expectation on them. The changes submitted involved small 10 and 20 cm reductions to parts of the fence that top the wall and also a significant reduction of 1.2m at the gates and fence that was erected from the ground. This left the fence at approximately 1.8m around the whole site.

The site lay within the settlement limit of Bangor within the extant plan and Draft BMAP. It lay within an area of recreation and open space and an LLPA. The site was located within close proximity to Outer Ards Ramsar site and SPA, Coastal Policy Area, Outer Ards Area of Special Scientific Interest, and an area of constraint on mineral development. There were no new policy considerations raised by the amendments and the main policy considerations that applied were SPPS, PPS2, PPS8 as well as ENV3 in Draft BMAP relating to LLPAs.

Due to the sensitive nature of the proposal NIEA and SES were both consulted and had no objections to the proposal.

The Officer highlighted to Members that the basis for discussion this evening was to be focused around the content of the addendum that was uploaded on 23rd March 2022. As outlined in the addendum there were inaccuracies in the initial drawings and the fence on site was not reflected accurately in the drawings. There was no further intended increase in the fence but rather a correction of inaccurate drawings submitted by the applicant.

With regard to investigation into the possibility of using land not within NIW ownership, that was looked into and the statutory body decided not to pursue this avenue as that was dependant on whether or not they felt that planting of some description would be effective. Under planning legislation, Planning had to assess the application before them.

With regard to the aforementioned planting and additional screening through shrubs and trees, NIW decided not to pursue this due to the potential of it looking more visually obtrusive with views becoming entirely restricted when the vegetation was at maturity as well as the impact that the vegetation had with regard to attracting rodents and vermin to their site. That said, although the reduction in the fence may not have gone far enough to allay third party concerns, planning was content that the health and safety impact still outweighed the visual impacts which, due to the amended plans would be somewhat less than before. The concern for potential injury at the site was an important consideration.

The Case Officer recommendation for this application remained approval.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

Councillor McClean asked the Officer to summarise the changes made since the application was last heard. The Planning Officer explained that there had been minimal reductions of 10 cm and 20 cm on the fence that topped the wall. The increased more significant reduction had occurred at the fence and gate from the ground which was reduced to 1.8m, that was located on the coastal side rather than the path side.

Councillor McClean referred to the 'translucent finish' that was detailed and questioned that aspect in relation to the visual impact. The Planning Officer clarified that meant the mesh finish rather than Perspex.

Councillor McRandal sought clarity that the sole change being made was in relation to the height of the fence and that the type of fencing and colouring had not changed. The Planning Officer confirmed that the only change was the height of the fencing.

The Chairman invited Councillor Gilmour to address the Committee who was speaking against the application.

(Councillor Cooper entered the meeting – 7.27 pm)

Councillor Gilmour highlighted that it had been three years since the fence was erected, without planning permission, and it was now the third meeting of the Planning Committee discussing the application. She believed the issues to be fairly clear and fairly stark, there were planning issues and there were judgement issues. The relevant Planning consideration was PPS6 which stated that permission should not be given for development that would damage the environmental quality of an LLPA. Councillor Gilmour felt the first judgement call was whether the fencing was detrimental to the local amenity. The Committee had already considered that matter and had reached a view in principle. The Committee's view was that the fencing was visually unacceptable, and they resolved that they were minded to refuse the application. That judgement was shared by everyone of the 60 people, including Councillors and MLAs, who commented on the application. Even NI Water agreed that there was a definite visual impact. Councillor Gilmour stated that she disagreed with the planning reports interpretation of 'minimal' visual impact. She viewed the fencing as a big ugly eyesore along the beautiful coastline which was totally unacceptable. She advised that many residents had been in contact with her saying they considered it a bizarre judgement on the part of the planning report when it suggested that the visual impact was "minimal" and she found it fortunate that it was the Committee's view that was decisive, not any officials.

Councillor Gilmour recalled at the September meeting the Committee deferred a final decision, in order "to allow NI Water to consider other options and to engage with local landowners" – which referred mainly to the Council, who own all the adjoining land and she questioned what had occurred in the last 7 months. She advised that she recently contacted the Council's Lands Officer to confirm if any contact had been made from NI Water in relation to Seacourt WWPs and the response was clear that no contact had been made. There were now amended plans, which proposed a minor reduction in the height of one part of the existing fence and she felt that for all intents and purposes, that was to keep what was already there. The amendments did not in any way change the visual impact of the fencing.

Councillor Gilmour expressed frustration that no action had been taken by NI Water, they had not engaged in any meaningful dialogue with the Council and they had no proposals for use of adjoining land. NI Water had not been willing to discuss their plans, and the reasons for them, with members of the local community. She was of the understanding that an MLA had asked for a meeting with NI Water on this subject, and they had declined. NI Water had not commissioned any architectural or engineering study, as this Committee had asked them to do or consider any alternative approaches to the problems. All NI Water had done was to see whether they might tweak the existing fencing in some minor degree. Councillor Gilmour described the approach from NI Water as tunnel vision, it was a fence or nothing. She did not see any evidence of an attempt to address the very legitimate concerns of the local community and the Planning Committee. Seven months on, the Planning Committee were being asked to endorse essentially the same proposal that the Committee were minded to reject in the first instance and she hoped the Committee would not provide that endorsement. Councillor Gilmour stated that the Coastal Path was an asset for the whole of Bangor and it should not be allowed to be spoiled.

In finishing, Councillor Gilmour stated that by installing the fence without planning permission NI Water had shown contempt to this Committee and the people of Bangor. Their lack of engagement had further demonstrated their disrespect for the views of the Planning Committee and the local community. The issue of the height and kiosk was one which created by NI Water and was not a matter which the Council was in anyway to blame. A number of years ago, NI Water had reconfigured the site to create the kiosk again without planning permission. Councillor Gilmour felt that if NI Water were minded to they could change the configuration of the fence to something much more acceptable. Councillor Gilmour urged the Committee to vote against the application.

Members had no questions for Councillor Gilmour and she was returned to the public gallery. Following which the Chairman invited further questions from Members for the Planning Officer.

Councillor McClean noted that there had been scarcely any change to the proposal which the Committee had considered to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area and did not address the concerns.

(Councillor Kennedy entered the meeting – 7.32 pm)

He appreciated NI Water had every right to be concerned about mitigating any risks on their land and ensure public safety however he did not feel the Council should refuse the application over those concerns until the Committee further looked at its own considerations with proper scrutiny. If Council was to adopt the same approach most of the coastal path would need to be fenced off. Consideration had not been given to the harm to the visual amenity and he could not add his support to the proposal.

As there were no further questions, the Chairman steered Members towards a proposal.

Proposed by Councillor McClean that the recommendation is not accepted and that planning permission is refused.

The Director reminded the Member that a planning reason was required for a refusal.

Councillor McClean stated that the fundamental planning reason for his proposal was the harm to the visual amenity of the area under PPS6.

The proposal did not receive a seconder.

Councillor Walker shared the concerns and agreed the proposal was unacceptable. The difficulty was that if planning permission was refused and NI Water had to remove the fence that put the Council in jeopardy. He would not be content if the fence was to remain for the foreseeable and expressed concern that NI Water had not engaged with the Council with an alternative. Councillor Walker was unsure how the Council could proceed and asked for guidance in that regard.

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer (G Kerr) stated several matters needed to be born in mind. She recognised that the Committee had been frustrated with NI

Water's approach to the matter and process. However, Members needed to be mindful that it was the structure that the Committee needed to vote on. Also, in respect of the proposal, PPS6 was not a relevant policy in this instance as that policy dealt with planning archeologically and built heritage. Therefore, if Members were minded to refuse that would need to be done under a different policy.

The Chairman outlined the options for deferment.

Alderman McIlveen wondered if it would be useful to have a site meeting with the applicants and was minded to make a proposal in that regard.

The Director stated that the Committee could ask for a site visit however within the planning protocol it outlined that neither the applicant, agent, objectors/supporters or any other member of the public would be permitted to address the Committee as part of that site visit. Therefore, a site meeting could not occur with NI Water. The Director outlined options that were available to the Committee.

Given those circumstances, Alderman McIlveen was unsure if site meeting would be useful.

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer highlighted that the protocol did state that site visits should only be held in exceptional circumstances where the expected benefit would be substantial. The site was well known and the application had now been to Committee three times with considerable debate having already been held. If the Committee were minded to refuse the application, paragraph 62 of the protocol stated that it was her duty to advise that the Planning Committee and Members tabling motions to overturn recommendations of the Planning Department should be mindful of the ability to seek costs on appeal to the Planning Appeals Commission or potential costs liability that may arise through any legal challenge brought against such a contrary decision.

Councillor McRandal agreed with Councillor McClean in respect of the risk exposure along the coastal path and that the fence was an eyesore. He expressed concern in respect of the risk exposure if the application was to be refused and made a proposal that legal advice was sought. He questioned if Council refused the application and NI Water had the fence in place to mitigate the risk exposure how Council's public liability insurance was affected and was there any exposure for individual Members of the Committee.

To her knowledge, the Principal Planning and Technical Officer advised that there had been no legal advice sought to date as to public liability or health and safety obligations. NI Water had erected the fence in the first instance as they were receiving complaints in respect of potential accidents around the site. If the application was refused an enforcement case would be opened again for removal of the fence and NI Water could appeal the refusal.

The Director stated that if the Committee were minded to refuse they needed to be clear as to the Planning reasons why. In terms of the liability issue, that was a separate issue from planning policy she noted the Council could enlist the advice from the legal team.

Proposed by Councillor McRandal, seconded by Councillor McClean, that the application be deferred to seek legal advice.

Councillor McClean felt there was unanimity that the fence was an unacceptable development. The legal and liability issues were an important aspect and he agreed that they should be explored.

In the interest of expediency and moving the application forward, the Principal Planning and Technical Officer suggested that when the application came back to Committee a clear reason for refusal would be provided. In terms of the proposal on the floor she questioned if the application was going to be refused on visual grounds.

The Chairman was of the understanding that the proposal was solely for deferment based on legal reasons and sought clarity from the proposer in that regard.

Councillor McRandal stated that the issue with the proposal was the visual amenity and he was unsure what policy would be valid in relation to that.

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer highlighted that a refusal reason was required and reference could possibly be made to visual amenity and the local area plan.

Councillor Walker was happy to support the proposal and felt it was unfair to ask the Planning Officers to provide a reasoning for refusal when their recommendation was approval. The Committee was not objecting that NI Water was trying to protect the public from hurting themselves rather it was their approach to the matter. Councillor Walker wondered if there was any value meeting with NI Water. He expressed a degree of concern going down the legal route to reach agreement. The Committee needed to have a clear refusal reason.

The Chairman noted that discussions had taken place with NI Water for some time and he was unsure if additional time would assist.

Alderman Gibson recognised that Members were unhappy regarding the adverse visual impact of the proposal. However, Officers had documented less weight on the visual impact in their considerations and were recommending approval.

The Chairman noted that visual amenity was relatively subjective.

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer explained that the assessment of any planning application was the balance of any material matters in line with SPPS and local policy. There was a visual impact from the structure and Officers needed to provide balance if the structure was so bad visually that it would warrant a refusal. Along the coastal path there was sewerage works and different fences which Officers were mindful of in the context. Planning Officers had used their professional planning judgement and did not feel the visual impact was so bad to warrant a refusal.

Alderman Gibson stated that the problem was that the fence was already in existence. He was concerned that the application had come before Committee now on a number of occasions and the Planning Officers position remained the same.

The Chairman indicated he would like Members to ascertain the information they needed to make the right decision on the matter. He felt the fundamental question was the necessity of the fence.

Alderman McIlveen felt there was a form of conflict for members of the Committee and that needed to be borne in mind with such applications. In respect of the liability issues, the outcome could potentially affect the Council and Committee Members individually and he sought guidance in that regard.

The Director advised that she had not come across such a case and agreed that the Committee should be able to make judgement. That question would be also be asked when legal advice was being sought.

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer reminded Members that they were to make decisions based on material planning matters.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McRandal, seconded by Councillor McClean, that application be deferred for legal advice to be sought.

- 4.7 LA06/2020/1054/F - Lands immediately NE of 6 Craigavad Park, Holywood - 2 No. detached dwellings on Site 4 (previously approved detached house ref: W/2006/0314/RM) with detached garages, landscaping and associated site works
(Appendix VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report.

DEA: Holywood & Clandeboye

Committee Interest: A Local development application attracting six or more separate individual objections which are contrary to the officer's recommendation

Proposal: 2 No. detached dwellings on Site 4 (previously approved detached house ref: W/2006/0314/RM) with detached garages, landscaping and associated site works

Site Location: Lands immediately NE of 6 Craigavad Park, Holywood

Recommendation: Approval

The Senior Professional and Technical Officer (A Todd) outlined the detail of the application. The site was located within a larger residential development previously granted planning permission in 2007 for a total of 26 dwellings. The development remained under construction with only some of the dwellings adjacent to Station Road having been completed. The site was located on land zoned for housing in both the North Down and Ards Area Plan and Draft BMAP. The site also lay within the proposed Marino, Cultra and Craigavad Area of Townscape Character. The site had been cleared and the topography sloped gradually downwards to the east with mature trees located along the rear boundary of the site. The existing dwellings already constructed were substantial two and two and a half storey properties.

The development would involve an increase in the number of approved units at site 4 from one detached dwelling to two detached dwellings. In terms of the potential impact on the character of the area, the proposed dwellings would sit in a similar position to the dwelling previously approved on the site. The position of the dwellings would respect the established building line and their height would also be comparable to the adjacent existing dwellings. The proposed plots would be generous in size at around 0.1Ha each with private amenity space measuring between 300 - 450sqm per unit, well in excess of the average 70sqm recommended in Creating Places. Adequate parking would be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling and the mature trees protected by a TPO would be retained and measures taken during construction to ensure that they would not be adversely impacted upon. Additional landscaping was also proposed to help screen and soften the impact of the development. Generous separation distances between the existing and proposed dwellings would also be incorporated to ensure that no unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of existing dwellings would occur.

The scale, height and massing of the buildings would be very comparable to the size and scale of the other adjacent dwellings already constructed which were substantial two and two and a half storey properties. The design and finishes would be of a high quality and completely in keeping with existing dwellings within the area. Similar to the previous approval on the site, render and natural slate were proposed along with hardwood doors and sliding sash windows.

Referring to the image, the Officer displayed the footprint of the original approved dwelling outlined in blue in comparison to the proposed dwellings. As could be seen the frontage width of the development was similar as was the building line. While the proposed plot sizes and footprints of the dwellings were both slightly smaller than the large detached dwellings immediately adjacent, it was not considered that this in itself would render the development out of keeping with the established built form in the wider area or that it would result in any harm to the overall character and appearance of the area.

With regard to density, the development plan key site requirements place no restriction on the maximum density allowed for the site. An *appropriate* mix of house types and sizes was welcomed within the overall development and was indeed encouraged by policy. Paragraph 4.3 of policy QD1 of PPS7 stated that '*quality design requires variety and contrast within developments*'. Paragraph 4.26 also states that on greenfield sites '*innovative layouts and higher densities will be encouraged where they will provide an attractive contrast to existing urban form and on large sites, a range of densities, building forms and a mix of house types will be required to help enhance quality and sustainability.*'

The density of the proposed development would equate to approximately 10 dph which fell well within the definition of low density as outlined in PPS12 Housing in Settlements which was considered as developments less than 15dph. The 10dph was also not considered to be significantly greater than that already found within the area. There are numerous examples of mixed densities within the wider area including 55 Station Road at 20dph, 62 Station Road at 13dph and 31 Station Road at 12dph. There have also been a number of planning approvals in recent years for developments of a similar density to that proposed. Members may also recall that

planning permission for a similar increase in the number of units from one detached dwelling to two semi-detached dwellings at site 25 of the development was previously approved by Planning Committee in June 2020.

Nevertheless, a significant number of objections to the proposal had been received. Those had been considered in detail in the case officer's report. The main concerns raised included:

- Road and pedestrian safety
- Piecemeal development
- Impact on the environment of Station Road
- Excessive density and smaller plot sizes
- Difference in design to the previous approval
- Impact on the amenity of 57 Station Road.

A number of the objections had raised particular concerns regarding road safety. DfI Roads was consulted and raised no objections to the proposal. Station Road was a private road up to the railway bridge where it then became an adopted public road up to the main Bangor Road protected route. DfI Roads were satisfied that the application does not represent intensification of use from the private road onto the public road adjacent to the railway bridge. This assessment had taken into account the number of existing units and future committed development. Policy AMP3 Access to Protected Routes was not applicable as the proposed application did not have direct access onto the A2 protected route.

However, DfI Roads was content that the existing signalised junction where Station Road meets the A2 provided a safe means of access onto the Protected Route. Where the private section of Station Road meets the adopted section, DfI Roads had advised there was no evidence of a collision history or record of delays and/or inconvenience caused due to traffic within its vicinity. Observation of traffic movements made during site visits had also indicated that while some delays were experienced in the vicinity of the railway bridge they were not of a level that would raise concerns regarding road safety.

While concerns had been raised that the approval of the development would set a precedent for similar proposals, that was not the case as each application must be considered on its own merits. Any future applications for similar developments would be assessed as to whether individually or cumulatively they would harm the character or appearance of the area or result in an unacceptable intensification of use onto the public road.

In summary, this development of two detached family homes of high-quality design and finishes, was considered to be acceptable on this site and would not cause any harm to the character or appearance of the area. The site was located within an area zoned for housing and must be considered within the context of the Plan led system. The proposal had been carefully assessed having regard to PPS6 Addendum Areas of Townscape Character, PPS7 Quality Residential Environments and PPS7 Addendum Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas and the Planning Department was satisfied that the development would meet all of the relevant policy requirements. All of the statutory consultees were content with the proposal and the objections raised have been fully considered in the officer's report.

On that basis, the Planning Officer stated it was recommended that full planning permission should be granted.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

Councillor McClean referred to the requirement of the Planning Committee to consider the cumulative impact of such developments yet look at each application in isolation. He expressed concerns that such applications were coming forward on a phased basis rather than a full application for the applicants desired outcome. Councillor McClean asked if the Officer could recognise his concern.

The Planning Officer explained that while Planning considered each application on its own merits part of the consideration of an application included looking at what had been approved previously in the area as that made up part of the character and context of the area. Therefore, with this application Planning Officers had taken into account the previous approval, visually what did the proposal look like in the area and cumulatively what was the impact. In that regard, Planning were satisfied that there was no harm caused by the cumulative impact. If there were to be further applications submitted in the future, planning would continue to assess those in the context of what had been previously approved.

Councillor McClean highlighted the need to give due weight in the first instance to setting precedence.

The Chairman welcomed Neil Davison to the meeting to who was speaking against the application.

Mr Davison advised that over 70 Residents had signed a letter of concern regarding road safety, specifically highlighting the choke point at the railway bridge. Many residents often expressed concern that the bridge area was an accident waiting to happen. As the only option open to the residents to bring road safety to the attention of Public Authorities, those letters of concern addressed this application for densification. Mr Davison explained that the objection centred upon piecemeal densification of Craigavad Park, not the overall approval cited on page 3 of the Case Officer's Report. The Case Officer's report referenced various Policies governing development in the wider area, including the ATC. All of those policies brought to bear the latest and best practices governing development, road and public safety. However, he noted there was no mention of how Authorities were to address access to a development across a Private Road which was not up to DoE Roads criteria and therefore pedestrians (many of whom were children) were at risk.

The Planning Committee was being asked to approve densification of a development across a road which failed all criteria set out by all Public Authorities. There was insufficient width of road. There was no footpath and yet many residents, the Guides and the public, accessing the Coastal Path, walked the road. In 2000, Lorne Guides received 27,500 visitors, 13,000 under the age of 14. The 2006 Roads Service Report C.P. King, referenced by the Case Officer, made no mention of traffic or pedestrian volumes. The report was silent on road safety issues on the Private Road. On page 16 of the Case Officer's Report, it stated; "Objectors have expressed health and safety concerns given there is no footpath along Station Road. This

concern it is beyond the remit of this planning application." The Planning Committee was being asked to close its eyes to the dangers created by its decisions because it was a private road. That defied common sense and all the safety improvements fed into the ATC and other Policies. As per the DFI letter of 13 October 2021, the DFI conclusion was based upon an increase of two dwellings to Station Road on top of the already permitted densification. The methodology used to reach the conclusion was not mentioned, whereas that to determine access from Craigavad Park onto Station Road was documented. As a result of the DFI assessment, the objections of the Residents were being ignored as to future levels of densification which may occur in Craigavad Park as no undertaking had been given by the Developer to restrict further Applications which would give certainty to the residents. Additionally, there was no mention in the DFI assessment of the dangers faced by pedestrians. Any child or pedestrian, following the Highway Code, was exposed to severe danger by vehicles driving down the road and under the railway bridge as the lines of sight effectively blinded drivers to oncoming pedestrians. That was further aggravated by the volume of commercial plant, lorries and goods vehicles going to and from Craigavad Park, which was likely to continue for many years to come.

The assessment referred to collision information. The residents were concerned that road safety, in particular for pedestrians, was on the brink of serious injury – in fact neighbours were aware of uncomfortable situations under the bridge as a matter of routine. In the light the concerns having been expressed as objections to densification, it would shed a very negative light if safety was not treated with the utmost care. Mr Davison questioned if a health and safety assessment had been undertaken at the railway bridge. On the point of each application being assessed on its own merits, he stated that there was a cohort of signatures that were prepared to protest on each and every future application for development in the area which was not in the interests of the public purse. Mr Davison asked the Committee to give consideration to turning down the application on the basis of health and safety concerns at the bridge.

As there were no questions, Mr Davison was returned to the public gallery.

The Chairman then invited Mr David Donaldson to address the Committee who was speaking in support of the application.

Mr Donaldson stated that the application related to two detached houses within the settlement limit of Holywood. The site was within an approved housing development of 26 houses, with a large house already approved on this site. It was acknowledged that the application had attracted representations from a number of local residents. The objections related primarily to concerns over traffic, precedent and privacy. Mr Donaldson endorsed the comprehensive officer report, which addressed all of those matters in considerable detail. However, he wished to stress that Planning in NI operated on the basis of the plan led system. Section 6 of the Planning Act stated that decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise. Mr Donaldson highlighted that was an important point, this site was within the settlement limit of Holywood, and on land which had been zoned for housing since the North Down and Ards Area Plan was adopted 31 years ago. It remained zoned in draft BMAP, which indicated a minimum gross density of 5 dwellings per hectare. Mr Donaldson stated that it was not a case

of garden grabbing or town cramming it was simply the planned development of zoned housing land. It was 10ph or 4 houses to the acre and therefore remained a remarkably low density – most housing zonings were in the range of 20-25dph. In the light of the complete compliance with the development plans, the Committee must consider whether any of the comments raised by the objectors were of such overwhelming weight that they outweigh this development plan compliance and justify refusal of permission. To assist the Committee, Mr Donaldson wished to comment briefly on the key points. Mr Davison had expressed concerns about additional traffic, construction traffic, lack of footpaths etc. Station Road was a private road but it had traffic lights where it met the A2. DfI Roads had no objections. The concerns must be considered in the context of the site already having permission for 27 houses. It was on a road which already served over 100 houses, a Golf Club and Lorne Guide Centre. This proposal would increase that traffic figure by just one house. That fell way below the figure of 5% increase which was the normal threshold for consideration of intensification. Refusal on the basis of traffic generation or road safety could not possibly be supported by policy or practice. The development plan indicated a minimum of 5 houses per hectare and these houses would each be on the site approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre. They would be classically styled and be of a scale, form and appearance which would be complementary to the Craigavad Park and the surrounding area. In relation to precedent, Mr Donaldson highlighted that there were four large detached houses and a pair of semi-detached houses already built and sold; and one further detached house was currently under construction. 'Creating Places' encouraged variety on development sites such as this site. In conclusion, Mr Donaldson stated that that was an application for two large and exclusive detached house on zoned land. It was on a sustainable location within the settlement limit of Holywood. There was no policy basis whatsoever to oppose the development and the objections could not be sustained in view of the facts. Mr Donaldson asked the Committee to endorse the Officers recommendation and grant permission.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

Councillor McRandal asked when DfI Road considered the application would they have considered road safety on the unadopted section of the road. Mr Donaldson stated that generally DfI Roads would look at road safety in relation to the adopted road network. He highlighted that Station Road was long established serving a number of houses and when you look at the level of intensification proposed as a result of this application it was very minor.

Councillor McRandal concluded from those remarks that the agent/applicant had been left to their own devices in respect of the road network within Craigavad Park and how it accessed onto Station Road. Mr Donaldson did not agree in that regard. He stated that the site had been sold as suitable for development 32 years ago, since the North Down & Ards Area Plan was adopted. This was not garden grabbing; it was zoned development on a zoned housing site. The area had been looked at many times through the development and planning process.

Councillor McRandal asked if any reassurance could be given on how road safety was considered in terms of the layout of the site. Mr Donaldson recognised that Station Road was a narrow road however the traffic in the area moved slowly. The

internal layout of Craigavad Park was designed to a higher standard than Station Road itself and there were footpaths, a wider road and space available. The development itself had been set out using Creating Places and the modern standards.

The Chairman noted the residents' concerns in relation to the road. Whilst there could be argument for one additional dwelling he highlighted the piece meal approach that was being used and did not feel that was the ideal way for planning. Councillor Cathcart sought Mr Donaldson's views in that regard. Mr Donaldson outlined that the current planning permission on the site dated back to 2006, within those years seven houses had been built and now the two houses in the proposal were coming forward. With the exception of two, all of those were detached houses which sat on large plots. The demand in the area was for high quality, large houses set on spacious plots and that was what the developer was seeking to achieve. There were some plots within the development, such as the one in the application that were larger which had lent itself to the creation of two detached houses on the site. Any further applications would need to be looked at carefully in relation to the market demand, planning policies and road safety. Mr Donaldson felt the development would always remain at the upper end of the housing market and a low density development.

There were no further questions for Mr Donaldson and he was returned to the public gallery.

The Planning Officer recognised the level of objection in relation to proposal and for that reason the application had being held back to allow DfI to consider the issue in more depth. Having done that they remained satisfied that they could not sustain a reason for refusal on road safety grounds. This current application when considered with the previous applications would not trigger or exceed the threshold of the 5% intensification of use of the access, looking at where the private part of the road joined the adopted road. DfI had been on-site a number of times, taken observations and had advised Planning that they were content.

On the issue of intensification, Alderman McIlveen noted that the issue had been raised along the same stretch of road previously. He recalled a number of meetings ago when the issue of intensification had been debated and that legal opinion had been obtained in that respect and questioned if that had been taken into account. The Planning Officer stated that in that instance that was more to do with the potential impact on the protected route. As this application did not involve a direct access onto the protected route policy AMP3 was not engaged. DfI Roads had advised that the road onto the protected route was a safe junction and it was signalised.

The Chairman questioned if there was another exit off Station Road and was of the view that it could only be accessed onto the A2. The Planning Officer confirmed that Station Road was not a through road and the A2 was only access/exit. The private road came onto the adopted part of Station Road first before moving to the protected route.

Councillor McRandal recalled that this was the second application that had been seen in recent times whereby there had been extent planning permission for one property and a new application was being presented with a proposal for two properties on the plot. In respect of the issue of intensification, he questioned would it be legitimate to give consideration to that issue in the cumulative. Having spoken to DfI Roads, the Planning Officer advised that they would be content to consider the applications cumulatively and take account of the changes to the large residential site. However, an assessment would need to be undertaken as to the threshold of the 5% intensification. There were in the region of 110 existing properties in the area, extant permissions and traffic associated with the Golf Club and Guide Centre and therefore the Planning Officer imagined the threshold would be high given the amount of development and traffic already on the road.

Councillor McRandal referred to the concerns of Mr Davison and intensification on the unadopted part of the road. There was pedestrian and vehicle traffic to give consideration too. The Planning Officer explained that if the intensification did not exceed 5% then DfI could not ask for any improvements and therefore each application needed to be considered on its own merits.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning permission be granted.

Alderman McIlveen highlighted that the Committee had gone through the application in detail. He noted that there were concerns however he believed the Officers had demonstrated how the assessment had dealt with those concerns and the application fell within current policy.

Councillor Thompson was content that the concerns had been addressed and had been adequately explored by DfI.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning permission be granted.

Councillor McClean and Councillor McRandal wished to be recorded as against.

- 4.8** **LA06/2021/0169/F – 12 Rugby Avenue, Bangor – Demolition of dwelling to accommodate replacement dwelling and garage, landscaping and associated site works**
(Appendix VIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report.

DEA: Bangor West

Committee Interest: A Local development application attracting six or more separate individual objections which are contrary to the officer's recommendation

Proposal: Demolition of dwelling to accommodate replacement dwelling and garage, landscaping and associated site works

Site Location: 12 Rugby Avenue, Bangor

Recommendation: Approval

The Senior Professional and Technical Officer (C Rodgers) outlined the detail of the application. The site was located within the settlement limit of Bangor as shown in both the North Down and Ards Area Plan and Draft BMAP. It was not affected by any other plan designation and the area was characterised by residential development. St. Comgall's Primary School was located beyond the western boundary of the site.

The existing dwelling was a two-storey detached property with a hipped roof. There were a range of house types in the surrounding area including two-storey detached and semi-detached dwellings and detached single-storey dwellings. The finishes of the surrounding dwellings include render and brick. The original proposal involved the erection of two dwellings on this site but was amended to a single replacement dwelling during the processing of the application.

The Officer further explained that the design and finishes of the dwelling were in-keeping with other dwellings in the area and the proposed ridge height was consistent with the scale of dwellings in the vicinity (8.3m above finished floor level). Density and plot size remained as existing as that was a like for like replacement. The proposed replacement dwelling occupied a similar footprint to the existing dwelling and the established building line along Rugby Avenue was respected. The existing access would be retained, and adequate provision was made for parking.

The impact on residential amenity had been assessed in detail in the case officer report. The proposal would have no unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity in terms of overlooking, loss of light, overshadowing or other disturbance. The proposed upper floor landing window on the gable facing No.14 Rugby Avenue (to the south of the site) would be finished in obscure glazing and that could be secured via planning condition.

She confirmed that a completed NIEA Biodiversity Checklist was submitted with the application, and it did not identify a scenario where the development could have an adverse impact on designated sites or other natural heritage interests.

The site was within a potential inundation area associated with Clandeboye Lake. No condition assurances were provided and DFI Rivers deemed the overall hazard rating as high. To address that concern, the original scheme of two units was amended and a single replacement dwelling was now proposed. As the proposal was for a like for like replacement dwelling, there was no greater flood or safety risk associated with this application.

Following advertisement and neighbourhood notification of the original scheme 21 letters of objection from 11 separate addresses were received. No further objections were received following advertisement and neighbourhood notification of the amended scheme for a single replacement dwelling.

Having considered all material planning matters, the Officer concluded that it was recommended that this application was approved.

As there were no questions from Members, the Chairman asked that Mr Colin McAuley (Agent) be brought into the meeting. He then invited him to address the Committee to speak in support of the application.

Mr McAuley thanked the Committee and endorsed the Council's Planning Officers' recommendation to approve this application. By way of background, he clarified that this application started out as a proposal to replace the existing dilapidated detached dwelling with a pair of semi-detached dwellings, including the formation of an additional access onto Rugby Avenue. It was this original scheme for a pair of semi-detached dwellings that attracted some local objection, despite the Planning Officers' feedback that the semi-detached scheme was acceptable to them in principle.

As a result of the DfI Rivers Agency response following their recent review of the Clandeboye Reservoir, the site was identified as falling within a potential area of inundation, an issue which Members may now be familiar with. As a result of that, the scheme was revised to remove any intensification in use of the site, to a 'like-for-like' replacement dwelling and garage. The planning policy for development in proximity to reservoirs was set out in PPS 15 Policy FLD 5. It stated the following with regard to replacement buildings, 'planning permission will be granted provided it is demonstrated that there is no material increase in the flood risk to the development or elsewhere'.

Mr McAuley noted that DfI Rivers confirmed in their final response that 'from the submitted plans this proposal does not exceed the size of the previous building and therefore DfI Rivers would have no concerns of additional run off being generated as a result of these proposals.' He stated that the proposal for a replacement dwelling satisfied the policy requirements of PPS 15 Policy FLD 5. It was also important to note that no objections had been received in respect of the revised scheme for a like-for-like replacement dwelling and garage.

In addition to the above, Mr McAuley believed that Members may wish to note that following the submission of the revised scheme for a replacement dwelling, they had engaged with a neighbour who resided in the adjoining dwelling at 14 Rugby Avenue, granting his request for a first floor landing window to be fitted with opaque glass. He emphasised that the revised proposal was compliant with all prevailing planning policy set out within the SPPS, PPS 7, PPS 7 Addendum and PPS 15 regarding flood risk. Rivers Agency had no objections to the revised scheme, and no third party objections had been received. Considering the foregoing points, Mr McAuley on behalf of the applicant endorsed the Planning Officer's professional recommendation to approve and respectfully requested the Committee to do likewise.

As there were no questions from Members, the Chairman thanked Mr McAuley for his attendance at the meeting and asked that he was escorted into the virtual public gallery.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McClean, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning approval be granted.

4.4 LA06/2020/0014/F – Lands approximately 200m East of 155b Movilla Road, Newtownards – Single-storey amenity building to serve established fishery with kitchen, clubroom, overnight guest accommodation, hardstanding and associated site works
(Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report.

DEA: Ards Peninsula

Committee Interest: A Local development application attracting six or more separate individual objections which are contrary to the officer's recommendation

Proposal: Single-storey amenity building to serve established fishery with kitchen, clubroom, overnight guest accommodation, hardstanding and associated site works

Site Location: Lands approximately 200m East of 155b Movilla Road, Newtownards

Recommendation: Approval

The Senior Professional and Technical Officer (P Kerr) outlined the detail of the application. The site was located on the fishery facility between the car park and the fishing pond. There was currently a container within the site used as an office/kitchen as part of the facility, which was in disrepair and was to be removed as part of this application. The proposal if approved by Committee would have a condition attached to any approval ensure that there was no cumulative impact. That proposal would have much less of a visual impact in this area than the existing container to be replaced. All consultees were content with the proposal.

She verified that the proposal was being presented to Committee as it had attracted more than six objections. It was important to note that there was a fall back position for this application as there was extant outline (LA06/2017/0882/O) planning permission on the site for a single storey amenity building to serve the established fishery with small café/clubroom, storage, managers facilities and overnight accommodation which was granted 20.09.19. The proposal being presented was for full permission rather than reserved matters as it involved a slight relocation of the building in comparison as to what was approved in the outline. All the other outline conditions had been adhered to in this proposal.

The Officer highlighted that there was currently a live enforcement case for unauthorised building works at the site which was still pending an outcome (LA06/2021/0304/CA). That was an entirely separate issue to the subject matter of this proposal and had no bearing on the processing of this application being presented tonight.

There were nine objections received from seven different addresses in respect of this proposal which raised the following relevant planning issues:

- increase in traffic on the lane
- littering on the lane
- increase in noise/entertainment licence being issued/anti-social behaviour

The above matters would be addressed throughout her presentation.

Turning to the development plan, she commented that the proposal site lay within the countryside in the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015. No other designations effected the site.

With regard to regional policy, the main policy considerations fell under PPS21, PPS8 Open Space Sport and Outdoor Recreation and PPS16. PPS21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside CTY1 directed towards PPS8 and PPS16 for this type of development. PPS8 Policy OS3 Outdoor recreation in the countryside applied in particular to part 6 where it stated that any ancillary buildings or structures were designed to a high standard, were of a scale appropriate to the local area and were sympathetic to the surrounding environment in terms of their siting, layout and landscape treatment. The proposed building was of an appropriate scale and massing in order to be considered as ancillary to the fishery. In relation to its design, it was appropriate for the local area and had high quality finishes and material, smooth render Scrabo stone cladding and natural roof slates.

Regarding Planning Policy Statement 16 Tourism, the relevant policy considerations were TSM5 Tourism in the Countryside and TSM7 which was the general criteria for tourism development. She stressed that it was important to note that Movilla Fishery was considered a tourist amenity (Discover NI) and an attraction in its own right. Therefore, criteria b of TSM5 applied where a cluster of three or more units located at or close to the tourist amenity could be provided. That, alongside consideration under PPS8 OS3 had been assessed as policy compliant.

Regarding TSM7 which dealt with design criteria and general criteria for all tourism development all design criteria were met. The general criteria stated that the proposal had to be compatible with surrounding land uses and would not harm the amenity of nearby residents. This proposal in front of us, as had been submitted, would not significantly impact upon the residential amenity of the surrounding residents and was deemed compatible with the use of the fishery and adjacent land uses due to the nature of its scale and use. Due to its scale and nature, there would be little traffic creation and noise or litter creation caused by such a proposal. This was for very small scale guest accommodation and ancillary building/clubhouse. What had been applied for did not involve any areas that would require an entertainment licence nor could it accommodate any type of event that would result in loss of adjacent residential amenity. The proposal was also in place of the existing office/kitchen/clubhouse container that already existed on the site.

In relation to the roads and access aspect of this criteria as well as assessing the proposal against PPS3 access movement and Parking, DFI had no objections to the proposal. The existing access and existing parking area would remain unaltered and a proposal of this scale would have little or no impact. Notwithstanding the fact that it was replacing an existing container being used as an amenity building. Once again, she reiterated there was already an extant outline approval on this site which the applicant could submit reserved matters for with or without this permission.

Concluding, the Officer remarked that the proposal had an extant permission, the proposal was policy complaint and therefore approval was recommended. She would however ask if the Committee would allow delegated powers to add an extra

condition to ensure that this permission, if granted, would be in place of the extant outline as although they would be too close to build both, it was a possibility.

RECESS

The meeting went into recess at 9.07 pm and resumed at 9.18 pm.

(At this stage, Councillors Adair, Brooks and Cooper left the meeting – 9.07pm)

Following the Officer's report, the Chairman sought questions from Members.

In terms of the accommodation offered and tourism aspect, Councillor Thompson noted that the current provision was in a state of disrepair and thus he would be pleased to see improvements. He asked how many bedrooms were proposed, did they have an ensuite and if they were intended for overnight use.

The Planning Officer confirmed that there would be two bedrooms both ensuite and they were being planned for overnight stays by guests utilising the fishery. Presently located on the right hand side of the site, she pointed out that there was already an amenity building, an angler's lounge, a kitchen and reception area.

Within the Officer's report, it had outlined that there would not be full self-catering facilities provided and Councillor Thompson sought further clarity on that.

Taking account of the floor plan and description, the Planning Officer verified that statement to be correct. The kitchen and angler's lounge were currently available for day to day use. She assumed that those staying in the guest accommodation could also use the communal kitchen and lounge alongside other anglers and club members.

Alderman Gibson requested clarification regarding the additional condition placed on the application and wondered if that was in response to recent objections received.

The Planning Officer explained that she had checked through the application prior to the meeting and had also explored the extant file. She was aware that the extant planning permission and the proposed amenity building were quite closely positioned. Although there was no overlap of those, she wanted to ensure that both permissions could not be built out although it was unlikely it would be possible. Hence, following the proposed works, there would only be one amenity building on the site.

Bringing attention to the enforcement notice, Alderman Gibson wondered if that action was ongoing and would it impact on the decision.

The Planning Officer stated that it was indeed an ongoing issue in relation to building works on the facility but separate from the application under discussion.

At this point, the Principal Planning and Technical Planning Officer further clarified that the original outline planning permission had been granted but the applicant wished to make some changes. Those would not have been part of the Reserved

Matters as they had to comply with the outline application and thus, the condition was added to guarantee that both could not be built out.

Proposed by Alderman Gibson, seconded by Councillor Thompson that the recommendation be adopted.

As seconder, Councillor Thompson acknowledged that it was a facility well supported by anglers and he was satisfied that a better tourism attraction would be accessible at that location.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning approval be granted.

4.5 LA06/2020/0823/F – Land at 160 High Street, Holywood – Construction of 29 No. dwellings (16 No. houses and 13 No. apartments) with associated car parking and landscaping
(Appendix **)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report.

DEA: Holywood & Clandeboye

Committee Interest: A major development application

Proposal: Construction of 29 No. dwellings (16 No. houses and 13 No. apartments) with associated car parking and landscaping

Site Location: Land at 160 High Street, Holywood

Recommendation: Approval

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer (G Kerr) outlined the detail of the application which was appearing before Members as it was a major application. There were also seven objections which had been received from six addresses with all material issues raised being addressed in the case officer read. A wide range of consultation was carried including HED, SES, NIEA, Roads, Rivers, Env Health, NI Water with all having no objections to the proposal. The Officer detailed that Members would be aware that Section 27 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 placed a statutory duty on developers to carry out a Pre-application Community Consultation on major development proposals.

The PAN submitted complied with the legislation and community consultation was carried out through online and remote means due to current COVID-19 social distancing restrictions a website was designed for the consultation to allow residents and stakeholders an opportunity to view plans for the development, details to get in touch with members of the project team and provide feedback on the plans before the planning application was submitted. For those with no internet access, hard copy project information packs were delivered to their addresses as well as enclosed feedback forms and pre-paid envelopes.

The Officer referred to a slide which displayed the application site and surrounding area and explained that this was the former Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, with buildings on the site having been demolished. The site topography rose

gradually from High Street towards the rear boundary. There were protected trees on the site. There was a watercourse that ran from the west corner of the site, across the site and along the eastern boundary. There was an existing access to the site off High Street. The surrounding area was predominantly residential with a mix of house types and designs. There were also some schools and churches and the site was approximately 175m south of Holywood's town centre.

She detailed that the application site was located within the settlement development limit of Holywood as designated in the North Down and Ards Area Plan 1985-1994, Belfast Urban Area Plan and draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015. The site was also designated within the proposed Holywood South Area of Townscape Character (ATC). The proposed ATC designation in draft BMAP was a material consideration relevant to this application. The principle of development of housing on this site was considered acceptable as the site was within the settlement limit of Holywood and on a brownfield site where housing development was encouraged.

In terms of the layout of the site, the proposal was considered to be a quality residential development bringing a now derelict site back into use within walking distance of Holywood town centre. The proposals for 16 dwellings and 13 apartments were set on a site surrounded by predominately residential development. The proposed dwellings would be detached and would be located towards the rear of the site with two separate apartment blocks closer to the entrance to the site. All properties would face onto the road network and would have in-curtilage car parking and private amenity space which was a similar pattern of development to the surrounding streets and area. The apartments would have shared car parking at the rear and shared amenity space surrounding the buildings which was characteristic of apartment developments. The properties were set on generous plots with adequate car parking.

As the proposal was for greater than 25 units, she said that an area of open space had been provided within the site as per Policy OS 2 of PPS 8. It had been demonstrated that the area of useable open space was greater than 10% of the total site area as advised under policy. There was a watercourse within the site with a 5m landscaped buffer maintained adjacent to it and many trees that were protected by a TPO with sufficient space around the layout would not harm any tree protected by the TPO and that any trees to be felled were not part of the TPO.

In respect of the design of the dwellings, the Officer detailed that they would comprise a mix of two and two and a half storeys with pitched roofs with the apartment blocks would be two and a half and three and a half storeys with pitched roofs which would respect the massing within the surrounding area. The dwellings and apartments would be finished in a mix of render and red brick with a mix of grey natural slate or terracotta tiled roofs. That was considered as sympathetic and in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. Within the Design and Access Statement, the agent had demonstrated how the design, materials and detailing had been drawn from similar properties within the surrounding area. It was therefore considered that the proposal would have no unacceptable adverse impacts on residential amenity.

The proposal would use an existing access onto High Street, Hollywood, which was not a protected route. The site was within walking distance to Hollywood Town Centre and has pedestrian links to other shops/ services, schools and recreational facilities within the wider Hollywood area. It was well served by public transport with bus stops within 100m from the development access and Hollywood Train Station was 800m walk from the site.

The Officer concluded that the recommendation was to grant planning permission.

The Chairman sought questions from Members.

Councillor McRandal made reference to the enforcement case relating to the site and queried if it was relevant to the application.

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer verified that there had been a breach of planning legislation involving the removal of trees prior to the new applicants purchasing the land. She stressed that it was not directly relevant to this development proposal and was being dealt with by the Planning Enforcement Team. The Tree Officer had indicated that she was content with this current application. The Planning Officer verified that the breach was in respect of LA06/2018/0035/CA – *'unauthorised removal of trees which were covered by a TPO without benefit of consent of the Council. The Council thoroughly investigated the matter and a replanting notice is to be served in line with the current development proposal to ensure that all trees removed without the benefit of consent are replaced on a one to one basis'*.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Alderman Gibson that the recommendation be adopted.

Having listened to the presentation and read the report, it was perceived by Alderman McIlveen that certain matters highlighted by objectors were taken into consideration and the necessary amendments made. He was satisfied that the application had been thoroughly examined by Officers and met policy requirements.

Alderman Gibson echoed the comments of the previous speaker.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Alderman Gibson, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning approval be granted.

4.6 LA06/2020/0273/F – 17 Moss Road, Ballygowan – Ground floor extension to NE side of existing offices, to replace existing ground floor offices
(Appendix VI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report.

DEA: Comber

Committee Interest: Local application involving development which constitutes a departure from the Development Plan and which is recommended for approval

Proposal: Ground floor extension to NE side of existing offices, to replace existing ground floor offices

Site Location: 17 Moss Road, Ballygowan

Recommendation: Approval

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer (G Kerr) outlined the detail of the application. Initially there had been seven objections from six addresses received, however the Officer noted that when the proposal was amended from a two-extension to a single storey extension only two objections were received. All consultees had no objections with some requesting conditions.

The site was located on the southern side of Moss Road within the development limit of Ballygowan. The site was occupied by a long-established engineering company called CCP Gransden which was a company specializing in advanced composite design and manufacture. It was comprised of one main building set back from the Moss Road with ample areas to the side and front for parking and turning of vehicles. There were a variety of land uses in the vicinity including housing adjacent to the west of the site, a quarry to the east of the site and agricultural fields.

The site was located within the settlement limit of Ballygowan as defined in the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 where there was a presumption in favour of development. The site was within lands designated for proposed housing under HPA 4. As this application was to expand the business and given that the site was located within a zoning for proposed housing, although not considered to be a major departure from the development plan, the proposal the proposal required to be presented before Members as the number of objections also exceeded six from separate addresses

The Officer referred to the planning history which was a material consideration as there was a long-established factory use on this site which pre-dated the construction of the housing with a recent approval for an office building presented to Members of the Committee in October 2016 voting to grant planning permission.

In respect of the proposal, a ground floor extension to the NW side of existing offices was proposed which would replace existing ground floor offices which were to be demolished. When travelling from the east towards the site, the proposed development would be well screened by the existing mature planting along the eastern boundary which would aid its integration. As the proposal sought permission for a minor extension and would not introduce a new use, the principle of development was acceptable. The extension would have a sloping roof rising to 6.8m high, 9.5m deep and 61m long.

There was a row of 14 dwellings along the north-west boundary of the site, adjacent to where the proposed extension was to be constructed. The original submitted design was for a two-storey extension to the building, with first floor windows facing the row of dwellings along the NW boundary. Concerns were raised with regard to the first-floor element of the proposal. The design had since been amended so that there were no first-floor windows now proposed and no first floor. The proposed extension was to have only ground-floor office space, ground-floor windows and roof lights on the slanted roof structure.

Environmental Health had been consulted with regard to any potential impact the development proposal may have on the dwellings with respect to noise, air pollution, general amenity, ambient air quality and contaminated land. Environmental health responded with no objection to the proposal in this regard and confirmed that the extension would provide additional office space. It was noted that no externally mounted plant or equipment was to be located on the facade. Taking into consideration the proposed future office use, Environmental Health was satisfied that the development proposed should not cause significant adverse noise impact to the occupiers of nearby residential dwellings.

No alternations to the access with the public road were proposed. An increase of 10 car parking places was proposed for five visitors and five staff in addition to existing parking to the front and rear of the building. DFI Roads were consulted and had no objection.

The site did not carry any special designations in recognition of any nature conservation. However, the site was in close proximity to Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites. The potential impact of this proposal on Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites had been assessed.

In conclusion, the Officer stated that given the assessment of the proposal, policy and consultee responses grant of full planning permission was recommended.

Following scrutiny of the points raised by objectors, Alderman McIlveen felt it concerning that many had related to the overlooking of children's bedroom windows. With that borne in mind, he questioned how much higher the windows would be set in the new offices in comparison to the current office block.

The Principal and Technical Planning Officer referred to the slides depicting the original elevation and concurred with the Member that the two storeys had been deemed unacceptable to Officers.

Alderman McIlveen voiced unease that the windows appeared substantially higher than the existing block whereby windows were positioned at a lower level. The roof was also higher in the new building, albeit no longer comprising two storeys but it was difficult to ascertain from looking at drawings exactly how high they were. He asked if there were any proposals to raise the level of the internal flooring as regards the views from inside that particular office block. Perhaps with an alteration of the angle of view towards adjacent houses.

The Principal and Technical Officer specified that the elevations would be built to tie in with the original building. The distance was approximately 20m to the shared boundary and the 3m high boundary wall would prevent a direct view. The distance was 25-33m back to back between the dwellings and proposed extension. She observed that there were no overlooking concerns or an amenity issue given the design and the fact that the windows in the adjacent houses were at a higher level.

Returning to the issue of objections raised, Alderman McIlveen discerned that noise was one of those and Environmental Health had been duly consulted. A comment

had mentioned that noise was occurring throughout the day and affecting the times when children were sleeping. To that end, he queried if there were any previous conditions on the factory pertaining to hours of operation, as he thought it would be odd to have houses in close proximity to a factory without those.

In response, the Planning Officer believed it to be a case of 'buyer beware', considering it was a long established factory based in the area before the houses were constructed. House buyers would be fully aware that they were situated beside an existing operational factory. At this stage, Officers were undertaking a determination of the extension and she was mindful that no hours of operation could be affixed to an extension. If there was a breach of time conditions pertaining to the main factory itself, then that would permit an investigation by the Enforcement Team.

Alderman McIlveen sought an assurance that the extension was to be utilised for administration purposes only.

The Planning Officer verified that it was for storage and administration offices with no manufacturing element included.

Proposed by Alderman Gibson, seconded by Alderman Keery that the recommendation be adopted.

Holding local knowledge of the area, Alderman Gibson accepted that the factory had been operational for 30-40 years. The former use had been a major industrial site which contained several factories. As the size had diminished, he recognised that the level of objections had also significantly reduced. He maintained that it offered much needed employment for the area and the factory seemed to be closed at night. The neighbouring houses were constructed 15 years ago and when those plans had been submitted, Members of the legacy Ards Borough Council had welcomed them.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Alderman Keery, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning approval be granted.

(Having declared an interest in Item 4.9, Councillor Adair had left earlier in the meeting)

- 4.9 LA06/2021/0353/F – Adjacent to properties extending from 59 Harbour Road to 81 New Harbour Road, Portavogie – Environmental Improvement Scheme consisting of creation of a new civic focal point and reorientation of the memorial statue. Installation of street furniture, pillars and raised planters. Replacement of street lighting with feature columns. Extension and refurbishment of existing pedestrian wall with feature inlays. New decorative surfaces to all footpaths, artwork to gable wall, winch anchor point, relocation of Armco barrier and concrete hard standing to the existing winch house and all associated site works**
(Appendix IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Case Officer's Report.

DEA: Ards Peninsula

Committee Interest: Application made by the Council

Proposal: Environmental Improvement Scheme consisting of creation of a new civic focal point and reorientation of the memorial statue. Installation of street furniture, pillars and raised planters. Replacement of street lighting with feature columns. Extension and refurbishment of existing pedestrian wall with feature inlays. New decorative surfaces to all footpaths, artwork to gable wall, winch anchor point, relocation of Armco barrier and concrete hard standing to the existing winch house and all associated site works

Site Location: Adjacent to properties extending from 59 Harbour Road to 81 New Harbour Road, Portavogie

Recommendation: Approval

The Senior Professional and Technical Officer (C Rodgers) outlined the detail of the application. The site was within the settlement of Portavogie as per the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015. Referring to the slide, the Officer highlighted the layout of the proposed works which would update the existing public realm along Harbour Road.

Raised planters would soften the appearance of the northern portion of the application site and benches would be introduced. The existing wall along the footpath would be extended and refurbished with a rendered finish and coping with artwork. Resurfacing of paving would create a much more modern, accessible and safe space. Uncontrolled pedestrian crossing would be introduced to ensure safe access for all.

All consultees were content subject to conditions and no objections had been received.

The development would make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and would create an attractive space for the public to view the harbour. The Council would secure funding for proposed works subject to granting of planning permission

In finishing, the Officer stated that the recommendation was to grant planning permission subject to a number of conditions including a condition to restrict hours of construction to protect residential amenity and a condition to ensure mitigation was implemented to protect designated sites.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Thompson that the recommendation be adopted.

As proposer, Alderman McIlveen declared that this application presented a very exciting development for Portavogie and the village had long awaited such an enhancement scheme. It would certainly brighten up the heart of the village particularly around the harbour area. He commended Officers for bringing it forward adding that he was pleased that the scheme had been thoroughly looked at and complied with the policies in place.

Concurring with his colleague's remarks, Councillor Thompson also believed the proposed works to be a wonderful addition to the Portavogie area. He hoped that the development scheme would avail of the necessary Seaflag funding and it would be passed through the planning system as soon as possible. Without doubt, it would provide a further tourism offering for the Ards Peninsula as well as across the rest of the Borough.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning approval be granted.

5. UPDATE ON PLANNING APPEALS (FILE 160051)

(Appendix X)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning attaching Planning Appeals Commission Decision.

1. The following appeal was allowed on 11 March 2022.

Appeal reference:	2019/A0099
Application Reference:	LA06/2018/1392/F
Appeal by:	King's Church Bangor
Subject of Appeal:	Demolition of existing church building and erection of 17 apartments over 4 floors with 30 enclosed car parking spaces, with 5 further retained off-street spaces and a loading bay
Location:	196 Seacliff Road, Bangor

The Council refused this application on 6 October 2020 for the following reasons:

- The proposal was contrary to policy QD1(a) and (g) of the Department's Planning Policy Statement 7: Quality Residential Environments in that the development would, if permitted result in the overdevelopment of the site and cause unacceptable damage to the local character and environmental quality of the area by reason of its layout, scale, proportions, massing, hard surfaced areas, design and appearance of buildings.
- The proposal was contrary to Policy LC 1 (a) of the Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7, Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas, in that the proposed density is significantly higher than that found in the locality would not be in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the established residential area
- The proposal was contrary to Policy LC 1 (b) of the Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7, Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas, in that the proposed development would not be in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the established residential area

- The proposal was contrary to Policy ATC 2 of the Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 6, Areas of Townscape Character, in that the proposed development would not respect the built form of the area and would not maintain or enhance the overall character of the area by reason of its layout, scale, massing, design and density.

The Council's first and fourth reasons for refusal were not sustained. Whilst it was acknowledged the impact on the proposed ATC remained a material consideration to be objectively assessed, the Commissioner believed the policies within APPS6 and the related provisions of the SPPS refer to ATCs, but no reference was made to draft ATCs, which do not have the same status or legal standing as a designated ATC. He was therefore not persuaded that Policy ATC2 of APPS6 and the provisions of the SPPS were applicable to the consideration of the appeal development.

With regard to Policy QD1 of PPS7, it stated that planning permission would only be granted for new residential development where it was demonstrated that the proposal would create a quality and sustainable residential environment. The policy went on to state that in Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Character housing proposals would be required to maintain or enhance their distinctive character and appearance. Again, as the policy referred to ATCs, but no reference was made to draft ATCs, the Commissioner was not persuaded that this element of Policy QD1 was applicable to the appeal development. Notwithstanding this, the potential impact of the appeal development on the proposed ATC remained a material consideration.

The Council considered that the overall appearance and consequent visual impact of the appeal building was unacceptable given its design and incompatibility with the surrounding design context. It also considered that the resulting visual impact would also fail to conserve or enhance the proposed ATC designation. The Commissioner acknowledged that the appeal building was a large structure that would occupy a prominent frontage position on a corner / road junction location. It was undeniable that it would be readily apparent in the street scene. However, he considered that this location facilitates such a building on the site without detriment to the character of the area given the transitional role the site plays.

The Commissioner was not persuaded that the size, massing, siting and overall design and finish of the apartments would render the appeal building visually pre-eminent or discordant within the streetscape or surrounding context. It was considered that despite its size, the appeal building had been carefully designed to respect the scale and character of existing buildings using differing but nevertheless sympathetic building materials. It would also respect the existing street pattern, as well as landmarks, topographical and other features which contributed to the character of Bangor.

With regard to density, whilst it was accepted that the density of the proposal would be higher and the pattern of settlement would vary to that generally exhibited in the ERA, these differences when taken together with the corner site position, topography and the large gaps in the surrounding built development constituted by the RUYC grounds, would not render the appeal development disharmonious with,

or result in unacceptable damage to the local character and environmental quality of the area.

The Commissioner was satisfied that although the appeal development did not meet specific elements of Policy LC1 in a purely mathematical sense, it nevertheless satisfied the essential thrust of Policy LC1 taken as a whole. The Council's second and third reasons for refusal were not sustained. The decision was attached to this report.

New Appeals Lodged

2. The following appeal was submitted on 21 February 2022:

Appeal reference:	2021/E0070
Enforcement Case Reference:	LA06/2016/0285/CA
Appeal by:	Mr & Mrs Howard Hastings
Subject of Appeal:	1) Alleged unauthorised infilling and raising of the land without the benefit of planning permission. 2) Alleged unauthorised construction of a timber retaining structure.
Location:	27 Station Road, Craigavad, Holywood BT18 0BP

Details of appeal decisions, new appeals and scheduled hearings can be viewed at www.pacni.gov.uk.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

Proposed by Councillor McRandal, seconded by Alderman Keery that the recommendation be adopted.

As no questions from Members were forthcoming, the Chairman made reference to the report and the first appeal listed. He recalled that the application in respect of Seacliff Road had been previously discussed at length by the Committee. Not only had it been strongly opposed by the local community but the Committee had also agreed with the Officer's recommendation to refuse the proposal. He expressed disbelief that that decision had been overturned by the PAC, especially pertaining to the ATC. He thought it would be interesting to see what impact that decision would yield when the Council came to examine the issue of ATCs within the Local Development Plan.

Supporting the Chairman's comments, Councillor McClean also recollected how Members were unanimous in the decision taken at that time against that large application. Taking that into account, he said he would welcome an Officer's response on that outcome.

The Principal and Technical Planning Officer emphasised that Officers remained largely content that they had recommended a refusal and that decision had been wholly upheld by the Committee. The Commissioner had disclosed that although ATCs were a material consideration, the opinion was that the design could fit within the site given that it was slightly separate and in a transitional area. However, she wondered how it would appear in reality whenever it had been built out.

Councillor McClean was of the belief that we were not wrong in applying the appropriate policy to the proposed development. He felt it illustrated that in terms of the visual effect, two parties could arrive at a different decision.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor McRandal, seconded by Alderman Keery, that the recommendation be adopted.

6. PLANNING SERVICE UNIT PLAN 2022/23 (FILE 160051/160127)
(Appendix XI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning attaching Service Plan. The report detailed that since 2017/18 Service Plans had been produced by each Service in accordance with the Council's Performance Management policy.

Plans were intended to:

- Encourage compliance with the new legal, audit and operational context
- Provide focus on direction
- Facilitate alignment between Corporate, Service and Individual plans and activities
- Motivate and develop staff
- Promote performance improvement, encourage innovation and share good practice
- Encourage transparency of performance outcomes
- Better enable us to recognise success and address underperformance

A draft plan for 2022-23 was attached to the report which had been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the draft Corporate Plan 2020-24 and the draft Annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The Plan would also support delivery of the ITRDS. The agreement of the plan would also aid toward achievement of the Council's performance improvement duties under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

The Service Plan highlighted where the service contributed to the Corporate Plan and, where that was the case, sets out the objectives of the service for the 2022-23 year. It further identified the key performance indicators used to illustrate the level of achievement of each objective, and the targets that the Service would try to attain along with key actions required to do so.

The plan had been developed in conjunction with staff, officers and management and in consultation with key stakeholders where relevant.

The plan was based on the agreed budget. It should be noted that, should there be significant changes in-year (eg due to Council decisions, budget revisions or changes to the PIP) the plan may need to be revised.

The Committee would be provided with update reports on performance against the agreed plan.

RECOMMENDED that Council adopts the attached Planning Service plan.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted.

7. PRESENTATION TO MEMBERS OF STUDIES FOR LDP (RD147)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that Members should be aware that Nexus Planning was preparing evidence on behalf of the Council for the Local Development Plan (LDP) in relation to Retail Commercial Leisure study. In addition, Ironside Farrar was commissioned to prepare evidence in relation to Open Space Strategy and Landscape Character Assessment review.

The consultants would present to Members in May, following receipt of final documentation. It was proposed to invite:

- (a) Nexus Planning to present at 6.00 pm on Tuesday 3 May
- (b) Ironside Farrar to present at 6.00 pm on Tuesday 17 May

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the arrangements detailed above.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Walker, that the recommendation be adopted.

8. UPDATE ON QUEEN'S PARADE (Appendix XII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning attaching DfI Minister's letter dated 9 March 2022. The report detailed that Members would be aware that Council's Planning Committee passed a resolution to approve planning LA06/2020/0097/F for the redevelopment of Queen's Parade, Bangor on 26 January 2021.

As the Council was proposing to grant planning permission for this major development contrary to a consultation response of a statutory consultee (DfI Rivers), the Council was legally required to notify DfI of this resolution. The requirement arose under the terms of a directional order issued by the DfI under the Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017. DfI were duly notified on 27 January 2021.

In February 2021 the Council received a further 'Holding Direction' from DfI preventing it from issuing the planning approval it had resolved to make until further advice was issued by DfI. That was to allow DfI time to consider whether or not the proposed development raised issues that required it to be referred ('called in') to the Department for determination. Those issues were in relation to the noncompliance

of PPS 15 'Planning and Flood Risk' and Policy FLD 5 'development in proximity to reservoirs'.

The Council chased the DfI throughout 2021 to seek a decision as to whether or not DfI Planning would 'call in' the planning application for it to determine rather than the Council. Throughout this period the Council sought to engage with DfI and resolve any questions or issues it had with respect to the development proposal and flooding.

The DfI Minister, Nichola Mallon, wrote to Council on 9 March 2022, confirming that after careful consideration she had decided that it was not necessary for the planning application to be referred ('called in') to Department for determination. The letter confirmed her view that the application did not raise issues of such importance that their impact was considered to extend to a regional or sub-regional level and the circumstances of this case were not exceptional such as to render the use of the DfI's 'call in' power under section 29 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 necessary. In so doing the Minister and DfI did not recommend any additional conditions relating to the issue despite having the power to do so.

The Minister further clarified that the 'Holding Direction', issued by DfI under the terms of Article 17 of the (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 ("the GDPO") was no longer in place and the Council could continue to process this application accordingly. Consequently, the Council was now free to determine the planning application subject to compliance with the legislative requirements noted below.

As Members would recall delegated authority was given to officers to change the conditions and negotiate and draft a planning agreement in conjunction with the Council's solicitor post resolution. That process had been put on hold to avoid the unnecessary expenditure of costs in the event that the DfI 'called in' the planning application.

However, as the application was referred to DfI planning on foot of the directional order under the GDPO, Regulation 7 of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 was engaged. This regulation meant that the Council must hold a pre-determination hearing to update the Planning Committee on developments in advance of determining the planning application. Following the conclusion of the pre-determination hearing, the Planning Committee should then consider the planning application at Planning Committee and proceed to determine the planning application in light of the outcome of DfI's decision and had any other material considerations which had arisen in the intervening period (from January 2021 to present day) brought to its attention to allow the Planning Committee to consider the Planning Application as a whole taking into account all material considerations and in accordance with Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

Whilst the legislative procedures required the pre-determination hearing and subsequent Planning Committee to occur it was considered prudent in any event given the protracted consideration by DfI that the Planning Committee be updated as

to any material considerations arising. An updated report would be prepared in advance of the pre-determination hearing and the planning committee in this regard.

The Planning Service would schedule the pre-determination hearing and subsequent planning committee in accordance with the guidance issued by DfI Planning in the form of the Development Management Practice Notes it had issued in respect of the conduct of such meetings.

Subject to consultation with the Chair, the pre-determination hearing and Planning Committee may be undertaken on the same evening, with a date to be agreed. However, further consideration as to the utility of holding the meetings on the same evening was required when all matters were considered.

Planning would work closely with the applicant, following due planning process, to ensure the Pre-determination Hearing and subsequent Planning Committee were undertaken in a timely manner. However, that was subject to the ability to ensure all matters were resolved prior to the scheduling of the meetings and the production of the reports, which was likely to take a number of months.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the correspondence from the DfI Minister, the update within the report, and is asked to endorse the approach of the Planning Service to the scheduling and conduct of the pre-determination hearing in line with the published guidance of DfI and that the Chair is permitted to agree on behalf of the Planning Committee the schedule and conduct of the meetings.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Keery, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the recommendation be adopted.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McClean, seconded by Alderman Keery, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted item of confidential business.

9. UPDATE ON ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

(Appendix XIII)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Walker, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 10.07 pm.

ITEM 7.2**ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A meeting of the Environment Committee was held remotely via Zoom on Wednesday, 6 April 2022 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor MacArthur

Alderman: Carson
Wilson

Councillors: Armstrong-Cotter Greer
Boyle Johnson
Cathcart (7.19 pm) Kendall
Cummings McKee
Edmund Smart

Officers:- Director of Environment (D Lindsay), Head of Assets and Property Services (P Caldwell), Head of Regulatory Services (S Addy) and Democratic Services Officer (H Loebnau)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend were received from Alderman M Smith and Councillors Douglas and McAlpine. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Cathcart.

NOTED.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair asked for Declarations of Interest, and none were made.

NOTED.

3. Q3 SERVICE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORTS**3.1 Waste and Cleansing Services**

(Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 7 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement the Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

EC.06.04.22PM

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2021)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2021)

The Council's 17 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 3 2021-22 was attached.

Key points to note:

- The Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact across the range of services delivered by Waste and Cleansing during Q3.

Key achievements:

- Despite a number of Covid cases during the quarter, all waste collection services were delivered as scheduled.

Emerging issues:

- The previous upward trend in residual waste sent to landfill was reversed with a drop by around 1,000 tonnes when compared to Q3 for the previous year (2020), but still well above pre-Covid levels and the Council's performance target.
- The recycling rate remained concerningly below 50% but up 2% on the same quarter in 2020.

Action to be taken:

- As highlighted at the March 2022 Committee and on the basis that the pandemic measures were removed in the near future, it was proposed to run a major communications campaign around the range of recycling options available to the householder, to encourage them to re-engage fully with the service.

EC.06.04.22PM

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Greer, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Greer asked to raise a number of questions. Firstly, referring to the quarterly performance report she asked if there was a reason why staff were not receiving regular briefings. The Director explained that the Head of Waste and Cleansing Services was unable to be at the meeting and he would confirm those details directly with the Member.

Councillor Greer had also noted the slight reversal in the upward trend in residual waste sent to landfill and asked if that was expected to improve further as more people returned to the workplace and more normal working environments resumed. The Director clarified that this was a modest improvement in the amount of landfill being created but in relative terms it was not a significant reversal of fortunes. The rolling twelve-month figure was still of significant concern to officers. The figures were a 'glimmer' at best that the trend was being halted and it was the intention to keep pushing the recycling message to the public and have ongoing monitoring of the figures.

Finally, Councillor Greer referred to the recent strike action taken by some staff and how teams were coping with additional collection demands. The Director explained that no significant issues in respect of that had been brought to his attention nor was he hearing about any unsustainable pressure on the services at this stage.

Alderman Carson asked the Director if there had been any indication about the amount of contamination of bins over the strike period since he had heard complaints from people whose grey bins were full, and they intended to use the recycling bins as an overflow. The Director replied that he was not aware that this was a significant issue over the period of the strike or that the Council's recycling contractor had raised a concern in that regard.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Greer, that the recommendation be adopted.

3.2 Assets and Property Services

(Appendix II)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 22 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement the Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years

EC.06.04.22PM

- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2021)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2021)

The Council's 17 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 3 2021-22 was attached.

Key points to note:

- The sustainable energy management strategy was still a work in progress, expected to be finalised mid-April.
- As reported previously, the biofuel trial could not be completed due to rising costs of the product. It was still under review, pending tender exercise.
- The trial solar roof panels had been fitted although it was proving difficult to get accurate figures for savings as the cleansing fleet had had to make adaptations due to Covid and that may have skewed the results. The Council would await the return of normal operations before reporting on any savings.
- The refurbishments were slightly behind schedule due to asbestos found within Ward Park bowling pavilion. The schedule had since caught up and would be completed before the year end.
- Quality assurance of maintenance jobs, staff attendance and training were all slightly below targets but it was hoped those would improve for the next quarter.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle was pleased with the report and Councillor Kendall agreed and looked forward to the sustainable energy management strategy which was being developed.

EC.06.04.22PM

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

3.3 Regulatory Services

(Appendix III)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 23 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement the Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
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The Council's 17 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 3 2021-22 was attached.

Key achievements:

- Building Control was extremely busy and was meeting the increased demand and was therefore generating a larger than expected income. The Licensing Department also faced the increased demand of interpreting changing legislation and guidance from the NI Executive as well as currently being short staffed. Staff right across Regulatory Services had performed extremely well in Q3 to meet those demands.

Emerging issues:

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- The 'after use' surveys that all Regulatory Service users received had an extremely low uptake. That was important as the Council's four customer service objectives used the data to report on performance. That was despite many attempts to encourage and make easy for people to access and fill out.

Action to be taken:

- Review was ongoing to look at more meaningful and qualitative ways to accurately gauge customer service performance.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

Under emerging issues, Councillor Cummings referred to the low number of after use surveys coming through and the impact of that on the section. The Head of Regulatory Services explained that the responses to those surveys routinely had a low response rate. For that reason, it had been decided to look at convening focus groups in the future to get service quality feedback.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

4. LOO OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 9 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that the objective of the Loo of the Awards was to encourage the highest possible standards in all 'away from home' washrooms. The Awards sought to focus the spotlight on recognising and rewarding the very best washrooms throughout the UK and Ireland. It was considered the 'washroom standard' and a Loo of the Year Award was an established benchmark of washroom provision and compliance to national standards.

Ards and North Down Borough Council achieved a Platinum Award for the public conveniences at South Pier, Bangor, Bridge Street, Comber and Harbour Road, Groomspoint. The Council achieved a Gold Award for the toilets at The Parade, Donaghadee and Mill Street, Newtownards. Ards and North Down Borough Council had also been awarded National Winner (Ireland) for Public Toilet entries and Premier League Local Authority Award (based on total number of grading points achieved). In addition, Maureen Boyle was awarded Attendant of the Year Ireland and that was the second time Maureen had been recognised with that accolade, having previously won it in 2017. An Award Ceremony took place on Friday, 18 February 2022 in Solihull and this year, 2022, marked the 35th anniversary of the Annual Loo of the Year Awards.

Public conveniences could be notoriously challenging to consistently maintain to the high standard that most users would like to experience; their open access to all and the long opening hours meant that it only took a very small minority of careless users and worse still those involved in outright criminal vandalism behaviour, to have a

EC.06.04.22PM

significantly detrimental impact upon the experiences of the public when they visited those facilities. In that context, it was particularly pleasing to note the Council's performance when benchmarked against industry standards and also its relative performance compared to other Councils' standards of public convenience management. Maureen's repeated success was also extremely pleasing, and credit was due to her as a highly valued Council employee and public servant.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

Proposed by Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Greer was pleased to read that so many of the Council's public toilets had been given a Platinum Award and she asked for Maureen Boyle to be congratulated on behalf of Members for her success.

Councillor Kendall absolutely agreed, and it was known that there was much upkeep required to maintain public toilets at a high standard. She was delighted that the Council had won so many awards and praised everyone involved.

Councillor Boyle stressed the importance of the report to the Council which had been touched upon already and while it might appear to be amusing it was a serious issue, and critically and crucially important for residents and visitors alike that toilets were in good shape with an acceptable standard of cleanliness and tidiness. Many awards had been given to the Borough and it was right that the staff received praise for that, and the care that was being taken by them in their work.

Councillor Edmund had been delighted to see the Council 'flushed' with success and it sent a good message to the residents and visitors to the Borough. It was a positive gain, and he congratulated the team involved.

Alderman Carson gave his congratulations and noted that it was disappointing when toilets were vandalised. He asked about the cost of refurbishment to the damaged public conveniences near the Anchor Car Park, Portavogie. The Head of Assets and Property Services did not have that information but agreed to report back to the Member directly on the costs involved.

The Chair concurred with the previous positive comments and offered her own congratulations to Maureen Boyle on her award.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Councillor Cathcart entered the meeting at 7.19 pm)

EC.06.04.22PM

5. LITTER PAYMENTS UNDER EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

(Appendices IV & V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 14 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful had written to convey concerns about the potential for back track in the original proposal under the forthcoming Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system, for producers to be made responsible for the full net costs of managing packaging waste, including bin and ground litter management costs.

The attached email and draft letter to UK ministers responsible for implementing the EPR provisions explained the background and the request that government should not reverse or dilute the original proposal regarding EPR and its scope in relation to litter management.

The attached letter had been sent by Keep NI Beautiful and it had asked for support from across the environmental sector - particularly local Councils, who bore much of the cost of the problem. That was an issue of huge significance for the Council, both in terms of the local environmental and aesthetic impact on the Borough and the wider environment and economy, as well as the cost of litter management to the Borough's residents.

RECOMMENDED that the Council writes to the addresses detailed in the attached KNIB letter regarding Litter Payments under Extended Producer Responsibility, endorsing the letter's contents and confirming the Council's support for the position set out.

The Director referred to the report and gave a verbal update on the latest position. He stated that if Members were in agreement he would write to the addressees on the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful correspondence, giving the Council's support for the position stated.

He pointed out that while Scotland and Wales had agreed to incorporate payments for dealing with the impact of littering by packaging materials in the proposed EPR scheme, it was unfortunate that this was not to be the case in England and Northern Ireland. Although the intention had now been announced, the Director still considered it to be worthwhile to write to the relevant Ministers to express the Council's grave concerns and express its support for the position being taken by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Proposed by Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor McKee, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Smart agreed with the Director that the decision recommended for England and Northern Ireland was incredibly unfortunate and in his view it was essential and correct that producers of packaging pay towards cleaning up littered packaging, under the polluter pays principle.

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Councillor McKee totally agreed and was disappointed to see that there would be disparity across the devolved nations of the United Kingdom, when it could have been an opportunity to have the same policy enforced. He thought Scotland and Wales were taking a progressive step and could only hope that the benefit of that to the circular economy would be felt and Northern Ireland would follow in time.

Commented [LH1]:

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor McKee, that the recommendation be adopted.

6. NOM REPORT – TIMELY RESPONSE TO LITTERING PROBLEMS

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 23 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that in September 2021, the Council agreed a Notice of Motion asking:

"...That Environment Directorate Cleansing and Parks Officers work together to agree a draft plan for collaborating to ensure that waste management staff can be deployed to problem litter locations in a timely manner, having regard for severity and urgency. This should include consideration of need for a single, cross department out of hours contact to log issues and to facilitate the deployment of resource. That a report outlining the plan, complete with costings, is brought before the relevant committee."

Following a transformation process for delivery of the Borough Cleansing Service several years ago, manpower resources within that service unit had been reorganised to provide 7 days per week cover – including supervisory cover for Saturdays and Sundays – throughout the year. Whilst planned resource deployment at weekends was reduced compared to weekdays, manpower was available to respond to pressing cleansing/littering issues that may arise in areas for which the Borough Cleansing Unit had responsibility – primarily adopted streets and roads. Members had in the past been provided with an email address that they could utilise, should they need to draw attention to cleansing/littering issues that were of a more urgent/pressing nature and should not if possible be left until the next normal working weekday. That email was monitored by the duty Cleansing Supervisor over the weekend, who would assess requests coming through and arrange follow up by the Borough Cleansing Unit where possible/appropriate. The relevant Member should also receive confirmation of the follow up action taken. Members had been urged to only use the email address outside of normal weekday working hours for significant cleansing/littering issues for which a delayed response was undesirable (e.g. due to nature/scale/location of the issue and the significant risk to the environment/amenity/reputation of the Council). Response to all other cleansing/littering issues should be accommodated during planned/routine cleansing rotas/schedules and predominantly when the available manpower resource was greater during the standard working week.

The Parks and Cemeteries Department had responsibility for the cleansing/litter maintenance of facilities that it routinely managed in other regards – i.e. horticultural management of parks and other open recreational spaces. That Department had now developed capacity within its resource management arrangements to also have

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planned manpower deployment on Saturdays and Sundays. Similar to the Cleansing service, the Parks service used an email address for the Parks Rangers that could be utilised for communicating urgent littering issues.

In the interests of providing an integrated, single point of contact to Members for the purpose of flagging up significant and urgent littering issues that arose at the weekend, whether they be in areas maintained by the Parks or Cleansing Service Units, a single email address would be circulated to Members for that purpose. The message sent to the email address would be forwarded to both Cleansing and Parks staff who were providing weekend service cover – and the matter would be responded to by the appropriate service unit. A response would subsequently be provided to the Member on the action taken.

In relation to cost, those arrangements for timely response to more urgent cleansing/littering issues on a 7 day per week basis, had now been incorporated into the budgets of both the Borough Cleansing Unit and the Parks and Cemeteries Department – and there were therefore no financial implications over and above the currently agreed budgets.

On a related subject around a separate Notice of Motion regarding responsibility for servicing litter bins (tabled at the Community and Wellbeing Committee), officers from Waste and Cleansing and the Parks and Cemeteries Departments were currently looking at options to maximise efficiency and effectiveness of litter bin maintenance across all areas of the Borough - and maximise outcomes. A separate report in that regard would be brought in due course to the Community and Wellbeing Committee.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

Proposed by Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Edmund commended the report and commented on the persistent carelessness of some people when it came to littering and was aware that the Council was doing everything in its power to address the matter.

The Director confirmed that the single email address would be circulated to Members.

Councillor Cathcart thanked officers for that collaboration with a single email address which took some of the complication and inefficiency out of the system and he looked forward to the related report that was being compiled for the Community and Wellbeing Committee on servicing of litter bins across the Borough.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

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7. REVISED VEHICLE REPLACEMENT POLICY (Appendix VI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 3 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that the Council adopted the current Vehicle Replacement Strategy in April 2016. The strategy had generally been working well, with many outdated, inefficient and unreliable vehicles being replaced, thus ensuring the Council fleet stayed roadworthy and safe. However, as always, there was scope for improvement.

Required Changes

A recent audit recommended that the following amendments were made:

- The vehicle replacement form should cover disposal i.e., what happened to the vehicle once it was no longer fit for its current purpose.
- Review the challenge process around replacement to ensure a more robust case was made.
- Define a person responsible for ensuring compliance with the above process.

In addition, having used the Policy for several years, the Transport Manager and Capital Accountant, wished it to include quarterly reviews to discuss the upcoming vehicle replacements and have a forum to discuss options for postponing or fast-tracking replacements on a case-by-case basis.

Lastly, significant increases in the purchase price of vehicles had necessitated the need to increase the Council's allocated budget for vehicle replacements from £1.4M to £1.6M over the next three years.

All of those changes had been applied to the draft Policy attached in the appendix.

RECOMMENDED that the Council adopts the revised Policy for Vehicle Replacement.

Proposed by Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Smart asked if there was a standard disposal method used by the Council and the Head of Assets and Property Services explained that the options depended on the condition of the vehicle and if it was at the end of its life, those would be through auction, trade or scrappage.

Councillor Armstrong-Cotter had been astonished by the increases in costs and noted that those amounted to £200k per annum for vehicles alone. However, it was noted that there was no other option for such an essential part of the Council's delivery of services and she had confidence in the team to make the correct decisions.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

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8. **NOM REPORT – CHANGING PLACES FACILITIES** (Appendices VII – IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 22 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that following a Notice of Motion heard at the Environment Committee in October 2021, the Council agreed:

That this Council recognises the value of providing Changing Places facilities and agrees to request a Report on the feasibility of creating such a facility within the public toilet building in Donaghadee. The report should reflect the specific requirements for a Changing Places toilet, the level of demand at this site, potential costs and possible external sources of funding. Additionally, it should highlight how users might be aware of the new facility including via the Changing Places and Euan's websites. This report should be used to inform a Borough-wide review of provision of Changing Places.

Officers would refer Members to the following reports (attached) for a full understanding of the background and works completed thus far.

- Provision of "Changing Places" Facilities, April 2016
- Council's Strategy for the Provision of Public Toilets, January 2017
- Changing Places Facilities Update, April 2018

Factors to Consider When Creating a Changing Places Facility

Space Available. The minimum size of a Changing Places facility was 12m². Given the Council's previous progress in the field, it was reasonable to say that none of the rest of the estate had a spare room available of this size and that the creation of such a space would require extensive remodelling works to the property concerned.

Cost. The equipment alone for each facility costs upwards of £20k, plus the building, plumbing and electrics required could easily take a typical project cost to £30k.

Anti-Social Behaviour. Due to the cost of the equipment, Changing Places facilities were best situated in an attended site only such as leisure centres.

Unsupervised Usage. Amongst the equipment provided was a hoist, upon which the user must be safely and appropriately secured. If a person attempted to utilise the equipment incorrectly, perhaps due to the lack of an attendant, then serious injury could occur.

Publicising the Facilities

Once installations had been accredited, Changing Places uploaded the details to its website where potential users could view a map, assisting them when planning a journey/trip.

Existing Facilities

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The review of provision of public toilets in 2017 concluded that there was adequate provision of Changing Places facilities within the Borough. The new facility at Groomsport had been added since that review. Current facilities include:

- Aurora (x2 accredited facilities)
- Ards Blair Mayne (x1 - accreditation pending approval)
- Comber Leisure Centre (x1 facility - was accredited but requirements have since been revised, discussion ongoing about potential to renew accreditation)
- Groomsport (x 1 - accreditation pending approval)
- Portaferry Hotel (x1 accredited, independent facility)

Anticipated Usage

It was difficult to assess how frequently a facility such as this would be used, not least because the very people for whom such a facility was required may not visit a location because of its lack of facilities; there was therefore no way of capturing this information on potential usage.

However, anecdotal information from our other Changing Places toilets suggested they were used very infrequently.

The Groomsport Changing Places facility was switched to radar key access last year due to staffing issues but consequently there were numerous instances of improper use, particularly of the shower facility.

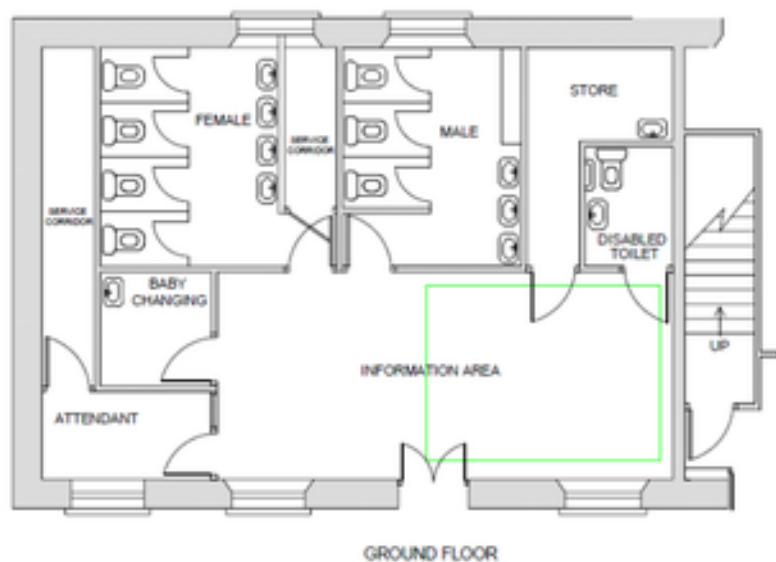
Potential to Provide a Changing Places Facility at The Parade, Donaghadee

The public toilets at The Parade, Donaghadee were constructed in the early 20th Century, the building originally having been used as a Technical College. The toilets are fairly spacious with stone/block wall construction and high timber rafted ceilings.

The image below showed the current layout of the toilet facility, with the green box indicating the 12m² required for a Changing Places facility.

As can be clearly seen from the image, the CP facility could not fitted within this space without extensive remodelling.

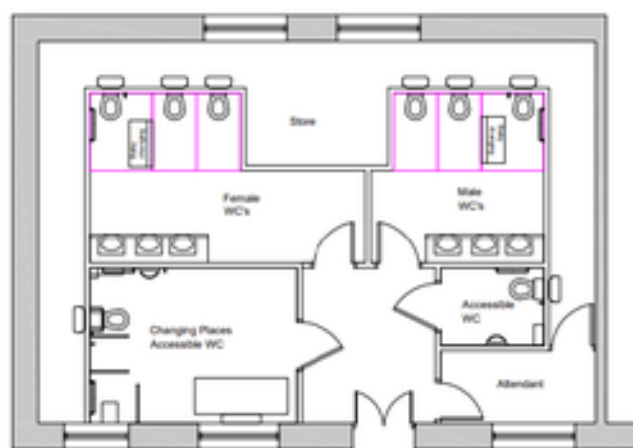
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It would be feasible to fit a Changing Places facility within the space, as shown below, however:

- The required works would be extensive, and the public toilets would be closed for a prolonged period of time to facilitate that.
- The high ceiling presented a complicating factor when designing the hoist, adding significantly to the cost.
- The toilets were in need of a refurbishment in any event, so it would seem prudent to consider a Changing Places facility at the same time should the Council be inclined to provide one.
- To refurbish the toilets without the Changing Places facility would cost in the region of £70k and this would likely be covered within the next cycle of planned refurbishments under the maintenance strategy (2023/24), subject to condition survey and Council approval of budget in the usual way.
- It was estimated an additional £50k would be required to accommodate a Changing Places facility within this building, due to the extensive remodelling required.
- Appropriate revenue budgetary provisions would also need to be made for the increased training and maintenance required.
- Due consideration would need to be given as to how access to and use of the facility would be granted, given that the attendant (now redesignated as a Town Centre Warden covering a range of town centre cleansing maintenance duties) was not always present at the Public Conveniences.

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Proposed Floorplan

RECOMMENDED that the Council decides if a Changing Places facility should be included within the refurbishment proposals for 2023/24, and be included in the annual Technical Budget Report to follow in November as part of the estimates/budget setting process.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Smart, that a Changing Places facility should be included within the refurbishment proposals for 2023/24, and be included in the annual Technical Budget Report to follow in November as part of the estimates/budget setting process.

Councillor Boyle thanked officers for the detailed report and outlined the journey the Council had taken since 2016. This would be a cost to the Council but it was also an essential service related to the dignity of people and it enhanced quality of life, so it was therefore money well spent. He wholeheartedly supported the costs attached and considered that the Council needed to step up for ratepayers and those who would visit the Borough by sending out the message that the Borough was open and could cater to all. He urged fellow Members to support him.

Councillor Smart was happy to second the recommendation and thanked the officers for all their efforts. He remarked that it had not been an easy process, but it was absolutely worthwhile particularly when the Council was refurbishing the toilet block. Most people were aware of the inadequate provision previously and the difficulties and inconvenience that had brought to the lives of disabled people and their families, so he looked forward to seeing further provision.

Alderman Wilson agreed that it was important that the Council did all that it could, but he referred to the report that had suggested that there was adequate provision already in the Borough and he asked the officers for their opinion on that and if external sources of funding would be available. His feeling was that Donaghadee may not be the ideal site due to roof height in the toilet building and also given that

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there was a Changing Places facility in Groomsport which was relatively nearby, considering further down the Peninsula may be more appropriate.

In response the Head of Assets and Property Services stated that in terms of provision there was no real standard set and depended upon what officers and Members considered to be reasonable, but he indicated that Ards and North Down had good provision when compared to other Boroughs within Northern Ireland. He indicated that there he was not aware of available funding externally at the current time. He also indicated that Donaghadee had been considered, since this was the specific site that had been raised in the original Notice of Motion.

The Director added that officers had been proactive on the subject of Changing Places provision since the new Council had been formed; notwithstanding the potential for further improvement through this Notice of Motion, it was important to send out the message that there was already good provision and that the Ards and North Down was a welcoming, inclusive and disabled-friendly Borough.

Alderman Wilson welcomed the existing provision and hoped to see that extended, but he felt that there was a gap between Donaghadee and Portaferry.

Councillor Kendall also gave her support to Councillor Boyle's proposal, and she was aware of the issues and challenges that disabled people often faced. She praised the officers for the work that they had undertaken to date and the willingness of everyone to be inclusive and welcoming as they planned for the Borough.

Councillor Armstrong-Cotter believed that the Borough could do even better and that money invested in Changing Places was well spent. The location of further facilities could be considered but she pointed out that over the summer months many people visited and enjoyed the coastline around Donaghadee and the peninsula. She pressed for progress to be continued and to have facilities such as these set within the Rate setting process.

Councillor Edmund considered that it was essential to strive for further facilities and thought that there was indeed a gap in the middle part of the peninsula. Over the coming years these could be developed to keep the Borough ahead of the game by being totally inclusive.

The Chairman noted that it had been suggested in the discussion that funding opportunities should be explored further and the proposer and seconder were asked if they would include that in the recommendation that they had made. Councillor Boyle and Smart agreed on condition that the Changing Places facility would not be delayed subject to that funding and wished to see it delivered as soon as possible.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Smart, that a Changing Places facility should be included within the refurbishment proposals for 2023/24 and be included in the annual Technical Budget Report to follow in November as part of the estimates/budget setting process, and that funding opportunities should be explored by the Council.

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9. BUILDING CONTROL Q3 ACTIVITY REPORT

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 22 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that the information provided in this report covered, unless otherwise stated, the period 1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021 (Q3 1 October 2021 – 31 December 2021). The aim of the report was to provide Members with details of some of the key activities of Building Control, the range of services it provided along with details of level of performance. The report format had been introduced across Regulatory Services.

Applications

Full Plan applications were made to Building Control for building works to any commercial building, or for larger schemes in relation to residential dwellings.

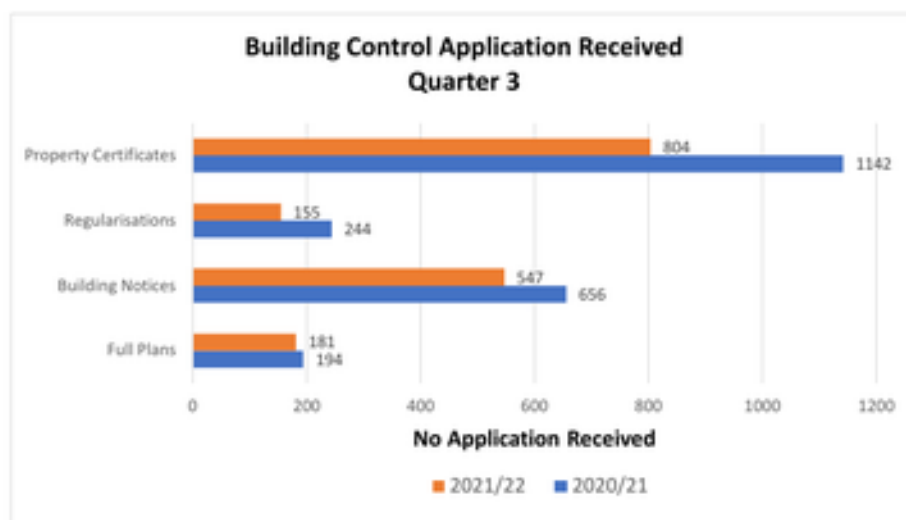
Building Notice applications were submitted for minor alternations such as internal wall removal, installation of heating boilers or systems, installation of all types of insulation and must be made before work commenced. Those applications were for residential properties only.

Regularisation applications considered all works carried out illegally without a previous Building Control application in both commercial and residential properties. A regularisation application considered all types of work retrospectively and under the Building Regulations in force at the time the works were carried out.

Property Certificate applications were essential to the conveyancing process in the sale of any property, residential or commercial, and provided information on Building Control history and Council held data.

	Period of Report 01/10/2021 – 31/12/2021	Same quarter last year	Comparison
Full Plan Applications	181	194	↓
Building Notice Applications	547	656	↓
Regularisation Applications	155	244	↓
Property Certificate Applications	804	1142	↓

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The number of Full Plan applications received was very much determined by the economic climate; any changes in bank lending or uncertainty in the marketplace may cause a reduction in Full Plan applications. There was no internal means to control the number of applications received.

Regulatory Approvals and Completions

Turnaround times for full plan applications were measured in calendar days from the day of receipt within the Council, to day of posting (inclusive).

Inspections had to be carried out on the day requested due to commercial pressures on the developer/builder/householder, and as such any pressures on that end of the business reflected on the turnaround of plans timescale.

The lower targets achieved figure would be indicative of 2.4 vacant posts during the quarter. One post had since been filled, and the remaining vacancies were under consideration by the Corporate Leadership Team.

	Period of Report 01/10/2021 – 31/12/2021	Same quarter last year	Comparison	Average number of days to turnaround plan
Domestic Full Plan Turnarounds within target (21 calendar days)	23.3%	76%	↓	30

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Non-Domestic Full Plan Turnarounds within target (35 calendar days)	47%	65%	↓	38
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Regulatory Approvals and Completions

The issuing of Building Control Completion Certificates indicated that works were carried out to a satisfactory level and met the current Building Regulations.

Building Control Full Plan Approval indicated that the information and drawings submitted as part of an application met current Building Regulations and works could commence on site.

	Period of Report 01/10/2021 – 31/12/2021	Same quarter last year	Comparison
Full Plan Approvals	180	200	↓
Full Plan Completions	218	390	↓
Building Notice Completions	276	339	↓
Regularisation Completions	134	173	↓

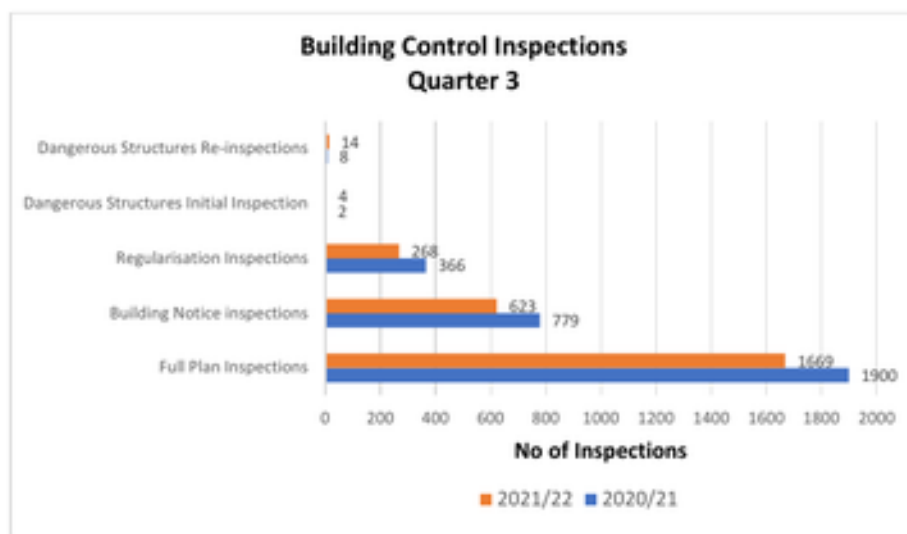


Inspections

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Under the Building Regulations applicants were required to give notice at specific points in the building process to allow inspections. The inspections were used to determine compliance and to all for improvement or enforcement.

	Period of Report 01/10/2021 – 31/12/2021	Same quarter last year	Comparison
Full Plan Inspections	1669	1900	↓
Building Notice Inspections	623	779	↓
Regularisation Inspections	268	366	↓
Dangerous structures initial inspection	4	2	↑
Dangerous structure re-inspections	14	8	↑
Total inspections	2578	3055	↓

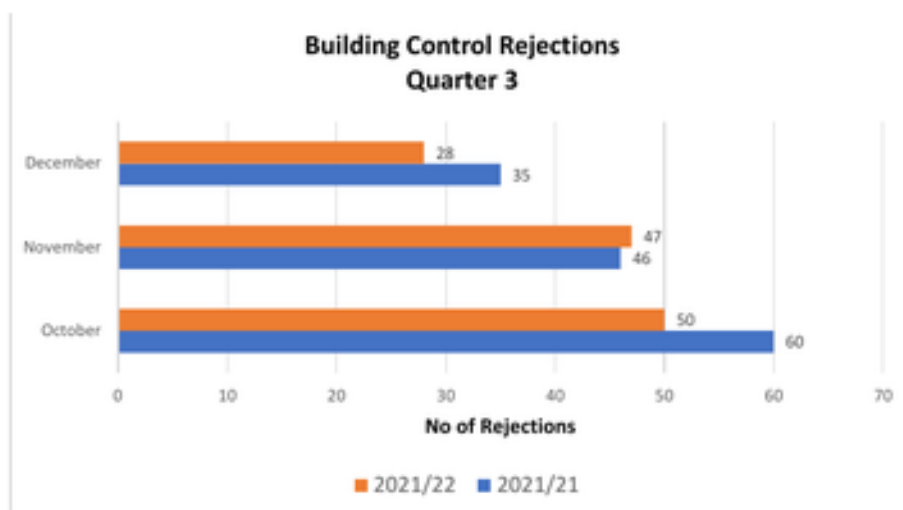


Non-Compliance

Where it was not possible to Approve full plan applications they were required to be rejected. Building Control Full Plan Rejection Notices indicated that after assessment there were aspects of the drawings provided that did not meet current Building Regulations. A Building Control Rejection Notice set out the changes or aspects of the drawings provided that need to be amended. After those amendments were completed, the amended drawings should be submitted to Building Control for further assessment and approval.

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	Period of Report 01/10/2021 – 31/12/2021	Same Quarter last year	Comparison
Full Plan Rejection Notice	125	141	↓
Dangerous Structure Recommended for legal action			—
Court Cases			—
Other			—



RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Cathcart had previously raised at the committee the turnaround time to assess plans, and if the lower targets being achieved were indicative of vacant posts.

The Director reported that a number of officers had been lost recently and recruiting those highly skilled professional technical posts often took some time, but it was hoped that the positions could be filled as soon as possible. The Member hoped that they would be, pointing out that this was one of the few areas of the Council that

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produced an income. He also thought that an efficient planning and building control system would help to secure investment within the Borough.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

10. GRANT OF ENTERTAINMENT LICENCES

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 11 March 2022 from the Director of Environment detailing that applications had been received for the grant of entertainment licences as follows:

1. The International, 38 Frances Street, Newtownards

Applicant: Mrs Roisin Rice, 38 Frances Street, Newtownards

Days and Hours: Monday to Sunday during the permitted hours when alcohol may be served on these premises under the Licensing (NI) Order 1996

Type of entertainment: Indoor dancing, singing and music or any other entertainment of a like kind.

2. McKenna Community Centre, McKenna Road, Kircubbin

Applicant: Mr Anthony Bell, 9 Coulters Hill, Kircubbin

Days and Hours: Monday to Sunday during the permitted hours which intoxicating liquor may be sold or consumed on these premises under the Registration of Clubs Order (NI) 1996.

Type of entertainment: Indoor dancing, singing and music or any other entertainment of a like kind; A theatrical performance; Public contest match, exhibition or display of boxing, wrestling, judo, karate or any similar sport.

RECOMMENDED that the Council grants the applications.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Armstrong-Cotter, that the recommendation be adopted.

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

12. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

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EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Kendall, seconded by Councillor Armstrong-Cotter, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted items of confidential business.

13. NEW PUBLIC REALM STREET WASHING SERVICE – STAFF RECRUITMENT

(Appendix X)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Armstrong-Cotter, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

Circulated for information

(a) Letter from DfC – Review of Reduced Fees for Entertainment Licences

NOTED.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 8.14 pm.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Regeneration and Development Committee was held remotely via Zoom on Thursday 7 April 2022 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Alderman McDowell

Aldermen: Girvan
Menagh

Councillors:	Adair	Dunlop
	Armstrong-Cotter	McClellan
	Blaney	McKimm (7.36pm)
	Brooks	Walker
	Cummings	

In Attendance: Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning (S McCullough), Head of Regeneration (B Dorrian), Head of Tourism (S Mahaffy), Head of Economic Development (C McGill) and Democratic Services Officer (P Foster)

1. APOLOGIES

The Chairman (Alderman McDowell) sought apologies at this stage.

Apologies had been received from Alderman Smith and Alderman Wilson.

NOTED.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman sought Declarations of Interest at this stage and the following declarations were made.

Alderman McDowell – Item 12 – PGA EuroPro Tour, NI Masters 24-26 Aug 2022

NOTED.

3. COVID 19 REVITALISATION FUNDING UPDATE

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that as members would be aware the Department for Communities (DfC) issued a Letter of Offer for c£1.75M for Covid 19 revitalisation projects. This funding comprised of DfC, Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEARA) contributions in response to the impact of the pandemic on the local area and to assist the revitalisation of towns and rural areas.

1. Projects delivered

The following projects had been undertaken:

<p>Item 1 – Business Adaptation and Improvement Scheme – Urban Budget allocation: £740,000. Funding stream: DfC Capital</p> <p>Grants up to £2,500 for businesses to adapt and/or improve their premises/practices regarding the impact from Covid-19.</p> <p>Total number of applications received: 478 Total number of Letters of Offer issued: 390 Total number of claims processed and paid to applicants to date: 341 (9 claims to be submitted and processed by 31 March 2022) Total amount of grant paid to date: £699,396.35</p> <p>Status: Completion end of March 2022</p>
<p>Item 2 – Solar Bins - Urban Budget allocation: £42,510. Funding stream: DfC Capital</p> <p>Installation of 10 solar bins across the towns.</p> <p>Status: Complete</p>
<p>Item 3 – Flower Sculptures - Urban Budget allocation: £40,000. Funding stream: DfC Capital</p> <p>Five living sculptures were installed within each of the Town Centres. Each sculpture was individually themed to represent a key aspect of the town centre (Bangor-Mermaid Comber-Brent Goose Donaghadee-Waves Hollywood-Golfer Newtownards-Spitfire)</p> <p>Status: Complete</p>
<p>Item 4 – Donaghadee Copelands Court - Urban Split budget: Budget allocation: £43,631. Funding stream: DfC Budget allocation: £76,369. Funding stream: DfI - Total allocation: £120,000.</p> <p>Environmental Improvement Scheme at Donaghadee Harbour Copeland Court which included levelling of area, new drainage, lighting, resurfacing, planting and a mural.</p> <p>Status: Complete</p>
<p>Item 5 – Comber Town Improvement Scheme Part 1 Budget allocation: £30,000. Funding stream: DfI</p> <p>Phase 1 minor town improvement scheme; providing a linkage from the new cycling infrastructure and the greenway entrance.</p> <p>Status: Complete</p>
<p>Item 6 – Cycling Infrastructure – Urban Budget allocation: £60,000. Funding stream: DfI</p>

Design, production and installation of a range of cycling infrastructure within the town centres to assist and promote active travel.

Status: Tender complete, equipment received – **installation to take place March/April**

Item 7 – Hollywood Green Scheme – Urban

Budget allocation: £2,815. Funding stream: Dfl

This project relates to the second of three Hollywood Town Subway schemes, administered and supervised by 'Subways Action Group' a focus group within Hollywood Residents Association. The project transformed the subway at Redburn Square to improve the appearance of this key gateway to the town.

Status: **Complete**

Item 8 – Cycling Infrastructure – Rural

Split budget:

Budget allocation 1: £8,631. Funding stream: Dfl

Budget allocation 2: £31,369. Funding stream: DAERA - Total allocation: £47,400.

Design, production and installation of a range of cycling infrastructure within the various villages of the Borough to assist and promote active travel.

Status: Tender complete, equipment received – **installation to take place March/April**

Item 9 – Business Adaptation and Improvement Scheme – Rural

Budget allocation: £161,614. Funding stream: DAERA

Grants up to £2,500 for businesses to adapt and/or improve their premises/practices regarding the impact from Covid-19.

Total Number of applications received: 134

Total number of Letter of offers issued: 98

Total number of Letters of Offer claims processed: 81

Total amount of grant paid to date: £161,614

Total number of applications received: 87

Total number of Letters of Offer issued: 73

Total number of claims processed and paid to applicants: £161,614

Total amount of grant paid to date: £161,614

Status: **Complete.**

Item 10 – Marketing Campaign (Part 1)

Budget allocation: £15,000. Funding stream: DfC Revenue

'Shop Local' marketing campaign across the Borough to promote the offerings and assist recovery.

Status: **Complete**

2. Projects still on-going

The following projects were still continuing and funding had been extended to September 2022 for their delivery. Confirmation of this had been received from DfC.

Item 11 – Hollywood Covering - Urban

Budget allocation: £100,000. Funding stream: DfC Capital

Design, production and installation of a bespoke, waterproof, modular structure located Hibernia Street. Approx.24m length.

Status: Ongoing – Tender complete and appointment of contractor. Planning application submitted – awaiting outcome. **Expected completion September 2022**

Item 12 – Parklets - Urban

Budget allocation: £200,000. Funding stream: DfI

Design, production and installation of 10 parklets within the town centres. Providing flexible, safe and inviting spaces for a range of uses that would help support the local economy.

Status: DfI approved obtained, planning application submitted – awaiting outcome. **Expected completion Summer 2022.**

Item 13 – Professional and Technical Fees

Budget allocation: £24,000. Funding stream: DfC Revenue

Professional and technical fees associated with the range of projects/ interventions within the Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Scheme.

Status: ongoing. **Expected completion September 2022**

Item 14 – Post Project Evaluation

Budget allocation: £15,000. Funding stream: DfC Revenue

Appointment of consultants to deliver a Post Project Evaluation to include post project shopper and user surveys and evaluation report.

Status: **Expected delivery approx. 3months following scheme completion.**

3. Projects not going ahead

Item 15 – McKee Clock Covering - Urban

Budget allocation: £50,000. Funding stream: DfC Capital

The proposed project was to install a covering at McKee Clock to provide a sheltered area for the use of markets, animation, and performance.

Due to constraints regarding statutory consents, the impact of the Bangor Waterfront/Queen's Parade schemes, it was agreed at a meeting of the Bangor Town Advisory Group to dismiss this project and reallocate the budget to Parklets. This was recommended by the Bangor Town Advisory Group.

Status: **Reallocated.**

Item 16 – Electrical Vehicle Charging Points - Urban

Budget allocation: £20,000. Funding stream: Dfl

The proposed project was to install a number of electrical vehicle charging points within the town centres. Due to constraints with the electrical contractor for electric feeds this was not feasible in the timescale.

Status: **A reduced scheme to be incorporated within Item 17 (Comber Public Realm Phase 2) – for consideration.**

4. Underspend

The following showed the underspend after projects had been completed or not proceeding:

DfC Capital	£91,859.00
Dfl	£20,185.00
DAERA	£34,589.40
DfC Revenue	£5,500.00

The Funders had now agreed to extend the scheme until at least 30 September 2022.

5. Additional Projects

The following projects had been identified following internal consultation on what could be reasonably delivered within the timescales required. Those had also been supported by the appropriate Town Advisory Group. Those projects also meet the criteria set by the three Departments and approval in principle had been received.

Item 17 – Comber Town Improvement Scheme Phase 2 (Bridge Street/ Leisure Centre Car Park)

Proposed budget: £82,074. Funding stream: DfC £61,859 | Dfl £20,185.

Phase 2 Comber Town Improvement Scheme (Bridge Street/ Leisure Centre Car Park)

The proposed project aimed to:

- improve linkages between the existing greenway, leisure centre and the retail core of the town centre
- promote connectivity by enhancing the existing area to create a safe and attractive environment
- encourage and support active travel by providing a safe route for people to walk and cycle
- introduction of LED lighting which would support active travel in the evenings and improve residents and visitor's safety and security
- provide infrastructure for the future installation of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points

It should be noted that the proposed scheme was currently being costed and as such those were indicative costs.

Project constraints to be aware of are statutory consents and external issues such as rising contractor and material costs.

Item 18 – Bangor Lighting Improvement Scheme (Castle Park/ Abbey Street)

Proposed budget: £30,000. Funding stream: DfC

Lighting Improvement Scheme (Castle Park/ Abbey Street)

The proposed project aims to:

- improve linkages to the retail core of the Town Centre
- promote connectivity by enhancing the existing area to create a safe and attractive environment
- improve safety and accessibility for all users (pedestrians, wheelchair users, cyclists, parents with prams, etc)
- encourage and support active travel by providing a safe route for people to walk or cycle
- support active travel in the evenings and improve residents and visitor's safety and security

It should be noted that the proposed scheme was currently being costed and as such those were indicative costs.

Project constraints to be aware of were statutory consents and external issues such as rising contractor and material costs.

Note - this project had been raised on a number of occasions by elected members and the public, but due to budget constraints this was not progressed.

Item 19 – Rural Signage Scheme

Proposed budget: £43,192.89. Funding stream: DAERA £34,589.40 | ANDBC £8,603.49 (existing budgets)

Production and installation of village entrance signage.

The proposed project aims to:

- provide new and improved physical infrastructure and environment in which opportunity can flourish in economic, social and cultural terms to develop our attractiveness as a home, place of business, and tourist destinations
- providing villages with its own identity and creating a sense of welcome and arrival in the village
- making the villages a more attractive place to live, work and visit, whilst encouraging a sense of pride within communities
- similar design that would connect and link the rural settlements
- the signage would reflect the heritage of the village

It should be noted that the proposed scheme was currently being costed and as such those were indicative costs.

Item 20 – Marketing Campaign (Part 2)

Proposed budget: £5,500. Funding stream: DfC Revenue.

To deliver a second phase of the 'Shop Local' marketing campaign across the five town centres of the borough.

To provide a further boost to the local traders during the summer period and reiterate the message of 'Shop Local/ Support Local'

Campaign to include a range of outdoor advertising, social and print.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the extension for the delivery of the scheme and agrees to:

1. progress the reallocation of budget lines within the various projects/interventions and
2. approve the proposed projects (Items 17-20) to utilise the identified underspend.

Councillor Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the recommendation be adopted.

The proposer, Councillor Adair, commended officers on the comprehensive report which had been presented to the committee. He confirmed that he was aware the funding provided to many local businesses throughout the Borough had been very much welcomed. Referring to proposals for Village signs he welcomed this adding that it would have a positive impact on tourism and encourage visitors to explore the many villages throughout the Borough.

The seconder, Councillor Dunlop, referred to Item 12 Parklets which in his opinion were very much overdue and as such asked if there was anything further which could be done to help speed up the process.

In response the Head of Regeneration stated that the planning process for the Parklets would take as long as was necessary to complete. He added that both the specification and location of the Parklets had been agreed by DfI and as such once planning had been approved a Street Licence would be the only item left outstanding.

By way of an update the Director of Regeneration, Development & Planning confirmed that as of that afternoon planners were still waiting for DfI Roads Service to report back on the application.

Councillor Dunlop commented that it was a very frustrating situation for all. Continuing he referred to Item 18 – Bangor Lighting Improvement Scheme and suggested that consideration was given to including a lane just off Abbey Street, Bangor which while well used was not lit and therefore was very dark during the winter months.

The Head of Regeneration commented that he was not familiar with the location the member was referring to adding that it would need to be ascertained whether or not it was in Council ownership.

Sharing Councillor Dunlop's frustrations in respect of the Parklets, Councillor Armstrong-Cotter added that it was deeply frustrating for all involved and suggested

that the Council wrote to the Minister to ask that the Parklets were given priority once the funding had been secured. Continuing she acknowledged ongoing issues in Donaghadee with the proposed Parklets for the town and asked if there would be any wriggle room for the funding to be spent elsewhere in the town.

In response the Head of Regeneration reported that the matter had been raised at the last meeting of the Donaghadee Town Advisory Group where it was felt the Parklets at the proposed location were not a good use of the funding. He added that the criteria for the use of the funding had been circulated to all members of the Group.

Expressing his thanks to officers, Councillor Cummings sought clarification on the following items:

- Item 8 – Cycling Infrastructure – Rural – Completion date
- Item 17 – Comber Town Improvement Scheme Phase 2 – Update

The Head of Regeneration advised that work to install the cycling infrastructure had yet to commence by the contractor however he indicated that it was anticipated it would do so in April. In respect of the Comber Town Improvement Scheme members were advised that costings were being finalised and planners had confirmed that the submission of a planning application would not be required.

Alderman Girvan also expressed disappointment with the delay of the Parklets but hoped to see some movement on them in the very near future. She sought updates on the following proposals:

- Item 16 – Electrical Vehicle Charging Points – Urban
- Item 17 – Comber Town Improvement Scheme Phase 2

Given the number of electric cars now on the road she sought clarification on how many charging points there were within the Borough.

The Head of Regeneration advised the member the Director of Environment, Mr David Lindsay and his colleague Mr David Brown would be best placed to provide an update on the number of electrical vehicle charging points currently throughout the Borough.

At this stage Councillor Armstrong-Cotter noted there was one such charging point at the Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex in Newtownards.

The Chairman, Alderman McDowell advised that currently the East Border Region was reviewing this very issue and asked if there were any updates from the Council.

The Head of Regeneration indicated that the Head of Regulatory Services was the Council representative on this and suggested contact was made with that Officer.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the recommendation be adopted.

4. **HIGH STREET TASK FORCE (FILE RDP206)** (Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that at the meeting of the Regeneration and Development Committee held on 9 December 2021 members were advised that the Executive had announced a new High Street Task Force for NI which was tasked with considering and addressing the key issues affecting businesses. This was part of a wider announcement outlining several Executive actions in relation to Covid-19.

The Executive stated that it was clear that towns faced a range of economic and social challenges. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic undoubtedly exacerbated the situation, many of the challenges were longstanding, stemming from the financial crisis of 2009, prolonged underinvestment in infrastructure, and changing patterns of consumer behaviour.

The Executive then issued a 'call for evidence' covering a range of topics including Partnerships, Management of High Street, Investment, Village and Town Masterplans, High Street Environment, Stimulation of the Economy, Capacity Skills, Greener Environments, Living in/around High Streets, Journeying to High Streets, Tourism, Digital Innovations, Village Developments and Localism. A Council response was prepared and submitted.

The High Street Task Force launched its Report on 22 March 2022, 'Delivering a 21st Century High Street', copy attached, as well as a copy of their 'Call for Evidence Report'.

The report summarised the findings and advice of the High Street Task Force including 13 recommendations across the immediate, medium and longer term, to deliver the vision: "Sustainable city, town and village centres which were thriving places for people to do business, socialise, shop, be creative and use public services as well as being great places to live."

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the report.

Councillor Dunlop proposed, seconded by Councillor Walker, that the recommendation be adopted.

The proposer, Councillor Dunlop, commented that the report made for very interesting reading. He made particular reference to Page 13 of the report which stated:

"The HSTF strongly recommends that district councils each develop dereliction strategies and action plans and that they use their existing powers to transform streets and village centres".

He sought clarification on what the Council's existing powers were.

The Director of Regeneration, Development & Planning stated that she too had noted those comments adding that until the Council obtained those powers, it would not be in a position to proceed along those lines.

Councillor Walker questioned how the Council would be able to implement many of the suggestions made within the report.

The Director outlined that officers not had time to review the report in its entirety and as such, she was slightly unsure how many of the suggestions could be implemented. She added that clarification would be needed on how the Taskforce would operate and further reports brought back to the Committee for consideration in due course.

Councillor Armstrong-Cotter suggested that in any response a need for collaborative working was encouraged given the ongoing issues with the implementation of the Parklets. She expressed frustration with various Departments and their strict adherence to timetables and referred to the booming High Street in Newtownards, and all of the plans in place for Bangor to turn it around and attract people to the town. Continuing she mentioned plans for many of the Borough's other towns and villages and the reluctance of those Departments to dig deep and get on with the job in hand. She reiterated that the Council should not have had to wait as long as it had for the Parklets and regeneration of town centres despite announcements of large sums of funding from various Government Departments which the Council had yet to be able to benefit from. Continuing she urged for common sense to prevail to enable projects to be successfully delivered for the many towns and villages throughout the Borough. She expressed the view that the Council did not get what it needed in terms of support from central government and urged the Director in any proposed response to ensure the Council's depth of feeling on this matter was reflected accordingly.

At this stage the Chairman asked if it would be possible to put this matter on the Agenda for each of the Town Advisory Groups.

The Head of Regeneration indicated that could be done so for information purposes and general discussion.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Dunlop, seconded by Councillor Walker, that the recommendation be adopted.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN PROTEM

At this stage the Chairman indicated that as the proposer of the next item he would vacate the Chair and a member nominated as Chairman ProTem in the absence of the Vice Chairman.

Councillor Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Armstrong-Cotter, that Councillor Brooks be appointed as Chairman ProTem.

Councillor Brooks duly assumed the Chair at this stage.

NOTED.

5. NOTICE OF MOTION

5.1. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Walker and Alderman McDowell

Councillor Walker proposed, seconded by Alderman McDowell, that this Council - recognising the potential difference we could make to the lives of residents and businesses throughout our Borough if we were to have full responsibility for a Regeneration budget as envisaged in the Review of Public Administration - does agree to write to the Minister for Communities requesting that they undertake to devolve such powers to Local Councils within the period of the new Assembly Mandate. And further, that Officers are tasked to bring back a report outlining a programme of engagement with other Councils, SOLACE, and NILGA to present a united campaign to secure the Minister's support.

The proposer, Councillor Walker, noted the frustration which had been expressed throughout the meeting adding that he could not understand why the powers for regeneration had not been delegated to local Councils. He acknowledged that the Council knew what it wanted to do and as such the situation it found itself in was totally frustrating. He suggested that what was needed was to revert back to what had been originally suggested which would enable Councils to make their own decisions about what to do with funding. However he questioned how best that should be done perhaps through the adoption of a strategic approach through lobbying in conjunction with SOLACE and NILGA. Continuing Councillor Walker also asked that officers were tasked to come back with a report outlining a Strategy how best to use any funds .

(Councillor McKimm joined the meeting at this stage – 7.36pm)

The seconder, Alderman McDowell, commented that this was a non-political issue and one which should have been devolved as part of the Review of Public Administration (RPA). He stated that it was a vital missing part of an important jigsaw to ensure Councils were able to secure funding to make plans for many towns and villages. Continuing Alderman McDowell advised that this was something which NILGA was lobbying hard for along with the Partnership Panel. He reiterated the importance of such powers being given back to Councils to enable them to make the most of many opportunities.

Councillor Dunlop commenting in support agreed that there was a need for local solutions for local challenges. The passing of regeneration powers to local Councils was in his opinion the way to proceed forward on this matter.

Councillor Armstrong-Cotter commented that the question for the Council had always been could it handle the responsibility of such devolved powers. She added that as a result of her involvement with regeneration matters, she at this point would have more faith in Council officers than Department officials to get the job done as they actually cared about the projects. Previously she had had concerns about the

Council's capacity to carry out such a role whereas now she found herself asking could they do worse. She felt now was the time to say the Council had proven itself with the small things and it was time to take on the big things. Continuing she emphasised her support for this going forward on the understanding that there would need to be a co-ordinated approach to this rather than the Council's team leading. In summing up she indicated that she would look forward to the report coming back in due course conscious of the fact there were people already in place who were more than capable of carry out this work.

Concurring with those comments Councillor Adair, also acknowledged the Council's team of officers who had demonstrated on numerous occasions how successfully they had previously delivered projects. He asked that the Council ensured that when lobbying for those regeneration powers that an adequate budget and team of staff were included as part of those considerations. He added that he believed Government worked best when it was kept local.

Welcoming Councillor Adair's comments Councillor McClean commented that there was also the issue of accountability to consider. He suggested that if regeneration powers were devolved to local Councils, a team of local people would then become accountable for the delivery of projects for local towns which could then be made a priority. He added that by bringing such powers down to Council level would mean there would be accountability on the ground. Continuing Councillor McClean also agreed with Councillor Adair's call for a budget and the need for that to be administered by those on the ground carrying out the work. He added that it would make for good governance and increased transparency.

By way of summing up, Councillor Walker expressed his thanks to members for their support and reassured them that his motion did include reference to provision of an appropriate budget. He added that he did not wish officers to spend a lot of time on this instead preferring to instigate the matter and get things going in the first instance. Continuing he acknowledged those projects which had already been successfully delivered throughout the Borough as the result of the good work undertaken by Council officers who already had in place an excellent working relationship with their counterparts within the Department. Therefore what he was proposing should make life easier and enable accountability to come to the Council's door. He added that it was the last piece of the jigsaw and thanked members for their support.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Alderman McDowell, that this Council - recognising the potential difference we could make to the lives of residents and businesses throughout our Borough if we were to have full responsibility for a Regeneration budget as envisaged in the Review of Public Administration - does agree to write to the Minister for Communities requesting that they undertake to devolve such powers to Local Councils within the period of the new Assembly Mandate. And further, that Officers are tasked to bring back a report outlining a programme of engagement with other Councils, SOLACE, and NILGA to present a united campaign to secure the Minister's support.

RESUMPTION OF CHAIR

At this stage Alderman McDowell resumed his position of Chairman and thanked Councillor Brooks for stepping in as Chairman ProTem – 7.49pm)

6. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

The Chairman advised there were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

NOTED.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Dunlop, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of undernoted items of confidential business.

7. TENDER REPORT ON SEAFLAG HARBOUR PROJECT, PORTAVOGIE – DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO APPROVE

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDNG THAT INFORMATION)

8. PICKIE Q3 REPORT – 1 OCT-31 DEC 2021 (FILE 171006)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDNG THAT INFORMATION)

9. EXPLORIS Q3 REPORT 1 OCT-31 DEC 2021 (FILE DEVP3C)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDNG THAT INFORMATION)

10. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE STRANGFORD LOUGH AND LECALE TOURISM CLUSTER (FILE TD178) (Appendix II)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

11. TOURISM EVENTS GRANTS – FORMAL APPEALS (FILE TO/EG57)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

(Having declared an interest in the next item, Alderman McDowell vacated the Chair, was put on hold and the Vice Chairman assumed the Chair at this stage – 8.00pm)

12. PGA EUROPRO TOUR, NI MASTERS 24-26 AUG 2022 (FILE TO/EG19 & RDP200) (Appendix III)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

(Alderman McDowell rejoined the meeting and resumed the Chair at this stage – 8.04pm)

13. COCKLE ROW COTTAGES UPDATE REPORT (FILE TO/VIC4)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

(Having declared an interest in the next item Councillor McKimm left the meeting at this stage – 8.13pm)

14. PORTAFERRY ROPEWALK IMPROVEMENT SCHEME UPDATE (FILE REG66/160135/RDP77)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 8.38pm.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A virtual meeting of the Corporate Services Committee was held via Zoom on Tuesday 12 April 2022 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Egan

Aldermen: Keery
Gibson
McIlveen
Girvan

Councillors: Blaney (7.03pm)
Chambers
Cooper
Dunlop
Greer

Officers: Director of Organisational Development and Administration (W Swanston), Director of Finance and Performance (S Christie), Compliance Manager (G Robinson) and Democratic Services Officer (R King).

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for inability to attend was received from Alderman Irvine and Councillors McKimm, Mathison, Philip Smith and Tom Smith.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Greer declared an interest in Item 6(a) – Response to Notice of Motion 154.

NOTED.

3(a) REQUEST TO LIGHT UP COUNCIL BUILDINGS IN SUPPORT OF UKRAINE (FILE LP37)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that in response to the invasion by Russia of Ukraine in February 2022, and to show Council's support for and solidarity with Ukraine, it was retrospectively agreed at March 2022 Corporate Committee (and subsequently retrospectively ratified at March Council) to light up Council buildings blue and yellow on Friday 25th, Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th February 2022. The action was well received as measured by messages from the public.

At the March Corporate Committee it was also proposed by Councillor P Smith, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that the Council continues to light up its buildings in support and in solidarity with the people of Ukraine if there were no other light ups programmed and to review that decision in one month. It was agreed that Corporate Services Committee would undertake the review.

RECOMMENDED that Council considers the decision to continue to light Council buildings blue and yellow in support of Ukraine on dates when there are no other light ups programmed, to be further reviewed on a monthly basis at Corporate Services Committee.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Alderman Gibson, that Council continues to light Council buildings blue and yellow in support of Ukraine on dates when there are no other light ups programmed, to be further reviewed on a monthly basis at Corporate Services Committee.

(Councillor Blaney joined the meeting – 7.03pm)

3(b) REQUEST TO SUPPORT GLOBAL INTERGENERATIONAL WEEK (FILE LP37)

(Appendices I – II)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that the Council had received a request to support Global Intergenerational Week which ran from 25 April – 1 May 2022.

Global Intergenerational Week was now in its third year, with the primary purpose of inspiring individuals, groups, organisations, local/national government, and NGOs to fully embrace intergenerational practice. This initiative aimed to connect people of all ages, especially the younger and older generations.

As we emerged from the pandemic now more than ever it was vital that we developed and celebrated relationships between generations to rebuild our communities, reduce isolation and loneliness, improve health and mental wellbeing, help young people to catch up with their learning, and to reduce ageism.

There were a range of ways in which the Council could support Global Intergenerational Week such as:

1. Sign up as a supporter
2. Get involved in the Social Media Campaign
3. Endorse the launch media release
4. Light up a Council building
5. Promote & attend LGNI events (Appendices 1 and 2)

The Council had also received a request from Lynn Heatley on behalf of Linking Generations NI to light up Ards Town Hall / Ards Arts Centre pink on Monday 25th April 2022, and annually thereafter, to mark the beginning of Global Intergenerational Week 2022. She had advised that Linking Generations was based in Newtownards and had deep roots in the council area.

The current lighting up policy stated that requests for the lighting up of Council buildings were deemed eligible if they were from:-

- Charitable, community or other non-profit making organisations based in or with a significant connection to the Borough and which were celebrating a significant anniversary or occasion.

RECOMMENDED that the Council retrospectively supports this initiative including the light up request which meets the light up policy requirements and that the light up date is added to the annual schedule.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the recommendation be adopted.

4. ASYMPTOMATIC TESTING PROGRAMME FOR COVID 19 (Appendices III – VI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration that on 22 June 2021 Ards and North Down Borough Council commenced a parallel scheme offering lateral flow tests (LFT) internally for all staff for workforce testing, and externally at our three collection sites (Bangor Town Hall, Church Street and the VIC in Newtownards) for our local communities, business to collect lateral flow tests for home use. Additional sources such as pharmacies or online ordering were also available. Where a positive LFT test was indicated this was followed up with a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test at nominated Health Trust sites.

The purpose of the scheme was to enhance additional Covid-19 legislation, guidance and mitigations such as test track and trace, self-isolation, vaccination programme, and more recently newer specific medical treatments not available in the first waves of the pandemic. The high uptake of the vaccination programme in Northern Ireland coupled with those infected and recovered indicated a high immune protection to serious disease.

The offer of free lateral flow tests although not compulsory was taken up by large number of staff within council services and across the borough at our collection sites. We were indebted to all the staff who participated in the workforce testing and public collection schemes and those who assisted in its implementation, the result of which was our ability to maintain critical services throughout key periods of the pandemic.

From June 2021 Council distributed out an approximate total of 16,680 boxes of 7 tests both internally and externally. The scheme was still active until 22 April 2022 with 4,400 boxes of 7 tests available at the time of this report. Stock remaining at the conclusion of the scheme would be returned through Public Health for use in vulnerable and clinical settings.

As the Pandemic progressed towards an endemic it was natural for a review of this programme, and on the 24th of March 2022 the Department of Health announced the end of mass testing through free, lateral flow and PCR tests from the 22 April 2022.

A transition period would commence on the 22 April and continued to the end of June 2022 during which time a targeted approach would be taken for the most vulnerable in society (details were attached).

It was clear that the virus was still widely in circulation and caution was still required alongside personal responsibility in adherence to guidance which in itself had not changed. Free testing would remain in both vulnerable persons and connected work sectors for the foreseeable future and plans were in place in the case of a resurgence of the virus or new variant of concern.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the recommendation be adopted.

5. EXTENSION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT REMOTE MEETING LEGISLATION
(Appendix VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that the Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 empowered Councils to meet remotely. This was subordinate legislation made under section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020. Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act was scheduled to expire on 25 March 2022, which would mean so too would the power to hold remote meetings in line with the 2020 Regulations. However, the Department for Communities (DfC) had written to the Chief Executive to advise that it had extended the expiry date by six months to 24 September 2022. Thus, for the time being Councils could continue to meet remotely in accordance with the 2020 Regulations.

As regards the Council's longer-term plans for meeting arrangements, it was agreed in March 2022 that subject to permanent legislative change, Council would purchase equipment to support the running of hybrid meetings in Bangor Town Hall Chamber and in Ards Chamber. As Members would be aware, the DfC recently issued a call for evidence, to which Council responded, seeking views on the introduction of legislation to enable Councils on a permanent basis to be able to meet wholly remotely and also in a hybrid format i.e., meetings with both physical and virtual attendees. DfC would be establishing a working group, with officer representation from each Council, to review the existing legislative provision and to consider the responses from the call for evidence. An update on this work would be brought back to Council in due course.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the attached letter relating to the extension of the remote meeting legislation.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the recommendation be adopted.

Alderman McIlveen asked for clarification if the two Council representatives appointed to sit on the working group would be officers and that was confirmed by the Director of Finance and Performance.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Girvan, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Councillor Greer left the meeting having declared an interest in the next item – 7.08pm)

6. RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION

6.1 NOM 154 – Stress in Social Housing (FILE NOM154) (Appendix VIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that A Notice of Motion debated at Corporate Committee in January 2022 and subsequently ratified by Council stated:

“That this council writes to the Minister for Communities to express concern at the high level of housing stress and shortage of social housing within our Borough. Further, that the minister is made aware of the limited temporary accommodation available to our residents.

The Council further requests that the minister should bring forward proposals to identify sites in towns and villages within our Borough for additional social housing and, in the interim, requests that she works with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to ensure that additional emergency accommodation is made available to those in extreme housing stress, particularly in these challenging times.”

A letter was sent from the Chief Executive on 14 February 2022 to the Minister for Communities and a reply email was received on 8 March 2022.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the response to the Notice of Motion.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the recommendation be adopted.

The proposer, Alderman McIlveen, commented that his colleagues Councillor Adair and Councillor MacArthur had brought the Notice of Motion forward and he advised they would have something to contribute on the item when the minutes of this committee were being discussed at full Council.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Councillor Greer returned to the meeting – 7.09pm)

7. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Notice of Motion submitted by Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Greer, Johnson, Kendall and McRandal

(Councillor Kendall was admitted to the meeting – 7.09pm)

That Council writes to the Department for Infrastructure calling for the prioritisation of the resurfacing of Bridge Road South, Helen's Bay due to the appalling state of the current road surface and the recent injury of a child.

Proposed by Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the notice of motion be adopted.

Speaking to the proposal, Councillor Greer explained that this was not the way she would have liked to have addressed the matter but despite efforts by all of her DEA colleagues to raise it with the Department for Infrastructure through the traditional routes, it was not willing to move on the issue. The state of Bridge Road South was a widely known concern for anyone who knew the area and recently a child was badly injured on the road.

After contact from deeply concerned local residents, Councillor Greer was now calling on members to support the motion which would result in a letter to DfI calling for urgent upgrades. With increased usage expected over the summer by visitors to Crawfordsburn Country Park, the road would only fall into further disrepair. She hoped that members could support her proposal.

The seconder, Councillor Kendall, was aware of a significant length of the road in a state of disrepair which was a major concern for residents who had contacted the DfI on numerous occasions. With an increase in usage over the summer months, her DEA colleagues were now calling for DfI to prioritise the resurfacing work.

Alderman McIlveen was aware of the difficulties of a lot of the roads in the Borough and he was also aware of the low investment from DfI on the Borough's roads and felt that the Borough did not receive an equal share of that funding. He spoke of the volume of heavy industrialised usage in many areas leaving a lot of roads in such a poor state and requiring urgent attention. He was happy to support this cross-party proposal and recognised it was an incredibly bad area.

The Chair, Councillor Egan, spoke to welcome the Notice of Motion recognising that the road was in an incredibly busy area and well used, particularly coming into the tourist season.

Summing up, Councillor Greer thanked all of members in Holywood and Clondeboyne DEA for supporting the motion, along with those who had spoken on the matter.

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

(Councillor Kendall left the meeting – 7.15pm)

8. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There were no items of any other notified business.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted items of confidential business.

9. JOBSTART SCHEME

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

10. UNITE INDUSTRIAL ACTION UPDATE

(Appendix IX)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

11. REQUEST FOR LEASE TO INSTALL A TELEPHONE MAST AT CHURCH ROAD CARPARK, HOLYWOOD (FILE LP493)

(Appendices X – XII)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

12. REQUEST FROM NORTH DOWN HOCKEY CLUB TO RENEW LICENCE FOR TEMPORARY SCAFFOLDING TOWER AT COMBER LEISURE CENTRE (FILE LP158)

(Appendices XIII – XIV)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDNG THAT INFORMATION)

- 13. REQUEST FROM NI WATER TO EXTEND THE LICENCE FOR A SITE COMPOUND AT BROMPTON**
(Appendices XV – XVI)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDNG THAT INFORMATION)

- 14. REQUEST FROM MARKET PLACE EUROPE LTD. FOR AN INTERNATIONAL MARKET AT CONWAY SQUARE 2022 (FILE LP2G PART 3)**
(Appendix XVII)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDNG THAT INFORMATION)

- 15. REQUEST FROM PANORAMIC WHEEL COMPANY LTD. FOR AN ADDITIONAL ATTRACTION AT THE MCKEE CLOCK ARENA**
(Appendix XVIII)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDNG THAT INFORMATION)

16. REQUEST FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY TO RENEW THE LICENCE FOR THE TIDAL GAUGE AT THE COMMERCIAL PIER AT BANGOR MARINA

(Appendix XIX)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

17. SPFG MINUTES DATED 31 MARCH 2022

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Dunlop, seconded by Councillor Chambers, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 7.34pm.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A virtual meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Committee was held via Zoom on Wednesday 13 April 2022 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Thompson

Aldermen: Carson
Irvine (8.18 pm)
Menagh

Councillors:	Boyle	MacArthur
	Chambers	Mathison (7.15 pm)
	Douglas	McRandal
	Edmund	Smart (7.56 pm)
	Johnson	T Smith
	Kendall	

Officers: Director of Community and Wellbeing (G Bannister), Head of Community and Culture (J Nixey), Interim Head of Parks & Cemeteries (S Daye), Leisure Services Officer (A Johnson) and Democratic Services Officer (H Loebnau)

1. APOLOGIES

The Chairman sought apologies at this stage and apologies for lateness were received from Alderman Irvine and Councillors Smart and Mathison.

NOTED.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman asked for any Declarations of Interest and none were noted at this stage.

Councillor Kendall declared an interest later in the meeting for Item 21 – Queen's Platinum Jubilee Grants.

NOTED.

3. SPORTS FORUM GRANTS

(Appendix I-IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 7 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that on the 26th

August 2015 Council delegated authority to the Ards and North Down Sports Forum, in order to allow it to administer sports grants funding on behalf of the Council. £35,000 had been allocated within the 2021/2022 revenue budget for that purpose.

The Council further authorised the Forum under delegated powers to award grants of up to £250. Grants above £250 still required Council approval. In addition, the Council requested that regular updates were reported to Members.

During February 2022, the Forum received a total of 3 grant applications; 1 of which was for Anniversary, 1 for Equipment and 1 of which was for an Event. A summary of the 2 successful applications was detailed in the attached Successful Equipment Applications and Successful Events Applications.

A total of 1 of the applications failed to meet the specified criteria. The reason for the unsuccessful application was detailed on the attached Unsuccessful Applications.

For information, the annual budget and spend to date on grant categories was as follows:

	Annual Budget	Funding Awarded February 2022	Remaining Budget
Anniversary	£1,000	£0	£1,000
Coaching	£3,000	£0	£1,499.25
Equipment	£9,000	*£1,000	-£7,028.41
Events	£6,000	*£171	£3,499.52
Seeding	£500	£0	£58.57
Travel and Accommodation	£14,500	*£0	£12,422.82
Discretionary	£1000	£0	£1,000
Goldcards proposed during the period February 2022 is 5 ("subject to").			

*The proposed remaining budget for Equipment of -£7,028.41 was based on a proposed award of £1,000.00 as outlined in Successful Equipment Applications – for Approval. The proposed remaining budget for Events of £3,499.52 was based on a proposed award of £171 as outlined in Successful Events Applications – for Noting, and withdrawn costs of £171.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the attached application for financial assistance for sporting purposes valued at above £250, and that the application approved by the Forum (valued at below £250) is noted.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Carson, seconded by Alderman Menagh, that the recommendation be adopted.

4. **PROPOSED CHANGES TO ARDS AND NORTH SPORTS FORUM GRANTS**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 29 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that an increased budget of £40,000 had been allocated within the 2022/2023 revenue budget towards the Ards and North Down Sports Forum Grants Programme.

Following a review of the Grants Programme and feedback received from applicants and clubs; the following changes were proposed by Officers and the Sports Forum Working Group:

Individual & Club Travel and Accommodation Category

Award increase of £50 proposed (except for Northern Ireland)

Individual Travel and Accommodation	2021/2022	2022/2023
Northern Ireland	£50 (Minimum 50 miles)	£50.00
Ireland	£50.00	£100.00
Great Britain	£100.00	£150.00
Europe	£120.00	£170.00
Outside Europe	£150.00	£200.00
NB: Max of £500 per year per athlete		
Club Travel and Accommodation	2021/2022	2022/2023
Northern Ireland	£50	£50.00
Ireland	£150.00	£200.00
Great Britain	£200.00	£250.00
Europe	£250.00	£300.00
Outside Europe	£300.00	£350.00
NB: Should the programme be oversubscribed and due to limited funds available, a reduction in funding percentage will be applied across all applications. Max of £500 per year per club		

Equipment Category

Grant Category	What is in place for 21/22	Proposed changes for 22/23	Rationale / Justification
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CW 13.04.2022 PM

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Equipment Category	<p>Allowance of £1,000 towards sports equipment per club, per financial year.</p> <p>'Fundamental' equipment is currently ineligible for funding under the Equipment grant.</p>	Of this £1,000 equipment grant; £300 can be fundamental equipment.	<p>Provides further flexibility to clubs to purchase their main sports equipment. However, Forum will use discretion and utilise eligibility criteria where necessary "Costs that are deemed to be unreasonable e.g. excessive goods/services"</p>
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Event Category

Grant Category	What is in place for 21/22	Proposed changes for 22/23	Rationale / Justification
Event Category	<p>Allowance of £1,000 towards event delivery per club, per financial year.</p> <p>'Fundamental' equipment is currently ineligible for funding under the Event grant.</p>	Of this £1,000 event grant; £300 can be fundamental equipment.	<p>Enables clubs to put on more events in the borough knowing that if they need additional sports equipment, a contribution is available towards the costs.</p> <p>However, Forum will use discretion and utilise eligibility criteria where necessary "Costs that are deemed to be unreasonable e.g. excessive goods/services"</p>

Anniversary Award Category

Grant Category	What is in place for 21/22	Proposed changes for 22/23	Rationale / Justification
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Anniversary	6-month stipulation as part of criteria. i.e. clubs had to submit an application 6 months prior to the year of their Anniversary.	Reducing this to 3 months prior to Anniversary.	More flexibility for clubs to apply for financial assistance.
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Coaching / Seeding / Goldcard Award Category

No changes proposed.

School / Club Pathways Category

The Sports Development Team and Sports Forum Working Group were currently developing a new category to be included within the Sports Forum Programme and it was hoped that this category would be introduced in 2022/23. This category would provide financial assistance to clubs to provide sports coaching within the school environment and to increase club and school links and create further pathways for club participation. A further paper would be presented to Members once this award category had been developed.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the above non-monetary changes and approves the proposed monetary changes to the Awards granted under the Sports Forum Programme to commence in 2022/23.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Kendall, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

5. MARY PETERS TRUST (Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 18 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that the Council had previously, on an annual basis, provided support to the Mary Peters Trust in the form of a grant. The Mary Peters Trust do excellent work in helping to develop upcoming local athletes from a wide range of sports through the distribution of financial support that allowed the athletes to train and compete at the highest levels.

In 2021 the Mary Peters Trust provided financial support to 8 local athletes from 5 different sports across the Ards and North Down Borough Council area, totalling £4,450 of investment.

Without financial support many of the athletes would struggle to do the training required or be able to afford to travel to events to compete and represent everything that was good about the Borough.

It was proposed to continue to support the work of the Trust through the award of this grant which could be paid from the existing allocation in the Sport Development Budget for 2021/22. In previous years, the Council had provided £3,000 to the Trust.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves an award of £3,000 to the Mary Peters Trust.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Chambers, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

6. SUB REGIONAL STADIA PROGRAMME FOR SOCCER

(Appendix VI & VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 23 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that at the Council meeting on 23rd February 2022 the following Notice of Motion:

That this Council writes to the Minister for Communities Deirdre Hargey calling on her to deliver the sub-regional football stadium funding that would enable Ards FC to fulfil their strategy and develop a new community stadium in Newtownards was discussed and it was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Minister for Communities.

was discussed and it was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Minister for Communities (attached).

A response had been received from Shirley Chambers, Head of Sub Regional Stadia Programme (attached).

The letter noted:

That the Minister met with representatives from Ards Football Club, along with local MP and an MLA. That the team also met with representatives from Bangor Football Club, along with another MLA.

That the Minister also met with the Irish Football Association and the Northern Ireland Football League to address their concerns and to provide assurances of her commitment. Finally, the letter stated that the Minister planned to meet again with both organisations to provide a further update on the programme.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the response.

Proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Chambers, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Johnson welcomed the progress made and hoped that the momentum continued to keep the initiative moving forward. It was time, in his opinion, to get the funding in to the football clubs since it was greatly needed. Councillor Chambers was in agreement and considered that it had been a great shame that the funding had stuttered and stalled for many years and was pleased that clubs would now get the funds they deserved.

Alderman Menagh welcomed the assurances and hoped that all sports would be encouraged and developed as society moved out of the Covid-19 pandemic.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Chambers, that the recommendation be adopted.

7. ARDS AND NORTH DOWN IN BLOOM ANNUAL GRANTS (Appendix VIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 2 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the purpose of the report was to consider the 14 applications from local community groups for the annual Ards and North Down in Bloom funding grants.

Ards and North Down Borough had a reputation for leading the way with its floral displays. The Borough had won regional and national competitions in recent years and the common theme throughout all the success was the incredible hard work and enthusiasm shown by staff and the local communities they worked with.

The grant scheme assisted the Ards and North Down in Bloom initiative which had been developed with three overlapping objectives: horticultural excellence, community participation and environmentally sustainable practices. Those were in line with objectives of Translink Ulster in Bloom and other regional awards schemes.

Ards and North Down Borough Council currently made budget provision for the allocation of funding to community groups in order to assist with floral displays in the towns and villages throughout the Borough, to assist with the Council's commitment to the Translink Ulster in Bloom competition.

The allocation for funding was intended to supplement floral display and amenity area maintenance currently carried out by the Council's Parks and Cemeteries Service. That may be in the form of hanging baskets, planters, flower beds, sustainable wildflower displays etc. either on Council or other statutory bodies' land or privately owned non-domestic areas in public view.

The maximum limit for floral funding was £1,000 per annum per group. A further grant may be provided for funding, in whole or in part, appropriate liability insurance covering the floral display work over and above the group's normal insured activities.

Funding would be allocated with 80% advance payment, with the further 20% paid upon the receipt of invoices.

The Council wished to encourage a collaborative approach by groups, where there was more than one group applying in a town or village, consideration may only be given to one project.

The 14 applications were assessed against the following criteria:

- Meet the core objectives of Ards and North Down in Bloom
- Provide a vision as to how the funding will enhance the particular areas and how this will be sustained in subsequent years.
- Evidence of approval from relevant landowner where works are to be carried out.
- Where appropriate insurance liability cover is in place, copy of certificate and schedule to be submitted.
- How the works are to be carried out, and by whom.
- Detailed breakdown of how funding will be utilised, and receipts submitted accordingly.

The appendix clearly demonstrated how each application met each of the criteria. In the assessment, all 14 applications were considered to have met the criteria.

Currently, there was a budget allocation of £17,000 for the In Bloom grant programme. The 14 applications amounted to £12,395 in total.

RECOMMENDED that the Council awards all 14 applications for funding.

Proposed by Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Douglas was very excited to see some of the projects being rolled out particularly among the villages around the Borough and she wished them well. Councillor Kendall concurred and was greatly encouraged to see such a spread of community groups across the Borough and she was sure it would enhance the attractiveness of local communities.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

8. ARDS AND NORTH DOWN IN BLOOM UPDATE

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 29 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the purpose of this report was to provide an update on 'In Bloom' community activities within the Ards and North Down Borough.

Ards and North Down Borough had a reputation for leading the way with its floral displays. The Borough had won regional and national competitions in recent years and the common theme throughout all successes, was the incredible hard work and enthusiasm shown by staff and the local communities they worked with. The Ards and North Down in Bloom initiative had been developed with three overlapping objectives which were: horticultural excellence, community participation and environmentally sustainable practices. Those were in line with objectives of Translink Ulster in Bloom and other regional awards schemes.

Most recently, at the 2021 Translink 'Ulster in Bloom' Awards, Donaghadee was overall winner of the Town Category, Comber was placed third in the same category. Carnalea Rail Station placed third in the Floral Stations category. While that success was welcomed, the Parks Service recognised the opportunities for growth, through further community engagement and participation. In 2021 entries from the Borough to Ulster 'In Bloom' grew to 14 towns and villages. That would provide an opportunity for feedback on each area and act as a starting point for future improvements.

To support communities on their entries, the Park Service invited annual application from village groups, community associations etc, within the Ards and North Down Borough for funding to enable the purchase of bedding plants, shrub and tree material, for planting within local villages or towns. The allocation of funding was subject to Council budget approval and capped at £1,000 per application. Since 2019 the In Bloom Funding Scheme had awarded more than £42,000 supporting 50 projects (figures did not include the 2022 scheme).

The benefits of the wider 'In Bloom' initiative include: increased numbers of visitors who travelled around the towns and villages to see the floral displays. Shops and businesses in the respective communities reported a considerable increase in their business for weeks afterwards. In addition, people perceived these floral places as attractive areas to live resulting in demand for properties, thus increasing property value.

Community Competitions

To further promote and support the 'In Bloom' initiative, the Parks Service launched the Ards and North Down in Bloom Community Competitions in 2020. The competitions were coordinated by Ards and North Down Borough Council. This community competition encouraged everyone who lived or worked in the Borough to think about their local environment and how attractive flowers, plants, trees and gardens could enhance it. By supporting the competition residents not only made their garden or business more attractive, but also contributed to the Borough's entry to the Translink Ulster in Bloom Competition and other regional awards.

The competitions were designed to attract a wide demographic to become involved in activities that promoted horticultural excellence, increased environmental responsibility and encouraged community participation. More than 1,000 residents

took part in the competition. The general categories for the Community Competition categories were:

- Best Kept Front Garden
- Gardening for Wildlife Award
- Volunteer of The Year
- Best Kept Commercial Premises
- Best Kept Community Planting Scheme.

Being a new initiative, a sustained media campaign was required to communicate the benefits of the competition and promote participation. The involvement of local community groups and schools in these media releases helped raise the profile of the Council as a whole. As the community learnt to live with Covid-19, it was hoped that each year winners and runners-up would attend an awards ceremony in October, where they would be presented with prizes that could be used to further enhance their areas.

The structure of the competitions recognised the importance of educating young people on environmental responsibility, benefiting the Borough now and for future generations. The competitions included categories specifically aimed at entrants aged under 16. The Young People's Categories for the Community Competitions are:

- Best School Gardening Project
- Painting Competition
- Tallest Sunflower Competition
- Young Volunteer of The Year

The most popular Young People's category was the Tallest Sunflower Competition. The category was designed to engage young people in a fun horticultural activity, while learning about how to grow and care for plants. The Parks Service had found many stories of children working with friends, neighbours and relatives to grow their sunflower as tall as possible. To support the scheme, free packets of sunflower seeds were distributed to schools across the Borough. In 2021, the scheme saw the delivery of 6,000 packets of seeds (approx. 60,000 seeds).

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the success of the Ards and North Down in Bloom initiative and continue to support it by encouraging local communities to participate the various ways outlined in this report.

Proposed by Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor MacArthur that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Douglas welcomed the report and noted the successes within it. Seconding the recommendation Councillor MacArthur was in agreement and

referred to children's enthusiasm for the tallest sunflower competition which was always so well received and very popular with young people.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

9. DISPLAY BED APPLICATIONS

(Appendix IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 16 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that on the 27 February 2019 the Council agreed a policy for the use of Display Beds in the Borough. That policy required officers to report to the Council any applications received by external organisations. Through the pandemic the display bed application process had been suspended and those floral beds had been used to celebrate the excellent work carried out by NHS staff and other key workers. It was proposed that the display bed application process now recommenced and that the NHS staff/key workers displays continued until new applications had been approved by the Council.

The Council had received three applications for use of the display beds and officers had assessed those and determined that all requests met the criteria in the policy and were recommended for approval. The applications were deemed by officers not to require equality screening.

The applications were as followed and the proposed design of the display was included in the attached appendix. The Parks team would endeavour to replicate the design as far as possible, however detailed design may alter in order to facilitate installation. If necessary, the officer would liaise with the applicant if the installation may have to be significantly different from that proposed.

Name of Group / Organisation	Display Bed applied for	Proposed dates of display	Reason for the display
Bangor Horticultural Society	Adjacent to Bangor Post and Sorting Office	24/04/2023 - 26/06/2023	To commemorate Bangor Horticultural Society reaching 100 years in the Bangor area
ANDBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to Bangor Post and Sorting Office • Court Square, Newtownards 	20/06/2022 - 26/06/2022	To commemorate the Freedom of the Borough

ANDBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to Bangor Post and Sorting Office • At the Bangor Road entrance to Ballymenoch Park, Holywood • Court Square, Newtownards • East Street, Donaghadee • Comber Square, Comber 	30/05/2022 - 05/06/2022	To commemorate the Queen's Jubilee
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RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the above applications for the display beds.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur thought these display beds looked lovely dotted about the Borough and she asked about the proposed beds to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and if there was any indication yet on what those might look like.

The Interim Head of Parks and Cemeteries explained that the design would be the logo of the Jubilee itself which would be large and eye catching and the main colour in the display would be purple.

Councillor Kendall referred to the 100 year anniversary of the Bangor Horticultural Society and offered her congratulations for that.

Alderman Carson asked about how the design had been chosen for the Platinum Jubilee and the officer explained that the events team had applied from within the Council and it had chosen the Jubilee logo, indeed. It had also applied for the Irish Guards display in planning for its award of Freedom of the Borough.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

10. DOWN HIGH SCHOOL MOTION TREE PLANTING

(Appendix X & XI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that at the Council meeting on 26 January 2022 the Council agreed to support a Motion from Down High School as followed;

That this Council should consider the Motion from Down High School to provide and support the planting of a tree for every pupil in Northern Ireland, and to write to the Minister for Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in support of it.

A response had now been received from Edwin Poots, Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (attached).

The letter notes:

"I commend your Council for its proactive approach to recognising the importance of trees and woodland for people in Northern Ireland, not least to help mitigate climate change.

In March 2020, I launched a programme of afforestation called Forests for Our Future, which aims to plant 18 million trees to create 9,000 hectares of new woodland by 2030. I am pleased that to date 1.75 million trees have been planted under the programme, which is approximately 1 tree per person.

You may wish to note that the Forestry Grant schemes are planned to reopen in summer 2022 which may provide important grant aid support for Council led new woodland creation projects."

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the response.

Proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Johnson congratulated the young people of Down High School for the work that they had undertaken and thought it was encouraging to see secondary school age pupils getting involved in politics and showing active engagement in their communities. That was something which should be celebrated.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Councillor Mathison entered the meeting at 7.15 pm)

11. LOUGHVIEW CEMETERY SIGNAGE AND FLOWER BEDS

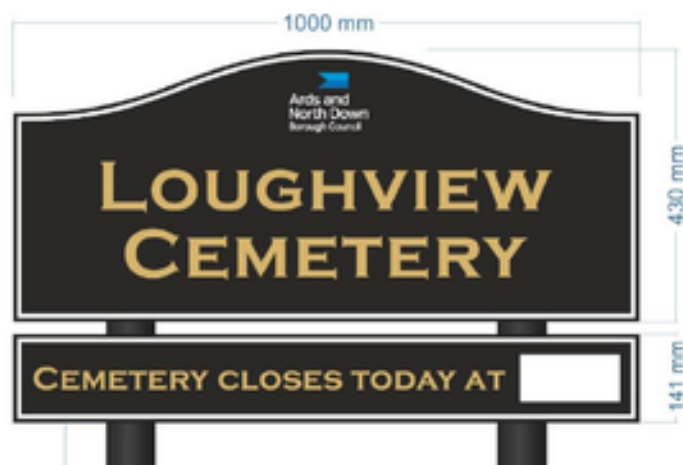
PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 29 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that in October 2021, the Council agreed to the following Motion.

"Loughview Cemetery, Comber, was established in April 2014. It is disappointing to note that in the past seven years, the Council has not erected signage of significant quality and status at the entrance to the cemetery. Therefore, it is requested that officers bring back a report outlining a proposal for the design, costs and positioning of a sign that is comparable to other graveyard signs throughout the Borough.

Furthermore, that the report also includes the option of planting flowerbeds or similar at the entrance to the cemetery on the Ballygowan Road."

Officers could confirm that the cost to carry out the above would be £799.18 for the sign including installation and £216.76 for a floral display, therefore a total cost of £1,015.94.

The proposed sign was in the style as other cemetery entrance signs already in place including at Comber (Old), Redburn, Clandeboye Cemeteries etc. See graphic below.



The proposed location was on a greenspace off the Ballygowan Road (A21). See graphic below.



The floral display would be installed around this sign using an appropriate design to enhance the signage.

RECOMMENDED that the Council agrees to progress the work as outlined above.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Alderman Carson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur welcomed the new signage and noted that some members of the community would visit cemeteries weekly and the signage was the first thing they were likely to see. She hoped that there would also be some planting of flowers around the sign similar to that of other cemeteries throughout the Borough.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Alderman Carson, that the recommendation be adopted.

12. LITTER BIN RATIONALISATION RESPONSE TO NOM

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 29 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that in September 2021, the Council agreed a Notice of Motion asking:

"...That Environment Directorate Cleansing and Parks Officers work together to agree a draft plan for collaborating to ensure that waste management staff can be deployed to problem litter locations in a timely manner, having regard for severity and urgency. This should include consideration of need for a single, cross department out of hours contact to log issues and to facilitate the deployment of resource. That a report outlining the plan, complete with costings, is brought before the relevant committee."

In addition to the above Notice of Motion, a further Notice of Motion was submitted in November 2021 requesting:

"That officers bring back a report to consider the option of transferring responsibility for bins which are currently the responsibility of the Parks Section into the Environment Directorate."

An initial report had been tabled at the April Environment Committee regarding the cross department out of hours contacts. That report also outlined that a report on the servicing of litter bins would be tabled at the Community and Wellbeing committee in April.

Following a transformation process for delivery of an improved out of hours service within Parks and Cemeteries in 2020, manpower resources within that service had been reorganised to provide 7 days per week cover – including supervisory cover for Saturdays and Sundays – throughout the year. A Ranger Service covered that and one of the duties was emptying of bins.

The following set out the actions proposed by officers in addressing the issues outlined in the above Notice of Motion with regard to a collaborative approach to the servicing of litter bins across the Borough. Currently there were a number of areas

where both the Cleansing teams and Parks & Cemetery teams attended to service litter bins. Given the differing roles of each section, while there was occasionally an overlap in service, there was also a disparity in the frequency of visits due to the complexity of each service area and the roles different teams undertook on those visits.

In order to address the issues, the following work had been carried out:

- All litter bins across the Borough were now plotted on the Council's GIS system showing current area of responsibility.
- Heads of Service had commenced discussions to agree where greater collaborative work could be carried out and identify where the benefits of the transferring bins to the Cleansing Directorate would be feasible.
- Service Managers from both Directorates were meeting to review the responsibility of servicing across the Borough and create a more efficient operating model.
- Other considerations were being discussed within the group with regard to increasing litter bin capacities, additional seasonal deployment, and amended seasonal responsibility.

Once officers had concluded the discussions, a further report would be brought before Members for consideration.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note this progress report.

Proposed by Councillor McRandal, seconded by Councillor Douglas that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McRandal thanked officers for the work that had been done in this area to date relating to the two Notices of Motion. The original Motion that he and Councillor Douglas had brought had had nothing to do with bins but rather arose from an incident of littering at Seapark the previous summer. He asked if the changes being brought in would help to address that in future. The Interim Head of Parks and Cemeteries explained that the two Motions were being considered together across the Community and Wellbeing and Environmental Directorates in an attempt to work more closely on similar issues and in a more efficient manner. A central email point of contact would ensure that a team from Council could address any matter of littering at any time, seven days a week.

The officer went on to state that this was hopefully an encouraging step forward in dealing with litter promptly and the rationalising of bin collection had been undertaken at the same time for public areas.

Councillor Douglas was hugely disappointed that it had taken seven months to get to this point and pointed again to parts of the Council working in silo and the need for it to become more streamlined as an organisation.

The officer understood and shared the desire of Members to move on the matter quickly and explained that much work had gone on in the background for over a year including mapping public bins throughout the Borough and organising the most efficient way to collect those. Councillor Douglas looked forward to seeing that implemented but added that what was being discussed was an operational issue for the Council and she did not think that Members should need to raise matters such as those using Notice of Motions.

Councillor T Smith concurred with those frustrations expressed and hoped to see the new system implemented as soon as possible. He asked was the email for members of the public or for elected Members only. The officer replied that it was initially planned to be used for elected Members only.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor McRandal, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the recommendation be adopted.

13. SEA SWIMMING RESPONSE TO NOM

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 29 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that in February 2022 it was agreed;

"That this Council recognises the health and wellbeing benefits of Sea Swimming and therefore will write to the DAERA Minister to ask him to increase the sites in our Borough where bathing water quality is tested and the time of the year which testing occurs and officers will bring back a report detailing how Council can promote and better facilitate safe sea swimming; including consultation and engagement with swimming groups to address their needs, and promote information on the activity on a central webpage."

There were currently seven designated bathing water sites within the Ards and North Down area, which was the highest number for any Council in Northern Ireland. They were:

- Helen's Bay
- Crawfordsburn
- Ballyholme (Also part of the EU Swim Project)
- Groomsport
- Millisle
- Ballywalter (Also part of the EU Swim Project)
- Cloughey

Sampling for water quality was undertaken by the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), from 1 June to 15 September and the Water Quality Results Data was published on the DAERA website at: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/north-down-bathing-water-quality>.

Northern Ireland had 26 identified bathing waters which must meet stringent water quality standards set under The Quality of Bathing Water Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008. DAERA Officials were currently preparing for a full review of Bathing Waters in 2022/23 including public consultation which would not only look at the identification of new Bathing Waters but would also consider extending the length of the bathing season. The current consultation process had a closing date 8 April 2022.

Currently the Environmental Health Team printed out the Water Quality results data, laminated them and then posted them on the existing signs at the Designated Bathing Water beaches every week in the Borough, with the exceptions of Helen's Bay and Crawfordsburn, which were managed by DAERA, so they posted the results at those locations.

The Environmental Health Team had advised that a better approach would be to update the signs at the Designated Bathing Water beaches by adding the details of the NI Direct website referred to above and/or by adding a QR code so that people could directly access the data themselves. That approach would also enable people to check the Water Quality results data before they travelled to the locations.

The Council had also been developing a new Outdoor Recreation page on the Council's Leisure website and that went live week commencing 14 March 2022, having been in development for the last few months. That Outdoor Recreation webpage would have a section on swimming and details of the Designated Bathing Water locations, and links to the Water Quality results data on the NI Direct website. That new Outdoor Recreation web page would be promoted over the Council's social media channels in the following areas.

Safe Sea Swimming: Council had begun a programme to promote safe sea swimming hosted by Swim Ulster and funded by Sport NI.

Webinars promoting general water safety ran on: 2 and 9 November 2021. The webinars were advertised over social media and the local swimming groups were made aware of them, in total 45 people attended. Further webinars focussing on water acclimatisation, swim strokes and safety were due to be held on: 22 and 29 March 2022.

Beach to Buoy Classes aimed at existing sea swimmers were held on the following dates: 13 and 14 November 2021 and 20 and 21 November 2021. There were 16 participants on each course, so a total of 32 people attended generally made up from members of the informal sea swimming groups in the Borough. Further classes aimed at beginner sea swimmers were due to be held on: 23 and 24 April 2022.

An Open Water Safety Awareness Booklet was written by Swim Ulster and funded by Sport NI and was/would be given to the participants of the classes.

It was hoped, subject to funding, that a combination of webinars and more classes could be delivered in the future each year.

It was also hoped, subject to funding, that some additional infrastructure could be installed at the Designated Bathing Water beaches such as, external showers and benches to help changing etc. The feasibility of those types of infrastructure, costings, planning requirements etc would be explored over the coming year and then the Council could apply for funding when it became available.

Digital Signage

The digital EU Swim Project signage had had technical issues and suffered acts of vandalism in the past. The Council was however committed to continuing with the Project, but a longer-term replacement for signage had been proposed by Environmental Health, hence the suggestion to direct people to check the NI Direct Water Quality results data themselves via updated signage at the relevant beaches.

It was acknowledged that there were existing/informal groups regularly swimming at the following sites. However, there were Combined Storm Overflows (CSO) at those sites, so they would not be candidates for Designated Bathing Water areas as they would be unlikely to pass the ongoing stringent water quality standards:

- Donaghadee (2 CSO's within 400M)
- Brompton (right beside a Combined Storm Overflow CSO)
- Skipperstone (close proximity to the above CSO and the outflow at Bergenz House)
- Seacourt (right beside a CSO)
- Bangor Bay (fugitive sewage effluent emissions much reduced since the construction of the storm overflow tank at Quay Street Bangor Under the carpark at Bregenz House))
- Seapark (issues with human E Coli coming from the river and they have yet to find the source despite extensive testing of properties)

NB: General advice was not to swim in open water following heavy rainfall, it was best to leave 2 to 3 days to allow for dilution of storm/sewage runoff and discharges.

Environmental Health considered that Knockinelder beach which was popular in the summer was a potential candidate for a Bathing Water Designation, based on usage and likely water quality, however it was managed by the National Trust so proposing it and issues such as the signage etc would have to be dealt with by the Trust.

It should also be noted that while there were many swimming groups around the coastline of the Borough, they were considered informal, in that they were not constituted formal clubs. The general reason why they did not formalise as clubs, may be that they did not want to take on the liability burden should incidents occur,

therefore they simply had open/closed Facebook Groups which people could join and go along to swimming meet ups as advertised via those social media groups.

RECOMMENDED that the Council

1. Notes this report and the work already being carried out by officers to promote and support sea water swimming, and support the continuation of this,
2. Writes in response to the current consultation to DEARA and the DEARA minister (as required by the notice of motion) highlighting the above details, and recommend that that the National Trust owned Knockinelder Beach is suggested as a new Designated Bathing Water.

Proposed by Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor Kendall that the recommendation be adopted. Councillor Kendall wished to make a further addition to the recommendation to include that;

Subject to funding, that Council pursues opportunities to install additional infrastructure at the Designated Bathing Water beaches such as, external showers and benches to help changing etc.

Councillor Douglas, as the original proposer of the recommendation, was happy to agree for that addition from Councillor Kendall.

Councillor Kendall asked that after the upgrade works at Brompton would the Council consider that as a designated area in the future. The Director replied that that was possible but it was not a matter for the Council to do that itself and that DAERA would decide, although he pointed out that a decision such as that Council could ask for it to be considered at any time and officers could review that option at a later date. The Member went on to refer to the fact that many swimming groups around the coastlines of the Borough were informal and un-constituted and if that was the reason why the Council did not engage with them fully.

The Interim Head of Parks and Cemeteries pointed to the report which indicated that the Council does engage with such groups and described the casual nature of the swimming groups. Sometimes therefore there may be difficulty in establishing contacts with them since they used Facebook to communicate with one another and often preferred to be informal in their structure.

Councillor T Smith asked if areas such as Donaghadee were automatically ruled out due to its experience of combined storm overflow. In response the Director explained that that was not an automatic decision but that there was a greater risk that the water quality would be poor after heavy rain and at best the Council would give the message that it was safe to swim but there were greater risks particularly after heavy rainfall in such areas. That information was not posted at swim sites but it was the advice given to groups when they engaged with the Council. If such sites

were ever designated and subject to routine sampling this could often coincide with rainfall related overflow discharges and render a positive result and therefore closure. It could therefore be counterproductive, hence the preferred way forward was to offer advice about when not to swim.

Councillor MacArthur referred to effluent from drains into sea water and the various items of littering which were discarded on beaches. It was understood through DfI that there was increasing pressure on the drainage system but she noted that there was a problem with effluent even without heavy rainfall and she did not wish to see people put at risk. In response the Director emphasised that generally there was a risk after heavy rainfall but that other than that it would normally be safe to swim in the sea. The Member disagreed stating that in her opinion the evidence unfortunately pointed to the contrary.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the Council

- 1. Notes this report and the work already being carried out by officers to promote and support sea water swimming, and support the continuation of this,**
- 2. Writes in response to the current consultation to DEARA and the DEARA Minister (as required by the notice of motion) highlighting the above details, and recommend that that the National Trust owned Knockinelder Beach is suggested as a new Designated Bathing Water.**
- 3. Subject to funding, that Council pursues opportunities to install additional infrastructure at the Designated Bathing Water beaches such as, external showers and benches to help changing etc.**

14. ARTS PROJECT GRANTS

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 28 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Arts Projects Grants for 2022-2023 opened for application on Thursday 27 January 2022, with a deadline of 9 March 2022. The grants were advertised in the press, on the Council's website and groups were targeted by email.

An assessment panel met on Wednesday 26 March to assess 13 applications received by the closing date. The panel comprised of the following members of the Arts and Heritage Advisory Panel:

- Alderman Robert Gibson
- Dympna Curran
- Patricia Hamilton

The total Arts Project Grants budget was £11,000 and up to £1,000 could be applied for per application.

Table 1 below provided a summary of the applications and the recommended awards.

Name of Organisation	Requested Amount	Project	Project	Amount Rec
AMH New Horizons	£1000	Ceramic skills – developing previous participant skills and teaching new clients	83	£1000
AMH Promote	£1000	Christmas Pantomime	77	£1000
Kilcooley Women's Centre	£1000	Wonderful watercolours – basic skills and improving techniques	76	£1000
Portico	£1000	Choral Training and creation of a CD of Gounod's Requiem in C	83	£1000
Decorum NI	£981.25	Drawing and painting skill development	82	£981.25
Portaferry Gala Festival	£1000	Flashmob dance during the Portaferry Festival	82	£1000
Valhalla Street Theatre	£994	Tales of Down – drama workshops and storytelling festival	77	£994
Portaferry Community Services	£1000	Selkies Women's Sea Shanty – radio podcasts & performance at Sails & Sounds Festival	83	£1000
Leonard Cheshire Disability	£1000	Art Attack for Inclusion – young adults with a disability to create an art piece which will be displayed to mark International Day for people with Disabilities	75	£0 On 31 March the organisation emailed to request the withdrawal of the application from the process.

Comber Brass	£675	Youth Brass Band – creation of a youth band aged 8-18	87	£675
Big Hits Radio	£1000	Big Hits Radio Training Fund – to educate volunteers in radio broadcasting	58	£0
Bangor Speech Festival	£1000	Bangor Speech Festival 2023 – to provide a platform for young people to practice drama and public speaking	90	£1000
Ards Camera Club	£1000	A photographic journey through the seasons in the AND area. Capturing the lives, employment, leisure activities, festivals, flora and fauna, landscapes, sunsets and sunrises throughout the year.	75	£800 This amount is reflected due to the inclusion of invalid costings
Total	12,650.25			£10,450.25

The total value of applications received was £12,650.25 and the pass mark was 60%. Big Hits Radio application did not meet the required pass mark, as the application lacked detail and information on its wider benefits.

The applications received were of a good to high standard engaging with the arts across many genres from photography to dance, from music to art. There was enough money in the budget to fund all eleven projects that met the pass mark, leaving a remaining budget of £549.75 which would be used to offset an increase in bursary costs for this financial year.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the 11 successful applications and awards detailed in table 1 above totalling £10,450.25 for the Council's Arts Projects Grants 2022-23.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Kendall, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the recommendation be adopted.

15. HERITAGE GRANTS

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 30 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Development detailing that following on from the success of the previous three years, applications to the Heritage Grant 2022-23 opened in February 2022 and closed at 4pm, 9 March 2022. Eight applications were received; a ninth application which arrived after the deadline was not included in the assessment. Two members of the Arts and Heritage Panel, Robin Masefield and Billy Carlisle, assessed the applications on 28 March, along with Moira O'Rourke, Heritage Officer.

There was a total of £5,000 available in the grant budget with a maximum of £500 per application awarded. As shown in the accompanying Scoring Matrix, each application was scored out of 100. Recommendation for award of grant was based on a minimum score of 60.

Table 1 Application Assessment Scoring

Organisation	Request ed	Project Title	Score	Award
Portavogie Culture & Heritage Society	£500	Booklet Publication	60	£500
Portaferry and Strangford Trust	£462	'A Wee Bit of Maritime History'	75	£462
Ards Historical Society	£500	Printing literature and publishing on our website, www.ardshistoricalsociety.com	65	£500
Donaghadee Heritage Preservation Society	£496	Sir Samuel Kelly anniversary booklet	60	£496
Friends of Columbanus Bangor	£500	Columbanus Revival Mark 2	70	£500
Donaghadee Historical Society	£500	Journal - 'A Light on the Past'	60	£500
Portaferry Community Services Ltd	£500	Tailored Community Tour Guide to Heritage	39	£0
Portaferry Sailing Club	£500	"Emerald Memories" Portaferry	60	£500
Inspiring Yarns CIC	£600	Heritage Yarn Skills for Beginners	Not assessed as missed the deadline	£0
Total	£4558			£3458

Robin Masefield abstained from voting on the application from Friends of Columbanus, Bangor as he was a member of that group.

Portaferry Community Services Ltd scored low as the project had an unclear heritage focus with vague outputs.

The total amount recommended for award was £3,458 leaving £1,542 available for the next round of funding in 22/23. Further applications would be invited in the coming months for the remaining balance of funding. Unsuccessful applicants above would be provided with feedback on their application.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approve the recommendations detailed in Table 1, above.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

16. ARTS BURSARIES (Appendix XII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 29 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that in May 2021, the Council offered creative bursaries to artists in the Borough to the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Co. Monaghan (four, one-week bursaries) and to Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Co. Mayo (one, two-week bursary).

Those unique bursaries gave an artist an opportunity to focus on a specific project or development in their work and further their artistic and professional practice.

The bursaries were advertised in an e-bulletin that was sent to artists and they were also advertised through social media (Council Facebook and Ards Arts) and other online visual artist reference sites e.g., Visual Artist Ireland.

The application process opened on Thursday 27 January 2022 and closed on Wednesday 9 March 2022.

Applicants were asked to clearly demonstrate their experience and how they would use the bursary to further their professional practice.

Members of the Arts and Cultural Advisory Panel met virtually on Monday 14 March 2022 to assess eight Tyrone Guthrie applications.

The panel comprised the following Arts Panel Members:

- Shauna McGowan, independent artist

- Robin Masefield, heritage specialist
- Patricia Hamilton, Arts Officer

A second panel met on Monday 28 March 2022 to assess the Ballinglen Arts Foundation Bursaries applications.

The panel comprised the following Arts Panel Members:

- Craig Jefferson, independent artist
- Sharon Regan, independent Artist
- Patricia Hamilton, Arts Officer

Applications were scored against set criteria and the following highest scoring applications from residents of the Borough are recommended for approval by the assessment panel.

Name of Applicant	Bursary	Project Score	Recommendation
Clare Gallagher	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	79%	Unsuccessful *
Craig Jefferson	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	85%	Award one week
Joel Matthew Smyth	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	79%	Award one week
Laura McCamley	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	71%	Chris Ledger Award *
Marian Noone (Friz)	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	72%	Unsuccessful
Sara Brown	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	74%	Unsuccessful
Tim Dwyer	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	64%	Unsuccessful
Tim Millen	Tyrone Guthrie Centre	82%	Award one week
Georgina Heffernan	Ballinglen Arts Foundation	-	Didn't meet the criteria to assess

Lauren McCullough	Ballinglen Arts Foundation	78%	Awarded two weeks
Marian Noone (Friz)	Ballinglen Arts Foundation	66%	Unsuccessful
Philip Mussen	Ballinglen Arts Foundation	75%	Unsuccessful
Rosy Ennis	Ballinglen Arts Foundation	67%	Unsuccessful
Sally Houston	Ballinglen Arts Foundation	77%	Unsuccessful

Although Clare Gallagher scored highly and achieved the same score as another applicant who has been recommended for support, the panel were recommending the bursary be awarded to the next ranked applicant, since Clare had recently attended a bursary to Ballinglen Arts Foundation supported by ANDBC.

Recommended Bursaries:

Tyrone Guthrie Centre Bursary, Co. Monaghan

One-week bursary:

*Laura McCamley, (writer) was the second recipient of the bursary made available to support an artist with a disability. The award was created in memory of Chris Ledger through the developments of the Arts and Disability Working Group.

One-week bursary: Craig Jefferson, visual artist, painter

One-week bursary: Joel Matthew Smith, visual artist, jewellery

One week bursary: Tim Millen, visual artist, painter

Ballinglen Bursary, Co. Mayo

Two-week bursary: Lauren McCullough, visual artist

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the recommendations of the scoring panel as detailed in this report.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

17. NI CENTENARY GRANTS (Appendix XIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 30 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that as Members were aware the Council decided at a meeting on 21 April 2021 to put in place a grants scheme to mark the NI Centenary. The scheme would enable locally constituted community organisations within the Borough to avail of grant assistance from the Council to commemorate / celebrate or otherwise explore the setting up of the Northern Irish state.

A total of £10k was set aside for the grant scheme. Groups could apply for up to £500 each for their NI Centenary event or activity. Grants were awarded on a 'first come first served' basis to applicants who met the following criteria:-

- Events / Activities to celebrate or commemorate the setting up of the state of Northern Ireland
- Events / Activities are open and inclusive to the wider community
- Benefits to the Community
- Value for money is demonstrated
- Covid 19 Public Health guidelines compliant

All funding was to be expended by 31 December 2021.

A total of 15 groups applied for the funding. The groups that were successful in their application under the scheme, meeting the criteria set out are detailed in Table.1 below.

Table 1

Name of Group	Name of CENTENARY GRANT EVENT	Payment
Ballyhalbert Community Association	Exhibition of Important Events	£500
Ballywalter Community Action Group	Timeline Exhibition	£500
Bangor District LOL No.18	Parade to Tree Planting and Dedication	£255
Boyne Cultural Association	Evening with Guest Speakers and Music	£500
Cottown LOL 1029	Family Fun Day	£500
Kilcooley Women's Centre	Intergenerational Event #NI100	£500
Ladybird Children's Services	Family Fun Day	£500
Loughries Men's Shed	Historical and Musical Evening	£500
Portavogie PTA	Family Fun Day	£500
Ballygowan & District Community Association	Art & Photographic Competition	£500

Somme Memorial Flute band	Cultural Day, Historical talk and Barbeque	£500
Conlig Community Regeneration	Cultural & Historical Community Event	£500
Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership	Street Art Mural - Large Map Mural	£500
Redburn Loughview Community Forum	Family Fun Day	£500
Comber Regeneration Community Partnership	Tree Planting & Dedication	£500
Total		£7,255

Members would note that out of the original budget of £10k, a total of £7,255 was distributed to community groups throughout the Borough with an underspend of £2,745. An appendix showed the distribution of NI Centenary grants within the Council area.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the report.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McArthur asked what would the underspend be used for. The Head of Service that no decision had yet been made a further report would be brought back on that matter.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

18. ARDS AND NORTH DOWN SOCIAL SUPERMARKETS

(Appendix XIV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 31 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the third update report on two Social Supermarkets being established in Ards and North Down was considered by the Council in March 2022. Further to Members consideration the following amendment to the report was approved:

That a report is brought back on the Bangor Social Supermarket pilot scheme outlining support (financial and other) to enable it to proceed, including timeframe, and what is expected from the organisation delivering it.

The initial report, presented to the Council in September in 2021, went into significant detail outlining the strategic context that the Department for Communities (DfC) was working within to set up Social Supermarkets (SSM) in each Council area

and SIB's evaluation of the five pilot schemes already supported by the Department. That report also clarified the purpose of a Social Supermarket, the anticipated budget, and initial thoughts on how the scheme could be rolled out within the Borough. DfC developed additional guidance on the methodology for the creation of Social Supermarkets via the establishment of local co-design groups.

The initial update report presented to Council in September 2021 stated:

Meetings have also been held with Warehouse based in Ards and Kilcooley Women's Centre who would both be interested in becoming involved in any SSM pilot schemes for the Council area. DfC has also suggested that funding awarded to Council in March 2021, for "Food and Essential Supplies" could be used towards setting up a model.

Although funding is limited, it may be possible to support two SSM pilots within the Borough, one based in the Councils only Neighbourhood Renewal area, Kilcooley and one based close to the town Centre in Ards. The two pilot schemes could then be evaluated to determine which model works best for the Borough, taking into consideration learning and potential improvements, before devising a tender opportunity to formally test the market.

It is therefore proposed that officers, along with key stakeholders and DfC proceed on the basis of exploring two pilot schemes outline above, keeping Members updated on developments.

Members would note that a tender process to establish a SSM was not progressed in September, since:

1. DfC had advised that a co-design approach to establish a SSM was to be adopted
2. The establishment of a SSM was a completely new venture therefore officers did not have sufficient expertise to draft a robust tender document
3. The budget for the scheme had not been confirmed by DfC, although the Department confirmed that when the budget was confirmed the funding had to be allocated within the 2020-2021 financial year

In September 2021, officers had been told that there could be up to £40,000 available from the Department for the establishment of a Social Supermarket (SSM) but there had been no formal offer. The only funding available at that time was through DfC's Covid Funding "Food and Essential Supplies" and in September Members agreed that £10,000 from that funding was allocated to Kilcooley Womens Centre (KWC) towards the establishment of a SSM in Kilcooley Square. That financial contribution was part of a cocktail of funding secured by KWC to establish a SSM for the Neighbourhood Renewal area. Capital works on the property in Kilcooley Square was ongoing and the Council has been informed that there have been some contractual delays, therefore at this time a date for the opening of the SSM could not be confirmed. The

SSM in Kilcooley would follow the "My Pantry" model. The operating model for the Kilcooley SSM was still to be finalised, however it was likely to have limited opening hours and like all other SSMs membership would be limited.

Following discussions with DfC it was stipulated that Councils were required to establish a SSM using a co-design approach involving key stakeholders. Members would be aware that officers initially discussed the SSM with the Community Support Group, who agreed to progress the co-design approach through a SSM subgroup. The subgroup was comprised of representation from the 3 main food banks, Kilcooley Womens Centre, Ards and North Down Community Advice, SEHSCT and South Eastern Regional College. Most of those organisations were involved in providing wrap around support for the foodbanks during the Covid-19 pandemic, with financial support from DfC's Covid-19 response funding, so had lived experience in supporting those coping with food poverty.

In January 2022 DfC indicated that a budget of £83,267.22 would be allocated to Ards and North Down for the establishment of an SSM. The Department indicated that a proportion of that budget should be used to buy in specialist support to assist in the process, as the Community Development team did not have the capacity to progress a project of this scale and within the defined timescale. It was also considered, by officer and the sub-group that this additional support would bring an independence to the process.

A number of Councils were availing of similar additional/independent support. A budget of £15,000 was therefore ringfenced from the overall budget for that purpose and Blu Zebra was appointed in late February 2022. Their initial brief was to carry out a needs assessment by 24 March, to identify the preferred location and operator for a pilot SSM, so that an award could be made to the preferred operator in the 2020-21 financial year.

Following a procurement process Blu Zebra was appointed to project manage the establishment of the SSM. Blu Zebra was required initially to carry out an assessment of need which would identify a preferred location and operator. Blu Zebra consulted with all stakeholders represented on the Community Support Steering Group (and others), and its summary report was attached.

Members would note that the emerging SSM in Kilcooley, being developed by Kilcooley Womens Centre, was considered, however those consulted felt that its estate-based location and scale did not lend itself to being a viable and inclusive SSM to serve the entire borough and a SSM in the Ards area, but operating Borough wide, was the preferred option. It was also acknowledged that whilst Kilcooley was currently designated as a Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) area, the top two Super Output Areas (SOA's) of multiple deprivation were in fact in the Ards area, Scrabo, and the Glen. Scrabo was the top ranked SOA in the Borough for both income and employment. The Department's "People and Place Strategy", which was a driver for

Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) was currently under review and may change Kilcooley's current NR status.

Members of the co-design subgroup were very strong in their opinion that accessibility was one of the most important factors in selecting a physical location for the organisation who would be running the SSM. Easy transport links from the rural Peninsula and the Comber/Ballygowan area was highlighted as being an important factor.

The summary report also demonstrates that KWC was consulted as part of the needs assessment and they were represented on the Community Steering Group and would have a valuable contribution to make in developing the Borough wide SSM in the Ards area. It was anticipated that both the larger Borough wide SSM based in Ards and mini estate based SSM in Kilcooley would complement and add value to each other (they were not competitors) and learning would be shared for the benefit of those living in food poverty. The report stated **"All co-design subgroup members expressed their support and are prepared to collaborate with both providers in the delivery of the SSM."** Furthermore, officers would continue to work in partnership with Kilcooley Women's Centre to support the Kilcooley SSM and would, where possible, secure additional funding to support its operation going forward.

The report, received by Council officers on 24 March 2022, recommended that The Warehouse (its subsidiary North Down Community Works) was selected as the organisation to lead the pilot SSM in Ards and North Down, given its current wide-ranging activity, its networks, and partnerships with other organisations across the Council area and its accessible location in Newtownards. North Down Community Works was a large-scale operation, which currently provided food parcels, cooked fresh food for the vulnerable, and wrap around services based on the report's independent recommendation and in order to meet the timeframe for the allocation of funding set by DfC, a Service Level Agreement (SLA), to the value of £68,267.22 had been issued to North Down Community Works to establish and operate a SSM in the Ards area. In order to move the project forward as quickly as possible, it was recommended that the Council retrospectively approves the award.

The next phase of the project would be to map how the Social Supermarket to be run by North Down Community Works aligned with the Social Supermarket in Kilcooley and with the existing Food Bank infrastructure to ensure that all residents of the Borough, no matter where they resided, had access to appropriate support structures to help them move out of poverty.

RECOMMENDED that the Council retrospectively approves the award to North Down Community Works, to establish a SSM in the Ards area, as detailed in this report.

Proposed by Councillor Mathison, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Mathison commented that there had been a reasonable amount of discussion on this matter and how it was being rolled out and while the communications had not always been clear there was no Bangor / Ards divide and he was happy to welcome the initiative and had every confidence that the partner would do a good job. He viewed this as a great opportunity for the Council to meet local need and lead the way in providing assistance and was aware that the cost of living crisis was a very real issue across the Borough.

Seconding the recommendation Councillor Kendall was pleased to give her support and was glad to read that the Council would try to secure additional funding to support the Kilcooley supermarket going forward. She supported both and hoped they would work well to give support to people who were struggling.

Councillor T Smith echoed what had been said and wanted to see the initiative progressed. He pointed out that need existed in almost every area of the Borough and wondered how the Council would determine if it was reaching people and monitoring that. The Head of Community and Culture said that was still being developed and currently involved all organisations that would have an interest in social supermarkets such as foodbanks and the co-design team included KWC. It would be a wraparound service supporting those who needed assistance. She agreed to bring back regular reports to the Committee as the initiative was developed. Councillor McArthur also indicated how she had hoped that there would be 2 pilots to compare and contrast, including KWCs Pantry model.

(Councillor Smart entered the meeting at 7.56 pm)

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Mathison, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

19. ARDS AND NORTH DOWN YOUTH VOICE (Appendix XV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report 31 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that in June 2021, Members were advised that the PEACE IV funded Ards and North Down Youth Council had come to a natural end, with the closure of the PEACE IV Programme and a new Youth Council, branded Ards and North Down Youth Voice, was being established in partnership with the Education Authority (EA) Youth Service, PSNI, and PHA.

The Council promoted the establishment of AND Youth Voice on the Councils website [Ards and North Down Youth Voice | Ards and North Down Borough Council](#) and through Social Media and assisted with the recruitment exercise. To date 16 young people had been recruited to the programme and recruitment was ongoing.

Funding for Youth Voice was provided from a number of sources:

- Community Development - £24,000
- Councils Good Relations Programme - £3,000
- Policing and Community Safety Partnership - £4,000
- PSNI - £6,000
- EA Youth Service also provided management and dedicated staff support for the project.

EA staff support also ensured a consistent approach to the Youth Voice initiative across Northern Ireland in relation to purpose and function, bringing an expertise and a broader voice across Northern Ireland. They also provided a standardised, accountable support function that enabled the young people to quickly, and effectively, learn the skills needed to be a 'voice' for young people in their area. That consistent approach to training, sharing of resources and the opportunity to network across Council areas created opportunity for shared practice. The regional participation team could provide a consistent, structured model, with opportunity for staff and Council members to network across Northern Ireland, and an opportunity to provide consultations across the whole country. That link into larger structures and opportunities made funding and accountability more feasible, and therefore gave young people a more powerful voice.

The project was managed by a Project Board with representation from each of the financial contributors and governed by a Partnership Agreement. The Project Board had been meeting on a bi-monthly basis to drive recruitment, training and programming, although the Young People also agreed their own priorities and programming.

To date the young people had participated in:

- A consultation on the Children and Young Peoples Strategy on 9 March
- Focus group as part of the Youth Independent Advisory Panel consultation for the PSNI on 16 March
- A Regional Network Youth Voice Conference held in Belfast City Hall
- Two training sessions on identity and culture with Springboard, facilitated by the Councils Good Relations Team
- A Small Worlds Café session, facilitated by Council's Good Relations Team. A Small Worlds workshops was café-style events hosted by members of Belfast Friendship Club, a meeting space for people from around the world (and locals too). The workshops provided a safe space for participants to encounter people from different backgrounds and parts of the world. They were carefully managed by an experienced facilitator
- A "Meet the Councillor" event to be repeated in the next quarter
- Engagement with Youth Service including a consultation on the local area plan with SYO Esther Millar, attendance at the local stakeholder event and representatives had attended the LAG.

Videos had been produced of the Meet the Councillor event and the Regional Network Youth Voice Conference and those would be shared on social media in due course.

A number of young people were currently involved in exams at this time of the year, but it was hoped that a residential could be organised before the summer months so the group had an opportunity to better get to know each other and meet Members of the project board.

A further update report would be provided in due course.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes progress in relation to the Youth Voice initiative and that a further update report will be provided to Council in due course.

Proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Kendall that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Johnson commended the fantastic range of activities and initiatives and questioned how widely those opportunities were advertised. He thought many young people would be interested in participating if they were aware of them. The Head of Community and Culture stated that they were advertised on the Council's website and on social media through the Education Authority and were also promoted through local schools.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Kendall, that the recommendation be adopted.

20. GOOD RELATIONS CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS PROGRAMME

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 31 March 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Council would be aware that through the Council's Good Relations Cultural Expressions Programme, funding was provided to support community festivals associated with bonfires that positively celebrated local culture and family participation and encourage cultural/educational and diversionary activities;

Pre-Covid approximately 30 festivals, associated with bonfires were supported, that included a bonfire located at Castle Gardens in Newtownards, which was on land owned by the Education Authority and the associated festival was held in the East End Estate in Newtownards.

The use of this site came under some scrutiny over the last couple of years and in particular in 2021, mainly due to:

1. Its proximity to Ards Fire Station and due to the large crowds gathering to watch the bonfire, access and egress for the Fire Engines, could be impeded, especially with the additional demands on the service on the 11th Night
2. Its proximity to local businesses and residential properties. The size and location of the bonfire had caused damage to local businesses and residential properties in the past and each year there were concerns that that damage could escalate, due to the size of the bonfire, exacerbated by prevailing winds and weather conditions. The bonfire had also negatively impacted on recent environmental improvements made to the canal paths.
3. The site was owned by the Education Authority (EA). Each year EA had attempted to secure the site, with fencing and a padlock, to deter the use of the site for this purpose, although those efforts had not been successful.

It was also important to note that each year officers had engaged with the builders at the site to encourage them to better manage their bonfire, particularly to limit the size of the bonfire to reduce its negative impact in line with the Council's Cultural Expression Programme.

Following the concerns raised in 2021, officers had been engaging both with EA and the bonfire builders to try to resolve the situation. EA had taken the decision to better secure the site, and had recently installed cement barriers to restrict access to the site. Officers had liaised with the builders to keep them informed of EA's intentions and had been assisting the builders to try to identify an alternative suitable site.

It had not been possible to identify an alternative site and given that EA had actively secured the site it would not be appropriate for the Council to support a bonfire on this site if it was subject to trespass.

RECOMMENDED that the Council agrees that the Castle Gardens site is not supported under the Council's Cultural Expressions Programme.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Mathison, that the recommendation be adopted.

Proposing the recommendation Councillor Boyle felt that this was a situation in respect of bonfires that the Council faced which was not improving. He stressed at the outset that he had always assisted with any cultural programme but in his view this one tended to run a bit loose, and he hoped that through time that would settle. He stated that he would support dialogue and that the recommendation in the report would be something that he would agree with whilst supporting the bonfires and cultural expressions that had always taken place.

Councillor Mathison echoed the comments of Councillor Boyle and pointed out that the site under discussion had been problematic for a number of years. Members were aware of the issues and the access to the fire station but the main one in his

view was that the Education Authority, which was the landowner, had taken a firm position that it did not want others to access its site. He hoped that engagement could continue should an alternative site be identified so that a safe, legal and responsible cultural expression could take place. The position currently put the Council in a very difficult situation.

Alderman Menagh disagreed stating that there had not been any discussion with the community and up until the current time there had been good engagement and he did not think that the community could be ignored. He therefore thought that a decision should be delayed and that Members and officers should continue to engage on the way forward.

The Head of Community and Culture explained that the Education Authority was securing its land and anyone going on to that site would therefore be trespassing.

Councillor Smart was aware of the problems at the site which had been expressed to him. He thought that the residents' association was keen to come to an agreement at the site and so the Council should take every opportunity to identify and help to find those solutions where possible.

Councillor Smart proposed, seconded by Alderman Menagh, that;

We defer this proposal for one month to allow a meeting to take place including East End Residents Association, Council officers and DEA elected members to identify what, if any, solutions exist.

Councillor MacArthur supported the amendment and the title of the report Good Relations should speak for itself and what was being suggested was not an example of good relations but was rather the opposite. She stressed that the Council did not pay for bonfires but supported communities and this was a huge community that celebrated well. If it were not to go ahead it would deprive a whole community the opportunity to celebrate. She questioned if the Council always sought permission from the Housing Executive for bonfires on its land and this bonfire had been in that area for many years. In her view the Alliance Party's interference in that community over the issue of bonfires had caused difficulties previously and she thought that engagement should continue with the community, many of whom did fantastic work.

Councillor Edmund had been disappointed in the report and had heard from the community that there had been a lack of engagement. He encouraged everyone involved to work to achieve a solution and supported the amendment.

Councillor T Smith stated that he would also support the amendment and had been opposed to the original recommendation. He was very much in support of bonfires and was wary of political parties whose intention was to create mischief around them. He repeated that this Council did not fund bonfires and that this was a cultural expressions programme and his community had the same rights to express its

culture as any other had. He thought that it was important to hear from all sides of the discussion and welcomed the amendment.

(Alderman Irvine entered the meeting at 8.18 pm)

Councillor Mathison thanked Councillor Smart for his amendment which was constructive in his view and questioned the officer if she considered that there was any scope for the Education Authority to attend such a meeting if one could be arranged. The officer agreed that she could certainly extend an invitation to the Education Authority. In that case he said that he also could support the amendment and that the Council needed to be sure that everything it supported was within the law.

Alderman Irvine thought what had been put forward was a sensible amendment in helping to address what was a sensitive issue and it must be dealt with in a manner that had local community buy in. He asked the officer about engagement in that area and she explained that much engagement did take place and while often the builders had agreed to build a smaller bonfire often that had not happened. The Member urged officers to continue to engage.

Councillor Boyle thanked Members for their contribution in the discussion and stressed that in this area the Education Authority did not want a bonfire on its land. He had never been anti-bonfire but if the landowner did not give permission options for moving forward appeared to be limited. However, he agreed to support Councillor Smart's amendment if an agreement could be thrashed out and the bonfire builders in turn honored their agreement.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Smart, seconded by Alderman Menagh, that we defer this proposal for one month to allow a meeting to take place including East End Residents Association, Council officers and DEA elected members to identify what, if any, solutions exist.

(Having declared an interest Councillor Kendall left the meeting at 8.29 pm)

21. QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE GRANTS

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 1 April 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Council decided at a meeting on 24 February 2022 to put in place a community grants scheme to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The scheme would enable locally constituted community organisations within the Borough to avail of grant assistance from the Council to commemorate/celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

A total of £40k was set aside for the overall scheme. £35k had been set aside for the grant scheme with a further £5k set aside for providing official bunting, party wears etc. The latter would be made available to groups who were deemed ineligible

to apply for more substantial funding for example, un-constituted community, resident and voluntary groups, and religious organisations.

Eligible groups could apply for up to £1,000 each for their Queen's Platinum Jubilee event or activity. Eligible grant applications were scored by an officer panel. Applications were measured against the following criteria:-

- Events / Activities to celebrate or commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee
- Events / Activities were suitably advertised and open and inclusive to the wider community
- Value for money was demonstrated
- An evaluation was undertaken

All funding must be expended over the Queen's Platinum Jubilee official holiday from 2 June to 6 June 2022.

A total of 48 groups had applied for funding under the scheme. 39 were deemed eligible with 37 being deemed successful in their application under the scheme, meeting eligibility requirements and the criteria set out above. Applications deemed ineligible did not supply the required correct documentation; were not from a recognised 'constituted community, voluntary or residents group' or were from faith based/sporting organisations.

Below were tables of applications deemed successful / unsuccessful by the officer panel:-

Table 1. Successful Applicants

#	Name Of Group	Score	Eligible Amount	Amount Awarded
1	1st Newtownards Somme & Historical Society	60%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
2	Ballygowan & District CA	55%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
3	Ballyhalbert Community Association	75%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
4	Ballywalter Community Action Group	70%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
5	Bangor Ex Services Club	65%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
6	Bowtown Community Development Group	80%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
7	Breezemount CA	80%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
8	Carrowdore & District CA	70%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
9	Clandeboyne Village CA	70%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
10	Cloughey & District CA	55%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
11	Comber Regeneration Community Partnership	60%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00

12	Conlig Community Regeneration Group	70%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
13	Decorum NI	50%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
14	Donaghadee Community Development association	80%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
15	Donaghadee Heritage Preservation Company	60%	£700.00	£700.00
16	Eastend Residents association	70%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
17	Glen Ward Community Development Association	60%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
18	Harmoni	75%	£983.32	£983.32
19	Hollywood District Guides	65%	£985.00	£985.00
20	Kilcooley Community Forum	60%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
21	Kilcooley Womens Centre	60%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
22	Kirkistown Primary PTFA	55%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
23	Ladybird Childcare Services	60%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
24	Lisbarnett & Lisbane CA Ltd	65%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
25	Loughries Men's Shed	70%	£995.00	£995.00
26	Millisle & District Community Association	65%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
27	Millisle Health & Wellbeing Group	60%	£500.00	£500.00
28	Millisle Youth Forum	65%	£950.00	£950.00
29	Mothers Union Branch St Philip & St James	60%	£145.00	£145.00
30	Portavogie Historical Society	65%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
31	Recharge CIC	60%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
32	Redburn Loughview Community Forum	55%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
33	Seahaven Park homes Residents Association	55%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
34	St Mark's Drop In	60%	£660.00	£660.00
35	The Regimental Association of the Ulster Defence Regiment (Bangor Branch)	55%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
36	West Winds Development Association	65%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
37	Whitehill Community Association	65%	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
		Totals:	£34,918.32	£34,918.32

Table 2. Unsuccessful Applications

#	Name of Group	Score	Reason for unsuccessful application
1	Ards Rangers FC	Not Scored	Sports Club

2	Ballycrochan Presbyterian Church	Not Scored	Faith based organisation
3	Bangor District LOL No 18	Not Scored	Political / Faith Based organisation
4	Comber Methodist Church	Not Scored	Faith based organisation
5	Comber Recreational FC	Not Scored	Sports Club
6	Friends of Ravara Training Centre	Not Scored	No essential documents provided
7	Hollywood Shared Town	40%	Failed to reach pass mark
8	Newtownards Orange Hall Trustees Committee	Not Scored	Political organisation / Building Trustees
9	North Down Scout Centre	Not Scored	No constitution / Large Charitable organisation
10	Portavogie PTA	35%	Failed to reach pass mark
11	The Beacon	Not Scored	No essential documents provided

Members would note from the above table that a wide range of local community organisations had been successful in receiving funding under the grant scheme. £34,918.32 had been expended from the available fund. Each successful application had received 100% of the funding they applied for under the scheme.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approve the recommendations detailed in Tables 1 and 2 above.

Alderman Irvine asked to put forward an alternative proposal which was seconded by Councillor MacArthur;

That this item be deferred until the full Council meeting in order that applications from all constituted community groups can be scored.

Alderman Irvine expressed that given the nature of the national Jubilee celebrations it would be wrong not to include those groups who were faith based. Councillor MacArthur agreed with that point of view and shared her colleague's concern. She asked officers to look at the criteria again and how it was applied.

The Head of Community and Culture explained that there was a grants policy to help with decision making and there were exclusions within it such as for groups that were faith based and that the Council followed guidance laid down by central government.

Councillor Edmund stated that there were approximately 160 faith-based organisations within the Borough but relatively few of them had applied for grant

funding to celebrate the Jubilee and he felt that it was wrong to exclude them and further discussion should take place.

Councillor T Smith was happy to support the amendment, he went on to describe that Her Majesty the Queen had a Christian faith that was pivotal to her life and reign. For that reason alone, it seemed odd to deny faith-based organisations support in marking that celebration. The report that had been brought to the Council the previous month had not outlined the exclusions that would be applied when allocating grants. Her Majesty was devout and sincere in her beliefs and was said to be 'Defender of the Faith' and so if the criteria could be extended and open to those who shared that faith then so be it.

Councillor Boyle remarked that officers had presented a report and that Members should not feel that they could twist policies to suit themselves and that was a dangerous way to conduct business. He understood the significance of the Jubilee to some people but did not feel that the criteria could be ignored. Not every application that applied for any sort of funding was successful and that was a simple fact.

Alderman Irvine thanked Members for their comments and asked for a recorded vote.

On the proposal being put to the meeting with 12 voting For, 1 voting Against and 3 Absent it was declared CARRIED.

FOR (12)

Alderman

Carson

Irvine

Menagh

Councillors

Chambers

Edmund

Johnson

Mathison

MacArthur

McRandal

Smart

T Smith

Thompson

AGAINST (1)

Councillors

Boyle

ABSENT (3)

Councillors

Douglas

Egan

Kendall

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that this item be deferred until the full Council meeting in order that applications from all constituted community groups can be scored.

(Councillor Kendall was readmitted to the meeting at 8.43 pm)

22. UKRAINIAN RESETTLEMENT

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 31 March 2022 from the Director of Community and wellbeing detailing that at the March 2022 Council meeting, the following notice of motion was agreed.

That this Council expresses its solidarity with the people of Ukraine in light of Russian aggression and congratulates the residents of our Borough on their unprecedented support for charities which are assisting those affected by this terrible war.

Further, that officers are tasked with putting together a report which outlines how this Council could assist in the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees in our Borough, including how they may receive wrap around support from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies,

In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, officers had attended a number of meetings hosted by The Executive Office (TEO) and Department of Finance (DoF) who were working to develop, deliver and manage the operational arrangements required to support those arriving in Northern Ireland over recent weeks.

A Strategic Planning Group, chaired by the TEO Permanent Secretary, was leading the way to support Ukrainian arrivals. The Strategy Group was supported by a regional Operational Planning Group. The purpose of its work was to co-ordinate and develop the contribution of the NI Executive, public agencies, district councils, voluntary sector partners and local communities to the resettlement and integration of Ukrainian refugees coming to Northern Ireland.

The scope of the work included putting in place support for those who arrived through the formal UK routes – currently the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (the 'Schemes') – and those who arrived through other routes, including through the EU and across the border with Ireland.

The scope of the Group's activities would also address the needs of Afghan refugees resettled in Northern Ireland through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS).

The scope of the group did not include the development of a migrant/refugee strategy.

Membership of the regional Operational Planning Group included Government Departments, PSNI, NIHE, Education Authority, Border Force, UK Immigration Enforcement, Bryson Intercultural, Extern, Barnardo's, Red Cross, Belfast

Metropolitan College, Emergency Preparedness and all eleven Councils. The group was Chaired by Ian Snowdon (DoF) and met on a weekly basis.

It was currently estimated there may be between 6,000 and 10,000 arrivals (based on between 200,000 and 300,000 people seeking refuge in the UK and 3% of those coming to Northern Ireland) through all routes. Officers were aware that there were four main Councils across the Province where families wished to resettle. Thirty-five families are seeking to resettle in the Ards and North Down area, through the recognised schemes. That number did not include those who may arrive through other routes.

In response to the Notice of Motion agreed by the Council in March 2022 in relation to this issue, officers would recommend that any action taken by the Council was commensurate with the regional arrangements that were being put in place and in harmony with what was being asked of Councils by the Operational Planning Group to deliver in relation to that important issue.

At present the establishment of a regional "**Welcome Centre**" was being considered, similar to the model used to resettle Syrian Refugees. The Welcome Centre may be residential or non-residential but would provide advice and support from a range of statutory agencies and where needs could be triaged. That would be a central location convenient to the point of entry into Northern Ireland and should not therefore be duplicated by any local Council.

However, the four main Councils identified to date were being asked to establish **Community Advice Centres (CAC)**, where those resettling could avail of wrap around support from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies. The four main areas were: Belfast City Council, Causeway Coast and Glen, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council and Newry Mourne and Down Borough Council. Belfast City Council was being requested to set up a CAC by next week. The Department had asked other Councils not to "run ahead" and establish a CAC, without input from the regional Operational Planning Group.

Notwithstanding discussions had been ongoing locally regarding how best to establish a CAC in partnership with other agencies and the Department had been asked to provide each Council with a single point of contact (SPOC) from the key statutory agencies who had the necessary expertise to provide the type of advice and support required locally. Officers had been in discussions with North Down YMCA, who had accessible premises in Bangor and had access to premises in Newtownards. North Down YMCA also had established links and provided support and advice to migrants and had access to translation services. It was recommended that Council in partnership with North Down YMCA work to establish a CAC initially in Bangor, but with an option to also operate out of a premises in Newtownards, if required. The Council would also seek input from statutory agencies and others to allow connections to be made with health, education and benefits etc, and involving suitable translation services that would allow this to be transacted face to face and

online in order to assist Ukrainian evacuees and sponsor families. It was envisaged that the CAC's would be managed by a "Local Planning Group" similar in make-up to the regional Operational Planning Group, detailed above.

Consideration would also have to be given to matters such as safeguarding and data protection and a data sharing agreement would have to be established for all partners involved. As the situation in Ukraine was evolving there was no indication of how long a CAC would be required or indeed the volume of support required.

Members should note that whilst the DoF had indicated funding would be made available to Councils to cover associated costs, there was no budget currently and no indication of what budget may be made available, so funding would have to be secured from existing budgets.

There may be a requirement for the Council to inspect the property of those assisting resettlement through the Sponsorship scheme. Again, there was no further information on that at present.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes progress with this issue.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur thanked officers for the swift action that had been taken by them. It was expected that approximately fifty people would be arriving to the Borough from Ukraine and those people would be traumatised and deeply affected by what they were leaving behind. It was important that the local community did everything it could to make those people welcome and give them the support they desperately needed. She thought that the Council should engage with statutory agencies and also voluntary agencies, particularly faith-based groups, who had hugely stepped up and were providing huge amounts of funding. She asked if Members could be kept updated on the matter with regular reports.

Councillor Boyle passed on his thanks to Councillor MacArthur who had been involved in practical issues for refugees with the provision and distribution of wash bags on the Ukrainian border. He was concerned that the British government seemed to be dragging its feet and that the more groups that were involved the slower the progress would be and a structured approach was important.

The Head of Community and Culture explained that she had been at a regional operating planning group that day and noted that the Department of Finance and the TEO would prioritise community advice centres opening. Work was ongoing and she would report that to Members regularly.

Alderman Irvine welcomed the report and the work that had gone on so far and referred to the safeguarding of people who were traumatised and the

appropriateness of the properties that would be provided for them. The officer explained that a separate group was dealing with safeguarding issues and home visits would be carried out by Barnardos as well as having a single point of contact in the health trust to support the refugees.

Councillor Douglas proposed an amendment which was seconded by Councillor McRandal;

That this Council agrees to write to The Executive Office as the lead agency for the resettlement scheme to seek confirmation of an appropriate budget to support refugees in settling into their new communities and to ensure their needs are met.

Councillor Douglas was concerned that funding would not be available to meet the need that could be faced and deliver the service that was required. She believed that a budget should be provided from the Executive Office.

Councillor Kendall and Councillor Boyle expressed that they would be happy to support that amendment to guarantee the funding needed.

In summing up, Councillor MacArthur agreed that she would be happy to incorporate the amendment into the proposal and she thanked Members for the support that they were showing.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted and that the Council agrees to write to The Executive Office as the lead agency for the resettlement scheme to seek confirmation of an appropriate budget to support refugees in settling into their new communities and to ensure their needs are met.

(Councillor Smart left the 9.02 pm)

RECESS 9.02 pm

RECOMMENCED 9.11 pm

23. NOTICES OF MOTION

23.1 Submitted by Councillor Boyle and Alderman Carson

That officers bring back a report with reference to the provision of flood lighting and creation of a running track around the Council owned facility and home venue to Cloughey FC, located at Calhame Park, Cloughey.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Alderman Carson, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

Councillor Boyle explained that he had been approached by Cloughey Football Club, which used the Council owned facility during the summer months. He remarked that Cloughey was a growing community with an increasing awareness of health and wellbeing and pointed to the many uneven footpaths in the village. It had been suggested that there should be a running track around the facility to offer residents an opportunity to exercise safely and a survey in the village had shown overwhelming support for that in addition to the boardwalks which suffered the worst conditions of weather at times. He called for a report to investigate the viability of such a track and the costings involved.

Alderman Carson concurred the Councillor Boyle's comments and called for a report to guide the decisions of the Council on taking that forward for Cloughey.

Councillor Edmund supported the Motion asking for a report to be brought back and pointed out that Ballyhalbert United was the sitting tenant of Calhame Park. He hoped that that club would also be able to contribute to the consultation.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Alderman Carson, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

23.2 Submitted by Councillor Adair and Councillor Edmund

To mark the 400th anniversary of the building of Kirkistown Castle, Council tasks officers to work with the Department of Communities (Historic Monuments Division), local community groups and schools, to deliver a community programme of events to mark this important milestone in the history of the village of Cloughey.

Proposed by Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

Councillor Adair explained that his Notice of Motion had come about following the discovery of the 400 year anniversary of Kirkiston Castle which had been brought to him and MLA Michelle McIlveen from some members of that community.

He felt that this would be an excellent opportunity to bring the community together to help to celebrate the milestone and the Borough's rich heritage. The community was blessed to have the Castle maintained and in an excellent condition. The community had been successful in calling for the Castle to be open to the public and many people visited it from different parts of the world over the summer months when it was open.

It was interesting to note that during the Queen's last jubilee there had also been a fun day at the Castle, the building was an historic monument which had been preserved by the Department for Communities. Planning a day of celebration to include the two local primary schools and the community at large would be an excellent way to mark the historical anniversary. He believed that the occasion was

too significant to ignore and he called for a report to be brought back to the committee. He recognised that such a celebration had not been placed in the Council's budget for the current year but still did not wish to see the occasion go unmarked.

Councillor Edmund noted that although there were many historic buildings within the Borough there were not many of this age and in this condition. The Castle contributed to the peninsula's tourism offering and the anniversary was significant.

Councillor Boyle also supported the Motion and thought that Councillor Adair had summed it up well. He said that Cloughey was a very welcoming and mixed community and the two primary schools had worked together to enhance the village and the community. He accepted that there was no budget but thought that a report should be brought back

Councillor Johnson agreed with the Motion and was very much of the opinion that local history should be championed. If history was not celebrated, he thought it would be lost.

Councillor McRandal suggested that he would really like to support the Motion but wished to see the costings involved before the Council came to an agreement since there was no mention of that in the Motion.

Alderman Carson thanked Councillor McRandal for his comments since that was a reservation of his while at the same time wanting to support the Motion. He agreed that a report should be brought back explaining the costs and where the funding would come from. Councillor Douglas added her wish for a report to be brought back before a final decision was made.

In summing up, Councillor Adair, recognised again that the anniversary had not been included in the Council's budget and a wished to incorporate into the motion that report would be needed detailing the costs involved, however, he did not wish to see the report delayed since this was the year of the anniversary. The Castle was closed currently but the community wished to see it reopen in time for the summer months.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the Notice of Motion be adopted and a report be brought back to the committee detailing the costs involved.

24. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the public/press be excluded from the meeting.

25. PCSP MINUTES 13TH SEPTEMBER 2021

(Appendix XVI)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

26. PCSP MINUTES 15TH NOVEMBER 2021

(Appendix XVII)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

27. ITEM WITHDRAWN

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 9.38 pm.