



**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations
1.	Apologies	None
2.	Declarations of Interest	Councillor Schenning
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 October 2023	Signed as a correct record
4.	Delegation – Invest NI	Received
5.	PEACE Plus Local Action Plan	to recommend that Council approve the Local Co-Designed Peace Plus Plan to enable submission by the 14th of December deadline as recommended by the CC&G PeacePlus Partnership as shown in Annex A (circulated)
6.	Ulster History Circle Partnership	to recommend to Council that it engages in a partnership arrangement with the Ulster History Circle at a cost of circa £1,500 per annum and subsequent installation of one blue plaque per year for an initial term of three years, subject to review as outlined in option 2 of the report
7.	Good Relations Strategy	to recommend that Council approve the adoption of the proposed Good Relations Strategy for implementation from 2024 – 2027 and that an action

		<i>plan be developed to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the Good Relations issues are being addressed and local needs are being met</i>
8.	Annual Grant Funding Programmes	<p><i>to recommend that Council:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Grant programmes 1-19, listed in Table 3, along with the assessment / scoring criteria and scheduling summarised in Annex A.</i> <i>2. Opening of the Christmas Festive Fund after Easter 2024.</i> <i>3. Re-introduction of a simple scoring/assessment for the Christmas Festive Fund to differentiate more than one application from the same area.</i> <i>4. Increase maximum grant award for Livesmart from £500 to £750</i> <p><i>AND to further recommended that Council does not open the Community Development Support Grant for the 2024/25 period</i></p>
9.	RNLI Beach Lifeguard Service	<i>to recommend to Council the approval of Option 2 with a contribution to the RNLI of £166,508 for the 2024 season, along with approval of a change in hours of operation of the beach lifeguard service from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. from 2024</i>
10.	Review of Village Plans	<i>to recommend to Council that officers proceed to procure specialist external</i>

		support to complete the upgrade of six Village Plans and develop two new Village Plans, at an approximate cost of £30,000
11.	Labour Market Partnership	Noted
12.	Correspondence	
12.1	Correspondence from the Department for the Economy regarding NI Business Start-up Programme Performance 2022/23 (Dated 08 November 2023)	Noted
13.	Matters Reporting to the Partnership Panel	Nil
14.	Consultations	Nil
	For Confidential Consideration (Items 15-19 inclusive)	
15.	Generalist Advice Services Contract	to recommend that Council proceed to commission the Generalist Advice Service for a three year period from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2027, subject to the necessary funds being made available through the Department for Communities (DfC) and Council, and an annual review of contract deliverables/outputs AND to further recommend Option 3: 10% annual increase in Council contribution to reflect actual percentage increase in operating costs
16.	Sport and Wellbeing Essential Maintenance	to recommend that Council note the current position in respect of the Greysteel community and the lack of play facilities in a village

		<i>with a population of approximately 1,500, 22% aged 14 or under, and recommends to Council an increase of predicted spend from £70,000 up to £170,000</i>
17.	Visitors Guide 2024	<i>to recommend to Council the appointment of Kubrix at a total cost of £25,460 for the design and print of the 2024 Visitor Guide</i>
18.	Holiday and Leisure Parks Essential Works	<i>to recommend to Council to approve the advancement to detail specification and procurement, prior to a Council investment decision. The total estimated cost for the projects detailed within this Report is £349,000. The designated Capital elements have been budgeted for within the Capital reserve allocated for HALPs and the revenue elements will be allocated to HALPs Maintenance and Repair budget</i>
19.	Holiday and Leisure Parks Fees and Charges	<i>to recommend to Council an increase based on average CPI as outlined in Table 1 & Table 2 (8.5 %) for static and seasonal fees for the 2024 – 2025 season AND to further recommend to Council to approve the pricing for Caravan, Tents, Motorhomes and Pods as outlined in Table 3 (8.5% except Pod/Cabins)</i>
20.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)	<i>Nil</i>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND VIA VIDEO
CONFERENCE ON TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

In the Chair: Councillor Bateson (C)

Members Present: Alderman Callan (R), John McAuley (C), Stewart (C)
Councillors Anderson (C), N Archibald (C), Holmes (C/R),
Kennedy (C), Kyle (C), McCully (R), McGurk (R),
McShane (R), Schenning (C), Stirling (R), Watson (C),
Wisener (C)

Officers Present: D Jackson, Chief Executive (C)
J Welsh, Head of Community and Culture (C)
N McGurk, Head of Prosperity and Place (C)
W McCullough, Head of Sport and Wellbeing (C)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism and Recreation (C)
P O'Brien, Funding Unit Manager (C)
S Goldring, PEACE Coordinator (C)
S McCartney, Holiday & Leisure Parks General Manager (R)
S Calvin, Museum Services Development Manager (R)
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)
P Harkin, Good Relations Manager (R)
K McGonigle, Destination Manager (R)
U Harper, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: A McKeown, Invest NI (C)
D Gartland, Invest NI (C)

C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer (C)
A Lennox, Mobile Operation Officer (C)

Press 1 no. (R)
Public 1 no. (R)

Key: (C) Attended in the Chamber
(R) Attended Remotely

The Chair advised Committee of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded; and with the remote meetings protocol.

The Chief Executive undertook a roll call of committee members present.

1. APOLOGIES

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Schenning declared an interest in Item 8 – Annual Grant Funding Programmes. Having declared an interest Councillor Schenning did not participate or vote on the Item.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2023

Summary previously circulated.

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 October 2023 were signed as a correct record.

4. DELEGATION – INVEST NI

The Chairperson welcomed the representatives of Invest NI to the meeting: Alan McKeown, Executive Director of Regional Business and Des Gartland, North Western Regional Office Manager.

The representatives of Invest NI delivered a presentation. The presentation included the following information:

- A timeline of the Independent Review of Invest NI, of which all 39 recommendations have been accepted.
- The immediate actions taken in response to the Independent Review, including the appointment of a new Chief Executive.
- Invest NI's new purpose, and details of how it will get there.
- The details of "Vision 2026"
- Invest NI and 10X alignment, including details of the "Place" element, which is concerned with improving economic performance in all regions of Northern Ireland.
- Invest NI will work with the Council Chief Executive and his team to ensure that Invest NI products and services are visible and accessible to businesses in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CCGBC) area.
- Details of what Invest NI will look like sub-regionally, which will involve sub-regional economic targets and more local presence.
- Details of partnership working in Causeway Coast and Glens, including the current partnership total of 91 businesses here.
- Invest NI's key partners in this area, which include Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Ulster University, North West Regional College, Northern Regional College, Roe Valley Enterprises, Enterprise Causeway, and Causeway Chamber.
- Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal, innovation and digital projects.

* Alderman John McAuley joined the Chamber at 7.13pm

Alderman Callan thanked the Invest NI representatives for their presentation and welcomed the recognition of the need for a sub-regional approach. He

asked what engagement Invest NI plans to have with elected members sub-regionally. He also asked how the CCGBC area performances compares against other areas. He also noted that there was no mention of the Enterprise Zone and asked how it can be promoted.

The North Western Regional Office Manager advised that the Enterprise Zone is sold within the foreign direct investment (FDI) proposition for Northern Ireland. He advised that for the year to date, there have been seven FDI visits to the borough. He advised that Invest NI does not compare figures for different council areas but will be developing sub-regional targets. He advised that Invest NI produces Council profiles of their activities on an annual basis, with a breakdown of Invest NI's performance across all 11 council areas, and that he would be happy to share that with elected Members if requested.

The Executive Director of Regional Business advised that Councillors will be involved with Invest NI, and this will be communicated through the Council Chief Executive. He stated that targets need to be meaningful and tailored to each area.

The North Western Regional Office Manager advised that the development of regional offices was one of the recommendations, and that is a work in progress.

Alderman Callan stated that it would be good to have arrangements for ongoing engagement with Invest NI and regular reporting to Council. He stated that there needs to be a focus on developing higher value jobs in this area, as the area has a lot of potential.

Councillor Anderson thanked the Invest NI representatives for their presentation and asked how Invest NI plans to bring up wage levels in this area.

The North Western Regional Office Manager stated that in the Growth Deal projects, there is a particular focus on agritech, and life and health sciences, and the jobs in these sectors tend to be higher paid due to the nature of the work involved. He advised that while tourism and hospitality is a strength of this area, a mix of sectors is required to bring salaries up.

Councillor Anderson asked whether the Wattstown site is at full capacity. He advised that he had further questions that he will email to the North Western Regional Office Manager. He asked that Invest NI consider having a staff member located at Cloonavin.

The North Western Regional Office Manager advised that Wattstown is almost full, and that there is some land available at Garryduff. He stated that a new land strategy is in progress.

The Executive Director of Regional Business stated that Invest NI is happy to pursue the establishment of an office arrangement at Cloonavin with the

Council Chief Executive, as per the pre-covid arrangement. He suggested that Member-Officer groups could be a way of sharing information.

Councillor Anderson raised the issue of the Invest NI threshold presenting a difficulty for some businesses.

The Executive Director of Regional Business advised that Invest NI is happy to review the products that it offers and develop alternative products as required.

The North Western Regional Office Manager advised that businesses come on to the Invest NI radar when they start looking at export markets. He advised that Invest NI is happy to look into bespoke solutions where required.

Councillor N Archibald thanked the Invest NI representatives for their presentation and welcomed their commitment to having a presence in the Council. She noted that the presentation mentioned agritech as a potential growth area, and questioned what other areas could be developed here. She also asked whether there has been engagement with the Labour Market Partnership to support people who face barriers in returning to work.

The Executive Director of Regional Business stated that Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has been actively involved with Invest NI on the City and Growth Deals, and Invest NI has been supporting the Council with the development of the centre for food and drug discovery, the food innovation incubation and the business and innovation incubation hubs. He stated that there has been great progress with the City and Growth Deals, and that bids are to be assessed using independent frameworks.

The North Western Regional Office Manager advised that post-covid, hybrid working has changed business models and has created an opportunity to allow people to remain in their locality rather than relocating to a city, citing the example of Grow the Glens as an innovative project.

There being no further questions, the Chair thanked the Invest NI representatives for presenting to the Committee.

* **The representatives of Invest NI left the Chamber at 8.03pm**

5. PEACE PLUS LOCAL ACTION PLAN

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to request approval of the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan for submission to the Special European Programmes Body (SEUPB). The application has come as a result of the Co-Designed Process since October 2022 throughout the Borough with the support, direction, and guidance of the PEACEPLUS Partnership.

Background

In February 2022, the Council approved the nomination of 11 Elected Members to the PeacePlus Partnership under D'hondt. Nominations were submitted by the Party Leads and a PeacePlus workshop was held on Wednesday 23rd March 2022. In April 2022, Council approved recruitment of Social Partners for the establishment of the PEACEPLUS Partnership which signalled the initial stages of the Co-Design process of the Local Action Plan. The PeacePlus Partnership has been in operation since June 2022 and has overseen the design, development and implementation of the Co-Design Process for the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Local Action Plan. On Wednesday 4th October, the PeacePlus Partnership approved the Local Action Plan to seek Council's approval for full submission.

The proposed budget and subsequent application for the delivery of the local PeacePlus action Plan (Theme 1.1) is £6.1 million, with a target of 6,777 participants across three thematic areas as determined by SEUPB.

The deadline to the Special European Programmes Body for the submission of the Co-Design Local Action Plans is Friday 14th December 2023.

Proposals

Following a period of extensive and intensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including the local community, special interest groups, statutory organisations, the community & voluntary sector, SEUPB and Council, the PeacePlus Partnership is proposing the submission of this Local Action Plan as outlined in **Annex A**.

In summary, the Programme, divided into 3 areas:

- Local Community Regeneration & Transformation
- Building Peaceful & Thriving Communities
- Respect for all Cultural Identities

It is anticipated that the Programme (subject to approval) could commence delivery from Autumn 2024 lasting until December 2027.

The proposed projects are as follows:

Budget	£1,729,000	Budget	£1,765,000	Budget	£1,565,000
Participant Numbers	2445	Participant Numbers	2475	Participant Numbers	1860

Local Community regeneration and transformation;	Peaceful & Thriving Communities	Respect for all Cultural Identities
<u>Number of Projects:</u> 7	9	7
1) The Mountsandel Project	1) Older Peoples' & intergenerational Programme	1) Preserving History, Heritage, and Home Programme
2) Benbradagh – Gateway to the Sperrins	2) Women's Development Programme	2) Sustainable Festivals and Events Programme
3) The Girona Programme and Causeway Path	3) Adult Social Prescribing Programme	3) "Teanga" & "A when o words" Programme
4) The Laid Path & Development	4) Employability & Skills Programme	4) Multi-Cultural Learning & Celebrations Programme
5) Social Action Programming: regenerate, renew, transform	5) Resilient Communities Programme	5) Asylum Seekers & Refugee Programme
6) Cross-Border Programme: CCGBC/Inishowen Development Partnership & Estonia	6) Youth Development: Laying the Future Pathways Programme	6) Dealing with Past & Contemplating the Future Programme
7) Altnahinch Dam, Boardwalk regenerate, renew, transform	7) Nature & Environmental Programme	7) The Loyal Tribe Programme
	8) LGBTQIA + Programme	
	9) Access All Areas – Championing Inclusion in our Society Programme	

Capital projects listed will be subject to both SEUPB and Council's Capital Project approval processes. No 4 and 7 are not in the ownership of council and additional to approvals, will be subject to the necessary agreements being in place with landowners, including lifecycle costs post project.

Programme Budget Summary

Total Budget	Total Participants	Total Budget Programming	Total Administration
6,100,000	6777	£5,059,000	£1,041,000*

**Administration Budget to include Staffing costs, external auditor, external expertise & services, travel & subsistence, overheads, room hire, etc for 3 years.*

Figures have been provided in sterling and are subject to exchange rates applied by SEUPB at contract stage, and will therefore be adjusted accordingly.

The programming selected for inclusion into the application has come about as result of the community consultation, identifying needs and priorities and marrying those with the parameters as laid down by the Special European Programmes Body and set against a strategic context as articulated by The Northern Ireland Executive Office.

SEUPB are keen to consider proposals that will support mental and physical wellbeing, address marginalisation as well as opportunities to encourage citizens to look at sustainable practices and partnership approaches.

Some of the more obvious “Peace & Reconciliation Styled” programming will also remain a feature.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council approve the Local Co-Designed Peace Plus Plan to enable submission by the 14th of December deadline as recommended by the CC&G PeacePlus Partnership as shown in **Annex A**.

A presentation was delivered by the PEACE Coordinator. This presentation included the following information:

- An overview of the PEACE PLUS programme and details of the completed actions to date.
- Information on how co-design principles and practices were embedded in the partnership through extensive community consultation.
- Information on the socio-economic research produced by Dr Joanne Wallace – Members can contact the PEACE Coordinator if they require a copy of this.
- The future indicative timeline – it is hoped that Council will find out whether the application has been successful in June 2024, with the 23 programmes hoped to commence in September 2024, and the project ideally wrapping up by the end of December 2026, with a further three months allowed for closure of programmes.
- The indicative budget is expected to be £6.1 million, and will be 100% funded.

The Head of Community and Culture advised that the capital projects are indicative and subject to SEUPB and Council capital project approval processes, with the two projects not in the ownership of Council being subject to additional approvals and necessary legal agreements being put in place with any landowners, including the life cycle costs post-project.

Councillor Schenning stated that this investment would be very welcome. She thanked the Head of Community and Culture and the PEACE Coordinator for the enormous amount of work that they had carried out.

Councillor Anderson thanked the PEACE Coordinator for the phenomenal amount of work that she has put into to this project.

The Chair echoed these comments, thanking the Head of Community and Culture and the PEACE Coordinator for all their work.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED - to recommend that Council approve the Local Co-Designed Peace Plus Plan to enable submission by the 14th of December deadline as recommended by the CC&G PeacePlus Partnership as shown in Annex A (circulated).

6. ULSTER HISTORY CIRCLE PARTNERSHIP

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update members on the partnership agreement between the Ulster History Circle and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

In February 2023 a report was taken to Council for a decision on entering a partnership with the Ulster History Circle.

The Ulster History Circle (UHC) is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for placing the blue circular plaques in public spaces across Ulster in honour of men and women who have contributed to the province's history. UHC is an entirely voluntary organisation that has no earning capacity or trust funds of any kind. Its erection of blue plaques is facilitated purely on the basis of partnerships with local government bodies and other local organisations.

UHC will not accept nominations from Local Government bodies without a partnership arrangement in place. Partnerships can be time-limited or ongoing. They oblige the Local Government partner to fund the installation of agreed blue plaques, estimated at a total of £1,500 including the unveiling reception. UHC take responsibility for the research, design, production, installation and formal unveiling of the plaques, including the reception and

liaising with media and the PSNI where necessary. It is usual for only a single blue plaque to be installed per year, per partnership.

In order to be nominated for UHC blue plaques, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- Deceased at least 20 years, or be deceased but would have met their 100th birthday by the date of unveiling;
- Associated with one of the nine counties of Ulster by reason of birth, education, work, residence of vocation;
- Recognised for their significant contribution to education, industry, commerce, science, arts, literature, international affairs or other (non-political) calling anywhere in the world;
- Associated with a specific building within the nine counties of Ulster (i.e. place of birth, education, residence, work or similar).

If a partnership was agreed between the Council and UHC, the following processes would apply:

- Formal nominations on behalf of Council would be determined by designated council officers within the Communities and Culture team.
- Nominations would be proposed to UHC at a formal meeting where UHC would also put forward additional nomination relating to the Causeway Coast and Glens.
- Nominations would be narrowed down to three – five names. These would then be taken to the Leisure and Development Committee and Council for approval.
- By mutual agreement, one individual would be identified each year for an UHC blue plaque. All other nominees will be included in the Dictionary of Ulster Biography and may be identified for the receipt of blue plaques in later years of the partnership.

On 7th March 2023 Council approved the decision to engage in a partnership arrangement with the Ulster History Circle at a cost of circa £1,500 per annum and subsequent installation of one blue plaque per year for an initial term of three years, subject to review, with the caveat that the first blue plaque is for Mr Sayers.

Current Situation

Museum Services were informed by the UHC at the end of August 2023 that they did not agree to enter the partnership with the attached caveat.

They reiterated the normal process (as outlined above) which has worked in successful partnerships with other Councils, and which they hope can be adopted by Causeway Coast and Glens.

Options

Option 1: Council do not engage in a partnership arrangement with UHC. Council would be unable to install any blue plaques across the

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough commemorating the men and women who have contributed to the province's history.

Option 2: Council engages in a partnership arrangement with the Ulster History Circle at a cost of circa £1,500 per annum and subsequent installation of one blue plaque per year for an initial term of three years, subject to review. Officers from the Community & Culture team will nominate James Sayers as one of their three to five nominees. This will not guarantee he will receive a blue plaque, but he will be included in the Dictionary of Ulster Biography and may be identified for the receipt of a blue plaque in later years of the partnership.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council that they engage in a partnership arrangement with the Ulster History Circle at a cost of circa £1,500 per annum and subsequent installation of one blue plaque per year for an initial term of three years, subject to review as outlined in option 2 of the report.

Proposed by Councillor McShane
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED – to recommend to Council that it engages in a partnership arrangement with the Ulster History Circle at a cost of circa £1,500 per annum and subsequent installation of one blue plaque per year for an initial term of three years, subject to review as outline in option 2 of the report.

7. GOOD RELATIONS STRATEGY

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Good Relations Strategy 2023 - 2026 for approval.

The draft strategy, which has been developed following an audit of need over a period of 4 months of engagement, identifies the key Good Relations issues and sets the high-level strategic priorities for the development of an action plan to be delivered by the service area to meet local authority legislative requirements.

Background

Under Section 75 (2) duty of the Northern Ireland Act, local authorities are required '*to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group*',

Each of the 11 Council's avails of financial assistance from The Executive Office's 'District Councils Good Relations Programme' to help resource local authorities in their duty to deliver a local Good Relations Strategy. Historically financial

assistance was provided by TEO for up to 75% of costs for delivery of the action plan in each council area. This is made up of both staff and programme costs. However, on 12th May 2023, Council received notification via an EQIA consultation that The Executive Office grant towards the District Council Good Relations programme would be reduced by 47% across all councils for the 23/24 period. The rationale provided was that councils were in a better position than arm's length bodies to absorb such cuts into their own budgets.

The District Council Good Relations Programme remains an important link between high-level strategic priorities as outlined in the Government's T:BUC Strategy and the delivery of community relations activity on a local level.

Whilst the T:BUC Strategy is currently under review, it was identified that the Strategy has been restrictive and there is need to ensure that the Strategy continues to work for all communities and to reflect the needs of all in Northern Ireland society, which has seen much change over the last decade.

The Council Strategy will continue to focus on the 4 key themes as detailed in the T:BUC policy framework as these will be in keeping with the priorities and recommendations established by the Department, the Council and during the course of the audit.

1. **Our Children and Young People:** To continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.
2. **Our Shared Community:** To create a community where division does not restrict the life of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.
3. **Our Safe Community:** To create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety.
4. **Our Cultural Expression:** To create a community, which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced.

Developing the Strategy

In October 2022, *The Junction* was awarded the contract to conduct an audit and develop a strategy to guide good relations work in the borough for the next three years. The audit findings and the Strategy will be utilised to develop the annual action plan for Council to fulfil their statutory duty to promote good relations within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area.

The methodology to undertake the audit and strategy was designed to target partners, area based communities, specific thematic groupings, elected members and the general public. Workshop-based consultations were organised to include four public, area based / geographical consultations, four thematic discussions, leading to face-to face interviews with community representatives working within TEO's thematic priorities. Strategic partners were also engaged via two existing strategic partner forums and seven elected members took part in individual interviews. 306 individuals in total engaged with the Good Relations Audit.

Consultation findings are contained within the report, however the main findings include:

Summary Quantitative and Qualitative Good Relations Survey

In the context of the attitudes to good relations, the NILT 2020-21 data set recorded that in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough council area, 43% felt relations had improved in the last 5 years and 40% that they would continue to do so in the next 5 years.

The key findings of audit are:

- The three most common good relations issues identified in the area at this moment are: 1, Sectarianism (80.3%), 2, Cultural diversity (61.8%) and 3, Racism (28%).
- A strong majority (79.6%) of people felt safe in their community, 12.1% did not.
- On whether they felt their identity was respected 52.2% responded Yes.
- On whether their identity was not respected, 31.2% of people who answered this question said sometimes and 16.6% of people said it was not respected.
- Addressing the legacy of the past is really important to 46.5% of those who responded to the question, 42% said it is important. For 10% it is not that important.

The top 10 key issues arising as a result of consultation and engagement:

1. Shared and/or integrated education.
2. Cross community work.
3. Feeling safe in the area you live in.
4. Local people having an influence and voice in decision making process and civic life.
5. Challenging discrimination (racism, sectarianism).
6. Cultural expression including cultural celebration, language, music, and arts.
7. Justice for the victims and survivors.
8. Paramilitary control.
9. Community Development.
10. Cost of living crisis.

Key Interventions identified by respondents:

- Work with young people and children including common issues, local neighbourhood work, community education and training could bring people together and contribute to a shared community.
- Addressing the marking of territory.

- Increase understanding in Ulster Scots and the Irish language, cultures and traditions.

Proposal

A number of key priorities were identified for the development and implementation of the Good Relations Strategy (**Annex A**). Good relations issues identified are mapped detailing complementarity with other policies, programmes and plans to provide additional capacity building to achieve positive good relations outcomes.

Key Themes

Community education and training to better understand the dynamic of culture and traditions, good relations and building welcoming communities is the key focus of the Good Relations Strategy. Based on the findings of the audit, the key themes that emerge across the survey and consultations emphasise shared spaces, developing young people, addressing some difficult issues, the need for regeneration and integration, challenging racism, negative attitudes and behaviours and sectarianism and have been set out against the 4 main T:BUC aims.

Delivery against T:BUC aims:

4.2.1 Children and Young people

Support for children and young people in good relations and in integration work. The strategy proposes greater emphasis through more programmes, projects and services for young people as the next/future generation, via community youth, education and church sectors. The Strategy proposes that young people should be enabled to come together more easily, on a cross community basis, around shared and common interests. The strategy proposes focused projects and educational opportunities to enable young people to develop greater understanding for cultural diversity and equality.

4.2.2 Shared Community

Actions and activities supporting opportunities and programmes that 'bring people together' to provide cross community initiatives/programmes/projects which cater for all age groups around shared /common interests: sports, arts, local history, and nature/environment. Culture, traditions and global diversity have considerable potential to contribute to a shared community. Advocate targeted approaches whereby groups are encouraged and supported to reach beyond their areas, groups and comfort zones.

4.2.3 Safe Community

Safety on the streets for all groups, in particular young people, women and asylum seekers and refugees.

Statutory partners and council leadership are identified as key partners in continuing to support bonfire management and in addressing the marking of territory. Local communities are also critical to resolving these issues.

The integration and safety of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants - who are a small population in the borough, is identified as important. The need to counter negative and extreme views and fears is important. Education on global diversity and how this can enrich lives is identified.

4.2.4 Cultural Expression

Recognition of the importance of creating two-way experiences of diversity in schools, with young people and in communities. The strategy aims to develop ways to address rising tensions of both racism and sectarianism.

The strategy also suggests that through education, an understanding of history and heritage will offer community and museum led opportunities to promote understanding and to address difficult and different narratives.

Action Plan Development

In line with the District Council Good Relations programme, and using a community planning outcome based approach, an action plan will be developed using the delivery principles and will be programmed under the 4 T:BUC themes.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the adoption of the proposed Good Relations Strategy for implementation from 2024 – 2027 and that an action plan be developed to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the Good Relations issues are being addressed and local needs are being met.

The Head of Community and Culture clarified that the report was written at the end of the last Council term, and that the table on page 24 of the report will be updated with the new Council/DEA information.

Proposed by Councillor Kennedy
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

AGREED - to recommend that Council approve the adoption of the proposed Good Relations Strategy for implementation from 2024 – 2027 and that an action plan be developed to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the Good Relations issues are being addressed and local needs are being met.

8. ANNUAL GRANT FUNDING PROGRAMMES

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Funding Unit Manager.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend the annual grant funding programmes to Council for the 2024-2025 period.

Background

Every year Council agrees an annual programme of grants. The grant programmes target resources to meet identified need and further Council's

objectives as outlined in Council's Corporate Plan and individual Service Strategies.

Breakdown of Grants awarded 2016-2023:

Table 1

Year	No of Applications	Amount Requested (£)	No of Projects	Amount Awarded (£)
2016-17	312	1,017,490.53	266	854,958.05
2017-18	377	1,362,593.94	292	991,777.59
2018-19	389	1,728,482.51	276	1,347,399.59
2019-20	455	1,528,469.18	294	962,189.49
2020-21	1393	3,062,446.74	1054	1,828,139.36
2021-22	653	2,938,394.67	435	1,141,945.30
2022-23	616	1,835,683.36	520	1,508,872.23
2023-24*	587	1,726,106.23	482	999,950.74
Grand Total	4,782	15,199,667.20	3453	9,397,421.16

* These 2023/24 figures are as of 10/10/2023, end of year figures will increase as we have grants still open.

Current years grant programmes

In the current Grant funding period (2023-24) the following 23 grant programmes are being delivered:

Table 2

	Grant Programme	No of applications	Amount Requested (£)	No of LoOs	Sum of LoOs (£)
1	Building a United Community Fund	4	5,000.00	3	4,290.00
2	Christmas Festive Fund	35	52,015.00	30	40,105.00
3	Community Development Support Grant	69	189,533.09	63	163,681.02
4	Community Festivals Fund	46	65,567.00	45	62,567.00
5	Social Connections Grant	74	37,327.04	68	32,739.52

6	Creative Practitioner Bursary Scheme	8	7513.00	8	3,005.00
7	Culture, Arts and Heritage Grant Scheme	25	24,401.50	23	20,017.43
8	Enterprise Fund	45	205,046.80	19	82,344.48
9	Landfill Community Fund	12	87,400.00	7	87,400.00
10	LiveSmart Grant*	Recently opened for applications	-	TBC	TBC
11	Policing and Community Safety Small Grant *	31	28,172.40	20	18,834.40
12	Rural Business Development Grant	Await word from DAERA re programme opening			
13	Tourism and Recreation Large Events Fund	6	398,020.00	5	339,220.00
14	Tourism Events Growth Fund	1	203,900.00	1	15,000.00
15	Town Centre Experience Fund *	4	7,995.00	1	2,000.00
16	King Charles III Coronation Grant Fund	116	39,556.00	99	29,492.00
17	Sports Grant & Bursary Programme *	Recently opened for applications		TBC	TBC
18	Town Twinning Grant	1	5,000.00	1	5,000.00
19	Youth Creative Skills Bursary	3	650.00	3	600.00
20	Food Hardship Grant *	25	65,676.00	17	42,924.00
21	Personal Learning Account Fund	31	14,677.40	22	10,028.60
22	Business Seed Fund	51	288,656	47	40,702.29

23	NI Enterprise Support Scheme	Due to open for applications on 13.11.23			
	Grand Total	587	1,726,106.23	482	999,950.74

*Rolling programmes and currently open for applications

These 2023/24 figures are as of 10/10/2023, end of year figures will increase as have grants are still open.

Proposed Grant Funding Programmes 2024-25

The Annual Review of Grant Programmes Workshop for Elected Members was held on 11 October 2023 at which the proposed grant programmes for the incoming year were presented and discussed. (Attached at **Annex A**, which includes a brief overview of each proposed grant and the criteria to be used for assessment).

The Grant Funding Programmes available for the 2024/2025 period are as follows:

Table 3

	Grant Programme	Assessment/ Scoring	Max grant available (£)	Other Funder	Indicative Budget (£)	Indicative Cost to Council (£)
1	Building a United Community Fund	Score	1,500	75% Exec Office	4,500	1,125
2	Community Development Support Grant	Pass/fail	1,250 / 2,500 3,500	48% DfC	145,000	75,400
3	SIG / Social Connections Fund	Pass/Fail	500	48% DfC	15,000	7,800
4	Community Festivals Fund	Score	750 / 1,500 / 3,000	45% DfC	64,530	35,492
5	Culture, Arts and Heritage Grant Scheme	Score	1,000	100% Council	20,000	20,000
6	Creative Practitioner's Bursary Scheme	Pass/Fail	1,000	100% Council	3,000	3,000

7	Youth Creative Skills Bursary Scheme	Pass/Fail	200	100% Council	2,640	2,640
8	Tourism Large Events Funding	Score	100,000	100% Council	400,000	400,000
9	Tourism Growth Fund	Score	15,000	100% Council	Included above	Included above
10	Christmas Festive Fund	Pass/Fail	750/2,500	100% Council	50,000	50,000
11	Policing and Community Safety Grants	Score	TBC	100% DoJ	50,000	0
12	Enterprise Fund	Score	5,000	100% Council	TBC	TBC
13	Landfill Communities Fund	Score	15,000	100% HMRC	120,000	0
14	Town Twinning Fund	Pass/Fail	5,000	100% Council	10,000	10,000
15	Rural Business Development Grant	Score	4,999	100% DAERA	TBC	0
16	LiveSmart	Score	750	100% Council	10,000	10,000
17	Town Centre Experience Fund	Score	2,000	100% Council	24,000	24,000
18	Sports Grant & Bursary Programme	Score	150/200/300 / 400	100% Council	20,000	20,000
19	NISS	Score	4,000	100% DLUHC/ UKSPF	235,139	0
20	Personal Learning Account	Score	500	100% DfC	Subject to funding approval	0
				TOTAL S	1,173,809	659,457

Community Development Support Grant (CDSG)

Part funded by DfC, this is an enabling grant to provide financial assistance towards core operating costs of community development groups.

- Applicants in 2022/23 were invited to apply for a 3 year deal.
- New applicants in 2023/24 applied for a 2-year deal – bringing them into the 2024-25 cycle.
- If Council open the programme for 2024/25, it is recommended that it be for a one year deal – to synchronise all awards into the 2024/25 cycle.
 - 2021/22 - 51 projects funded totalling £92,836.86
 - 2022/23 - 55 projects funded totalling £145,418.02
 - 2023/24 – increased to 63 projects totalling £163,681.02
- In 2024/25, 63 Letters of Offer will be issued totalling £163,681.02. This brings us to the maximum point in the budget.
- Council need to decide if they want to open the grant programme this year to see if there are any groups who haven't yet come into the mix.
- Any new & emerging groups will continue to receive seeding financial support from Community Development.

NI Enterprise Support Service Fund (NIESS)

The Enterprise Support Service (ESS), led by Northern Ireland's 11 local Councils, is a new approach to help potential entrepreneurs, new starts and existing businesses to maximise both their potential and contribution to Northern Ireland's economy.

The funding programme will provide would-be and existing businesses with flexible, tailored and easily accessible advice and support at any stage of their growth journey. There are 4 elements of the programme:

1	Engage	Engaging individuals at the pre / early start-up phase.
2	Foundation	Support for founding of higher value / VAT + potential businesses.
3	Enabling Growth	Aligned to aspirations and potential.
4	Accelerated Scaling	Supporting start-ups that can generate at least £1m in revenues after 3 years.

Only potential employer enterprises accessing support within the Foundation and Enabling Growth elements of the wider Enterprise Support Service programme are eligible to apply for this Grant. The 2023/2024 programme is due to open for applications on 13/11/23 and is 100% funded by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Sports Grant & Bursary Programme

In September 2023 Council agreed the creation of the Sports Grant & Bursary Programme which replaced funding to the legacy Sports Councils to provide Sports Development Grants.

This new Sports Grants & Bursary Programme is available to local individuals, local sports clubs, and National Governing Bodies (NGB's) representing a sport recognised by Sport NI. The Sports Grant & Bursary Programme is about supporting local athletes and clubs to develop sport in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area.

Labour Market Partnership

Causeway Coast and Glens Labour Market Partnership (LMP) is a new Department for Communities (DfC) funded programme established in 2022/2023 to address key challenges in the local labour market for both local residents and local employers. The programme has been very successful, working to improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally by delivering a tailor-made action plan reflecting local conditions and needs. Table 2 depicts the LMP Programmes (21, 22) showing how successful the funding has been in the current year. There is no confirmation if DfC will approve funding for 2024/2025.

Christmas Festive Fund

The Christmas Festive Fund supports Community Associations from towns, villages and hamlets to help celebrate Christmas. This fund is for outdoor light switch on events only. The fund was pass/fail criteria for the past 2 years. It is recommended that- a simple scoring/assessment structure is reintroduced to allow for differentiation when 2 applications are received from the same area.

It is also recommended that the fund is opened earlier in the year, just after Easter, to give community groups more time to organise and plan their Christmas celebrations.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council:

1. Grant programmes 1-19, listed in Table 3, along with the assessment / scoring criteria and scheduling summarised in **Annex A**.
2. Opening of the Christmas Festive Fund after Easter 2024.
3. Re-introduction of a simple scoring/assessment for the Christmas Festive Fund to differentiate more than one application from the same area.
4. Increase maximum grant award for Livesmart from £500 to £750

It is further recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee considers whether or not to open the Community Development Support Grant for the 2024/25 period.

Councillor N Archibald asked whether the Community Development Support Grant can be opened to new applicants.

The Funding Unit Manager advised that it would be possible to open the fund, but noted that we are entering year 3 of the three-year period.

Councillor Anderson asked how much funding remains available.

The Funding Unit Manager advised that the total amount available would be subject to the rates setting process, so if it were decided to open the fund, this could be factored into the budget setting process. She advised that because the recommendation every year is to increase the budget, the community development budget is at its maximum.

Proposed by Alderman Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Watson

-To recommend that Council:

1. Grant programmes 1-19, listed in Table 3, along with the assessment / scoring criteria and scheduling summarised in **Annex A**.
2. Opening of the Christmas Festive Fund after Easter 2024.
3. Re-introduction of a simple scoring/assessment for the Christmas Festive Fund to differentiate more than one application from the same area.
4. Increase maximum grant award for Livesmart from £500 to £750

And to recommend that Council opens the Community Development Support Grant for the 2024/25 period.

The Chair put the Proposal to the Committee to Vote.
7 Members voted For; 8 Members voted Against.
The Chair declared the Proposal lost.

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Councillor Wisener

AGREED - to recommend that Council:

1. Grant programmes 1-19, listed in Table 3, along with the assessment / scoring criteria and scheduling summarised in **Annex A**.
2. Opening of the Christmas Festive Fund after Easter 2024.
3. Re-introduction of a simple scoring/assessment for the Christmas Festive Fund to differentiate more than one application from the same area.
4. Increase maximum grant award for Livesmart from £500 to £750

AND to further recommended that Council does not open the Community Development Support Grant for the 2024/25 period.

9. RNLI BEACH LIFEGUARD SERVICE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Members to consider options for adjustment in the provision of Beach Lifeguarding services to Council from RNLI for 2024. In

addition, Officers are requesting Elected Members' approval to alter the hours of service provision from 11:00am to 7:00pm to 10.00am to 6:00pm.

Background

At the March 2022 Leisure and Development Committee Meeting, Elected Members approved the renewal of the contract with RNLI to provide beach lifeguarding services for a further five-year period from April 2022 through to March 2027. This was based on a predicted increase per annum for the period of the contract capped at 2%, and the provision made to revert to Council if there is a requirement to increase on 2%.

At the Full Council Meeting on 4 April 2023, Elected Members approved a payment of £163,615 to RNLI for Beach Lifeguard Services for the 2023 season.

Inflationary pressures continue to be a major issue for the provision of this service. The average for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the period October 22 to September 23 is 9%. The cost of provision to the RNLI for the services has been communicated to Council as being well above the 2% increase provided for in the Council Report in March 2022. Due to the excessive variance, between what was agreed at Council and the average rates of inflation, Council Officers and Officers from RNLI have met to discuss options for mitigating the increase in costs, whilst continuing to provide an effective and efficient service.

Service Provision

The RNLI has delivered beach lifeguard services on behalf of Council since 2010. Initially this was for Coleraine Borough Council and Limavady Borough Council. In December 2015 Council agreed to a new agreement between Causeway Coast & Glens Council and RNLI for the following beaches:

- Benone Strand
- Downhill Strand
- Castlerock
- Portrush West
- Portrush East
- Whiterocks
- Ballycastle

As part of the agreement RNLI is responsible for the following elements;

1. Recruitment, selection, and training of lifeguards.
2. Provision of Beach Lifeguard Units and associated shore works.
3. Provision of all surf rescue equipment including vehicles and watercraft.
4. Undertaking of beach risk assessments for lifeguard service provision.

In addition, the service also provides;

1. Advice and support to Council with respect to beach and coastal events, beach safety signage and public rescue equipment.
2. Beach safety annual reviews for each site.
3. Delivery of an education programme where possible.

The service is operational during;

- Easter (selected beaches only).
- Weekends and Bank Holidays in May and June (All beaches).
- Daily from late June – early September (All beaches).

Beach lifeguard service provision has been from 11.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. It is proposed to adjust the hours of service to 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. for the 2024 season.

Since 2020 beaches have seen increasing numbers of visitors and a wider range of activities both on and off the water, especially during the summer months. The service provided by RNLI is invaluable in support of Council's ongoing approach to beach management to ensure the public can enjoy a safe environment and have a quality experience.

Options

In light of the extraordinary high levels of inflation, and after discussion with RNLI Officers, options for 2024 are presented below for Members consideration.

Option 1

To provide the same level of service as per 2023 with adjustments for the Easter Bank Holiday falling in March. The cost to Council would increase from £163,315 to **£177,153**.

Option 2

Reduce the service provision slightly.

- The summer service start to be moved from 22 June 24 to 29 June 24.
- Easter bank holiday (29 March 24 to 07 April 24), total cost to Council **£166,508**.

Therefore Option 2 is considered the most viable option as it retains a service at key times with a cost increase of 2%.

Request from RNLI for a change in times of service

Since 2010, the beach lifeguard service provision has been from 11.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. Elsewhere in Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom provision is from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. RNLI has conducted a statistical analysis of incidents on Council managed beaches which would support the adjustment of the service hours to 10.00 a.m. to 6 p.m. It would be appropriate for Council to mirror these timings with the seasonal Beach Ranger service.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council the approval of Option 2 with a contribution to the RNLI of £166,508 for the 2024 season, along with approval of a change in hours of operation of the beach lifeguard service from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. from 2024.

Alderman John McAuley stated that the RNLI does a fantastic job and that given that this proposal came from the RNLI, he would be happy to propose it.

Councillor McCully echoed Alderman John McAuley's comments regarding the good work of the RNLI.

Councillor McShane asked the Head of Tourism and Recreation to clarify which are the selected beaches for Easter.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that the beaches selected for Easter are: Benone, one of the units at West Bay in Portrush, East Strand, Whiterocks and Ballycastle.

Proposed by Alderman John McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

AGREED - to recommend to Council the approval of Option 2 with a contribution to the RNLI of £166,508 for the 2024 season, along with approval of a change in hours of operation of the beach lifeguard service from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. from 2024.

10. REVIEW OF VILLAGE PLANS

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the proposal to update the Borough's current Village Plans and develop two new Village Plans.

Background

The Causeway Coast and Glens area as a whole is emerging from COVID disruption and is now navigating through the Cost-of-Living Crisis. The rural parts of the Borough require an integrated approach, at village level, to assist villages and their surrounding areas to realise their potential and continue to provide quality environments which evolve to meet the needs of their citizens, businesses and visitors.

Refreshing and developing new Village Plans provides an opportunity to enable and encourage rural people and community groups to become involved in the development of their own local action plans. The plans should provide a needs-based strategic framework to co-ordinate specific development actions. The plans will inform Council, potential funders and the village's communities what

specific activities/interventions would be most beneficial to their respective village.

Current Situation

Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency (NISRA) classifies villages as having a settlement population of 1,000 or more and under 2,250 persons. On review of the villages across the Borough, the following 10 villages fall within these guidelines (note: 2021 Census population figures are unavailable):

Villages	Population (2011 census)	Existing Village Plan	Update /New
1. Ballykelly	2103	Yes	Yes
2. Bushmills	1292	Yes	No
3. Castlerock	1287	Yes	No
4. Cloughmills	1309	Yes	Yes
5. Cushendall	1276	Yes	Yes
6. Dunloy	1215	No	Yes
7. Garvagh	1274	Yes	Yes
8. Greysteel	1454	Yes	Yes
9. Kilrea	1679	No	Yes
10. Rasharkin	1114	Yes	Yes

Based on NISRA's guidelines, there are six villages that require their 2018 Village Plans to be updated and two villages that require new plans. Bushmills does not require a Village Plan as this is being covered by the regeneration plans for the area within the Growth Deal. Also, Castlerock Community Association (CCA) recently completed a new four-year Village Plan for the local area.

The need exists to procure specialist support to carry out a review and establish the position of the existing plans, facilitate village consultations, and update/develop eight Village Plans (including Action Plans).

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council that officers proceed to procure specialist external support to complete the upgrade of six Village Plans and develop two new Village Plans, at an approximate cost of £30,000.

The Chair stated that it was good to see a village plan for Kilrea being pushed through.

Proposed by Councillor Kennedy
 Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED - to recommend to Council that officers proceed to procure specialist external support to complete the upgrade of six Village Plans and develop two new Village Plans, at an approximate cost of £30,000.

11. LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP

For Information report, previously circulated, was presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the minutes of Labour Market Partnership Members Meeting on 10th May 2023 and also on the 21st June 2023.

Background

Action 27 of the Causeway Community Plan aims to:

‘Support the development of the Labour Market Partnership - supporting educational and skills initiatives within the Causeway Coast and Glens area to match current and future business needs.’

The 2023/24 Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan was approved by Council on 18th April 2023. It aims to address the employability needs of Causeway Coast and Glens (CC&G) Borough Council area, also building on the achievements of the previous year’s action plan.

The following 3 strategic priorities and programmes have been identified within the LMP Action Plan and are consistent with the labour market activation proposals in the Borough’s economic development strategy.

- **Strategic Priority 1:** To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area;
- **Strategic Priority 2:** To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally;
- **Strategic Priority 3:** To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision available either regionally or locally.

Members of the Causeway Coast and Glens LMP are from the following organisations:

- DfC JBOs
- Invest NI
- Causeway Chamber
- Careers Service
- North West Regional College
- Northern Regional College
- Enterprise Causeway
- Roe Valley Enterprises
- NHSCT

Members are asked to note the minutes of the meetings on 10th May 2023 and 21st June 2023 below.

Committee NOTED the report.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, was presented as read.

12.1 Correspondence from the Department for the Economy regarding NI Business Start-up Programme Performance 2022/23 (Dated 08 November 2023)

The Department for the Economy has responsibility for monitoring performance in relation to the NI Business Start-Up Programme against statutory targets. Confirmation of the audited performance of the overall programme performance and that of Causeway Coast and Glens has now been provided.

The 'Go For It' Programme ended in September 2023 with the new Enterprise Support Service being implemented from mid-November 2023.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the correspondence.

Members NOTED the Correspondence.

13. MATTERS REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to Partnership Panel.

14. CONSULTATIONS

There were no Consultations.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Councillor Watson
Seconded by Councillor N Archibald and

AGREED – to recommend that Council move '*In Committee*'.

- * **Public and Press were disconnected from the meeting at 8:58pm.**
- * **The Chair declared a recess at 8.58pm.**
- * **The meeting resumed at 9.05pm following a comfort break.**

The information contained in the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

15. GENERALIST ADVICE SERVICES CONTRACT

Confidential report by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to commission a Generalist Advice Service for a one year period from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, subject to the necessary funds being made available through the Department for Communities (DfC) and Council budget availability, with an extension clause to allow the contract to be extended for 2 further periods of one year each.

Background

The Department for Communities (DfC) provides funding for Generalist Advice Services through its DfC District Councils Community Support Programme (CSP) which contains a ring-fenced amount for Advice provision that is then matched by Council.

In February 2021, Council awarded the current contract for provision of Generalist Advice Services, following an open procurement exercise, to Community Advice Causeway (CAC), as lead partner for Causeway and Glens Advice Services Consortium consisting of Community Advice Causeway and Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI), for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. The contract was extended for 2 further years as allowed for by the extension clause in the contract and is due to end on 31st March 2024.

Value of contract

There is increasing pressure on providers in relation to the cost of operating the service. Rent and utility costs are increasing as are staff costs, in line with NJC scales. Where CAC could have relied on volunteers to supplement their service many cases are now too complex for volunteers to deal with. CAC estimate that their operating costs have increased by £25-30,000 in the past year.

In November 2020, when approving the recommissioning of the service, Council agreed to provide a 10% increase over the course of the 3 year term. This resulted in an annual increase of 3.33% in Councils contribution for each of the 3 years of the current contract. During the last 2 years DfC has provided a 2% 'Fair Funding' salary uplift to the core advice monies (not including Welfare Reform etc).

Calculations have been made for 3 options for Council to consider for its contribution to the contract over the next 3 years. At this stage DfC is unable to provide confirmation of the value of annual funding to be awarded for Advice provision in 2024-25 or subsequent years.

Option 1: 2% annual increase in Council contribution in line with DfC consolidated salary uplift.

Option 2: 3.33% annual increase in Council contribution continuing what has been in place for the past 3 years.

Option 3: 10% annual increase in Council contribution to reflect actual percentage increase in operating costs.

A 2% increase in Councils contribution would result in an increased budget requirement of **£2,705** in 2024-25.

A 3.3% increase in Councils contribution would result in an increased budget requirement of **£4,504**.

A 10% increase in Councils contribution would require an additional budget of **£13,524**.

Whichever increase Council decides would further be applied in 2025-26 and 2026-27 if the contract is successfully renewed for both those years.

Recommendations

Recommendation A:

It is recommended that council proceed to commission the Generalist Advice Service for a three year period from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2027, subject to the necessary funds being made available through the Department for Communities (DfC) and Council, and an annual review of contract deliverables/outputs.

Recommendation B:

Furthermore, council is asked to consider the 3 options as provided within section 4.3 of the report and agree the value of Council's contribution to the contract on an annual basis over the next 3 years.

Recommendation A was put to the floor.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

AGREED – to recommend that Council proceed to commission the Generalist Advice Service for a three year period from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2027, subject to the necessary funds being made available through the Department for Communities (DfC) and Council, and an annual review of contract deliverables/outputs.

Recommendation B was put to the floor.

Proposed by Councillor McGurk
Seconded by Councillor Watson

-To recommend Option 3: 10% annual increase in Council contribution to reflect actual percentage increase in operating costs.

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Kyle
Seconded by Councillor Anderson

-To recommend Option 2: 3.33% annual increase in Council contribution continuing what has been in place for the past 3 years.

Councillor Schenning asked how the service would be funded if Council did not agree to Option 3.

The Head of Community and Culture advised that CAC would be required to use its reserves.

Councillor Schenning stated that her preference is Option 3, as it would be unfair to ask a community group to use its resources to provide a service delivered for Council.

The Chair put the Amendment to the Committee to Vote.
6 Members voted For; 10 Members voted Against.
The Mayor declared the Amendment lost.

The Chair put the substantive motion by Councillor McGurk, seconded by Councillor Watson to the Committee to Vote.

10 Members voted For; 6 Members voted Against.
The Mayor declared the substantive motion passed.

AGREED - To further recommend Option 3: 10% annual increase in Council contribution to reflect actual percentage increase in operating costs.

16. SPORT AND WELLBEING ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE

Confidential report by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

To update Members on progress to return the Greysteel Play Park to a usable condition and provide the community of Greysteel with a “fit for purpose” play park.

Recommendation

The Leisure & Development Committee is asked to note the current position in respect of the Greysteel community and the lack of play facilities in a village with a population of approximately 1,500, 22% aged 14 or under, and recommends to Council an increase of predicted spend from £70,000 up to £170,000.

If approved by Council, a tender exercise will be undertaken with the expectation of a further report being brought back to Council early in the New Year 2024 for a final investment decision.

Alderman John McAuley queried why the predicted spend had increased from £70,000 to £170,000.

The Head of Sport and Wellbeing advised that the figure of £70,000 was based on an estimate from several years ago, and that it was based on a like-for-like replacement of the play facilities that had been in the park. The higher estimate is based on a new design that would sit within the same footprint but would have additional space following the removal of the portacabin. She advised that the new facilities would be proportionate to what is required in that area, based on the Playboard NI report.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the current position in respect of the Greysteel community and the lack of play facilities in a village with a population of approximately 1,500, 22% aged 14 or under, and recommends to Council an increase of predicted spend from £70,000 up to £170,000.

17. VISITORS GUIDE 2024

Confidential report by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Elected Members' approval to procure services for the design and printing of the Council's Visitor Guide for the 2024 season for the purpose of marketing the Destination.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends approval for the appointment of Kubrix at a total cost of £25,460 for the design and print of the 2024 Visitor Guide. This budget has been allowed for from the 2023/24 Destination Marketing budget.

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Councillor Wisener and

AGREED – to recommend to Council the appointment of Kubrix at a total cost of £25,460 for the design and print of the 2024 Visitor Guide.

18. HOLIDAY AND LEISURE PARKS ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE WORKS 2024-25

Confidential report By virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with detail on priority works / maintenance / repair works at Council's Holiday and Leisure Parks (HALP) that are individually expected to be in excess of £10,000. Approval is being sought to advance on delivery of these projects.

Recommendation

It is recommended the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council to approve the advancement to detail specification and procurement, prior to a Council investment decision. The total estimated cost for the projects detailed within this Report is £349,000. The designated Capital elements have been budgeted for within the Capital reserve allocated for HALPs and the revenue elements will be allocated to HALPs Maintenance and Repair budget.

Councillor McCully queried the maintenance approach to Benone given that it had been decided to explore a development brief for the site.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that there is no alternative to tanking and repairing the pool at Benone, if it is to be operational for next year. He advised that it is proposed to have a mobile shower and toilet facility at Benone, which could be relocated in the event of the disposal of the asset.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

AGREED - to recommend to Council to approve the advancement to detail specification and procurement, prior to a Council investment decision. The total estimated cost for the projects detailed within this Report is £349,000. The designated Capital elements have been budgeted for within the Capital reserve allocated for HALPs and the revenue elements will be allocated to HALPs Maintenance and Repair budget.

19. HOLIDAY AND LEISURE PARKS FEES AND CHARGES

Confidential report by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Elected Members to consider options for fees and charges across Council's six Holiday and Leisure Parks (HALPs).

Members are asked to consider options with regards to fees for seasonal and static vans, touring caravans, tents, motorhomes and pods for the 2024-2025 season.

Recommendation

It is recommended the Leisure & Development Committee consider the two options for static and seasonal fees for the 2024 – 2025 season and recommends to Council its preferred option:

Option 1 - No increase in fees.

Option 2 - An increase based on average CPI as outlined in Table 1 & Table 2 (8.5 %).

Elected Members are also asked to approve the pricing for Caravan, Tents, Motorhomes and Pods as outlined in Table 3 (8.5% except Pod/Cabins).

Councillor Holmes asked for details on the likely increase in income from caravans and motorhomes.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that this would depend on bookings. He advised that the static sites are completely oversubscribed, and are competitively priced compared with the private sector.

Councillor Anderson asked whether Council could explore increasing provision, given the demand.

The Chief Executive advised that he would look into the matter.

Councillor McShane noted that there is an issue with campervan parking in Ballycastle, particularly around the Carrickmore Road area, and asked that this also be considered when examining further provision.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

AGREED – to recommend to Council an increase based on average CPI as outlined in Table 1 & Table 2 (8.5 %) for static and seasonal fees for the 2024 – 2025 season

AND to further recommend to Council to approve the pricing for Caravan, Tents, Motorhomes and Pods as outlined in Table 3 (8.5% except Pod/Cabins).

20. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12. (O)

There were no items of Any Other Relevant Business.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Councillor Holmes and

AGREED - to recommend that Council move '*In Public*'.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 9.58pm.

Chair