

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on Tuesday, 17th October 2023 at 6:00 pm in Boardroom Monaghan Row.

Committee Membership 2023 - 2024

Councillor T Andrews **Chairperson**

Councillor W Clarke **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor D Finn

Councillor J Jackson

Councillor G Kearns

Councillor T Kelly

Councillor M Larkin

Councillor O Magennis

Councillor L McEvoy

Councillor K Murphy

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Rice

Councillor M Savage

Councillor D Taylor

Councillor J Truesdale

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on 19th September 2023

 *Action Sheet - September 2023 inc. historic actions SM update (002).pdf*

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Notices of Motion

4.0 Notice of Motion - Clean Indoor Air

 *SE Committee Oct 2023 - Report on Notice of Motion by Councillor Truesdale Clean Air.pdf*

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5.0 Notice of Motion - Review of Waste Collection Service

 *SE Committee Oct 2023 - Report on Notice of Motion by Councillor Jackson Refuse Collection.pdf*

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6.0 Notice of Motion - Animal Welfare

 *SE Committee Oct 2023 - Report on Notice of Motion by Councillor Kelly Animal Welfare.pdf*

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 *Animal Welfare Report Oct 2023 Appendix 1.pdf*

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For Discussion/Decision

7.0 NMDDC Food Surveillance and Sampling

 *FOOD SAMPLING PRESENTATION NMDDC 17.10.2023.pdf*

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8.0 NMDDC Mental Health Champions

Report to follow


 *SE Committee - Mental Health Champion - 17.10.23.pdf*


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Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

9.0 Business Case for Maintenance Servicing of Council Lifts

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 *Report Business Case for Maintenance Servicing of Council Lifts.pdf* *Not included*

 *Business Case - Lift Maintenance Updated.pdf* *Not included*

10.0 Procurement of Hire Vehicles

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 *SE Committee - Procurement of Vehicle Hire Services- Cover Report 17.10.23.pdf* *Not included*

 *Appendix 1 - Procurement of Vehicle Hire Services - Business Case.pdf* *Not included*

11.0 Procurement of Engine Oils and Lubricants

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 *SE Committee - Procurement of Motor Oils and Lubricants - Cover Report 17.10.23.pdf* *Not included*

 *Appendix 1 - Procurement of Motor Oils and Lubricants - Business Case.pdf* *Not included*

12.0 Procurement of Contracts for Household Recycling Centre Waste Streams



This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Information relating to the

financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

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|  <i>SE Committee - Procurement of HRC Waste Contracts - Cover Report 17.10.23.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Appendix 1 - Procurement of Residual waste contract for DPk Castlewellan Ballynahinch HRCs.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Appendix 2 - HRC Plastics Cardboard Paper - Full Business Case - 17.10.23.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |

13.0 Procurement of Deep Cleansing Services


This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

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|  <i>SE Committee - Procurement of Deep Cleansing Services - Cover Report 17.10.23.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Appendix 1 - Procurement of Deep Cleansing Services - Business Case 17.10.23.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |

FOR NOTING Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

14.0 ARC21 - Joint Committee Members Bulletin & Minutes - 28 September 2023. (Attached)

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

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|  <i>ARC 21 - 28Sept23-JC MembersBulletin In Comm.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>ARC21 - JC081-28Sept23-Item5-JC InCommMinutes31Aug23.F.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
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15.0 Call for Evidence Response - Electricity Connection Policy Framework Review

- [SandE Committee Report Oct 23 - Call for Evidence Response Electricity Connection Policy Framework Review.pdf](#) Page 62

- [Appendix 1 - NMDDC Response to UREG.DfE on Electricity Connection Policy Framework Review CfE.pdf](#) Page 65

16.0 Consultation on Carbon Budgets - DAERA

- [SandE Committee Report Oct 23 - Consultation on Carbon Budgets - DAERA.pdf](#) Page 71

- [Appendix 1 - NMDDC Response to DAERA Consultation on NI's Emissions Reduction Targets and Carbon Budgets.pdf](#) Page 75

17.0 Response received from Department for Infrastructure re: Slideryford Bridge to Murlough

- [MT 160991-23 - 231004 - A Cassells Dundrum to Murlough.pdf](#) Page 84

18.0 Tree Strategy

- [Report Council Draft Tree Strategy Oct 2023.pdf](#) Page 86

- [Appendix 1 Biosecurity Policy Arbor Urban Forestry \(003\).pdf](#) Page 91

- [Appendix 2 - Green Infrastructural Benefits of NMDDC Trees \(003\).pdf](#) Page 93

- [Tree Strategy Glossary Appendicies Introduction TBC.pdf](#) Page 96

- [August photos.pdf](#) Page 103

19.0 Recycle Week 2023

- [SE Committee Report - Recycle Week 2023 17.10.23.pdf](#) Page 113

20.0 ARC21 - Joint Committee Minutes - 31st August 2023

- [ARC21 - JC081-28Sept23-Item3-JC Minutes31Aug23.F.pdf](#) Page 115

Invitees

- Cllr Terry Andrews
- Cllr Callum Bowsie
- Cllr Jim Brennan
- Cllr Pete Byrne
- Cllr Philip Campbell
- Mr James Campbell
- Mr Andrew Cassells
- Cllr William Clarke
- Mrs Linda Cummins
- Cllr Laura Devlin
- Ms Louise Dillon
- Cllr Cadogan Enright
- Cllr Doire Finn
- Cllr Aoife Finnegan
- Ms Joanne Fleming
- Cllr Conor Galbraith
- Cllr Mark Gibbons
- Cllr Oonagh Hanlon
- Cllr Glyn Hanna
- Cllr Valerie Harte
- Cllr Roisin Howell
- Ms Catherine Hughes
- Cllr Jonathan Jackson
- Cllr Geraldine Kearns
- Miss Veronica Keegan
- Mrs Josephine Kelly
- Cllr Tierna Kelly
- Mrs Sheila Kieran
- Cllr Cathal King
- Cllr Mickey Larkin
- Cllr David Lee-Surginor
- Cllr Alan Lewis
- Cllr Oonagh Magennis
- Mr Conor Mallon
- Aidan Mallon
- Cllr Aidan Mathers
- Cllr Declan McAteer
- Cllr Leeanne McEvoy
- Cllr Andrew McMurray
- Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston
- Cllr Declan Murphy
- Sinead Murphy

Cllr Kate Murphy
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Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Mr Brian Rankin
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Michael Savage
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
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Sarah Taggart
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
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Mrs Marie Ward
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SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE**HISTORIC ACTIONS TRACKING SHEET**

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MEETING – 23 OCTOBER 2019					
NS/073/2019	Proposed Property Maintenance Policy and Strategy 2019 to 2023	Council's Facilities Management and Maintenance Department develop for agreement with the NS Committee a Property Maintenance Policy and Strategy for the Council to cover the term of this Council 2019 to 2023. If required to assist officers in the development of this Strategy, external support to be procured in accordance with Council Procurement Procedures.	K Scullion	Update provided to NS Committee May 2022 – work progressing on agreement of a Property Maintenance Policy and Strategy.	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING – 20 OCTOBER 2020					
NS/230/2020	Business Case – Provision of new public toilet in Killough	Agreed to note the content of the report and associated Business Case and to accept the conclusion of the business case that the Council proceed with the proposal to provide a new public toilet in Killough.	K Scullion	Report provided to S&E Committee on 22 nd March 2023.	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 17 NOVEMBER 2020					
NS/243/2020	Notice of Motion – Green New Deal Strategy	Grant approval to Officers to further scope the issues contained within the	S Murphy	Response received from DAERA Minister	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>Notice of Motion and to prepare a report which summarises the status of existing and planned activity in this area. A report to be tabled at a future Meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee and to also write to the Northern Ireland Executive clarifying what actions are currently being taken and what actions are being planned by the NI Executive in respect of climate change.</p>		<p>and considered by NS Committee.</p> <p>Scoping of the issues delayed by on-going COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 21 APRIL 2021					
NS/062/2021	Feasibility study for EV infrastructure at the Council's Depots	<p>Agreed to note the content of the report and to approve the recommendation that a Business Case be prepared which examined the investment and benefits of the EV charging system, together with costings.</p> <p>It was further agreed as part of the Business Case, that officials consider the need for a generator at the proposed sites, in the event of an interruption to electricity supply.</p> <p>It was also agreed officials investigate potential sources of funding for the provision of electric vehicle charging</p>	K Scullion	<p>Report provided to S&E Committee on 22nd March 2023.</p> <p>Ongoing investigations by Officers re: installation of EV Chargers in Council Depots. Report to be presented to future Committee meeting</p>	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		points from the East Border Region Committee.			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 19 MAY 2021					
NS/089/2021	Purchase of new industrial heavy grade tractor and side arm flail/cutting unit for grounds maintenance at various locations District wide	Agreed to note the content of the report and associated Business Cases and accept the conclusion of the Business Cases that Option 3 from each be chosen as the preferred option. This would see the procurement of an industrial tractor and a side arm flail.	K Scullion	Tractor purchased under Tender. Side arm flail not procured as yet.	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY 18 AUGUST 2021					
NS/125/2021	Distribution of compostable food bags and food waste caddy bins	Agreed to that Officers explore the feasibility of deploying brown bins to residents of high-rise buildings, who were not previously provided with these, and a report be brought back to the next Committee Meeting.	S Murphy	Report to be presented at future committee meeting	N
NS/127/2021	Enforcement Improvement Plan	Agreed to note the content of this report.	S Murphy	Report to be presented at future committee meeting	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Agreed that officers prepare a report for the next Committee Meeting on options for future staffing levels to improve the enforcement service, including the possibility of supplementing the service with a contractor on a short-term basis.			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2021					
NS/137/2021	Translink proposed programme – Bus Shelters in Council area	To approve Option 2 – to delay installation of a bus shelter in Burren pending outcome of Translink's deliberations in October / November 2021 with the option to reconsider this position if Translink were deemed to be making limited progress in providing the bus shelter in Burren.	K Scullion	Report for noting was presented at Sept 2023 Committee meeting re: update on all Bus Shelter applications	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 26 JANUARY 2022					
NS/004/2022	Trade Waste and Caravan Refuse Collection Services	Agreed to approve the report and recommendations:- 1. Alternate Weekly Commercial Waste Collection Service Commercial refuse customers (shops and businesses) to be contacted and advised of the	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>proposed move to an alternate weekly collection cycle of residual and dry recyclable waste, where this is achievable.</p> <p>Commercial customers, (not including Caravan Operators) to be provided with appropriate bins to facilitate this change, so there is no cost burden to customers as a result of this change.</p>			
NS/005/2022	Estates Management and Security Audit Findings	Agreed to approve the Estates Management and Security Action Plan and agree to quarterly updates being provided to the Committee on the implementation status of the Plan	K Scullion	In Progress	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 23 MARCH 2022					
NS/039/2022	Business Case for replacement of mini excavator and dumper	Agreed to note the content of this report and associated Business Case and accept the conclusion of the Business Case to proceed to tender to procure a replacement mini excavator and dumper.	K Scullion	Mini digger procured and in service. Dumper has been ordered.	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 21 APRIL 2022					
NS/048/2022	Update on the development of the Council's Tree Strategy	Agreed to note the contents of the report and approve the presentation of the draft Tree Strategy to the Neighbourhood Services Working Group in May 2022 along with a review of progress in the Council achieving a cessation in the use of herbicides containing glyphosate.	K Scullion	In progress and being presented to Committee on 17/10/2023	N
NS/049/2022	Applications for bus shelters in Crossgar and Killyleagh	To note the contents of the report. Agree to the recommendations in Appendix 1 for the erection of a bus shelter at Cross Street Killyleagh and the relocation of the shelter at Downpatrick Street Crossgar. In relation to the application for a bus shelter at Catherine Street, Killyleagh, a decision be deferred pending further consultation with the PSNI in light of the anti-social behaviour issues raised by Members Officers to consult further with Translink on the option for Council to enter into an agreement with Translink	K Scullion	In progress – Cross St Dpk St - Completed In progress In progress	N N N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NS/050/2022	Trial of solar lights at Council bus shelters	for the provision of bus shelters at official bus stops. Agreed to recommend to proceed with the installation of solar lighting at 2 bus shelters near Attical with their effectiveness monitored and this information to be reported back to Committee.	K Scullion	Solar lights have been installed and are working. In period of review.	Y
NS/052/2022	Compost Week 2022	Note and approve the additional activities in 2.2 to highlight and promote the importance of recycling food waste. Note and approve the launch of an application process, with set criteria, to establish demand for deploying brown bins to residents of high rise buildings who were not previously provided with these.	S Murphy	In progress (Action is duplicate of NS/125/2021)	Y
NS/057/2022	Various issues concerning the Events Space Kilkeel	Note the contents of the report. Approve the Officers recommendation that the legal position of the Council regarding its maintenance of the events space, Kilkeel, is reviewed with a separate report to be provided to the Council once this has been considered further.	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NS/059/2022	Business Case for the removal of leachate from closed landfill sites	Agreed to approve the business case for the removal and transport of leachate from Drumanakelly, Aughnagun and Croreagh closed landfill sites to a licensed treatment plant.	S Murphy	In progress	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 22 JUNE 2022					
NS/090/2022	Portable toilet trial as part of Council public toilet provision	Agreed that officials meet with representatives of Newcastle Yacht Club to discuss the potential of an SLA to enable the provision of shared public toilet facilities at their Club premises. Officials consider a request to investigate if there was adequate litter/dog fouling bins along the Greenway.	K Scullion	In progress	N
NS/091/2022	Enforcement Improvement Plan Update	Agreed to note the content of this update report and to agree review of key actions from the Enforcement Improvement Plan to be incorporated into a timebound programme of work for 2022/23 and annually thereafter.	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Test case footpaths – small footpath leading to WIN – officers to examine this area for dog fouling.			
NS/092/2022	Business Case – to support the implementation of the Public Toilet Strategy	To note contents of this report. Approve the recommendation within the Business Case for the provision of consultancy support to deliver on the objectives of the Public Toilet Strategy. Option 2 will see the appointment of the Councils nominated contractor under the SCAPE Framework to provide identified consultancy support and associated investigatory work up to the delivery of an economic appraisal	K Scullion	Report approved at S&E Sept 2023 for 2 No. new PC's at Newcastle & upgrade to 1 No. further PC with Changing Places.	N
NS/094/2022	Business Case for Annual Fixed Electrical Wiring and Emergency Lighting Testing	Note the content of the report and associated Business Case. Accept the conclusion of the Business Case that Option 2 is chosen as the preferred option. Option 2 will see the appointment, through a tender process, of a competent electrical contractor who will undertake these annual tests and where required, agreed remedial works to supplement in-house provision.	K Scullion	In progress	N
NS/095/2022	Business Case – provision of Bi-annual	Note the content of the report and associated Business Case.	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	service of oil fired boilers and emergency breakdown cover for Council properties	<p>Approve the recommendation within the Business Case for provision of maintenance services for Council's oil-fired boilers – Option 3 is chosen.</p> <p>Option 3 will see the appointment of a suitably qualified contractor to provide biannual servicing of Council oil fired boilers, emergency breakdown cover and minor capital works.</p>			
NS/098/2022	Business Case for Marine Services covering Council harbours and navigational aids	<p>Note the content of the report and associated Business Case.</p> <p>Approve the recommendation within the Business Case for maintenance of the Council's LAToNs and other marine services works – Option 3 is chosen.</p> <p>Option 3 will see the appointment of a suitably qualified marine services engineering contractor to undertake maintenance of the Council's LAToNs, other marine services works and inspections.</p>	K Scullion	In progress discussions with Ards and North Down Council ongoing.	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 17 AUGUST 2022					
SE/119/2022	Business Case – replacement of 4x4	Agreed to approve the Business Case as per Appendix 1, for the replacement of one Four Wheel	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	vehicles for closed landfill sites	Drive Vehicle for use by the Waste Processing section to access and service closed landfill sites across Newry Mourne and Down District Council area.			
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 18 OCTOBER 2022					
SE/140/2022	Vegetation growth with Aughrim (Little River) at the Events Space Kilkeel	Agree to Council organising a consultation with all relevant stakeholders on the findings of the report. Consultation to include Mourne DEA Councillors; Kilkeel Development Association; landowners adjacent to this section of the river; DFI Rivers Agency and Inland Fisheries. The purpose of the consultation would be to seek to agree a preferred option and agreement on a way forward.	K Scullion	In progress	N
SE/142/2022	Update on Cleansing Workshop	Agreed to approve the report of the Elected Member District Cleansing Workshop held on 5 October 2022.	S Murphy	Complete	Y
SE/143/2022	Notice of Motion – revenue from EU	Agreed to endorse the recommendation made at the Strategic Finance Working Group	A Cassells	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	Charging Infrastructure	Meeting of 16 June 2022 as set out in Section 2.2 of the report and that officers consider the most appropriate way forward in relation to identifying appropriate spaces that may be suitable for the proposal as outlined in the Notice of Motion.			
SE/144/2022	Proposed Phase 2 extension to Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery	Agreed to note the content of the report and to proceed with Option 2 for the Phase 2 development of Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery. Option 2 would include refurbishment works to the existing cemetery site and an extension to the cemetery (circa 208 burial plots) in line with current planning approval. It was also agreed to bring forward a proposal for lights for Phase 1 and 2 and the compound once planning had been approved.	K Scullion	Phase 2 works have been completed	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2022					
	SE/147/2022 – Clock at St. Mary's Parish Church, Newry	In response to a request for an update from Councillor Taylor, Mr Scullion advised officers needed to consult with representatives from St. Mary's Church, Newry, to ascertain what input the Council previously had in terms of	K Scullion	Report provided to S&E Committee on 22 nd March 2023.	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		maintenance of this clock and a report would be brought back to Committee once these discussions had been held.			
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY 20 DECEMBER 2022					
SE/170/2022	Update on request to sub lease the Bog Road Amenity Area Forkhill	Agreed to note the content of the report and agree to the recommendations contained within section 2.3 of the report.	K Scullion	In progress	Y
SE/171/2022	Newry Market Revitalisation	Agreed to note the content of the report and agree to the recommendations contained within section 2.3 of the report.	K Scullion	Ongoing – Report to be provided to future Committee meeting	Y
SE/172/2022	Facilities Management and Maintenance Procurement Action Plan update December 2022	Agreed to:- Note the progress update report; Approve an extension to the Neighbourhood Services Procurement Action Plan to the 30th of June 2023. Note that services will continue “out of contract” until new contracts are awarded and regularised.	K Scullion	Superseded by S&E Procurement action plan approved in June 2023	Y
SE/173/2022	Waste Management Procurement Action Plan Update December 2022	Agreed to:- Note the progress update report in Appendix 1;	S Murphy	Superseded by S&E Procurement action plan approved in June 2023	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>Approve an extension to the Waste Management Procurement Action Plan to the 30th of June 2023.</p> <p>Note that services will continue "out of contract" until new contracts are awarded and regularised.</p> <p>Note procurement update concluding issues previously highlighted.</p>			
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE					
WEDNESDAY 25 JANUARY 2023					
SE/005/2023	Proposed Mobile Phone installation at Downpatrick HRC site	<p>Agreed to note the contents and agree to:-</p> <p>Cornerstone progressing with their proposal to install mobile phone infrastructure at Downpatrick HRC site to replace a nearby site to provide continuation of service in the immediate area for both 02 and Vodafone, subject to them obtaining all necessary statutory consents.</p> <p>That the matter of any lease, wayleave or other legal agreement be properly referred to the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee.</p>	S Murphy	Matter regarding wayleave agreement referred to SP&R committee	Y
SE/006/2023	Economic Appraisal for provision of	Agreed to note the content of the report and approve the	K Scullion	In Progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	Christmas illuminations and ad hoc celebratory lighting	recommendation from the Economic Appraisal that Option 3 was the preferred option. Option 3 would see the Council enter into contract with a provider of Christmas and ad hoc illuminations for a five-year period. The contract would include both use of the Council's own illuminations and where appropriate and agreed by Council the hire of illuminations.			
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TUESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2023					
SE/014/2023	Control of Japanese Knotweed on land at Mourne Drive, Warrenpoint	Agreed in the interests of public Health and whilst there was no agreement on the treatment of Japanese knotweed on this land, that Council continue to spray for the control of this invasive species on an annual basis. Council to advise adjacent landowners of the current position including advice from DAERA in relation to their own legal civil remedy.	K Scullion	In Progress	N
SE/015/2023	Community Paint Reuse Project and Funding	Agreed to recommend approval for Officers to submit an application to the Paint Reuse	S Murphy	Application submitted and funding offer	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Capital Grant Scheme for Northern Ireland, funding by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs through Community RePaint to set up a Council RePaint Scheme at HRC sites in the District.		received for £4,400. Project in progress	
SE/016/2023	Economic Appraisal for the appointment of a Metal Fabrication and Repair Contractor	Agreed to note the content of the report and associated Economic Appraisal and accept the conclusion of the Economic Appraisal that Option 4 be chosen as the preferred option. Option 4 would see the appointment, through a tender process, of a contractor to provide metal fabrication and repair services. In addition to this an independent Metallurgical and Mechanical Engineering Consultancy Service would be appointed to provide advice to Council Officers on the procurement and management of this service.	K Scullion	In Progress	N
SE/017/2023	Business Case for the monitoring and maintenance of Council Public Space CCTV	Agreed to:- Note the content of the report.	K Scullion	Ongoing	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>Approve the findings of the Business Cases presented.</p> <p>Business Case for Town Centre CCTV Analogue Fiberoptic lines to link Camera system to Monitoring Centre – Approve Option 1 - Continue with analogue line rental with the current provider pending outcome of review of Public Space CCTV for 12-month period under an STA.</p> <p>Business Case for Town Centre CCTV Monitoring – Approve Option 1 - Continue with annual monitoring contract with the current provider for 21 town centre Public Space CCTV cameras for 12-month period under an STA.</p>			
SE/018/2023	Business Case for the appointment of a contractor to undertake Legionella Control Measures on behalf of the Council	<p>Agreed to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the content of the report. Accept the conclusion of the Business Case that Option 3 be chosen as the preferred option. Option 3 would see the appointment, through a tender process, of a competent contractor to undertake a number of duties under the Council's Legionella Management Plan for a three-year period. 	K Scullion	In Progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SE/019/2023	Business Case for the appointment of a contractor to undertake asbestos control measures on behalf of the Council	<p>Agreed to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the content of the report. Accept the conclusion of the Business Case that Option 3 be chosen as the preferred option to the appointment, through a tender process, of a competent contractor to undertake a number of duties under the Council's Asbestos Management Plan for a three-year period. 	K Scullion	In Progress	N
SE/020/2023	Waste Contract Extensions	<p>Agreed to approve:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extension of waste collection and processing contracts listed in Appendix 1 in line with the extension end date in the table. The extension of dog holding, kennelling and related services contracts listed in Appendix 2 in line with the extension end date in the table and rate increases in line with CPI. 	S Murphy	Complete	Y
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 22 MARCH 2023					
SE/031/2023	Review of Translink bus shelter requests	Agreed to note the contents of the report and that officers again contact Translink in relation to the 7 applications which have been submitted to Translink and ask them to make a firm commitment to	G Kane	Ongoing – Update report was provided to Committee Sept 2023 for noting	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SE/032/2023	Review of bus shelter requests being actioned by Council	<p>install a bus shelter at the locations listed.</p> <p>Translink to be advised that the Council find the lack of response from them on this issue to be unacceptable. If no commitment was received from Translink and the request for a bus shelter remained in place, the Council should facilitate the request.</p> <p>Agreed Officers explore the request made by Councillor McAteer in relation to the provision of bus shelters and report back to Committee</p>	G Kane	Ongoing – Update report was provided to Committee Sept 2023 for noting	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SE/035/2023	Removal of Bring Bank sites	Agreed to approve the removal of bottle bank "Bring Back" provision at caravan sites as listed in Appendix 1.	S Murphy	In progress	N
SE/039/2023	Business Case for replacement vehicles 2023-2025	<p>Agreed to approve the Business Cases/Full Economic Appraisals at:-</p> <p>Appendix 2 for the replacement of Refuse Collection Vehicles</p> <p>Appendix 3 for the replacement of and additional Mechanical Sweeping Vehicles</p> <p>Appendix 4 for the replacement of medium size chassis tipping vehicles</p> <p>Appendix 5 for the replacement of small and large vans with Electric Voltage (EV) small and large vans</p> <p>Appendix 6 for the replacement of small and large vans with Diesel small and large vans</p> <p>Appendix 7 for the replacement of small vans and Four by Four vehicles</p> <p>Appendix 8 for the replacement of ATV vehicles</p>	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Appendix 9 for the replacement of Ride-on Mowers			
SE/041/2023	Retaining wall at Downpatrick Household Recycling Centre	Agreed to approve the capital budget in the sum stated in the report, for the procurement of a contractor to undertake specified works to construct a retaining structure along the base of the slope between private land and Council land at Downpatrick Household Recycling Centre (HRC).	S Murphy	In progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 21 JUNE 2023					
SE/054/2023	Proposed charges for use of Newry Market as Event Space.	Agreed to defer this item for further consideration and an update be brought back to a future Sustainability and Environment Committee.	G Kane	Ongoing – Report to be brought to future Committee meeting	Y
SE/055/2023	Upgrade to public space – CCTV cameras – Newry; Warrenpoint; Killeel	Agreed to defer until August 2023 meeting and PSNI be invited to present their case to committee.	G Kane	Deferred report approved at August 2023 S&E Committee meeting	N
SE/057/2023	Business Case for Procurement of Tyres.	Agreed to approve the business case for the use of a supply, fit, servicing, call-out, delivery and disposal of tyres, tubes and ancillary products for all Council vehicles and plant.	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SE/058/2023	Business Case for the Procurement of Mechanics Tools.	Agreed to approve the business case for the use of a supply, fit, servicing, call-out, delivery and disposal of tyres, tubes and ancillary products for all Council vehicles and plant.	S Murphy	In progress	N
SE/061/2023	Single Tender Actions	<p>Agreed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the contents of the report. 2. Approve the Single Tender Actions that are in excess of £30,000 as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 and for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to approve the individual STA proformas that relate directly to Appendices 1 and 2. 3. Continue to receive regular update reports on the Procurement Action Plan. 	A Cassells	In progress	N

TRANSFERRED FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING 21 AUGUST 2023					
AHC/075/2022	Feasibility Study for Community Social Farm	<p>Mr Devlin stated that officers were currently looking at the feasibility of the project at this stage and he would circulate further information to Members in order to provide more background on the initiative and level of funding required.</p> <p>It was agreed to approve Officers procuring an initial feasibility study for development of a social farm on identified land at Castlewelan Forest park. Scope of the study will be to provide a general report for consideration of need and community support for a farm facility on council land.</p>	E Devlin	Ongoing	<p>Transferred to S&E Action Sheet</p> <p>Transferred to S&E Action Sheet</p>
AHC/076/2022	Edible Landscapes 'We can grow' Pilot Programme	<p>It was agreed to increase the scope of the scheme to have 6 community projects in order that each DEA would benefit from one of the schemes.</p> <p>It was agreed to approve officers procuring one or more horticultural contractors to supply and deliver 6 community projects with follow up support for one growing season.</p>	E Devlin	Ongoing	<p>Transferred to S&E Action Sheet</p>

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 22 AUGUST 2023					
SE/071/2023	Report re. Upgrade to Public Space CCTV Systems	It was agreed to note the report and associated correspondence from PSNI and approve the findings of the Business Case presented at S&E Committee on 21 st June 2023	G Kane	In progress	N
SE/072/2023	Business Case for Refurbishment and Upgrade to Public Conveniences, Newcastle and Installation of Changing Place Facility	It was agreed to proceed with Option 5 of the officer's report i.e. Upgrade to Donard Park and Central Promenade Public Toilet facilities in Newcastle. Refurbishment of public toilets at Downs Road, Newcastle together with the installation of a Changing Places facility was also agreed	G Kane	In progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 19 SEPTEMBER 2023					
SE/085/2023	Monthly Action Sheet	Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting of 22 August 2023 be noted	DSO	Noted	Y
SE/086/2023	Report on Notice of Motion in relation to Establishment of a Disabled Users Forum and other matters	It was agreed that Members consider the Motion and approve the following recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish a disabled users forum to proactively engage with local residents & organisations who experience accessibility issues in the district to hear first-hand how they experience council facilities and local attractions. 	A Cassells		Y

<p>SE/087/2023</p>	<p>Newry Mourne and Down Active Travel Masterplan Updates to Council and Shared Footway/ Cycleway Route Development at Dundrum/Murlough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Council facilities and promotional material will clearly display a list of local changing places and accessible facilities in the district. • All Council employees will be made aware of changing places, units and accessible features within council facilities. • When an event is applied for that it includes the use of portable toilet facilities and a mobile changing places unit. 	<p>A Cassells B Rankin</p>	
		<p>It was agreed to approve the proposed project to construct the Shared Footway/Cycleway route on the Council owned old railway route between Murlough and Dundrum and to approve the approach moving forward to provide 2 updates per year to Council on DfI and other Active Travel projects in the district.</p> <p>It was also agreed to write to the Department for Infrastructure raising the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To request a crossing at the junction of the Dundrum Road with the Old Road in order to progress the project. • Would parking also be discouraged within the design of the travel way? 		

SE/088/2023	Memorandum of Understanding Partnering Arrangements for the Removal of Snow and Ice from Town Centre Footways and Pedestrian Areas	<p>It was agreed to approve the proposal and extend for a further three years, in accordance with the 'Scope of the Agreement' Clause 3 and Appendix 1 of the officers report as amended, and to sign the updated MOU with additional locations.</p> <p>It was also agreed that Council Management follow up and look into using council street sweepers to grit streets during icy weather instead of sending employees home.</p>	A Mallon	In progress, awaiting signed MoU from Chairperson.	N
SE/089/2023	New Service Provision Tender Process	<p>It was agreed to note the report and agree the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the extension of the current Agency Agreement with The Department for Infrastructure until 31st March 2024 and permit additional extensions as required, up to 31st October 2024. 2. To provide authorisation that NMDDC as a member of the 8 Council Consortium, will equally share the burden of additional legal costs associated with Belfast City Council's defence of the Writ. 	A Mallon		
SE/090/2023	Purchase of a New Council Boat for Aquatic Grounds	It was agreed to note the content of the report and associated Business Case and accept the conclusion of the	A Mallon	In progress	N

	Maintenance at Various Locations District Wide	Business Cases that Option 3 be chosen as the preferred option. This would see the procurement of a suitable aquatic boat/clearance unit.			
SE/091/2023	Purchase of New Tractors & Cutting Machinery for Grounds Maintenance at Various Locations District Wide	It was agreed to approve the business case within appendix 1 of the officer's report for the continuing use of a supply framework to support the use of fuel cards across the District.	A Mallon	In progress	N
SE/092/2023	Business Case for the use of a Suitable Supply Framework to Facilitate the Use of Fuel Cards	It was agreed to approve the business case within appendix 1 of the officer's report for the continuing use of a supply framework to support the use of fuel cards across the District.	S Murphy	Complete	Y
SE/093/2023	Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin – 31 August 2023	It was agreed to note the bulletin.	A Cassells	Noted	Y
SE/094/2023	Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting in Committee Minutes of Thursday 29 June 2023	It was agreed to note the Minutes.	A Cassells	Noted	Y
SE/095/2023	Review of 2023 Summer Season Cleansing	It was agreed to note the contents of the review of 2023 Summer Season Cleansing.	S Murphy	Noted	Y
SE/096/2023	Review of Bus Shelter Requests being actioned by Council	It was agreed to note the report.	G Kane	Noted	Y

SE/097/2023	Update on Municipal Cemetery Development	It was agreed to note the report.	G Kane	Noted	Y
SE/098/2023	Sustainable Foods Update	It was agreed to note the update in relation to sustainable foods.	A Cassells	Noted	Y
SE/099/2023	'FASTER' EV Project Update	It was agreed to note the update in relation to the 'FASTER' EV Project.	A Cassells	Noted	Y
SE/100/2023	Update on Development of a Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy & Annual Action Plans	It was agreed to note the update on the development of a Council Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy and Annual Action Plans. Elected representatives were also invited to provide any initial feedback, prior to public consultation, using the information provided.	A Cassells	Noted	Y
SE/101/2023	Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes of Thursday 29 June 2023	It was agreed to note the Minutes of the Arc21 Committee Meeting held on 29 June 2023.	A Cassells	Noted	N
END					

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	Report on Notice of Motion in relation to Clean Indoor Air
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Contact Officer:	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment

For Decision	X	For Noting Only
1.0	Purpose & Background	
1.1	The purpose of this report is to facilitate discussion on the Notice of Motion received from Councillor Trusdale as deferred from the Council Meeting of 2 October 2023 concerning Clean Indoor Air.	
2.0	Key Issues	
2.1	<p>C/196/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – CLEAN INDOOR AIR</p> <p>The following motion was received from Councillor Trusdale: "Having learned the importance of ventilation and clean indoor air for health and productivity during Covid; and seeking to take all reasonable steps to enable use of all Council facilities by all citizens, including the most vulnerable and so further enable inclusion. By seeking to care for the health and wellbeing of Council employees, this Council will commit to signing and implementing 'The COVID Safety Pledge': to report on steps already taken to prioritise clean indoor air in all council premises within the district starting with Downshire and Monaghan Row sites. To report on what further or additional steps could be taken to improve indoor air quality and information about indoor air quality for employees and service users, and to develop and promote advice that can be followed to provide clean indoor air at events supported by NMDDC".</p> <p>The motion was seconded by Councillor McMurray.</p> <p>Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.</p>	
2.2	<p>There are a number of key and inter-related elements contained within the Motion which may be summarised as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Members should note that the Council no longer owns Monaghan Row since its sale to the Southern Health Trust and can therefore no longer exercise control over the building. The 'Covid Safety Pledge' referred to in the Motion states as follows: We pledge to protect our workers, service users and customers from Covid-19. We will assess our physical environment and working practices according to Health and Safety law, including Risk Assessments, in order to ensure that they are designed to safeguard against the spread of infection. 	

	<p>We will abide by best public health advice and ensure that all workers who test positive for Covid are both asked to self-isolate and given adequate support to stay at home.</p> <p>3. Members should note that committing to the pledge goes beyond the issue of 'clean indoor air'.</p> <p>4. By signing and displaying the COVID safety pledge, Council would be agreeing to the three main points of the pledge and to have consulted with employees, through the recognised trade unions.</p> <p>5. An evaluation of the Downshire Civic Centre for example would potentially require third party support and therefore incur additional unbudgeted expenditure.</p>	
3.0	Recommendations	
3.1	That Members consider the Motion and:	
	<p>1. Provide Officers with direction with regards to progressing the issues outlined in the Motion should Members so agree.</p>	
4.0	Resource Implications	
4.1	Unknown until further feasibility examined and approved.	
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)	
5.1	General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes	
	n/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	Proposal initiating consultation	
	Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be 12 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Rationale:</i> n/a	
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service	

	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
7.1	None	
8.0	Background Documents	
8.1	The Covid Safety Pledge can be found at; https://covidpledge.uk/	

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	Report on Notice of Motion in relation to a Review of Waste Collection Services.
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Contact Officer:	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment

For Decision	X	For Noting Only
1.0	Purpose & Background	
1.1	The purpose of this report is to facilitate discussion on the Notice of Motion received from Councillor Jackson as deferred from the Council Meeting of 2 October 2023 concerning Waste Collection Services.	
2.0	Key Issues	
2.1	<p>At the Council Meeting of Monday 2 October 2023, the following Notice of Motion was tabled by Councillor Jackson; at the Council Meeting it was agreed that this be referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee;</p> <p>C/199/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – REVIEW OF WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE</p> <p>The following motion was received from Councillor Jackson: "This Council commits to undertake a full cost benefit analysis of the waste collection service for the entire District, including benchmarking total cost of service delivery against private sector providers. This review should include analysis of the volume of missed bins and broken bins reported both across the entire District and by DEA. This Council is committed to delivering basic Council services efficiently and cost effectively. Every ratepayer should be delivered a quality service".</p> <p>The motion was seconded by Councillor Hanna.</p> <p>Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.</p>	
2.2	<p>There are a number of key and inter-related elements contained within the Motion which may be summarised as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gaining benchmarked information is not always straight-forward as different Council's may account differently for various costs. High-level or generalised benchmarking should however be achievable. 2. It is important that any benchmarking is carried out on a like for like basis; i.e.; different Councils deliver the service in different ways. 3. Obtaining meaningful costs from the private sector may be difficult as these are often commercially sensitive. Whilst only one Council (Antrim and Newtownabbey) in Northern Ireland has fully privatised its waste collection service others have involved 	

	<p>the private sector in parts of the service delivery e.g.; Bryson House in the collection and processing of recyclable waste through their kerbside box collection service.</p> <p>4. In general the availability and reliability of data.</p>	
2.3	Should Members agree with the Motion then it would be necessary to work through each of the issues as raised in the Motion. The Officer view is that this exercise would be time consuming and in order to provide auditability and probity would be best carried out by an independent third party which could require a procurement process to identify such a preferred third party to develop the report and therefore allowing input for a report to be prepared and presented to a future meeting of the Sustainability and Environment Committee. Any review could therefore incur additional unbudgeted expenditure.	
3.0	Recommendations	
3.1	That Members consider the Motion and: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide Officers with direction with regards to progressing the issues outlined in the Motion should Members so agree. 	
4.0	Resource Implications	
4.1	Unknown until further feasibility examined and approved.	
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)	
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> n/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following:	
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	Proposal initiating consultation Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves Consultation period will be 12 weeks Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <i>Rationale:</i> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	

6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0 Appendices		
7.1	None	
8.0 Background Documents		
8.1	None	

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	Report on Notice of Motion in relation Animal Welfare.
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Contact Officer:	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment

For Decision	X	For Noting Only	
1.0			Purpose & Background
1.1			<p>The purpose of this report is to facilitate discussion on the Notice of Motion received from Councillor Kelly as deferred from the Council Meeting of 2 October 2023 concerning Animal Welfare.</p> <p>This matter was reported to the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting of 19 September 2023 in closed session.</p> <p>That report was with regards to communication received via Alison McCullagh, Chief Executive Fermanagh & Omagh District Council (Lead Council for Animal Welfare) regarding the availability of DAERA funding for the non-farmed animal welfare service provided by local councils.</p> <p>The letter, as mentioned below and dated 23 August 2023 was attached to the SP&R report and is included again for information as Appendix 1.</p> <p>DAERA has advised Councils in the communication that it is unable in this current financial year to provide funding to support councils in the delivery of their statutory responsibilities for non-farmed animal welfare.</p> <p>DAERA (formerly DARD) has been funding the provision of the Service since 2012, when the 2011 Act was commenced and Councils have very successfully delivered animal welfare in Northern Ireland based on a regional delivery model with four sub-regions plus Belfast sharing resource and contracts for care and veterinary of animals.</p> <p>Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council are the employer council for the Southern Region providing cover for that Council area along with Newry Mourne & Down District Council. The relationship is managed through a Service level Agreement.</p> <p>The budget funded from DAERA during 2022/2023 to provide animal welfare service in the Southern region was £280,000 with a similar spend likely in this current year (2023/2024). The total regional budget for animal welfare is some £1.3M.</p> <p>Costs included staffing, IT systems, kennelling, veterinary, legal and transport.</p>

	<p>At this stage DAERA have indicated there is no funding. The DAERA Permanent Secretary (Katrina Godfrey) has advised that they will keep the situation under review and will let Councils know if the budgetary position changes in the months ahead in a way that would allow them to revisit this decision. Council Officers are considering options to manage this budgetary challenge.</p> <p>Officers lead by the Chief Executives forum, SOLACE NI, are working through this very significant service impacts of this decision by the Permanent Secretary.</p>
2.0	Key Issues
2.1	<p>At the Council Meeting of Monday 2 October 2023, the following Notice of Motion was tabled by Councillor Kelly; at the Council Meeting it was agreed that this be referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee;</p> <p>C/202/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – ANIMAL WELFARE</p> <p>The following motion was received from Councillor Kelly: "This Council notes with great concern the announcement by DAERA to cut the £1.25m budget for Animal Welfare in Northern Ireland to zero. This has the potential to adversely impact work being done by local government to meet its statutory requirements for non-farmed animals, and risks causing avoidable harm and suffering to animals. This Council will urgently write to DAERA Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey expressing its total opposition to this decision and urging her department to reconsider this retrograde move. Furthermore, recognising the Council's statutory responsibility, and the importance of inter-agency and partnership to support animal welfare, council will establish an Animal Welfare Forum. This Forum will meet regularly and provide strategic direction to and oversight of officers involved in animal welfare and reporting back to the relevant committee. As well as animal welfare officers, it will seek representation from elected members, dog wardens, local kennelling providers, DAERA, local animal shelters, charities and the PSNI. This Council also commits to ensuring that, should this cut go ahead, it will commit the necessary budget to ensure its statutory responsibilities for animal welfare are met, and no services are cut or curtailed".</p> <p>The motion was seconded by Councillor Truesdale.</p> <p>Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.</p>
	<p>The key issue raised by this decision of the Permanent Secretary is whether, in the absence of an Executive, she has the authority to make such a decision.</p> <p>DAERA are alleging that the funding for the Service is discretionary notwithstanding the fact they have been funding the Service in full since the commencement of The Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011 ('the 2011 Act').</p> <p>The 2011 Act is worded in a permissive way in that it states that councils may appoint inspectors in relation to non-farmed animals. However, DAERA cannot appoint inspectors in respect of non-farmed animals. If councils did not appoint inspectors, PSNI would still be able to deal with animals in distress under Section 17 of the 2011 Act, but they have no power to appoint inspectors to take enforcement action in respect of the rest of the 2011 Act. This would leave a significant gap in terms of animal welfare for non-farmed animals.</p>

	<p>The legislation effectively creates a statutory obligation regardless of whether the Act specifically states that councils have to provide the Service. Whatever the statutory obligations it is difficult to envisage from a reputational perspective that councils stop providing this Service although obviously that should not be conceded at this stage.</p> <p>It is also important to point out that DAERA's responsibilities in respect of animal welfare do not stop at farmed animals by virtue of the 2011 Act. They have an overarching responsibility for animal welfare in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The Regulatory Impact Assessment which supported the introduction of the 2011 Act should be reviewed. This refers to the cost implications of the implementation of the 2011 Act. Of particular relevance is Paragraph 7.5 which outlines funds that have been guaranteed to the Councils to implement the new legislation</p> <p><i>"Councils have currently no role in animal welfare. Councils will have for the first-time new costs associated with the enforcement of the provisions in respect of non-farmed animals. Annual funding of £760k has been guaranteed for Councils to enforce the Act, to assist with the implementation of their new enforcement role, including the seizure of animals that are suffering or likely to suffer and prosecution costs."</i></p> <p>It is unclear whether an updated Regulatory Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of what is effectively a change in policy position from DAERA.</p> <p>Furthermore, if DAERA are of the view that there is no statutory obligation upon councils to deliver this service then there will be a significant gap in the provision of animal welfare for non-farmed animals which should have been assessed through a Regulatory Impact Assessment before taking this decision.</p> <p>The point is that this area of work which has been funded by central government for a significant period of time in recognition that it is not possible to generate income for the Service to pay for itself. This decision has implications for all rate payers throughout Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The withdrawal of funding for the Service is potentially a crosscutting, significant and controversial decision and would therefore require the approval of the Executive Committee. The withdrawal of funding for a regional local government function which relates to animal welfare and puts the provision of this Service at risk is plainly a significant and controversial decision. Section 20 (4) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 outlines that the committee shall have the function of discussing and agreeing upon significant or controversial matters, notably in circumstances in which a program has not been approved by the Assembly.</p>
2.2	<p>The SP&R report recommended that a Pre Action-Protocol Letter be issued to DAERA challenging the proposed decision. That letter could be issued by Fermanagh & Omagh District Council as the lead Council, but it could equally be issued by any of the councils. As Members may be aware, judicial review proceedings must be issued within 3 months of the impugned decision. The Protocol for Judicial Review requires Councils to allow 21 days for a response to the Pre Action-Protocol letter.</p> <p>Members should be aware that a Pre Action-Protocol letter has been issued and that a response is currently awaited from the Department.</p>

2.3	<p>The current Officer view is that;</p> <p>Given that legal action has been taken by the 11 Councils against the Department by means of a Pre-Action Protocol that writing to the Department at this juncture will not add any additional weight to the legal process and may well prompt a response that given the legal action the Department cannot comment.</p> <p>Furthermore, given that the Councils responsibilities concerning Animal Welfare are set out in legislation and that the Council discharges its duties in relation to the 2011 Act through a service level agreement with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon the value of establishing an Animal Welfare Forum as outlined in the Notice of Motion is difficult to judge.</p> <p>Maintaining the current service is important; it is noted that the proposed withdrawal of funding places another direct financial burden on the Council.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>That Members consider the Motion and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide Officers with direction with regards to progressing the issues outlined in the Motion should Members so agree.
4.0	Resource Implications
4.1	<p>Continuing to provide the same level of service as in previous years following the withdrawal of funding support for Animal Welfare would place an in-year and ongoing additional burden on the Council of some £140,000 per annum at todays costs.</p>
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>
	<p><i>n/a</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p>
	<p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p>

	<i>Rationale:</i> <i>n/a</i>	
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
7.1	None	
8.0	Background Documents	
8.1	Animal Welfare Service: Proposed Funding Withdrawal; Report to Strategy Policy and Resources Committee of 19 September 2023.	

From the Permanent Secretary
Katrina Godfrey



Our reference: SCORR-0267-2023

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive
Fermanagh and Omagh District
Council / Solace NI

Via email:
fiona.dillon@fermanaghomagh.com

Office of the Permanent Secretary
Clare House
First Floor
303 Airport Road West
Belfast
BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9052 4608
Email: perm_sec@daera-ni.gov.uk

23 August 2023

Dear Alison

COUNCIL ANIMAL WELFARE BUDGET 2023-2024

In my letter of 3 July 2023, I promised to provide further clarity regarding the availability of DAERA funding for the non-farmed animal welfare service provided by local councils as soon as additional prioritisation work had been completed within the Department.

Determining how to allocate the reduced non-earmarked resource budget provided to DAERA by the Secretary of State has been a very difficult task, especially in a context where inflation and other factors mean that it is costing significantly more to deliver our statutory and contractual obligations than was the case in previous years. We have worked through our decision-making process very carefully, having regard to the provisions of the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2022 and the associated guidance on decision-making published by the Secretary of State, in order to ensure that the Department can discharge its own statutory functions within the limits of the allocations set out in the Secretary of State's statement to the House of Commons on 27 April 2023.

With this work now completed, I am very sorry to advise that the Department is unable in this current financial year to provide funding to support councils in the delivery of their statutory responsibilities for non-farmed animal welfare. I also want to apologise to you and to council chief executive colleagues as I understand there was some reporting of this decision in the press at the weekend in advance of this letter issuing to you. This was not intended and was in no way authorised by the Department. We will be investigating how it could have happened and will take appropriate action as necessary.

I do want to assure you that the Department continues to prioritise animal welfare and remains committed to discharging its statutory responsibilities under the Welfare of Animals Act. We are therefore taking the necessary steps to ensure that our core services relating to the funding and operation of the farmed animal welfare enforcement service will continue. Local councils will similarly want to consider how best they discharge the statutory obligations placed on them under legislation to ensure that a robust non-farmed animal welfare

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enforcement service continues. As colleagues in local government consider next steps, DAERA officials stand ready to engage and advise where possible.

I know the unavailability of DAERA funding for 2023-24 will come as disappointing news to council colleagues who are having to manage their own budgetary challenges. I will, however, keep the situation under review and will let you know if the budgetary position changes in the months ahead in a way that would allow me to revisit this decision.

Yours sincerely



KATRINA GODFREY

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17.10.2023

Food Safety – Food and Water Sampling Programme

Sinead Murphy

Ag freastal ar an Dún agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down and South Armagh



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
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Contents:

1. NMDDC food service
2. Food policy
3. Food/water sampling
4. Shellfish and wild fish sampling
 - Microbiological
 - Chemical
5. Private water supplies

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Food Premise Profile

Premise Type (Main usage)	No of Premise	Percentage(%)
Primary Producers	194	8.07
Manufacturers and Packers	193	8.03
Importers/Exporters	1	0.04
Distributors/Transporters	49	2.04
Retailers	426	17.73
Restaurants and Caterers	1540	64.09
TOTAL	2403	100%



Food Premise Requiring EC Approval

Establishment Approval Type	Number of Premises Approved
Auction Halls	2
Cold Stores	8
Fish Processing Plants	21
Dispatch Centres (LBM)	7
Freezer Vessels	7
Meat Preparation Plants	6
Meat Processing Plants	7
Processing Plant (Stomachs)	1
Purification Centres (LBM)	2
Re-wrapping Plant (Meat)	1
Re-wrapping Plant (Fish)	1
Total Number of Premises	63

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The Food Safety Team

- District Environmental Health Officers
- Technical Officer
- Senior Environmental Health Officer (Food Safety)
- Senior Environmental Health Officer (Imported/Exported Food and EC Approvals)
- Head of Environmental Health (Commercial).

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Food Policy

Food Standards Agency (NI) and the 11 District Councils.

Primary legislation governing food sampling includes:

- The Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 as amended and the Food Law Code of Practice
- The Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 as amended
- The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2009 (as amended)
- EC Regulation 2073/2005 and 178/2002 (and associated guidance)

NMDDC Food Service Plan



Food Policy – Aims and Objectives

- Protect the consumer.
- Verify the effectiveness of a food business's Food Safety Management System.
- Give advice and guidance.
- Assess the quality of food manufactured, distributed or retailed in Newry Mourne and Down District Council area.
- Ensure imported food complies with relevant food legislation.
- Giving customers sufficient information to make informed choices.
- Detect fraudulent activities.
- Ensure consistent and proportionate follow up action is taken upon receipt of sampling results in line with the council's enforcement policy.

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Types of Food & Water Sampling

- Microbiological
- Chemical
- Planned
- Reactive
- Surveys





Microbiological Sampling

- Routine microbiological sampling occurs weekly
- Types of samples - foods, water, swabs and pool/recreational waters.
- Samples from a range of premise, retail, catering and manufacturers.
- These samples are analysed at the Northern Ireland Public Health Laboratories based at Belfast City Hospital.

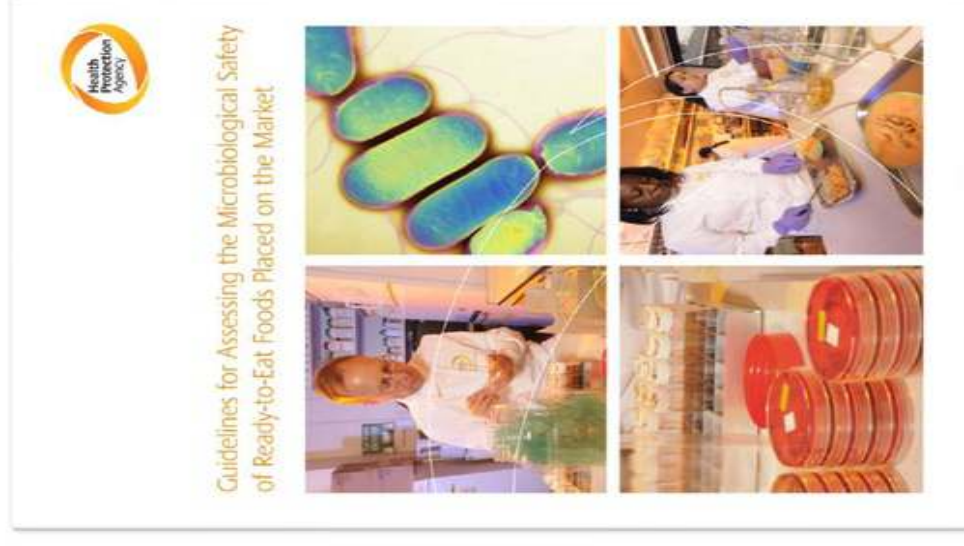


Microbiological Sampling Results

- Samples are analysed and results determined in line with relevant legislation and guidance.

Result category	Number
Satisfactory	198
Borderline	109
Unsatisfactory	30
Potentially injurious to health	0
TOTAL	337

- Follow up by officers





Chemical Sampling

Chemical Sampling Programme/Plan

- Number of samples & Premise sampled
- Priority samples – imported/exported food, locally produced
- Surveys

What do we routinely sample for?

- Undeclared allergens, meat content, additives, pesticides, speciation, labelling compliance

Results – labelling issues, undeclared allergens, additives above the legal limit





Chemical Sampling

- 1st January 2023 - Commission Regulation (EU) No. 2017/625 became applicable in Northern Ireland.
- Specific requirements to monitor/sample for contaminants in food.
- Types of contaminants being sampled for include;
 - Heavy metals (lead and cadmium) – apples, potatoes, carrots
 - Acrylamide – potato crisps, soft bread and breakfast cereals
 - Mycotoxins: Ochratoxin A - dried fruits, herbs and spices, coffee
 - Mycotoxins: Ergot Alkaloids - barley, wheat, spelt and oats



Chemical Sampling – Operation OPSON XII

- Europol and Interpol led initiative against fake and illicit food worldwide.
- OPSON XII – A survey of meat speciation and undeclared allergens within meat takeaway meals took place between 1st December 2022 – 31st January 2023.

Sample	No of samples	Unsatisfactory
Dairy free sample tested for presence of milk	63	37
Undeclared meat	17	1

- Follow up action



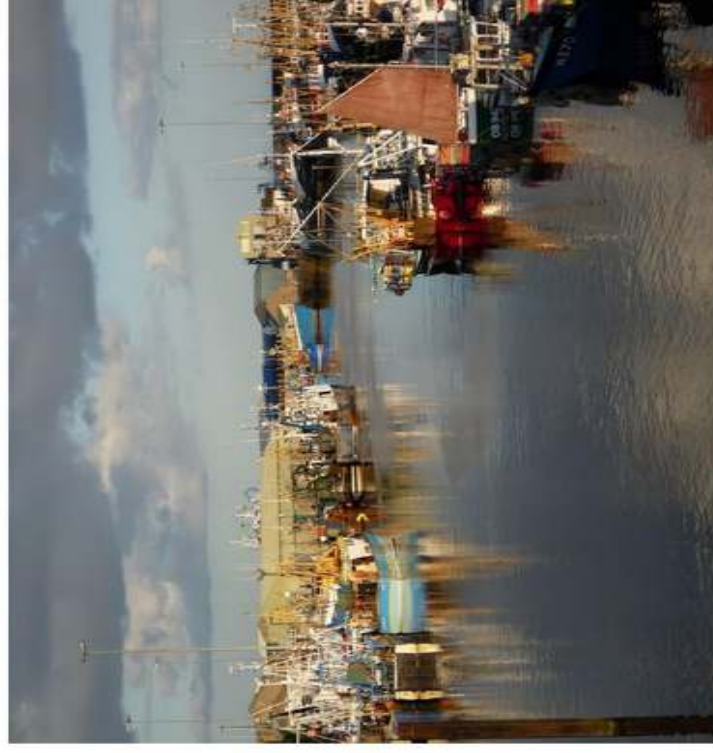
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Shellfish and Wild Fish Sampling

- On behalf of the Food Standards Agency
- Shellfish sampling
 - Oysters/mussels/water
 - Toxins and Microbiological quality
- Wild Fish Survey
 - Fish/crab/prawns
 - Heavy metals, PCBS and dioxins





Imported food samples

- Imported food checks at Warrenpoint Port since 1st January 2021
- Regulation (EC) 1793/2019 – checking certain food imported from outside UK/EU for known contaminants
- International Health Regulations (2005) – water samples from ships



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Private Water Supplies

- Sampling of private water supplies on behalf of the Drinking Water Inspectorate
- Samples – microbiological and chemical
- Risk Assessment



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Questions?

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	Mental Health Champion
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment

For decision	X	For noting only	
1.0			Purpose and Background
1.1			The purpose of this report is to seek up to two nominations from members of the Sustainability and Environment Committee to be appointed to work with MindWise New Vision as Mental Health Champions.
1.2			The Mental Health Champions would act as a conduit between MindWise and residents of Newry Mourne and Down District Council to promote the work and services available through MindWise and other organisations that support and empower people affected by mental health issues to live their best lives.
2.0			Key Issues
2.1			MindWise is a registered charity that provides over thirty services across Northern Ireland, working alongside people at risk of and affected by mental health issues, their carers and their families. Information on MindWise can be found at https://www.mindwisenv.org/
2.2			Members may be aware that in the Newry Mourne and Down District Council area, MindWise have a Resource Centre in Downpatrick which provides a day support service for adults over the age of 18 with enduring mental health needs, as well as carers and relatives. (MindWise Downpatrick Resource Centre (mindwisenv.org))
2.3			MindWise also provide housing support services in Kilkeel through the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, with supported living accommodation at The Forge and for age 65 and above at Ben Crom. More information on these services can be found at The Forge, Kilkeel MindWise (mindwisenv.org) and Ben Crom MindWise (mindwisenv.org)
2.4			<p>More generally, MindWise offer services which may be of use to people in the council area including:</p> <p>Mental Health and Money Advice: Mental Health & Money Advice (mindwisenv.org) Mental Health Training for individuals and employers through WorkWise Mental Health Training (mindwisenv.org) Free resilience-building programmes to schools through Bloom. Bloom - For Young People's Mental Health (mindwisenv.org)</p> <p>Your Resilience, which is an off-shoot of Bloom, is a free resilience-building programme which can be rolled out to sports clubs and youth clubs https://mentalhealth-uk.org/partnerships/projects/your-resilience/ Programme options - Mental Health UK (mentalhealth-uk.org)</p>

	Bloom and Your Resilience are interventions designed to ease the burden on CAMHS waiting lists and ensure that young people are getting appropriate help with their mental health, wellbeing and emotional development.
2.5	It is anticipated that the Mental Health Champions would participate in a PR campaign in partnership with the Health and Wellbeing and marketing teams.
3.0	Recommendations
	Members are asked to approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nomination of up to two members from the Sustainability and Environment Committee to be appointed to work with MindWise New Vision as Mental Health Champions for the District.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no resource implications associated with this report.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> <i>n/a</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/> The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.3	Proposal initiating consultation Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rationale: n/a</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)

6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	None
8.0	Background Documents
	<p>Links to MindWise videos:</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgfZJERYuBI</p> <p>https://youtu.be/5qze2pd8wYQ?si=UrhJZBIDBqsBMo8Y https://youtu.be/kn1jWWDsoe4?si=qQqeL_xTPTCLfPx WorkWise - Mental Health Training for Employers - YouTube</p>

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	Call for Evidence Response – Electricity Connection Policy Framework Review (UR/DfE)
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Brian Rankin, Head of Service - Sustainability

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either: -

For decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	That the Committee note the submission of the attached Call for Evidence response, which was made in advance of the deadline of 29 th September 2023.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and the NI Executive's Energy Strategy set out ambitious climate reduction targets that will change both the supply and demand of electricity across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>This joint Call for Evidence from the Utility Regulator (UREG), and Department for the Economy (DfE), is part of a process to review the connection policy framework for the electricity grid, in light of future carbon reduction targets.</p> <p>Those currently connecting to the electricity grid in NI pay for the connection of the asset and part of the associated reinforcement costs. In other parts of the UK and Ireland, a greater proportion of these costs are 'socialised', meaning that all electricity consumers (business and domestic) would pay for a higher proportion of reinforcement costs via their electricity bills.</p> <p>UREG and DfE are seeking evidence to demonstrate that a change to connections policy would support the delivery of renewable energy targets which would otherwise not be met.</p> <p>The Call for Evidence notes that getting connected quickly, easily and at a fair price is important for domestic consumers, businesses and generators alike. The Call for Evidence represents the first step of UR and DfE's electricity connections policy framework review. Further legislative and regulatory steps are likely to be required.</p> <p>Those who have already connected renewable or sustainable technologies to the grid, such as heat pumps, electric vehicles, solar panels or batteries, may be perceived as 'early adopters'. However, going forward, many more homes and businesses are likely to have to adopt these technologies before 2030 in order to meet ambitious targets, with NIE Networks forecasting that there will be a reasonable uptake of potentially 300,000 electric vehicles and 120,000 heat pumps by 2030.</p>

	<p>The response from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) reflects the need to take a balanced approach to electricity connection costs. It would be beneficial to remove some of the financial barriers for those homes and businesses who want to connect a renewable technology, whilst also ensuring that any socialisation of costs to consumers is reasonable, especially in the context of fuel poverty, recent energy price rises and cost of living concerns. Information or evidence relating to the potential impact on consumers' electricity bills, as a result of any proposed changes, has not been provided, and therefore our response highlights that this information is needed in order to have an informed position.</p> <p>We have also highlighted that the specific impact on rural consumers should be given special consideration.</p> <p>Please note that the deadline for consultation responses was 29th September 2023. A submission has been provided, as outlined in Appendix 1, with the caveat that it is subject to review by Council, and so our response can be retracted or changes can be made if required.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	That the Committee note the submission of the attached Call for Evidence response (see Appendix 1).
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	N/A
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1: NMDDC Response to UREG/DfE on Electricity Connection Policy Framework Review CfE
8.0	Background Documents
	https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/uregni/a-review-of-the-connections-policy-framework-in-no/

NMDDC Response to UREG/DfE Call for Evidence – Electricity Connection Policy Framework Review

Call for Evidence Details:

Call for Evidence Opened:	7 July 2023
Call for Evidence Closed:	29 September 2023
Preferred Method of Response:	By email to Utility Regulator and Department for the Economy, with further information at A Review of the Connections Policy Framework in Northern Ireland - NI Direct - Citizen Space A list of all 15 questions and responses are provided below.
Responses prepared by:	Brian Rankin, Head of Sustainability
Other comments:	It is assumed that the list of respondents to this consultation will be made publicly available. Responses may also be publicly available.

Context / Background:

With the recent publication of the Northern Ireland Executive's Energy Strategy – Path to Net Zero and the Climate Change Act (NI), the Utility Regulator (UREG) and Department for the Economy (DfE) are collaborating to carry out a review of the legislative and regulatory framework for connections in Northern Ireland (NI) to understand if it meets the needs of NI consumers and will enable delivery of the Energy Strategy.

The Utility Regulator (UREG) and Department for the Economy (DfE) are seeking evidence to demonstrate whether moving away from how connections are currently paid for will deliver renewable energy targets that otherwise would not be met.

The Call for Evidence notes that getting connected quickly, easily and at a fair price is important for domestic consumers, businesses and generators alike. The Call for Evidence represents the first step of UR and DfE's electricity connections policy framework review. Further legislative and regulatory steps are likely to be required.

The response from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) reflects the need to take a balanced approach to electricity connection costs. It would be beneficial to remove some of the financial barriers for those homes and businesses who want to connect a renewable technology, whilst also ensuring that any socialisation of costs to consumers is reasonable, especially in the context of fuel poverty, recent energy price rises and cost of living concerns. Information or evidence relating to the potential impact on consumers' electricity bills, as a result of any proposed changes, has not been provided, and therefore our response highlights that this information is needed in order to have an informed position.

We have also highlighted that the specific impact on rural consumers should be given special consideration.

Whilst the Call for Evidence notes the importance of getting connected quickly, easily and at a fair price, this Call for Evidence focuses on connection costs and so our response highlights the need to also address issues around the speed and simplicity of electricity connections, which will also be a significant barrier to delivery of future renewable energy targets.

Questions and Draft Responses:

1. What are the risks and opportunities in relation to the development of micro grids and what issues do these raise for the connections framework in NI?

No response provided

2. Do you agree with our guiding principles? Please expand your answer.

Yes.

However, we would propose that the first guiding principle should be amended to state that the Connections Policy Framework review will facilitate the delivery of the Executive's Energy Strategy targets, and also the requirements of the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022.

We would also stress that there should be recognition that in future there will be an increasing number of consumers of electricity who are 'prosumers', generating their own electricity, and investing in renewable energy technologies.

3. Do you agree with our proposed scope in relation to this connection review?

this includes:

- Are there other issues which you consider we should take into account. If so, please explain why
- Are there any connection areas we should remove from the scope of our review? If so, please explain why

Yes.

The Call for Evidence (CfE) notes the importance of getting connected quickly, easily and at a fair price. The focus of the CfE is on connection costs, which we would agree is an important matter to support future decarbonisation. As part of the scope of this CfE and further planned engagement, it would be beneficial to also consider the important issues of speed and simplicity of electricity connections in more detail, as these may also be a significant barrier to delivery of future renewable energy targets.

4. Do you consider the current 'partially deep' connection boundary in NI appropriate? Please explain your rationale further and provide evidence.

Section 5.18 of the Call for Evidence (CfE) highlights that, in order to make any potential changes to the current connection framework, it is essential to know the potential costs to NI customers. For this reason, it is difficult to provide an answer to this question at this time. As part of any future consultation on this area we would suggest that information on typical/estimated connection costs should be provided, alongside the potential cost implications for consumers, in order to support a more informed position. This should also highlight if there are particular regions or council areas where the current connection methodology presents more of a challenge i.e. where there are greater constraints on the grid and the cost of investing in renewable energy is disproportionately higher.

We would note a number of relevant points which relate to the current charging methodology and alternatives.

A 'partially deep' charging methodology may act as a financial barrier to those wishing to invest in decarbonisation and as such it could be argued that alternative methodologies may be more appropriate (subject to consideration of consumer protection).

The CfE notes the position in other parts of the UK and Ireland, where a shallower connection boundary is in place. It would be beneficial to model the financial impact of this position, if similar were to be adopted in Northern Ireland.

The current methodology is likely to directly impact many homes and businesses, and may also impact on future decarbonisation and financial decisions by councils e.g. to decarbonise buildings using heat pumps, to provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure, or to invest in renewable electricity generation (such as a solar farm).

We appreciate the significant complexity of balancing the need to remove barriers to decarbonisation, whilst also ensuring consumers are protected. We would note that consumers are not only impacted by costs passed through their electricity bills, but also via other means, such as rates. For example, removing high connection costs (and addressing simplicity and speed of connection) may make a particular renewable energy project by a council more financially viable, which in turn may mean that energy costs can be reduced, which can benefit rate payers.

We would stress the need to consider consumers in more rural locations, as those households and businesses are likely to have a greater need to travel by car (and so may be more likely to purchase an electric vehicle in the future) and they may also have fewer options to decarbonise heat, such as reduced access to the gas network (and so may be more likely to install technologies such as heat pumps). This may suggest that rural customers may be more likely to require additional grid capacity and so may be impacted more significantly by the choice of charging methodology. Whilst the CfE notes that there has been investment through RP6 and further planned investment through RP7, which is intended to reduce connection charges, the impact on rural homes and businesses should be carefully considered. For example, it would be beneficial to review historical connection costs for heat pumps and EVs for individual rural consumers (e.g. the need to upgrade small transformers), in comparison to those in a more urban environment, and consider the impact of each of the proposed connection methodologies.

We would also note that there may be other future policy developments to support decarbonisation in Northern Ireland and would question which connection policy is appropriate. For example, the Department of Finance is currently consulting on potential changes to building regulations. Areas being considered for new buildings include the potential increased use of heat pumps, and also the provision of infrastructure for EV charging. This includes potentially providing EV charge-points at all new dwellings where there is associated parking, similar to the position in England (where there is a cost cap of £3,600 in place for the average connection cost i.e. the additional cost due to including EV charger provision). The current 'partially deep' methodology may have a significant impact for new developments, where a combination of EVs, PV Panels and heat pumps may be required in order to comply with future regulations.

5. Do you consider a shallower connection boundary to be appropriate in the NI context? Please explain your rationale further and provide evidence.

If so, which of the following connection types should have a shallow connection boundary;

- Demand only
- Generation only
- Demand and Generation
- An alternate connection type (for example Domestic/Non-Domestic connections)

Please explain your rationale further.

Please see relevant information in our response to Question 4.

6. Do you consider a shallow-ish boundary to be appropriate in the NI context? Please explain your rationale further and provide evidence.

If so, which of the following connection types should have a shallow-ish connection boundary;

- Demand only
- Generation only
- Demand and Generation (for example Domestic/Non-Domestic connections)
- An alternate connection type

Please explain your rationale further.

Please see relevant information in our response to Question 4.

7. Do you believe that moving to a more shallow connection boundary in NI will deliver NI renewable targets that otherwise would not be met? Please provide evidence to demonstrate your answer.

Please see relevant information in our response to Question 4.

As noted in this response, a 'partially deep' charging methodology may act as a financial barrier to those wishing to invest in decarbonisation and as such it could be argued that alternative methodologies may be more appropriate. However, we do not have adequate evidence or information to understand the impact any changes will have on consumers, in order to ensure they are protected from charges which may be considered to be unreasonable.

It would be beneficial for the Utility Regulator to provide any available information and modelling in order to support a more informed position.

The regional impact of alternative charging methodologies, including the impact on rural consumers, should be considered (e.g. are certain areas in Northern Ireland, or rural customers in general, more likely to be unable to invest in renewable or sustainable technologies if the current charging methodology is retained).

8. Please provide evidence on the potential impacts on energy affordability in NI if reinforcement costs were socialised further? What would the impact on energy affordability be in NI if household bills were to increase per annum by;

- 1-3%
- 4-7%
- 7-10%
- >10%

We do not have direct evidence to respond to this question.

However, a useful tool to consider may be the Northern Ireland fuel price ready reckoner for fuel poverty (available from NIHE website). This tool was produced around 2018 and considers 35 fuel price scenarios which were applied to the 2016 modelled position of fuel poverty for Northern Ireland, including changes to the price of electricity.

9. Can NIE Networks differentiate between RP6 allowances, RP7 business plan connection requests and how these differentiate and have been factored into the analysis that has been done on potential reinforcement connection costs analysis NIE Networks have completed?

No response provided

10. Do you think that a developer led or plan led is the best approach for the future development of connections in NI? Please explain your answer.

No response provided

11. Do you think the current 3-month timeframe for SONI and NIE Networks to issue a connection offer is appropriate? Please explain your answer

The current timeframe of 3 months should be shortened.

This timeframe has specific challenges for projects where grant funding is made available, but the funding is time bounded e.g. for installing renewable technologies or EV charging infrastructure. SONI and NIEN may need specific details on the proposals which cannot be provided until the works have been procured (in order to determine specific products or solutions) and so the uncertainty around grid connection can lead to further difficulties when undertaking innovative projects.

It would be beneficial to clarify the timeframe for connection offers in other parts of the UK and Ireland, and consider any options to reduce the current 3 month timeframe.

12. If our legislation facilitated it, should obtaining planning permission be a pre-requisite in order to receive a grid connection? Please explain your answer.

An electricity connection is one of a number of permits and statutory processes that a developer must complete in order to carry out development. Most of these are separate from the Development Management process, and obtaining these consents prior to the planning authority determining the application is not considered to be of determining weight. Therefore, the Council considers that the suggested change in the law would have little impact on the processing of applications for developments which require an electricity connection, other than to increase pressure on local authorities to progress these in a timely manner. However, the Council does consider that if "Shovel Ready" schemes were afforded priority over those which had not received planning permission then this could allow these to be prioritised and enable a faster rate of connection of renewable energy schemes.

13. If our legislation facilitated it, do respondents consider any other issues associated with the current queue process? Or that a different approach to managing the connection queue, would result in quicker connections? If so, what would that be? Are there any lessons to be learned from other jurisdictions?

No response provided

14. Do you have any other information relevant to the subject matter of this Call for Evidence that you think we should consider?

No response provided

15. Please list any connection issues you have raised in order of priority. Please explain your reasoning behind your priority.

No response provided

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS CALL FOR EVIDENCE RESPONSE IS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY COUNCIL. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW THIS RESPONSE OR TO REVERT TO MAKE REVISIONS TO OUR RESPONSE, IN LINE WITH ANY FEEDBACK AND INTERNAL APPROVALS.

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	Consultation Response – NI’s Emissions Reduction Targets and Carbon Budgets (DAERA)
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Brian Rankin, Head of Service - Sustainability

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either: -

For decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>Purpose: That the Committee note the submission of the attached Consultation response, which was made in advance of the deadline of 11th October 2023.</p> <p>The consultation relates to Northern Ireland’s 2030 & 2040 emissions reduction targets & first three carbon budgets, and also seeks views on the Climate Change Committee (CCC) Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland.</p>
1.2	<p>Background: This consultation by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) aims to consult on the proposed 2030 and 2040 emissions targets for Northern Ireland and proposed carbon budgets for the periods 2023-2027, 2028-2032 and 2033-2037. DAERA are also using this opportunity to seek the public’s views on the Climate Change Committee’s (CCC) Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland.</p> <p>DAERA is required to prepare regulations on carbon budgets and interim targets guided by advice from the CCC.</p> <p>In March 2023 DAERA published a consultation on developing future regulations that will place climate change reporting duties on specified public bodies, with a response provided at the time by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC).</p>
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 sets emissions reduction targets that Northern Ireland must comply with legally, including achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050.</p> <p>The Act also includes a number of other key requirements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Producing a system of carbon budgeting ▪ The setting of 2030 and 2040 emissions reduction targets ▪ Producing five-year Climate Action Plans to set out the policies and proposals that Northern Ireland departments will implement to meet the set carbon budgets ▪ Establishing a Just Transition Commission for Northern Ireland and an office for a Northern Ireland Climate Commissioner

<p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting regulations in regard to climate change reporting duties by public bodies and a Just Transition Fund for Agriculture; and ▪ Establishing a system of reporting against targets and carbon budgets. <p>The advice from the CCC, published in March 2023, recommends that targets consistent with the 2050 Net Zero target would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A 48% emissions reduction by 2030 (2030 target) against the baseline ▪ A 77% emissions reduction by 2040 (2040 target) against the baseline <p>In the same report, the CCC have recommended that the first three carbon budgets should be set as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first carbon budget (for the period 2023-2027) should be set at a level that has a 33% average annual reduction ▪ The second carbon budget (for the period 2028-2032) should be set at a level that has a 48% average annual reduction ▪ The third carbon budget (for the period 2033-2037) should be set at a level that has a 62% average annual reduction <p>A response has been provided by NMDDC, as provided as Appendix 1. In particular, our response highlights the need to consider the impact on rural communities, and also highlights the importance of having appropriate supporting mechanisms. The absence of appropriate supporting measures, such as capital and resource funding, will mean that targets may be undeliverable and/or costs associated with decarbonising would be passed to ratepayers, which must be considered in light of the need for a 'just transition'.</p> <p>Please note that the deadline for consultation responses was 11th October 2023. A submission was made, as outlined in Appendix 1, with the caveat that it is subject to review by Council, and so our response can be retracted or changes can be made if required.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Recommendations</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>That the Committee note the submission of the attached Consultation response (see Appendix 1).</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Resource implications</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

<p>5.2</p>	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.3</p>	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</p>
<p>6.1</p>	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>7.0</p>	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: NMDDC Response to DAERA Consultation on NI's Emissions Reduction Targets and Carbon Budgets</p>
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Background Documents</p>
	<p>Consultation documents and information available at:</p>

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/carbonbudget>

The report from the CCC 'Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland' is available at:

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/advice-report-the-path-to-a-net-zero-northern-ireland/>

NMDDC Response to DAERA Consultation – NI's Emissions Reduction Targets and Carbon Budgets

Consultation Details:

Consultation Opened:	21 July 2023
Consultation Closed:	11 October 2023
Preferred Method of Response:	<p>Online via Citizen Space, with further information at Consultation on Northern Ireland's 2030 & 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets & First Three Carbon Budgets & Seeking views on Climate Change Committee (CCC) Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)</p> <p>A list of all questions and responses are provided below.</p>
Responses prepared by:	Brian Rankin, Head of Sustainability
Other comments:	It is assumed that the list of respondents to this consultation will be made publicly available. Responses may also be publicly available.

Context / Background:

This consultation by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) aims to consult on the proposed 2030 and 2040 emissions targets for Northern Ireland and proposed carbon budgets for the periods 2023-2027, 2028-2032 and 2033-2037. DAERA are also using this opportunity to seek the public's views on the Climate Change Committee's (CCC) Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland.

DAERA is required to prepare regulations on carbon budgets and interim targets guided by advice from the CCC.

Our response to this consultation highlights the need to consider the impact on rural communities, and also highlights the importance of having appropriate supporting mechanisms. The absence of appropriate supporting measures, such as capital and resource funding, will mean that targets may be undeliverable and/or costs associated with decarbonising would be passed to ratepayers, which would not be viable and must be considered in light of the need for a 'just transition'.

Questions and Draft Responses:

1. The 2030 Target:

Do you agree that DAERA should follow the current advice provided by the CCC and keep the current 2030 emissions reduction target in the Act of an at least 48% reduction in emissions compared to the baseline?

If 'No' then provide reasons. (Note that the Climate Change Act only allows it to be changed to a higher percentage).

Yes

An emissions target of at least 48% is recommended, in line with the CCC advice. According to the global emission reduction identified in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group III Report, 'Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change', a 1.5 degrees pathway requires CO2 emissions to be reduced by 48% by 2030.

It is also important to highlight, as noted in the consultation, that "the success of any new policies and proposals to reduce emissions across sectors will be dependent on significant new capital and resource funding as well as appropriate staff resources, wide-spread behavioural change and political acceptance". Newry, Mourne & Down District Council is supportive of the proposed target, and recognises the important role which councils can play, but further information is required on the detailed methodology for calculating emissions and the supporting mechanisms which are anticipated to be made available. The absence of appropriate supporting measures, such as capital and resource funding, will mean that targets may be undeliverable and/or costs associated with decarbonising would be passed to ratepayers, which would not be viable and must be considered in light of the need for a 'just transition'.

2. The 2040 Target:

Do you agree that DAERA should follow the current advice provided by the CCC and set a 2040 emissions reduction target of an at least 77% reduction in emissions compared to the baseline?

Yes

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) agree with the current advice provided by the CCC to set a 2040 emissions reduction target of at least a 77% reduction in emissions compared to the Baseline.

However, we also recognise that this target requires significant speculative options which the CCC have suggested such as direct air capture with carbon storage and agricultural changes which would require extensive behavioural and dietary change, therefore significant investment is required to support such transformations. We would stress that the achievability, cost and social implications of these options must be considered further. Additionally, proposals should acknowledge the role that Agriculture plays in the local economy, and so efforts should be focussed on reducing agriculture emissions sustainably through technological and biological innovations, as opposed to a focus on achieving a reduction on livestock numbers.

As already noted in our response to the proposed 2030 target, it is important to highlight (as noted in the consultation), that "the success of any new policies and proposals to reduce emissions across sectors will be dependent on significant new capital and resource funding as well as appropriate staff resources, wide-spread behavioural change and political acceptance". NMDDC is supportive of the proposed target, and recognises the important role which councils can play, but further information is required on the detailed methodology for calculating emissions and the supporting mechanisms which are anticipated to be made available. The absence of appropriate supporting measures, such as capital and resource funding, will mean that targets may be

undeliverable and/or costs associated with decarbonising would be passed to ratepayers, which must be considered in light of the need for a 'just transition'.

3. First Carbon Budget (2023 – 2027):

Do you agree that DAERA should follow the current advice provided by the CCC and set the first carbon budget at a level that has a 33% average annual reduction in emissions compared to the baseline?

Yes

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) are supportive of the proposed target, but we are aware that a review of a slightly less ambitious First Carbon Budget could be appropriate to account for a slower start in the first two years, although not meaning that the decarbonisation rates towards the end will slow down.

In June 2023, the Data for Northern Ireland's emissions in 2021 were published. The longer-term trend showed a decrease of 23.2% compared with emissions in 1990. However, between 2020 and 2021 most sectors showed an increase in emissions, with the most significant increases related to transport, agriculture and energy supply (with the later impacted by coal-based generation and reduced renewable generation due to lower wind speeds in 2021). It is imperative that emissions begin to be reduced across all sectors with adequate support provided to enable rapid decarbonisation if the first carbon budget target and subsequent targets are to be achieved. In 2021, Northern Ireland contributed 5.3% of all UK greenhouse gas emissions, which stood at 426.5 MtCO₂e. In the UK there has been a 47.7% reduction in emissions between 1990 and 2021. During the same period, the reduction in emissions in Northern Ireland was 23.2%, compared to 50.2% in England, 49.3% in Scotland and 35.0% in Wales.

Please also see our response to Question 1, which highlights the need for appropriate supporting mechanisms to ensure there is a just transition to decarbonisation.

4. Second Carbon Budget (2028 – 2032):

Do you agree that DAERA should follow the current advice provided by the CCC and set the second carbon budget at a level that has a 48% average annual reduction in emissions compared to the baseline?

Yes

Please also see our response to Question 1, which highlights the need for appropriate supporting mechanisms to ensure there is a just transition to decarbonisation.

5. Third Carbon Budget (2033 – 2037):

Do you agree that DAERA should follow the current advice provided by the CCC and set the third carbon budget at a level that has a 62% average annual reduction in emissions compared to the baseline?

Yes

Please also see our response to Question 1, which highlights the need for appropriate supporting mechanisms to ensure there is a just transition to decarbonisation.

6. CCC Advice:

Do you agree that DAERA should follow any updated advice and recommendations from the CCC (as a result of the publication of the Northern Ireland 2021 Greenhouse Gas Inventory) when setting the first three carbon budgets?

Yes

Please also see our response to Question 3, along with our response to Question 1, which highlights the need for appropriate supporting mechanisms to ensure there is a just transition to decarbonisation.

7. Impact Assessments:

Can you provide any information (relating to the potential financial, economic, social, rural and equality impacts) which will help inform the completion of the relevant impact assessments on the proposed carbon budgets?

As noted in our response to Question 1, there is a need for appropriate supporting mechanisms, including significant new capital and resource funding, along with appropriate staff resources, in order to ensure there is a just transition to decarbonisation. The absence of appropriate supporting measures will mean that targets may be undeliverable and/or costs associated with decarbonising would be passed to ratepayers, which would not be viable.

We would also highlight the importance of considering rural needs as homes and businesses in rural areas may be impacted more significantly by future proposals.

As an example, there will be reduced availability of public transport options in rural areas, leading to a greater dependency on car use. This means that a future proposed ban on new ICE vehicles will have a greater financial impact on those living in rural areas.

A further example is that homes and businesses in rural areas are less likely to be able to avail of natural gas networks, which means that they will have reduced options to decarbonise heat, with those options potentially being more expensive (both in terms of capital and running costs). Fuel poverty levels may also be higher in rural areas, due to property size and localised weather conditions etc.

Rural areas are also likely to have a much greater dependency on the agriculture sector.

Opportunities should be sought to invest in rural areas to support decarbonisation, including direct support for homes and businesses, alongside development of relevant skills to support the growth of the green economy.

Local authorities may be able to provide support to local communities, however this will be dependent on the supporting mechanisms which are made available.

8. Stretch Ambition Scenario to reach 93% reduction by 2050:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should follow the advice provided by the CCC and choose the Stretch Ambition Scenario?

Response indicated neither Yes or No, with information below provided.

In order to achieve the noted 93% reduction by 2050 it is recognised that more challenging actions would be required. Considerable investment will be required in infrastructure, such as grid capacity, to support some of the transitions, including increased electric vehicle ownership and decarbonising heating systems. Funding streams, such as those available in the rest of the UK and in the Republic Of Ireland, must be made available in Northern Ireland. Greater collaboration with local government, businesses and communities will also be required in areas such as district heating systems.

It is essential that electricity networks are strengthened and renewable sources of energy like wind, solar and geothermal are increased, in order to meet the requirement for 80% of electricity to come from renewables by 2030. The current use of coal for electricity generation is a particular challenge and should be removed from the electricity mix at the earliest opportunity.

We would highlight the benefit that afforestation and other nature recovery network solutions will play in carbon sequestration, noting also that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council was the lead partner in the recent CAAN project, which included peatland restoration measures.

There is a need to invest in more and better transport infrastructure to reduce car dependency in Northern Ireland. However, as noted, this should recognise the greater dependency which rural homes and businesses will have on cars.

We would stress in particular the role of the agricultural sector and the potential for proposals to have a more substantial impact on more rural areas, such as those in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. This again highlights the need to ensure there is a just transition, with local homes, businesses and communities provided with appropriate support. There may also be opportunities to work closely with the agriculture sector and other landowners (such as local councils) to increase annual afforestation rates.

Council also recognises that carbon capture and storage technology is both expensive and requires further development and understanding of potential consequences.

9. A. The Speculative DACCS Option to reach Net Zero by 2050:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should choose the Speculative Direct Air Capture with CCS (DACCS) option to reach Net Zero?

No

Direct Air Carbon capture remains the most expensive method for CO₂ extraction, due to the relatively low concentrations of CO₂ in air (compared to flue gas for example) and the cost of moving the captured carbon to be stored outside Northern Ireland. Costs should instead be diverted towards more feasible investments such as infrastructure, transport and renewables. Innovations in this industry may drive down the costs, but there will still be a need to strengthen the local market for CO₂ to avoid the transportation and storage cost/carbon production. Chatterjee, S and Huang, K, W. (2020) speculate there is a possibility that DACC may unfortunately only be an energetically and financially costly distraction from effective mitigation of climate changes, unless we are able to achieve a significant surplus of carbon-neutral/low-carbon energy".

Chatterjee, S., Huang, KW. Unrealistic energy and materials requirement for direct air capture in deep mitigation pathways. Nat Commun 11, 3287 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-17203-7>

There is also a concern that DACCS may have the potential to extend the timescales for an end to fossil fuel use, thereby locking in global emissions further.

B. The Speculative Agricultural Option:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should choose the Speculative Agriculture option?

Response indicated neither Yes or No, with information below provided.

It is acknowledged that agriculture has an essential role to play in achieving Net Zero targets. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is a region which is heavily dependent on the agriculture sector and is aware of the impact some of the proposals will have on this sector. Investment for a just transition to more sustainable and regenerative agriculture measures will be required, such as selective breeding for low methane production, and improvements in herd health.

All of the land-based mitigation measures must be considered, namely afforestation and improved management of existing broadleaf forests; increased production of bioenergy crops; restoration and sustainable management of degraded peatlands; and expansion of hedgerows and agroforestry.

C. Other Speculative Options:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should consider other speculative options such as (1) enhanced rock weathering and (2) addition of biochar to agricultural land?

Yes

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council welcomes the use of innovative approaches to carbon reduction, however we would urge careful consideration of associated risks. Council recommends that thorough research, investigation and analysis of potential interventions is carried out on a case-by-case basis by independent agencies to ensure consideration of all potential short and long-term risks, including extraction pollution, soil contamination, energy demand, and biodiversity impacts etc.

10. Agricultural Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should diverge from the CCC sector advice to deliver the required outcomes for the first carbon budget period and that these can be achieved through the actions outlined in the Agriculture sector summary?

Response indicated neither Yes or No, with information below provided.

Agriculture is the largest Green House Gas emitter in Northern Ireland, and in order to reach Net Zero, it is essential to think about ways to reduce the level of residual emissions that will persist in the next few decades. However, it is acknowledged that in order to ensure a just transition for

the agricultural sector, that there should initially be a greater focus on improving productivity as opposed to reducing livestock numbers.
 Any future proposals to reduce livestock numbers should include appropriate support mechanisms for the agricultural sector and rural communities.
 The entire production system, and not just the direct emissions from the animal itself, must be taken into consideration to develop an adequate mitigation strategy in this sector, and the use of greater scientific evidence to inform a new direction.

11. LULUCF Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should follow the LULUCF sector advice provided by the CCC?

Yes

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council agrees in principle that land use change is required to meet net zero targets including the regeneration of woodlands and peatlands in Northern Ireland. However, Council recommends careful delivery of afforestation plans so as not to degrade existing carbon sinks and harm existing biodiversity. The principles of right tree in right place should be applied with an emphasis on reforestation and restoration of existing woodlands, and peatland as a priority.

Council also advises that consideration and additional support will be required to support the agriculture sector and landowners in transitioning land towards afforestation.

Land management projects such as Arc Zero NI provide best practice examples of carbon storage, soil health, species selection and breeding programmes which could be replicated across Northern Ireland.

12. A. Buildings Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should consider the CCC advice on residential buildings, and develop a plan to improve energy efficiency and reduce reliance on fossil fuels, taking account of the capacity and capability of the low-carbon heating sector in Northern Ireland?

Yes

There must be a just energy transition which ensures that the impact of the low carbon energy transition on households and consumers does not disproportionately affect the most vulnerable sections of the population, who are most likely to be experiencing fuel poverty.

Energy efficiency, and a 'fabric-first' approach are vital to reduce energy demand and consumption in the first place.

There is also agreement with the need to upskill our workforce in the area of green technology.

Greater emphasis is required on the necessary support required to deliver a just transition with adequate provision made for socio-economic circumstances and areas of high social deprivation.

B. Buildings Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) should lead by example in the government estate and phase out the use of fossil fuel boilers as per the CCC advice?

Yes

The CCC acknowledges the significant contribution the public sector can make through leading by example, therefore local authorities, and public bodies, must be adequately supported to transition to net zero.

Similar financial support as exists in other parts of the UK should be available across all UK bodies to facilitate this process and guarantee a just transition to Net Zero. The NI Executive should work in partnership with public bodies to manage and provide these opportunities for a greener and more inclusive economy in our region.

13. Energy Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that additional measures (over and above those in the Energy Strategy) should be taken to ensure alignment with the CCC's advice?

Response indicated neither Yes or No, with information below provided.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council acknowledges and broadly support the measures outlines in the Energy Strategy. However, greater support and incentives are required to ensure a just transition of all communities, particularly those experiencing fuel and energy poverty. Council also reiterates the need for greater financial support to enable local authorities to support the decarbonisation of energy as well as required major investment in national and local infrastructure to facilitate increased renewables.

14. Transport Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should follow the transport sector advice provided by the CCC?

Yes

In order to meet the ambitious CCC deployment rates for electric vehicles (EVs) there will be a requirement to considerably upgrade the electricity infrastructure in Northern Ireland. There is a high dependency on cars in our Council area due to its rurality and reduced public transport options in areas. Financial incentives for the purchase of EVs and the installation of charge points will be required to increase EV ownership rates.

We would encourage initiatives to promote active travel options, with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council recently publishing an Active Travel Masterplan and working in partnership with DfI to consider funding options to promote cycling and walking.

15. Business and Industrial Processes Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should follow the Business and Industrial Processes sector advice provided by the CCC?

Yes

Businesses must be supported in their efforts to use energy and resources more efficiently and switch to low-carbon energy options. This is especially the case for businesses located in more rural areas, where they may have reduced and/or more expensive options to decarbonise. Upskilling of the workforce will be required to encourage behaviour change and this must also be supported.

16. Waste Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should follow the Waste sector advice provided by the CCC?

Yes

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council acknowledges the contribution of the waste sector towards net zero and the role local authorities play in managing waste. Council are committed to the principles of a circular economy and would recommend greater emphasis on zero waste. Council supports the need to reuse waste from landfill e.g. methane, however greater regulation and support is needed to ensure mitigation of pollution, and release of gases - in addition carbon capture and storage technologies require further research and development and understanding of potential risks.

17. Fisheries Sector Contribution to Net Zero:

Do you think that the Northern Ireland Executive should follow the Fisheries sector advice provided by the CCC?

Yes

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS CONSULTATION RESPONSE IS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY COUNCIL. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW THIS RESPONSE OR TO REVERT TO MAKE REVISIONS TO OUR RESPONSE, IN LINE WITH ANY FEEDBACK AND INTERNAL APPROVALS.

[Above caveat to our response was emailed separately to greengrowthfeedback@daera-ni.gov.uk due to the online response format].

Network Development – Southern Division

Andrew Cassells

Email: andrew.cassells@nmandd.org

Department for Infrastructure
Rathkeltair House
Market Street
Downpatrick
BT30 6AJ

Telephone: 0300 200 7899

Email:
tninddownpatrick@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Being dealt With By: **D. Hamilton**

Your reference: -

Our reference: **MT 160991-23**

4th October 2023

Dear Mr Cassells,

SLIDDERYFORD BRIDGE TO MURLOUGH

Thank you for your letter dated 27th September 2023 with regards to the Departments proposals for a shared cycling and walking route between Dundrum and the Murlough along the A2 Newcastle Road and the inner bay link along the former Co. Down Railway.

As you are aware, our key focus is on route safety for all road users and following a consultation with the PSNI, the design of this scheme will focus on delivering a shared facility along the Northern extents.

It is determined that should the shared footway/cycleway be provided along the Southern extents, then motorists arriving at the Murlough would park along the Northern extents and would cross the carriageway directly from their vehicle at various points, resulting in significantly more numbers of people crossing the carriageway at various locations rather than at the Murlough entrance itself.

With regards to proposed crossing facilities along the A2, I can confirm that as part of this scheme within the Dundrum village, it is proposed to provide a Toucan crossing at the area know as Keel Point approximately 85m north east of Keel Road.

With regards to the area at the Murlough itself, the Department has completed the provision of an uncontrolled crossing from the council owned Murlough car park to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the A2 Dundrum Road. Given the road speed at this location, it is not possible to provide controlled facilities.

The Department have no plans to alter the carriageway along the Southern extents and this will remain open to those pedestrians and cyclists who wish to cycle along this route.

Our focus will instead, try to promote both the existing car parks and playground that exist along the Northern extents in addition to providing a link from Dundrum village.

I trust you will find this reply helpful and I thank you for your continued interest in active travel and the road network.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours Sincerely,



Dave Hamilton

Network Development – Active Travel

Report to:	Neighbourhood Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	The Developing Council Tree Strategy 2021
Reporting Officer	Aidan Mallon, Acting Assistant Director Facilities Management & Maintenance
Contact Officer	Jonathan Ellis, Grounds Maintenance Manager

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either: -

For decision		For noting only	X
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with the Draft Councils Tree Strategy and seek approval to formalise this and associated landscape & climate adaption issues.</p> <p>This is the result of recommendations originally arising from the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held in September 2019. The Notice of Motion was tabled as detailed below.</p> <p>"This Council produces a tree strategy to protect and enhance tree cover for future generations. Council recognises the importance of trees, the benefits they afford us and the increasingly important role they can play in mitigating the effects of climate change, flooding and pollution control.</p> <p>Furthermore, Council acknowledges that trees can greatly enhance the visual amenity of our environment, they are vital for people's sense of well-being and contribute to everyone's quality of life".</p>
1.2	<p>Historical concerns raised at the meeting have been addressed as below : -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N. I. having the lowest level of tree cover in Europe – thousands of trees have been planted annually to mitigate this. • Utilising trees to combat climate change and minimise flooding. Improving the health and well-being of citizens by making streets look visually softer and removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. • Council continues to work with the Woodland Trust, DFI and private organisations to improve tree cover . • Council will incorporate woodland into the proposed new park at Albert Basin to act as the lungs of the city. • Planting progresses in areas with low tree cover e.g. the tow path and the wider the Mourmes area etc.
1.3	<p>Development of The Council Tree Strategy is part of the wider Council Climate Adaption and Sustainable Programmes.</p> <p>The following documents form this draft, and are included here</p> <p>The Draft Council Tree Strategy 2023 - currently a 23-page document.</p> <p>Appendices</p> <p>Appendix 1 - Biosecurity Policy in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry – 2 pages</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Green Infrastructural Benefits of NM&DDC Trees – 3 pages</p> <p>Appendix 3 - Case Studies & Management Initiatives – circa 18 pages.</p>

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The Tree Strategy is a working document achieving results district wide its structured into an.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summary • Introduction • Our Tree Heritage • Policy and Legal Framework • Council Climate Emergency and Adaptation Plan • Tree Strategy Development • Tree Strategy Objectives • Tree Strategy Action Plan • Agreed Actions • Monitoring and Review • Current Progress and future planned works <p>The Action Plan continued as originally intended encompassing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.- Sustainable Management 2.- Appropriate Planting 3.- Effective Protection 4.- Innovative Involvement 5 – Partnership Working <p>The tree expansion and sustainable landscape improvements are creating multiple benefits including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Air & water quality improvements ○ Climate betterment ○ Flood alleviation ○ Pollution Removal <p>The Strategy continues to drive how Council undertakes its urban & rural forestry tree expansion. Central to this is the council's unique historic precedent of being one of the best areas for tree collections in Europe, with several destination locations including Castlewellan Forest Park. A tree nursery has been recently completed on site and is now fully functioning to expand the districts valuable genetic resource of trees & plants. The Tree Strategy is attached in Appendix 1.</p>
2.2	<p>The main points of note within the current Draft Action Plan are: -</p> <p>The 2050 climate crisis date of zero carbon is paramount. Increasing woodland coverage from 5.58% to the National Target of 12% is an aspiration we should all work toward.</p> <p>Key milestones detailed in the previous report have all been addressed by completed and ongoing projects including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping & expansion of tree coverage. ○ Linking with ancient & existing forests. ○ Landscape connection for biodiversity improvements. ○ New woodland creation. ○ Securing tree planting mechanisms & sources of funding. ○ Completing & progressing Tangible Flagship Schemes for example; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Planting of ancient Irish Oaks from Kilbroney Wood for genetic species retention, ○ Promotion of ecosystem services valuation, for example, Knockree Avenue Killeel.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Valuations of the tree resource of Newry & Downpatrick - see Appendix 2. This can be used for media promotion nationally when the strategy is formally launched. <p>The S. Down & S. Armagh landscape, its heritage values and scenery, often regarded as the Council's best asset is being enhanced annually.</p>
2.3	Physical achievements have been realised annually – some of which are illustrated in Appendix 3. These have extended district wide over the past 4 years and have included local community involvement where possible.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>Committee approval is requested for the endorsement of the key concepts within the Tree Strategy and to approve this document.</p> <p>Tangible schemes will continue across the district with the intention of increasing Health & Wellbeing District Wide.</p>
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	<p>Costs related to this project are in the form of officer time to implement the strategy via sourcing funding for projects and front-line staff planting & landscaping locations.</p> <p>Practical projects producing tangible results include securing potential funding avenues, collaborative working, and physical seasonal works across the various landscape sites.</p> <p>To date circa £30,000.00 has been secured annually for landscape improvements from 2020, much of this is dedicated to increasing urban & rural canopy cover at strategic locations.</p> <p>Planting district wide is resulting in positive changes on a landscape scale.</p>
5.0	Equality and good relations implications
5.1	It is not anticipated that the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity and good relations.
6.0	Rural Proofing implications
6.1	Due regard to rural needs are incorporated.
7.0	Appendices
7.1	<p>The Draft Newry, Mourne & Down District Council Tree Strategy 2023- currently a 23-page document.</p> <p>Appendices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 - Biosecurity Policy in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry – 2 pages Appendix 2 – Green Infrastructural Benefits of NM&DDC Trees – 3 pages Appendix 3 - Case Studies & Management Initiatives – circa 18 pages.
8.0	Background Documents

	<p><i>This relates to meeting requirements outlined in Part 8 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, Access to Meetings and Documents, wherein for four years after a meeting the following must be available at the Council Offices and on the website:</i></p> <p><i>Background papers which are defined as those documents relating to the subject matter of a report which:</i></p> <p><i>a) Disclose any facts or matters which in the opinion of the Chief Executive, the report or an important part of the report is based upon; and</i></p> <p><i>b) Have, in the Chief Executive's opinion, been relied upon to a material extent in preparing the report.</i></p> <p><i>These are documents on which the report, or an important part of the report, is based upon and have been relied upon to a material extent in preparing the report.</i></p>
8.1	None

Appendix 1:

Newry, Mourne & Down District Council Tree Strategy 2023

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Biosecurity Policy in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry

Appendix 2 – Green Infrastructural Benefits of NM&DDC Trees

Appendix 3 - Case Studies & Management Initiatives

Appendix 1 - Biosecurity Policy in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry

NM&DDC is committed to promoting the implementation and understanding of good biosecurity practices to assist in safeguarding the future of its trees from the introduction and spread of harmful organisms.

This includes basic biosecurity principles that are adopted to reduce the unwanted introduction and spread of tree pests, diseases and invasive tree species:

1. Operatives and organisations undertaking work on or around trees consider the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their activities. Adopting biosecurity risk assessment processes and policy commitments are prudent first steps.
2. Those undertaking work on or around trees have a responsibility to implement routine biosecurity control measures for all sites and specific measures for higher risk sites highlighted by the biosecurity risk assessment process. This if deemed necessary should include the cleaning and disinfection of clothing, PPE, tools, equipment and vehicles.
3. Arboricultural operations such as pruning, felling and planting should be planned, managed and supervised to minimise the movement of arisings and soil. All arisings must be appropriately disposed of. If no risk is identified these are mulched for landscape work where practical.
4. When working on sites with trees staff ensure that operatives understand biosecurity issues and comply with adopted biosecurity measures. Training, guidance and supervision is given when necessary.
5. When planning, designing, or implementing planting projects staff aspire to source home grown and nursed specimens avoiding, where possible, directly imported stock to reduce the risk of introduction of pests and diseases.
6. Staff involved with tree supply should ensure that trees and associated soil are supplied free of pest and disease at all points in the supply chain. Consideration is given to the latency period (the period where a plant may be infected or infested by a particular pest or disease but no physical symptoms indicate ill health) and life cycles of all pests and diseases in order to achieve this. Special attention is given to imported stock.
7. Good urban forestry practice involves managing tree populations to increase species and genetic diversity by focusing on the establishment and maintenance of trees with qualities suited to the site and the prevailing climatic conditions. Additionally, good species composition, age structure, stock quality and condition will help reduce the future loss of trees due to the introduction, hybridisation or spread of tree pests and diseases.
8. Staff involved with trees must encourage and promote adherence to these guiding principles and act as role models.

Developing information will be obtained from the following sources

- Arboricultural Association
- The Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF)
- DAERA
- Northern Ireland Forest Service
- Forest Research (England).

Pests and diseases

Climate change will change the range of pests and diseases which will affect the council area as new pests and diseases become more prevalent. Possible Disease Threats include -

- Acute oak decline – a disease affecting oak trees in parts of Britain, in which bacteria, are believed to be involved.
- Bleeding canker of horse chestnut (*Pseudomonas syringae* pathovar *aesculi*) – a bacterium that causes death to horse chestnut trees. Up to half of Britain's horse chestnut trees have symptoms.
- Great spruce bark beetle (*Dendroctonus micans*) – is present throughout much of the Eurasian region, practically everywhere that spruce trees grow.
- Oak processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) – defoliates oak trees and can cause them to die. Trees are weakened and become prone to attack by other pests.
- *Phytophthora kernoviae* – has so far only been found in a very few trees, but is spreading. It can damage a number of tree species, including beech and English oak.
- *Phytophthora ramorum* – a fungus-like organism which attacks a range of trees and shrubs e.g. Japanese larch.
- Pine tree lappet moth (*Dendrolimus pini*). A serious defoliator of pine and other conifer species in its native range in northern and eastern Europe and Russia.

Ash dieback is a serious disease of ash trees caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* – this will decimate the local *Fraxinus* tree population and is evident district wide.

New plants will be sourced from nurseries working in accordance with strict biosecurity polices and will use, wherever possible trees raised entirely in the UK & Ireland.

Appendix 2 – Green Infrastructural Benefits of NM&DDC Trees.

I tree Canopy Study of Newry & Downpatrick Urban Areas.

For a direct quantification of ecosystem services and the value of the districts trees, two separate studies were undertaken on each of the largest urban centres. This process utilised cutting edge software which estimated the benefits for the developmental footprint of Newry City and Downpatrick Town.

It then measured the significance of the Urban Forest in terms of pollution mitigation, storm water run-off reduction, carbon sequestration and storage.

Downpatrick Town



Downpatrick Town – Tree Benefits.		
Carbon Reduction Figures		
Tree Carbon Benefit	Value	Monetary Value £
Annual Sequestration in Trees	209.15 Tonnes	£9660.00
Stored in Trees	5252.63 Tonnes	£493,747.00
Tree Air Pollution Benefits		
Annual Removal	Value Kg	Monetary Value £
Carbon Monoxide Removed Annually	60.58	£89.00
Nitrogen dioxide	483.75	£172.00
Ozone	2,954.92	£9352.00
Particulate Matter > 2.5 and < 10 Microns	1014.85	£7,012.00
Particulate Matter < 2.5	228.7	£36,950.00

Sulphur Dioxide	173.68	£23.00
Total Monetary Benefit Per Annum.		£53,599.00

To simplify Downpatrick Towns Trees, provide an annual benefit of £56,000 and remove almost 210 tons of carbon each year.

Newry City

ID	Cover Class	Latitude	L
1	Grass/Herbaceous	54.19037	
2	Tree/Shrub	54.20176	
3	Impervious Road	54.16767	
4	Impervious Road	54.17882	
5	Grass/Herbaceous	54.19632	
6	Impervious Road	54.18499	
7	Grass/Herbaceous	54.19611	
8	Impervious Other	54.17602	
9	Soil/Bare Ground	54.17521	
10	Impervious Buildings	54.17803	

i-Tree Canopy v7.0

Cover Assessment and Tree Benefits Report
 created using remote sensing data as of 1/10/2018

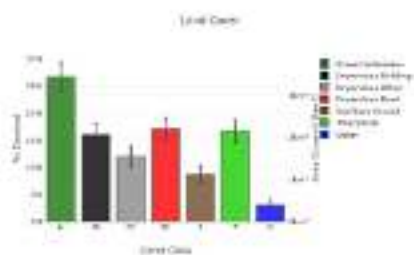


Abb.	Cover Class	Description	Points	% Cover ± SE	Area (km²) ± SE
H	Grass/Herbaceous		80	26.07 ± 2.52	3.41 ± 0.29
B	Impervious Buildings		45	14.00 ± 2.12	2.54 ± 0.27
O	Impervious Other		36	13.00 ± 1.86	1.93 ± 0.24
R	Impervious Road		91	31.00 ± 2.17	2.70 ± 0.25
S	Soil/Bare Ground		25	8.07 ± 1.83	1.32 ± 0.21
T	Tree/Shrub		97	30.07 ± 2.75	3.75 ± 0.35
W	Water		9	3.00 ± 1.30	0.70 ± 0.13
Total			383	100.00	12.85

Tree Benefit Estimates: Carbon (Metric units)

Description	Carbon (t)	±SE	CO ₂ Equiv (t)	±SE	Value (£/t)	±SE
Decomposed annually in trees	646.74	+94.28	2,908.00	+439.88	£49,761	±6,438
Stored in trees (Note this benefit is not an annual rate)	16,493.12	+2,129.21	88,144.22	+11,857.21	£1,499,688	±198,241

Current is ±SE. Max/min errors of stored and benefit amounts are based on the standard errors of sampled and classified points. Carbon sequestered is based on 306,000 tonnes. Carbon stored is based on 769,688 tonnes. Carbon value is £26,564. (MTC) (MTC) = tonnes, metric tons, t, t = metric tonne(s)

Tree Benefit Estimates: Air Pollution (Metric units)

Note	Description	Amount (kg)	±SE	Value (£/t)	±SE
CO	Carbon Monoxide removed annually	189.43	+94.45	£224	±89
NO2	Nitrogen Dioxide removed annually	1,650.97	+219.74	£575	±71
O3	Ozone removed annually	10,988.99	+1,418.67	£36,615	±4,727
PM10P	Particulate Matter greater than 10 microns and less than 100 microns removed annually	3,442.96	+458.88	£19,176	±2,476
PM2.5	Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns removed annually	697.34	+90.99	£105,011	±13,557
SO2	Sulphur Dioxide removed annually	608.47	+78.55	£85	±11
Total		17,338.19	+2,296.68	£210,447	±28,814

Current is ±SE. Max/min errors of stored and benefit amounts are based on the standard errors of sampled and classified points. Air Pollution Estimate is based on the values: CO (kg/yr) @ 126,540 @ (£/t) 184,382; NO2 (kg/yr) @ 15,512 @ (£/t) 37,500; O3 (kg/yr) @ 11,989 @ (£/t) 306,000; PM10P (kg/yr) @ 3,443 @ (£/t) 5,575; PM2.5 (kg/yr) @ 697 @ (£/t) 150,000; SO2 (kg/yr) @ 608 @ (£/t) 140. (MTC) (MTC) = tonnes, metric tons, t, t = metric tonne(s)

Tree Benefit Estimates: Hydrological (Metric units)

Note	Benefit	Amount (Ml)	±SE	Value (£/t)	±SE
WRO	Wetland Runoff	21.33	+10.87	£154,311	±13,821
E	Evaporation	215.71	+110.11	N/A	N/A
I	Interception	257.13	+132.26	N/A	N/A
T	Transpiration	515.41	+262.77	N/A	N/A
PE	Potential Evapotranspiration	767.19	+393.11	N/A	N/A
PET	Potential Evapotranspiration	18,123	+9,141	N/A	N/A

Current is ±SE. Max/min errors of stored and benefit amounts are based on the standard errors of sampled and classified points. Hydrological (Metric units) is based on the values: WRO (Ml/yr) @ 21.33 @ (£/t) 7,212; E (Ml/yr) @ 215.71 @ (£/t) 1,000; I (Ml/yr) @ 257.13 @ (£/t) 1,000; T (Ml/yr) @ 515.41 @ (£/t) 1,000; PE (Ml/yr) @ 767.19 @ (£/t) 1,000; PET (Ml/yr) @ 18,123 @ (£/t) 1,000. (MTC) (MTC) = tonnes, metric tons, t, t = metric tonne(s)

NEWRY City – Tree Benefits.		
Carbon Reduction Figures		
Tree Carbon Benefit	Value	Monetary Value £
Annual Sequestration in Trees	656.74 Tonnes	£48761.00
Stored in Trees	16,493.1 Tonnes	£1,249,680.00
Tree Air Pollution Benefits		
Annual Removal	Value Kg	Monetary Value £
Carbon Monoxide Removed Annually	189.43	£224.00
Nitrogen dioxide	1,650.97	£575.00
Ozone	10,988.99	£36,615.00
Particulate Matter > 2.5 and < 10 Microns	3,442.96	£19,176.00
Particulate Matter < 2.5	697.34	£105,011.00
Sulphur Dioxide	608.47	£85.00
Total Monetary Benefit Per Annum.		£210,447.00

To simplify Newry Cities Trees, provide an annual benefit of £162,000 and remove almost 657 tons of carbon each year.

The total monetary benefit per year for both Towns alone is over £210 thousand pounds.

Appendices & Glossary – very much TBC

Glossary

Carbon sequestration

The process by which atmospheric carbon is absorbed into carbon sinks for eg. the oceans, peat bogs, forests and soil.

Ecosystem

The living interrelationship between air, land, water, animals and plants etc.

Photosynthesis

The process by which green plants use sunlight to synthesize nutrients from carbon dioxide & water.

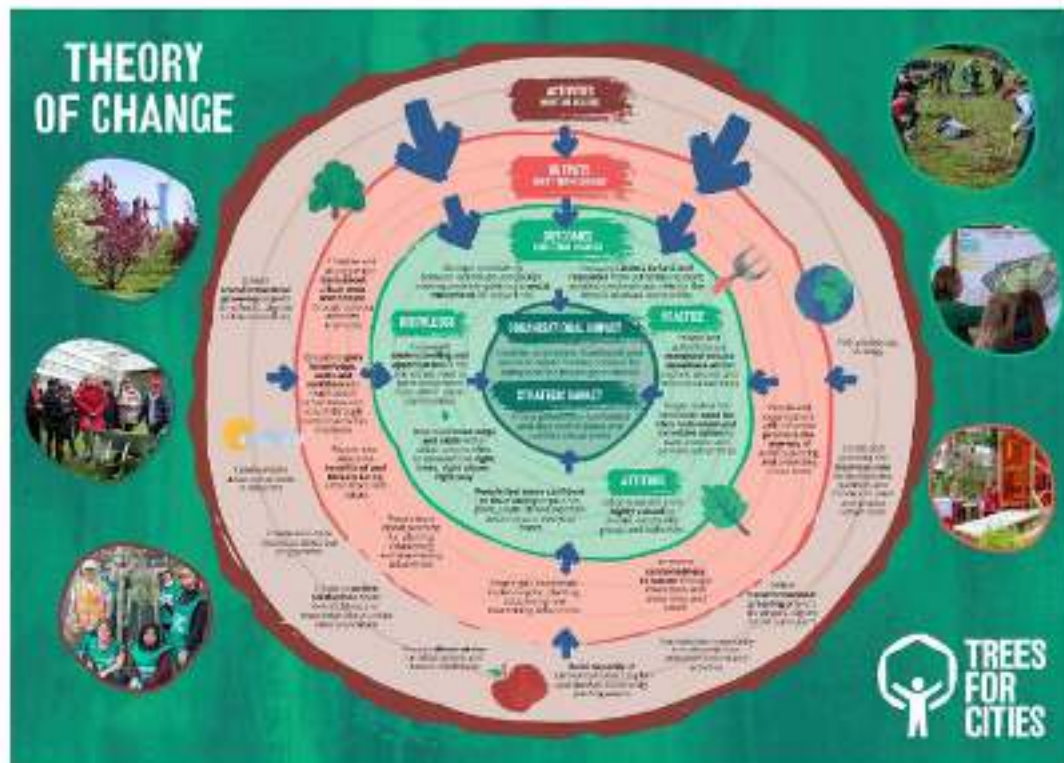
Species

A set of animals or plants in which the members have characteristics to each other and can breed with each other. Often a specific closely related type of Tree.

Appendices

Appendix Introduction Member Bodies.

1 - Tree Cities of the World - January 2021



2 – Trees for Cities.



3 – Arboricultural Association – Professional Member.

4 – Institute of Chartered Foresters.



5 – Arbor Day Foundation.



Appendix X Involved Partners

Woodland Trust

Kilkeel Chamber

Dolmens Climate Group

Forest Research, Alice Holt, England.

Below Various Developing Details etc

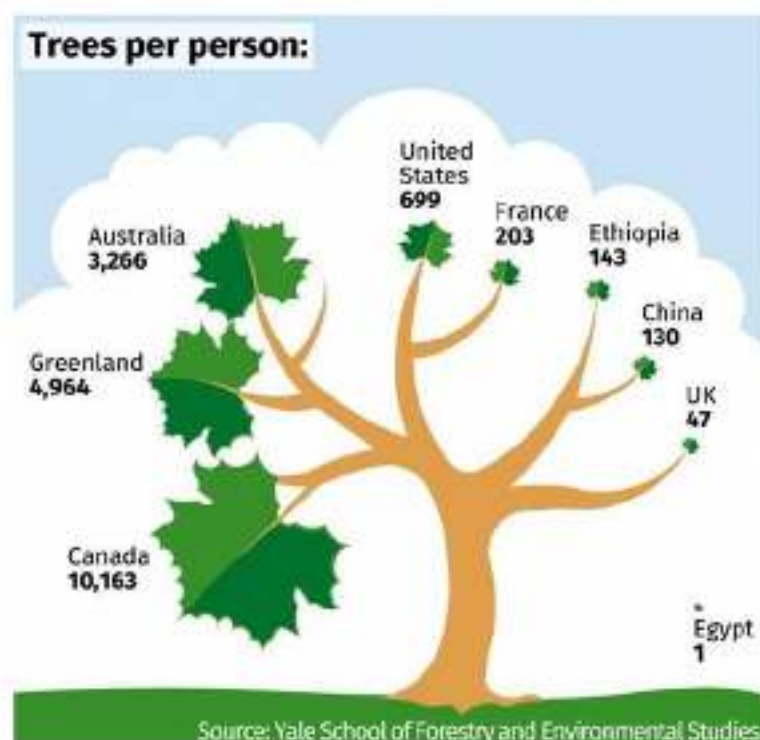
On average, one **acre** of new forest **can** sequester about 2.5 tons of carbon **annually**. Young **trees absorb CO2** at a rate of 13 pounds per **tree** each **year**. **Trees** reach their most productive stage of carbon storage at about 10 **years** at which point they are estimated to **absorb** 48 pounds of **CO2** per **year**.

As recommended by the [Committee on Climate Change](#) (CCC) the government has legally committed to net zero [greenhouse gas emissions by the United Kingdom](#) by 2050 and the [Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit](#) (ECIU) has said it would be affordable. A range of techniques will be required including carbon sinks ([greenhouse gas removal](#)) in order to counterbalance emissions from agriculture and aviation. These carbon sinks might include reforestation, habitat restoration, soil carbon sequestration, [bioenergy with carbon capture and storage](#) and even direct air capture.

UK peatlands cover around 23,000 km² or 9.5% of the UK land area and store at least 3.2 billion tonnes of carbon. A loss of only 5% of UK peatland carbon would equate to the total annual UK anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. Healthy peat bogs have a net long-term 'cooling' effect on the climate. Peatlands rely on water. When drained, peatlands waste away through oxidation, adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Damaged and degraded peatlands place a substantial financial burden on society because of increased greenhouse gas emissions, poorer water quality and loss of other [ecosystem services](#).

DEFRA plans to consult on a new tree strategy after failing to meet its target to plant new trees across 5,000 hectares of land in England every year by a wide margin. Official figures from Forest Research show DEFRA falling short of the target by 71%, having succeeded in planting only 1,420 hectares in the year to March.

Across the UK, 13,390 hectares of newly created woodland were planted, with Scotland faring the best at 11,210 hectares of new tree planting and Wales and Northern Ireland with 520 and 240 hectares respectively.



Appendix X DAERA an Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland

A Common Purpose for Our Environment

This 'Common Purpose' is our response to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' public discussion document on an Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland (September 2019). It is the result of a collaborative discussion between a range of sectors, networks and organisations held at NICVA in November 2019. The aim of the Common Purpose is to set out a brief number of key actions and principles which we (the signatories) believe are required to create an Environment fit for current and future generations.

Our environment, which is essential to our future health, well-being and prosperity, has never been under more pressure: our biodiversity is in decline, our air and the quality of the water in our rivers and lakes remains poor, and climate change is impacting upon all areas of life.

We need an ambitious long-term Environment Strategy to help reverse this decline and then, critically, set Northern Ireland on a new path of renewal and environmental regeneration.

We believe that:

Our environment is our health and wellbeing, our food and water, our heritage and history, our wildlife, our children's future and our economic foundation. Crucially, it's for everyone, equally, bringing a sense of community cohesion and shared enjoyment.

Our environment provides spaces and places for people to be active in; supports our economy through tourism, cultural heritage and inward investment; and provides educational opportunities.

Our land and landscape, unique historic environment, rich freshwater network and our enviable coastline and marine habitat provide a wealth of riches for our people and visitors to enjoy. We believe that an ambitious environment strategy for Northern Ireland is the best way to ensure its preservation.

The Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland must:

Have clear lines of accountability. All government Departments and public bodies should be included in the design not just of the strategy but the crucial actions that need to be clearly set out within it; and they should have a proactive duty to implement it and be held accountable for the impacts of decisions taken. Be independently monitored with robust mechanisms to hold government to account. Have statutory footing and binding targets that are clear, measurable and ambitious and in line with the SDGs. Effective environmental governance is essential for any framework of environmental policy; a strategy that is not backed up in law with effective enforcement mechanisms is essentially no more than a wish list. Be matched by appropriate and significant additional direct investment to enrich our environment and land/sea resource and a commitment that future public payments are directed towards delivering public benefits. In addition, we believe it is fundamental to the future of Northern Ireland that: A Northern Ireland Environment Bill is created to give the Environment Strategy a binding, legal footing. Creation of an Independent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Northern Ireland remains the only part of these islands without an EPA. We need an EPA to ensure independent and robust monitoring and appropriate mechanisms to hold government to account. Introduction of a NI Climate Change Act. Given the implications of Climate Change for all aspects of NI society and our massive over-dependence on imported fossil fuels despite our abundant local sources of renewable energy, NI urgently requires a Climate Change Act. It should include an action plan with short, medium, and long-term targets for GHG emissions reduction and renewable energy generation. Mainstreaming of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All future Departmental Strategies/ Policies (including the Programme for Government) must help deliver on our commitment to implementation of the UN SDGs and include: specific NI indicators; Compulsory incorporation into the local council community plans; Appointment of SD champions in each government department; and the Executive Office should be responsible for implementation/reporting.

A NI 'Well-being of Future Generations Act. Based on the Welsh example, this Act would improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of NI by encouraging cross-departmental cooperation; and improve partnership working with people and communities to undertake long-term planning to prevent problems through a more joined-up approach. It would help create a NI that people will want to live in, now and in the future. Creation of a NI Environmental Citizens Advisory panel. Such a Panel would improve citizen information, engagement and participation in the design of environmental policies and strategies that affect NI. As the island of Ireland and its surrounding seas represent a single biogeographic unit, consideration could be given to the future development of an all-island Environment Plan and a cross-border environmental advisory panel tasked with exploring an island wide response to environmental issues that affect all citizens.

Sustainable agri-food Sector Support. A growth strategy to support sustainable small-scale farming should be developed with provision of incentives for farmers/landowners to support environmental initiatives such as combatting climate change and restoring nature in our countryside. Farming subsidies should provide an incentive for farmers to farm in a way that helps protect the environment. This should be progressed through a 'Public Money for Public Goods' approach.

A Cross-Departmental Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development is developed. This strategy should lead to a systemic change in teaching and access to environmental education for all age groups and encourage long-term attitudinal and behavioural change in relation to our interaction with the environment. It should include ambitious targets for outdoor learning.

If you wish to sign up to this Common Purpose please email info@nienvironmentlink.org, providing name of organisation and contact details.





















Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 October 2023
Subject:	Recycle Week 2023
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Grainne McKinley, Head of Waste Processing, Enforcement and Business Support

	For decision	For noting only	X
1.0	Purpose and Background		
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members of the Sustainability and Environment Committee on Recycle Week 2023, this year's theme and Newry Mourne and Down District Council's planned marketing campaign.		
1.2	<p>Recycling Week 2023 will take place between 16-22 October 2023. This year's theme – The Big Recycling Hunt – focuses on 'missed capture' of items that can be recycled but are commonly missed in the home.</p> <p>The campaign, led by WRAP, will ensure people know that there are more items that they can recycle by highlighting some of the most commonly missed items to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic pots, tubs and trays • Plastic detergent/cleaning bottles • Shampoo/conditioner bottles • Aerosols • Food cans/tins <p>More information can be found on https://wrap.org.uk/taking-action/citizen-behaviour-change/recycle-now/recycle-week</p>		
2.0	Key Issues		
2.1	A social media content planner has been devised by the S&E directorate in partnership with the Marketing Team to ensure that assets created by WRAP are shared each day of Recycle Week across all NMDDC social media platforms in order to raise awareness of the importance of recycling for the environment.		
2.2	Newry Town Hall and Down Leisure Centre will be lit up in green on Sunday 15 th October to kick start the Recycle Week Campaign		
3.0	Recommendations		
	Members are asked to note the contents of the report.		
4.0	Resource implications		
4.1	There are no resource implications associated with this report.		

5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p><i>n/a</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale: n/a</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	None
8.0	Background Documents
	None

ITEM 3
ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting No 80
MINUTES
Thursday 31 August 2023

Members Present:

Councillor M Goodman (<i>Chair</i>)	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor E McLaughlin	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor A Cathcart	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor J Cochrane	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor T Kelly	Belfast City Council
Councillor E McDonough-Brown	Belfast City Council
Councillor P Kennedy	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor R Quigley	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor G McKeen (<i>Deputy Chair</i>)	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor C Enright	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor K Murphy	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Members' Apologies:

Alderman P Michael	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor C Blaney	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor B Smyth	Belfast City Council
Councillor A Givan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Alderman S Skillen	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Alderman A Wilson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor T Andrews	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers Present:

T Walker	arc21
H Campbell	arc21
J Green	arc21
K Boal	arc21
B McKeown	arc21
P Feeney	arc21
M Lavery	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
N Martin	Ards & North Down Borough Council
C Matthews	Belfast City Council
R Harvey	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
N O'Malley	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
D Carey	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
A Cassells	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers' Apologies:

D Lindsay	Ards & North Down Borough Council
P Thompson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

Mr Walker apologised for the late release of some of the papers and advised that for future meetings it was intended to release them as one bundle. He also advised that previously arc12 had released the correspondence received or sent in relation to the residual waste project on a monthly basis, but as there was a large amount of papers already released for this meeting, he had held back on this occasion. He asked Members to consider this following the AGM.

Item 1 - AGM**Procedures**

Mr Walker referred to the procedures for the position of electing a Chair and Deputy Chair for the forthcoming year.

Election of Chair

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair to serve the Joint Committee for the forthcoming year.

Nominated: Councillor Michael Goodman
Seconded by: Councillor Eamonn McLaughlin

It was resolved that Councillor Goodman be elected as Chair of the Joint Committee for the incoming year [2023/24].

(Councillor Goodman in the Chair)

Councillor Goodman thanked everyone for their acceptance of him as Chair and noted that he looked forward to working with Members throughout the year, along with the arc21 staff, as there were a lot of important issues to be dealt with over the coming 12 months.

Election of Deputy Chair

Nominations were then invited for the position of Deputy Chair of the Joint Committee.

Nominated: Councillor Gregg McKeen
Seconded by: Councillor James Cochrane

It was resolved that Councillor McKeen be re-elected as Deputy Chair of the Joint Committee for the incoming year.

The Chair congratulated Councillor McKeen on his appointment.

Councillor McKeen thanked Members for appointing him as Deputy Chair.

Item 2 - Conflicts of Interest Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest Statement, and none were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 3 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 4 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 079 held on 29 June 2023

The Joint Committee approved the minutes. Proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor Kennedy and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Item 5 - Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Action: Noted

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move "*in committee*" which was agreed. Proposed by Councillor Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Enright.

Matters of a confidential and commercially sensitive nature were discussed under these agenda items.

Following discussion on the commercially sensitive matters, the Chair recommended that the meeting would now return to the main agenda, which was approved, but whilst "*In Committee*" during this section of the meeting, there were four matters discussed.

Item 6 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 079 held on 29 June 2023 "*In Committee*" - approved

Item 7 - Matters Arising - noted

Item 8 - Residual Waste Treatment Project - noted

Item 9 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues - noted

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Proposed by Councillor Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Murphy.

Item 10 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Ms Boal provided a report on the high-level performance statistics for June and July.

Service Status

She reported that all services were operational during the months of June and July 2023 and no contractors required to put in place any of their contingency measures.

Performance

The contractor performance for June and July was presented which included details on the number of loads in each of the contracts, site visits, overweight vehicles, use of contingency arrangements, turnaround, availability, maintenance of records and reporting.

Ms Boal advised that in terms of the spread of information, issues were highlighted in yellow in the tables which were managed by arc21 staff and dealt with.

She noted that turnaround times had been reviewed for June and in all cases the contractors provided adequate reasons for these and therefore service credits were not applied for that month. However, after reviewing the turnaround times in July, service credits were applied to NWP for failing to meet their contract service levels.

She reported that overweight vehicles relating to the Haulage contracts continued to be monitored and arc21 was starting to see some positive results in recent months. Council officers have been requested to continue to liaise with their Operational Managers to seek to reduce the overweight vehicles going to the Landfill and Organics sites as these numbers were still high. In June and July, most reports were submitted on time and there were only minor issues with Biffa and Heatrick's reporting that required revision due to incorrect data. In both months however, arc21 have had some problems with Bryson not being able to send through the required reports by their due date because of an IT problem. As a result, arc21 issued service credits in June and then have applied service credits throughout most of July. These issues were subsequently fixed and arc21 started receiving the required reports at the end of July.

The bring service contracts data was also presented and she noted that in June there were 2 x Bottle Bank sites and 1 x Textile bank site, and in July there was only 1 x Bottle Bank site that did not have the specified capacity available. The contractors had been notified, and these banks were serviced accordingly. There were no Service Credits applied this month.

Health & Safety

Ms Boal referred to the table presented in the report highlighting the incidents in June and July and the actions taken. She noted that the management and reporting of this was primary to us.

She advised that council officers had been asked to liaise with their H&S officers and operational managers, including those of external contractors, to ensure that all drivers understand their Health & Safety obligations on site and that they abide by the site rules of each site.

She noted that an issue over requirements to access the site at Keady was being discussed after it was raised by NMDDC.

Health & Safety Audits

Ms Boal advised that arc21 has an external Health & Safety consultancy who visits, periodically, all the sites during the year at least once and continues to undertake health and safety audits. She noted that all of the contractors welcome this external consultancy and usually there is little coming out of the reports. She advised that arc21 maintains a running matrix on any issues identified and do a follow up to ensure that, where possible, these have been cleared up as quickly as possible.

She noted that in June, an audit was conducted at the NWP Transfer Station in Drumanakelly. No issues were found during this audit and it was concluded by arc21's consultant in his report that *"the company maintains a high level of health and safety compliance on site"*.

In July, an audit was conducted at Irish Waste's site in Duncrue. There were a number of Health & Safety issues identified during this audit and arc21 is working closely with the contractor to resolve these as quickly as possible.

Rejected Loads

The rejected loads for June and July were noted as follows:

Organic Waste Treatment Contract - no rejected loads into organics delivery sites in June and July 2023.

Materials Recovery Facilities - one rejected load into Bryson in June 2023, and two loads in July 2023. One of these rejected loads in July was not reported to arc21 before being sent for disposal and not charged as rejected.

She advised that officers have been requested to continue to review their protocols to ensure that systems are in place so that vehicles are fully emptied before collecting another material stream.

arc21 Contract Tonnages

A list of the contract tonnages for June and July 2023, compared to the same period last year, was presented and was summarised as follows:

- MRF Lot 1 MDR material delivered to Bryson - June 2023 an increase of 1.7%, and July 2023 an increase of 3.2%;
- MRF Lot 2 MDR material delivered to ReGen.- June a 2.1% increase, and July a 12.3% decrease;
- Organics Contract Type 1 - June 2023 an increase of 7.2%, and July a decrease of 3.6%;
- Organics Contract Type 2 - June a decrease of 10.5% , July a decrease of 8.4%; and
- Landfill Residual Waste Contract - June a 14.3% decrease, July a 21.4% decrease. No residual waste was sent direct to landfill by Belfast CC in July 2023.

Supplies

The number of orders placed and delivered in June and July was presented and the delivery non compliances were noted.

The Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Councillor McDonough-Brown and seconded by Councillor Murphy and noted by all.

Action: Noted

Item 11 - Waste Tonnage Trends

Ms Boal presented a report showing the waste tonnage trends for materials delivered into the arc21 contracts.

She talked to each of the graphs and reported that it highlighted the trends, pictorially, over a four-year period and tracked the tonnages. She noted the following:

- Landfill - a sharp decline as the BCC material had come out which was in or around circa 3k tonnes per month. If added back into the chart we would be in a similar position to the 21/22 year looking at it as a trend, which may continue. As other contracts hopefully go through the DPS and are awarded, the amount of tonnage should be less and will be a good sign.
- Organics - Type 1 (garden waste from civic amenity sites) similar trajectory to 21/22 year. Type 2 – (food and garden waste through kerbside collection schemes) the peak happened in May and in a slow decline since then as it is weather dependent but we are aware from studies that there is still a lot of food waste which could be taken out of the residual bin and there are incentives in terms of reduced gate fees when we get above a certain threshold to take advantage off and councils are looking at this.
- MRF - Lot 1 and 2 tonnages combined - a similar trend to the 22/23 year.
- Street Sweepings - a bit higher this year as councils move out of covid.

The other smaller contracts were also presented for information.

The Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Councillor McDonough-Brown and seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and noted by all.

Action: Noted

Item 12 - Consultations Responses

Mr Walker presented a report with a series of consultation responses as follows:

1. *Department for the Economy Place10X – A Sub-Regional Economic Approach - Call for Evidence*

10X Vision¹ is the Department's plan to create a pathway to transform the entire economy innovatively, inclusively, and sustainably at a regional level. This is a long-term plan where NI will become one of the top performing small, advanced economies in the world.

The arc21 response was submitted by the deadline of 9 July 2023 and was appended.

2. *Cabinet Office - Part 1 Consultation on draft regulations to implement the Procurement Bill*

A consultation on the secondary legislation required to implement the new public procurement regime established by the Procurement Bill split into two parts. Part 1 refers predominantly to areas of the Bill which require lists, calculations or further definitions to be used in practice.

The arc21 response was submitted by the deadline of 28 July 2023 and was appended.

3. *Cabinet Office - Part 2 Consultation on draft regulations to implement the Procurement Bill*

Part 2 focuses on the transparency provisions and notices that will be used by contracting authorities to fulfil their legal requirements under the Bill. It also includes information on the proposed approach to transitional arrangements for procurements already underway at the time that the new regime enters into force and the position on other legislation that will need to be amended in order for the full provisions of the Bill to take effect.

The arc21 response was submitted by the deadline of 25 August 2023 and was appended.

4. *Consultation on the McCloud Remedy in the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) – Supplementary Issues & Draft Regulations*

A consultation on the McCloud remedy in the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI) (LGPS (NI)). This consultation seeks views on proposed changes to the (LGPS (NI)).

The proposed arc21 response was presented, for submission by 1 September, and was appended for consideration.

Mr Walker noted that arc21 was also considering or actively working on responses to the following consultations which are currently live:

- *Consultation on the draft Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging & Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024 (responses to be submitted by 9 October);*
- *Plastic Packaging Tax – Chemical Recycling & Adoption of a Mass Balance Approach Consultation (responses to be submitted by 10 October); and*
- *Consultation on NI's 2030 & 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets & First Three Carbon Budgets & Seeking views on Climate Change Committee (CCC) Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland (responses to be submitted by 11 October).*

The Chair suggested that in future it would be preferable for the Joint Committee to be given sight of the proposed responses before submitting and Mr Walker agreed with this approach.

The Joint Committee agreed to retrospectively approve the three consultation responses already submitted (**no's 1-3 above**), approve the fourth consultation response to be submitted by the deadline of 1 September (**no 4 above**), and noted that there are a further three consultation exercises currently underway.

Proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Item 13 - Annual Report

Mr Walker presented the Joint Committee with the arc21 Annual Report for the year to March 2023 reflecting the progress made in the third year of our Corporate Plan 2020-2024.

The Chair proposed that Members are given time to review the content and raise any issues before signing off and it was suggested that Members revert to Mr Walker before the next Joint Committee accordingly, and it is put onto the September meeting agenda.

The Joint Committee agreed with this approach. Proposed by Councillor Murphy and seconded by Councillor Kennedy and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Item 14 - Governance & HR Matters

1. Roles & Responsibilities for Joint Committee Members

Mr Walker noted that a was in the final stages of preparation to clarify these duties and it is anticipated that it will be finalised and ready for the next Joint Committee meeting.

2. Audit Committee

Elected Members were sought for the arc21 Audit Committee which meets once per quarter. Mr Walker advised that the previous Audit Committee was served by 5 elected Members and 1 independent member. The Local Government Auditor and arc21's internal audit service provider (Belfast City Council's Audit, Governance & Risk Services) also attend these Committee meetings, and it is supported by arc21 officers.

He noted that the first meeting, scheduled for September, the Audit Committee Members must elect a Chair. At this meeting, it is proposed to approve the draft Statement of Accounts following the external audit currently being conducted by the Local Government Auditor.

Councillor Enright noted that he had other commitments for the next 6 months but could consider taking part in the Audit Committee after this.

As no nominations were forthcoming at the meeting, the Chair proposed that he would discuss with Mr Walker after the meeting to consider making contact with Members directly should no volunteers be forthcoming.

Action: Chair/Mr Walker

3. Remote Meetings Legislation

Mr Walker advised that the legislation to hold lawful meetings to allow for virtual/hybrid meetings to take place was expected to be extended post September to allow for online meetings to continue. However, as Members had discussed the wish to hold hybrid or in person meeting it was recommended that the next meeting is arranged as a hybrid and it was suggested that this is hosted by the arc21 constituent councils on a rotational basis, starting with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

Councillor Kelly and Councillor McDonough-Brown noted that they were content for hybrid meetings to take place, but would have difficulty in attending due to work commitments and would attend where possible.

The Chair advised that arc21 would progress with a hybrid meeting in September and then revisit the issue again.

The Joint Committee agreed with this approach. Proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Human Resource Matters

Mr Walker discussed several Human Resource matters which had occurred or were continuing since the Joint Committee meeting in March.

4. Recruitment of Chief Executive

Mr Walker reported that the recruitment exercise, undertaken by the Joint Committee to recruit a permanent Chief Executive earlier in the year was concluded in April, and no appointment had been made. This recruitment exercise cost circa £24,000 with ancillary costs around advertising, &c. which was paid for from General Reserves.

He noted that should Members wish to re-advertise the post for a permanent Chief Executive, a new procurement exercise would have to be undertaken.

The Chair advised Members that Mr Walker, as the Acting Chief Executive, was on secondment from BCC for circa 4 years and suggested that there was a need to regularise the situation and proposed that the recruitment exercise should be run again. He also noted that some of the CEXs had raised the issue of the SIB paper and whether the outcome of this should be resolved first, however it was thought that this was some time off.

Councillor Cathcart noted his concerns at recruiting a permanent position when it is unclear what the outcome of the potential waste body for NI might be and asked what the consequences were if a CEX was recruited and then arc21 is wound down in a couple of years.

The Chair advised that there was previous advice on this which could be shared with Members for further consideration.

Action: Mr Walker

The Chair recommended that arc21 register that the original recruitment exercise concluded unsuccessfully and that the Committee would defer consideration on next steps to a future meeting.

The Joint Committee agreed with this approach. Proposed by Councillor Cathcart and seconded by Councillor Murphy and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

5. Development of a Human Resources Strategy

Mr Walker advised that the Corporate Plan 2020/24, approved by the Joint Committee in 2020, set out the strategic direction for arc21 from April 2020 to March 2024 and one of the corporate strategic objectives of the Plan was to develop a HR Strategy for arc21.

A template for a HR Strategy going forward was presented and it was recommended that the Joint Committee note the finalisation of this strategy.

6. Draft Policies

In March 2021, the Joint Committee noted the bundle of HR policies which arc21 applies in the provision of its services. At this time, it was highlighted that these were being kept under review and any additional policies, or material changes to any of the approved policies, would be presented to the Joint Committee for consideration. Consequently, arc21 officers had been developing / revising two additional policies. With regard to whistleblowing, the Northern Ireland Audit Office revised its approach to this issue and recommended that local government bodies refresh their policy and reframe it under "*Raising Concerns*". Mr Walker reported that this had been completed and a revised policy was now in place within arc21 and Members are asked to note this development.

He also advised that arc21's "*Acting Up*" policy had almost been finalised to reflect both current and future practice and an update would be presented to Members shortly.

It was recommended that the Joint Committee note the completion of the revised "*Raising Concerns*" policy.

The Chair noted his concerns at not viewing the policies and being responsible for sign off and suggested that Members should be provided with these documents.

Mr Walker advised that there will be refresh of the suite of policies and that he would be happy to provide these to Members in due course.

Councillor McDonough-Brown noted that he felt it was burdensome to sign off each individual policy and would be happy to take as a bundle at a later stage, but on this occasion would leave to the executive team.

Mr Walker suggested that when the refresh is done he would liaise with the Chair to see how arc21 could complete as one piece.

Councillor Enright noted that as a board, Members are responsible for policy and implementation of policy and agreed with the Chair's comments.

The Chair noted that his concerns were not a reflection of the CEX or staff on their capabilities but only where the responsibility lies with Members signing off policies, especially in light of recent HR issues.

The recommendations for 5 and 6 were taken together for noting. The Chair added that the recommendation to note the Raising Concerns Policy is proposed without sight and noted his concerns on signing these off without viewing.

The Joint Committee agreed to the recommendations. Proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor Murphy and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

7. Corporate Services Director

Mr Walker advised that the former Corporate Services Director retired with immediate effect on 11 August, 2023 and that a separate paper (Item 17) has been prepared and would be presented at the end of the meeting.

He noted that in terms of the cheque signatories, the bank had advised that they need 3 x signatories and with Mr Craig now retired, he recommended that it be Mr Walker, Mr McKeown and Ms Boal.

The Joint Committee agreed to the recommendation. Proposed by Councillor McKeen and seconded by Councillor Enright and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

8. Payments

Mr Walker reported that under the national 2022/23 pay award, staff below chief officer grade were awarded an extra day's leave. In line with good practice and equitable treatment, many councils extended this arrangement to chief officers as a local agreement and, as a result, Members are asked to consider agreeing a similar arrangement for the relevant officers within arc21.

Further, last year the Acting Chief Executive determined that an honorarium payment was merited to the Principal Accountant arising for the discharge additional duties which were discharged arising from the long-term sickness absence of the Corporate Services Director.

This exercise determined the honorarium to be PO11 and this was paid from February 2022 to June 2023, with a break of nine weeks last summer when the Corporate Services Director returned. The Corporate Services Director returned to work again on a phased basis and resumed full-time from July this year until his retirement in August. At this time, the honorarium was reinstated for the Principal Accountant and will remain in place until such times as it is determined how the Corporate Services post will be filled.

It was recommended that the Joint Committee approve the local agreement to extend the 2022/23 pay award to arc21's chief officers and grant them an additional day's leave. Members are also asked to note the honorarium granted to the Principal Accountant during a period of sickness absence and following the retirement of the Corporate Services Director earlier this month.

Item 15 – Letsrecycle – EfW to be included in emissions trading scheme from 2028

Mr Walker provided a verbal report on the recent outworking's of one of the consultations on the Emissions Trading Scheme and noted that Government had confirmed that they are going to include EfW and incineration plants to be part of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme from 2028 onwards. He advised that this would have a significant impact on EfW operators and could cost the sector many millions of pounds. He advised that various aspects of the tax were to be determined and finalised but there was a strong probability of pass-through tax/charge to councils using such facilities. Therefore, in future similar to the landfill tax, any gate fees for such facilities, are likely to incorporate this incineration tax.

He noted that this is of real relevance for the residual waste project and will be considered in due course as part of the finalisation of any financial appraisal undertake to complete the procurement programme.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Item 16 - AOB

There were no other matters raised.

Officers were asked to leave the meeting and Members remained. Ms Feeney, HR Advisor from arc21, and Mr Walker remained to present the reports.

IN COMMITTEE

Item 17 - Previous Minutes & Confidential HR Report

The In Confidence Minutes of the previous meeting on 29 June were agreed. The recommendations had consisted of a series of steps including appointing additional HR support and convening a meeting amongst Members.

Action: Agreed

Regarding Item 17, this report highlighted that Mr Craig, Corporate Services Director has resigned with immediate effect on 11 August and details were provided of the retirement arrangements. Members noted the contents.

Action: Noted

A copy of the minute will be circulated to Members of the Joint Committee only, due to the sensitive nature of the report.

Item 18 - Next Meeting 28 September 2023

Date: _____

Chairman: _____