

November 7th, 2025

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Monday, 10th November 2025 at 6:00 pm** in **Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall.**

**Committee Membership 2025-26**

Councillor D Lee-Surginor **Chairperson**

Councillor K Feehan **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor T Andrews

Councillor W Clarke

Councillor C Galbraith

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor G Hanna

Councillor V Harte

Councillor G Kearns

Councillor A Lewis

Councillor S Murphy

Councillor A Quinn

Councillor M Ruane

Councillor J Tinnelly

Councillor H Young

# Agenda

## 1.0 Introduction and Apologies

## 2.0 Declarations of Interest

## 3.0 Action Sheet: Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism - Committee Meeting Monday 13 October 2025

📎 *ERT Action Sheet - 2025-10-13 inc. historic actions updated.pdf*

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### *For Discussion/Decision*

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## 4.0 Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden

*For Decision*

📎 *ERT Report - Castlewellan Forest Park - Friends of Castlewellan.pdf*

*Page 4*

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### *Exempt Appendices*

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### 4.1 Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden Appendices

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

📎 *Appx 1 - MoU Friends of Castlewellan.pdf*

*Not included*

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### *For Discussion/Decision*

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## 5.0 Local Economic Partnership (LEP)

*For Decision*

📎 *ERT Report - Local Economic Partnership (LEP) .pdf*

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### *Exempt Appendices*

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### 5.1 Local Economic Partnership (LEP) Appendices

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

📎 *Appx 1 - LEP - Productivity Growth Programme Business Case (restricted).pdf*

*Not included*

📎 **Appx 2 - LEP - AI Empowering Business Business Case (restricted).pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appx 3 - LEP Derelict Property Mapping Research Business Case (restricted).pdf** **Not included**

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### ***For Discussion/Decision***

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## **6.0 Mid Year Review of ERT Business Plans 2025-26**

*For Decision*

📎 **ERT Report - Mid Year Assessment of Business Plans 2025-26.pdf** **Page 11**

📎 **Appx 1 - Economy Regeneration and Tourism Mid Year Assessment Business Plan 2025-26.pdf** **Page 13**

## **7.0 PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1**

*For Decision*

📎 **ERT Report - PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1.pdf** **Page 28**

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### ***Exempt Appendices***

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#### **7.1 PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1 Appendices**

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

📎 **Appx 1 - PEACEPLUS BusCase - 1.2 enhancement of Community facilities (restricted).pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appx 2 - PEACEPLUS BusCase - 1.2 Enhancement of Sporting Facilities (restricted).pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appx 3 - PEACEPLUS BusCase - 2.6 Intergenerational Arts and crafts (restricted).pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appx 4 - PEACEPLUS BusCase - 2.6 Intergenerational EVAWG (restricted).pdf** **Not included**

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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***

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## **8.0 East Border Region - Showcasing 50 Years of Genuine Cross Border Collaboration**

*For Decision*

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **ERT Report - East Border Region Cross Border Collaboration.pdf**

**Not included**

## **9.0 Downpatrick Special Stage Car Rally 2026**

*For Decision*

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **ERT Report - Downpatrick Special Stage Car Rally.pdf**

**Not included**

 **Appx 1 Downpatrick Special Stage Car Rally.pdf**

**Not included**

## **10.0 Financial Assistance 2025/26 Call 4**

*For Decision*

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **ERT Report - Financial Assistance Report Call 4 2025-26.pdf**

**Not included**

 **Appx 1 - Financial Assistance Call 4 Community Facilities - Capital Works.pdf**

**Not included**

 **Appx 2 Financial Assistance Call 4 Community Facilities - Capital Items.pdf**

**Not included**

## **11.0 Labour Market Partnership - Action Plan**

*For Decision*

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **ERT Report - Labour Market Partnership Revised Budget.pdf**

**Not included**

## 12.0 Play Park Resurfacing at Kilbroney Forest Park

*For Decision*

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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

📎 *ERT Report - Kilbroney Park Play Park resurfacing.pdf*

*Not included*

📎 *Appx - Kilbroney Park Play Park resurfacing Business Case.pdf*

*Not included*

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### *For Noting*

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## 13.0 Museums Quarterly Report (Jul-Sept)

*For Information*

📎 *ERT Report - Museums Quarterly Update Report.pdf*

*Page 31*

## 14.0 Newry Business Improvement District (BID)

*For Information*

📎 *ERT Report - Newry Business Improvement District (BID).pdf*

*Page 36*

# Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Ms Michelle Boyle

Cllr Jim Brennan

Ms Sonya Burns

Lorraine/Emma Burns/McParland

Mr Gerard Byrne

Cllr Pete Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Cllr Martin Hearty

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Ms Catherine Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Joanne/Noelle Johnston

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Aurla King

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Jonathan McGilly

Ms Tracie McLoughlin

Ms Aveen McVeigh  
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Sinead Murphy  
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Cllr Declan Murphy  
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Cllr Selina Murphy  
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Cllr Kate Murphy  
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare  
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Mr Andy Patterson  
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Cllr Áine Quinn  
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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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Mrs Amanda Smyth  
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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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Cllr Helena Young  
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ACTION SHEETECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING – MONDAY 13 October 2025

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
ERT/096/2025	Action Sheet Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting Monday 8 September 2025	it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 September 2025	C. Mallon		Y
ERT/097/2025	Incoming Tour Operators Association Ireland Workshop 2025	it was agreed to provide sponsorship for the ITOA Ireland Workshop which in November 2025 is being hosted in the Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle.	A. Smyth	Actioned	Y
ERT/098/2025	Summit of the Cities 2026	it was agreed to approve Council as a key partner on the Summit of the Cities 2026 event.	A. Smyth	In progress	N
ERT/099/2025	Warrenpoint Baths	the following was agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission a comprehensive intrusive structural condition survey of the Baths structure and buildings.</li> <li>• Continue to explore and progress any relevant / appropriate funding opportunities for delivery of the approved project.</li> </ul>	A. Smyth	In progress	N



Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
ERT/100/2025	Belfast Region Innovation Funding	it was agreed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve acceptance of the Letter of Offer from Department for Science, Innovation &amp; Technology (DSIT) for Castlewellan Forest Park,</li> <li>• Approve the business case for the procurement for the project via the Crown Commercial Service Network Services 3 Framework (RM6116),</li> <li>• Approve the allocation of match funding towards the project, as set out in Section 4.</li> </ul>	A. Smyth	Actioned	Y
ERT/101/2025	Building Control X 6 Monthly Update	It was agreed to note the report	J. McGilly	Noted	Y
ERT/102/2025	EBR Bridge Report	it was agreed to note the award of funding to East Border Region, from the SEUPB PEACEPLUS Programme for the BRIDGE Project.	A. Smyth	Noted	Y
ERT/103/2025	Licensing 6 X Monthly Update	it was agreed to note the contents contained within the Licensing 6 monthly report.	J. McGilly	noted	Y
ERT/104/2025	NMDDC Economic Outlook	it was agreed to note the update on the Council's Economic Outlook compiled by Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC).	A. Smyth	Noted	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
ERT/105/2025	PEACEPLUS	<p>it was agreed to note the minutes of the PEACEPLUS Partnership on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2025 and the Partnership's agreement on the next phase of implementation against action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strand 3.7 Piece Work Embroidery – Flowering in the Mournes</li><li>• Strand 2.3 Learn the language of my neighbour</li><li>• Strand 3.6 Crossing Paths: Stories in Motion</li><li>• Strand 3.6 Home is a Journey: Migration in Film and theatre</li></ul>	A. Smyth	Noted	Y

<b>Report to:</b>	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Monday 10 November 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Aveen McVeigh - Head of Regeneration and Business Development

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p><u>Purpose</u> To approve entering a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden.</p> <p><u>Background</u> Council is in receipt of partnership funding from National Lottery Heritage Fund and is progressing with the delivery of a heritage led project at Castlewellan Forest Park by connecting people with the natural and built heritage of the historic Demesne.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The creation of a "Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden" group is intended as a legacy of the NLHF funding. One of the project's key outcomes is to support the establishment of such a group, which could play an important role in securing the Arboretum's long-term success.</li> <li>The group would operate as an independent charity, focused on raising funds through community fundraising and applications to external funding bodies (with Council approval).</li> <li>Its purpose would be to deliver enhancements beyond routine maintenance—such as funding rare plant acquisitions, additional seating, new sculptures, or awareness-raising events that enrich the visitor experience.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An MoU (Appendix 1) has been prepared in consultation with the Council's Legal Advisor. In developing this, officers engaged with Belfast City Council to review their <i>Friends of Botanic Gardens</i> model. Belfast City Council's experience highlights the significant value of such partnerships, with the Friends group acting as effective stewards of the Botanic Garden.</li> <li>The MoU sets out clear roles and responsibilities for both the Friends group and the Council, while ensuring appropriate Council oversight of the group's activities and any proposed enhancements to the garden.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	<p>It is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden for the purpose of working in partnership for the benefit of the Arboretum and Garden</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	Resource – staff time - two nominated staff members to attend quarterly 'Friends Of' meetings. One staff member will act as the Liaison Officer to the Friends outside of these meetings
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>
5.1	<p><b><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></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 checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

	<div> <div>Consultation period will be 12 weeks</div> <div>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)</div> </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/> </div>
	<i>Rationale:</i>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b>
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> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	<p>The below items are deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – <b>information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)</b> and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.</p> <p>1) MoU Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden</p>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	n/a

<b>Report to:</b>	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Local Economic Partnership (LEP)
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism.
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Aveen McVeigh Head of Regeneration and Business Development

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p><u>Purpose</u> To approve the recommendations in 3.1 of this report.</p> <p><u>Background</u> Council's Local Economic Partnership (LEP) was formed on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The aim of the Partnership is to deliver on a Regional Balance Fund focusing on creating good jobs, increasing productivity, improving regional balance and decarbonisation.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<p>Following Council approval of LEP action plan in October 2025, Council submitted an action plan to Department for Economy (DfE) for consideration.</p> <p>DfE have approved the action plan and issued Council with a Letter of Offer to programme delivery of the agreed projects as outlined within the action plan.</p> <p>Council is moving to project mobilisation. Projects require to be procured, and business cases have been prepared to enable progression.</p> <p>Business cases have been attached for the following programmes:</p> <p><u>Productivity Growth Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured support to enhance productivity in micro, small, and social enterprises</li> <li>• Support up to 60 micro and small enterprises and social enterprises (up to 50 employees).</li> <li>• Stage 1 - productivity needs analysis/diagnostic assessment.</li> <li>• Stage 2 - Deliver tailored mentoring (up to 21 hours per participant)</li> <li>• Stage 3 - Action plan for next steps &amp; signposting for further support</li> </ul>

	<p><u>AI: Empowering Business Through Awareness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured support to demystify artificial intelligence for micro and small enterprises and social enterprises through delivery of an AI readiness analysis/diagnostic assessment</li> <li>• Support up to 50 micro and small enterprises and social enterprises (up to 50 employees).</li> <li>• Stage 1 - AI readiness analysis/diagnostic assessment</li> <li>• Stage 2 - Tailored mentoring (up to 15 hours per participant) identifying and exploring how AI can enhance productivity, efficiency, customer engagement, and competitiveness.</li> <li>• Stage 3 - Action plan with key recommendations for implementation</li> </ul> <p><u>Derelict/Vacancy commercial property mapping research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify, document and assess the scale, nature, and location of derelict and long-term vacant buildings in urban areas as defined in the LEP Action Plan</li> <li>• Provide a baseline for impact measurement over time.</li> <li>• Inform targeted interventions through NMDDC's Revive and Reimagine Grant Support evidence-based decision-making for future town centre policy and investment.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	<p>It is recommended:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Council accept the Letter of Offer for Local Economic Partnership</li> <li>2) To approve the business cases outlined in Appendix 1 for the following programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Productivity Growth Programme</li> <li>• AI: Empowering Business Through Awareness</li> <li>• Derelict/Vacancy commercial property mapping research</li> </ul> </li> <li>3) To approve the establishment of a Service Level Agreement with Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency and Down Business Centre for delivery of the project "Derelict/Vacancy commercial property mapping research"</li> </ol>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	LEP is 100% funded by DfE.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<p><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></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	<b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b>
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	<b>Appendices</b>
	<p>These items are deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - <b>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)</b> and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of Business.</p> <p>Business Cases</p> <p>1) Productivity Growth Programme</p>



	2) AI: Empowering Business Through Awareness 3) Derelict/Vacancy commercial property mapping research
8.0	<b>Background Documents</b>
	LEP Action Plan (approved at Sept 2025 ERT Committee)

<b>Report to:</b>	Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Mid Year Assessment of ERT Directorate Business Plan 2025-26
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Conor Mallon Director – Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Conor Mallon Director – Economy, Regeneration and Tourism

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>		
1.1	Directorate Business Plans form an essential part of the Council’s Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, which drives and provides assurance that corporate objectives are being delivered.		
1.2	Directorate Business Plans demonstrate how planned activity during 2025-26 will contribute to the achievement of strategic outcomes in relation to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan and other key strategies.		
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>		
2.1	A Mid Year Assessment of each Directorate Business Plan has been undertaken in order to provide an overview of progress between April-September 2025. This exercise is an important part of the Council’s statutory obligations to strengthen the way performance is monitored, reviewed and reported at all levels across the organisation.		
2.2	The Mid Year Assessment of the ERT Directorate Business Plan is outlined at Appendix 1.		
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>		
3.1	To consider and approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Mid Year Assessment of the ERT Directorate Business Plan 2025-26</li> </ul>		
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>		
4.1	There are no financial resource implications within this report.		
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>		
5.1	<p><b><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></b></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <span style="float: right;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></span></p>		

5.2	<p><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></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> Consultation not required.</p>
6.0	<b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b>
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix 1 – Mid Year Assessment of the ERT Directorate Business Plan 2025-26
8.0	<b>Background Documents</b>
	Directorate Business Plan 2025-26

# Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate

## Mid-Year Assessment Business Plan 2025-26

## Introduction

This report provides an overview of progress in delivering the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Business Plan 2025-26 between April-September 2025, across the following service areas:

- Economic Development
- Regeneration
- Tourism Development and Promotion
- Tourism Facilities Management and Development
- Arts and Culture
- Events
- Heritage
- Grants & Funding
- AONB Management
- Planning Development Management and Control
- Local Development Plan
- Building Control
- Licencing
- International Relations

The delivery of the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate Business Plan 2025-26 supports the achievement of the following corporate objectives, and performance has been tracked using the legend below.

**Support the continued growth and development of our local economy**




**Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future**

**Support regenerative tourism opportunities which promote our culture, heritage and environment**

**Develop and revitalise our district**

**Deliver sustainable services**

## Legend

Status	
	Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved
	Target or objective partially achieved / likely to be achieved / subject to delay
	Target or objective not achieved / unlikely to be achieved

## Directorate objectives, supporting actions and measures of success

### Key Directorate Objectives

#### **Economy, Growth and Tourism –**

To support opportunities for sustainable and prosperous economic growth across the district.

To progress tourism, culture and heritage which delivers for local communities, businesses and the environment.

To deliver regeneration investments in infrastructure, tourism & cultural assets, that will revitalise the district as a place to live, work and invest.

To facilitate opportunities that will empower and enable communities to deliver against Councils key thematic areas.

#### **Regeneration –**

A statutory duty to apply the Building Regulations and licencing obligations of Council.

A statutory duty to apply the Planning Act / Development Management Regulations and enforcement.

Prepare and delivery of the Local Development Plan (LDP).

Economy, Regeneration and Tourism			
<b>ERT1 : To support opportunities for sustainable and prosperous economic growth across the district.</b>			
Jobs promoted through business start-up activity (statutory)	<div>Target</div> <div>Actual</div>	<div>86</div> <div>113</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>173</div> <div>—</div>
Notes: 1 Business Plans 158 Enterprise Action Plans 31 multiplier 0.6 = 113			
Number of existing businesses supported on their growth journey	<div>Target</div> <div>Actual</div>	<div>80</div> <div>243</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>220</div> <div>—</div>
Notes: 1 Foundation 83, Growth 160			
Number of new start businesses supported on their start up journey	<div>Target</div> <div>Actual</div>	<div>120</div> <div>289</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>300</div> <div>—</div>
Notes: 1 289 engage clients registered for support on the service			
Delivery of 2025 – 2030 Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Amber</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes: 1 Procurement process was undertaken, no one was appointed. Specification was revisited and procurement will be issued in Q3 2025.			

Advance opportunities from Councils strategic location on the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor. (CWB)		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
	Notes:	<p>1 DBEC continues to explore cross border economic opportunities and has led on three cross border bids for funding. A proposal developing cross border tourism opportunities is currently being assessed, a decision on the outcome is expected in Q3 2025. The final application exploring circular economy is still in development and planning stage. DBEC is partnering on an application to SEUPB (PeacePlus) that will target cross-border labour market access and mobility of workers across the border. The project will also explore cross border skills equivalence of qualifications. DBEC has continued to develop an Industry Advisory Board, a Terms of Reference for this board has been created and approved, with the first meeting of the board due in Q3 2025.</p>		
Deliver against the ambitions and maximise the opportunities from investments arising from Belfast Region City Deal (CWB)		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Red</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
	Notes:	<p>1 NCCR Full Business Case approved by DfC Planning Approval in place Project delayed following receipt of Pre Action Protocol MMGP Following decision by National Trust not to grant a lease, NMDDC working with key stakeholders to explore an alternative proposal Grade A Office Accommodation grant £3 Million Office accommodation grant was launched 19th September Hotel Accommodation grant £1 Million Office accommodation grant was launched 15th September Regional Innovation Hub Potential partnership opportunities being explored that could support the operation of a regional innovation hub in Newry City</p>		
Collaborate with key stakeholders on the advancement and delivery of opportunities that stimulate economic growth for the district. (CPP) (CWB)		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
	Notes:	<p>1 Council established an Local Economic Partnership in Q1 2024/2025. The Partnership developed a range of Regeneration and Economic development programmes to increase productivity across the district.</p>		



Collaborate with key stakeholders on the advancement and delivery of opportunities that improve access to skilled labour appropriate to growth ambitions across the district (CPP) (CWB)		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
	Notes:	<b>1</b> LMP initiatives are underway. Progress to date includes: • Get Work Ready pre-employment programme launched with 27 participants enrolled. • HGV Employment Academy launched with 32 participants enrolled. • Employment Pathway Job Fair event on 19th June with 50 employers; 16 support organisations; and 388 attendees, over 450 jobs were on offer and 63% of attendees were aged 19-44.		
Create opportunities to develop awareness of the districts diverse business base, product & service offering and successful entrepreneurs		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
	Notes:	<b>1</b> Delivery of Go Succeed and DTFF to entrepreneurs across the district. Engagement with Invest NI, Chambers, Colleges and business rep groups to create and promote opportunities.		
Progress innovation and digital transformation opportunities (externally / internally) that will drive forward growth and advance the district as an attractive place to live, visit and do business		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
	Notes:	<b>1</b> Funding awarded from Belfast Innovation Region funding programme for the installation of advanced technology that will enable the creation of a SMART Forest at Castlewellaan		
Secure external investment, where appropriate, to support delivery of actions under this objective		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
	Notes:	<b>1</b> Go Succeed funding for 25/26 was approved by UK Government. NMDDC's allocation for 25/26 is £1,071,801.92, Council contributes £167,203. The funding is secure until 31 March 2026. Council has been allocated £4.5 million for the delivery of LEP.		

ERT2 : To progress tourism, culture and heritage which delivers for local communities, businesses and the environment			
Level of Visitor spend (NISRA) (£)	Target	The target by end of March 2026	
	Progress	Amber	—
Number of overnight stays. (NISRA)	Target	The target for number of overnight	
	Progress	Amber	—
Development of visitor experiences which focus on outdoor adventure, food and drink, and heritage and culture.	Target	2 new experiences have been	
	Progress	Green	—
Progress investments in major tourism projects that will develop the district as an international visitor destination	Target	The development of the Treetops	
	Progress	Green	—
Collaborate with key stakeholders to progress sustainable active travel projects that promote accessibility to facilities and attractions across the district	Target	Works is continuing with key	
	Progress	Green	—
Investment in assets that will develop the tourism, cultural and heritage offering across the district	Target	Investment in a range of	
	Progress	Green	—
Delivery and development of a tourism events and festival programme that promotes and enhances the arts, culture and heritage offering across the district	Target		
	Progress	Green * 1	—
Notes:		1 Wake the Giant Festival - delivered June 2025 Eats and Beats Festival - delivered Sept 2025 -7500 attendance Footsteps in the Forest - delivered Oct 2025	

Development and promotion of the district's museums offering that will engage schools, local communities and visitors to the district		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div> <div>Green</div> <div>—</div>
	Notes:	<p>1 Both Down County Museum and Newry and Mourne Museum have resumed a rolling programme of temporary exhibitions, and both are upgrading and making interventions in their permanent galleries now that the two Curator posts are filled. The education and outreach programme, although hindered by absence at Down County Museum, continues to educate and entertain thousands of school children. Both museums are poised to begin PEACE Plus funded community engagement projects and continue to work in partnership with NMDDC colleagues and external organisations such as Newry BID, Down Community Arts and the St Patricks Centre in promoting the district</p>
Development and promotion of a district wide arts programme that will engage schools, local communities, the arts sector and visitors to the district		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div> <div>Green</div> <div>—</div>
	Notes:	<p>1 Delivered an extensive range of arts workshops. Delivered the Artist Bursary Programme. Applications received for the Artist in Residence Programme.</p>
To secure external investment where appropriate to support delivery of actions under this objective		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div> <div>Green</div> <div>—</div>
	Notes:	<p>1 Grant received from DEARA for Eats and Beats LOO from HED Conservation Area Pilot Natural History Museum - Fixing our broken planet</p>

ERT3 : To deliver regeneration investments in infrastructure, tourism & cultural assets, that will revitalise the district as a place to live, work and invest.			
Progress delivery of Council's ambitions under the Belfast Region City Deal tourism, regeneration and digital innovation projects (CPP) (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Red</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
Notes:	<p>1 NCCR Full Business Case approved by DfC Planning Approval in place MMGP Following decision by National Trust not to grant a lease, NMDDC working with key stakeholders to explore an alternative proposal Grade A Office Accommodation grant £3 Million Office accommodation grant was launched 19th September Hotel Accommodation grant £1 Million Office accommodation grant was launched 15th September Regional Innovation Hub Potential partnership opportunities being explored that could support the operation of a regional innovation hub in Newry City</p>		
Collaborate with key stakeholders in order to progress delivery against the Downpatrick Regeneration Living High Streets Toolkit. (CPP) (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
Notes:	<p>1 Council provides secretariat to DRWG. Meetings occur monthly. Engagement with Ministers for Economy and Infrastructure. Engagement with Rivers Agency, DfI, DfC. Submission of an application to PEACEPLUS for The Grove.</p>		
Progress implementation of Church Street and De-Courcy Place capital investment programme	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
Notes:	<p>1 Project board established, PQQ issued, utilities on site. Ongoing engagement with DfI.</p>		
Prioritise and advance key regeneration projects identified in master plans and strategies, and ensure funding opportunities are maximised	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>—</div>
Notes:	<p>1 Kilkeel Public Realm is progressing to RIBA stage 3. LEP has identified regeneration projects for inclusion for funding in the action plan.</p>		

Implementation of the PEACEPLUS Local Community Regeneration and Transformation theme. (CPP) (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* ↓</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Legal agreements being developed and issued Procurement of civils undertaken	
Sustainable investment in the protection and enhancement of Councils AONB's through implementation of NI Environment Funded action plan (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* ↓</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Ongoing delivery of priority actions across biodiversity, access, and community engagement, with strong partner collaboration and successful event and volunteer programming supporting AONB objectives. EF Change Request LoO signed.	
Progress the implementation of the Geo Park Action plan and continued management and investment in Council's geo park assets (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* ↓</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Progressed the integrated Strategy and Management Plan, aligned with council priorities and UNESCO guidance, and advanced partner engagement and communications to strengthen Geopark delivery.	
Continued stewardship of Landscape partnership legacy programme	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* ↓</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Partnership meetings ongoing with a programme of activity delivered via SLAs.	
To secure external investment where appropriate to support delivery of actions under this objective	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* ↓</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 £4.5 million of LEP funding has been ringfenced for NMDDC - 2025/26 - March 2028. NLHF - Castlewella Forest Park - £110k additional funding Capturing the collection at DCM - £4733 Mourne Esplanade Beach Access. £5,000	

ERT4 : To facilitate opportunities that will empower and enable communities to deliver against Councils key thematic areas.			
Efficient and effective delivery of Council's financial assistance programme	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Five calls open for 2025/2026 305 Letter of Offer Issued	
Support Capacity building across community and business sectors in the application of financial assistance. (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Pre Application workshops were delivered on financial assistance opportunities during open call for applications. Post assessment - workshops were held with successful applicants on the claim procedure and LoO terms and conditions.	
Progress the implementation of the Local Co-designed Peace Plus Action Plans. (CPP) (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Partnership Established Letter of Offer in place and deliver model established Implementation against action plan underway	

ERT5 : A statutory duty to apply the Building Regulations and Licensing obligations of Council.			
Maintain processing times within statutory targets.	Target		
	Progress	Green	—
	Notes:	1 Building control and licensing targets achieved	
Engage with regional partners in relation to regulations to ensure continued alignment with emerging requirements (CWB)	Target		
	Progress	Green	—
	Notes:	1 ongoing	
Delivery of licensing functions to support local communities and businesses	Target		
	Progress	Green	—
	Notes:	1 ongoing against KPIs	
Maintain percentage of time for processing domestic building control application within 21 days to 80%	Target	80%	80%
	Actual	86%	—
Maintain percentage of time for processing commercial building control application within 35 days to 80%	Target	80%	80%
	Actual	71%	—
	Notes:	1 Staff sick absence negatively impacting target.	
Maintain percentage of time for processing all application returns within 14 days to 85%	Target	85%	85%
	Actual	90%	—



ERT6 : A statutory duty to apply the Planning Act / Development Management Regulations and enforcement			
Improvement to processing times to achieve statutory targets.	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Amber</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 Achieved for major applications , local and enforcement targets still below target	
Engagement with key stakeholders and partners to develop a collaborative approach to planning improvements (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 workshop with agent and public consultation held on validation checklists	
Continued capacity building and mentoring within the planning function (CWB)	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Amber</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 ongoing with new staff and focus on group and 121 sessions etc	
Introduction of validation checklists	<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div>Introduction by September 2025</div> <div>Amber</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div></div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 approved by committee, staff training ongoing	
Average processing time for local planning applications of 15 weeks	<div>Target</div> <div>Actual</div>	<div>15</div> <div>49 weeks</div> <div>* 1</div>	<div>15</div> <div>—</div>
Notes:		1 stats only available up to June 2025	



Average processing time for major planning applications of 30 weeks	Target	30	30
	Actual	54 weeks * 1	—
Notes: 1 up to 30 June 2025			
70% of planning enforcement cases are processing within 39 weeks	Target	70%	70%
	Actual	74%	—
Average processing time for validating planning applications of 6 weeks	Target	6	6
	Actual	6	—
Reduce the number of planning applications in the system for more than 12 months to 170	Target	170	170
	Actual	473	—
Reduce the number of planning applications in the system for less than 12 months to 870.	Target	870	870
	Actual	1054	—
Reduce the number of enforcement cases in the system for more than 12 months to 580 (subject to the service operating at full complement).	Target	580	580
	Actual	610	—
To determine 110 applications per month	Target	660	1320
	Actual	703	—

ERT7 : Prepare and delivery of the Local Development Plan (LDP)			
Prepare and delivery of the Local Development Plan in accordance with the agreed timeframe		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div> <div>—</div>
	Notes:	1 Delivery remains on target - Draft strategy launched june 2025, consultation conclude sept 2025	
Ensure the LDP is reflective of Council's key strategic priorities as reflected in key strategies (CWB)		<div>Target</div> <div>Progress</div>	<div></div> <div>Green</div> <div>* 1</div> <div>—</div>
	Notes:	1 ongoing	

<b>Report to:</b>	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director Economy, Growth and Tourism
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Sonya Stephenson – Head of Programmes Sarah McClory – Project Coordinator

<table> <tr> <td><b>For decision</b></td><td><b>X</b></td><td><b>For noting only</b></td><td></td></tr> </table>				<b>For decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	
<b>For decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>For noting only</b>					
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>						
1.1	<p><u>Purpose</u> To approve the recommendations as set out in section 3.</p> <p><u>Background</u> The PEACEPLUS Partnership met on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 to recommend the delivery of the above activities under Strand 1 and 2 of the Co-designed Local Action Plan. The recommendations arising from these meetings require ERT Committee approval.</p>						
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>						
2.1	<p><u>Local Action Plan – Implementation</u></p> <p>The PEACEPLUS Partnership met on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 to recommend the delivery of the above activities under Strand 1 and 2 of the Co-designed Local Action Plan as set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.2 Enhancement of Community Facilities. Following a public expression of interest process community facilities were selected to enhance new or existing facilities which would enable increased levels of cross community engagement and service provision. Projects selected received full Council approval on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024.</li> <li>• 1.2 Enhancement of Sporting Facilities. Following a public expression of interest process sporting facilities were selected to enhance new or existing facilities which would enable increased levels of cross community engagement and service provision. Projects selected received full Council approval on 8th April 2024.</li> <li>• 2.6 Social and Emotional Support Programmes - Intergenerational Arts and Crafts</li> </ul>						

	<p>This project will focus on works that foster intergenerational connections and understanding, encourage sharing of personal histories and memories, promote creativity and artistic expression, create a tangible and lasting piece of art. Seven projects will be delivered, one in each DEA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.6 Social and Emotional Support Programmes – Intergenerational End Violence Against Women and Girls.</li> </ul> <p>This project will deliver an increased awareness and understanding of what violence against women and girls is and its root causes. Seven projects, one in each DEA.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	<p>It is recommended:</p> <p>To approve the procurement and delivery of the below activities under Strand 1 and 2 of the Co-designed Local Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strand 1.2 Enhancement of Community facilities.</li> <li>Strand 1.2 Enhancement of Sporting Facilities.</li> <li>Strand 2.6 Social and Emotional Support programmes – intergenerational Arts and Crafts</li> <li>Strand 2.6 Social and Emotional Support Programmes – Intergenerational End Violence Against Women and Girls</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	<b>Revenue/Payroll:</b> Project 85% funded by the EU and 15% by the two Governments
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>
5.1	<p><b><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b> 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><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></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	<p><b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b></p>
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:          Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<p><b>Appendices</b></p>
	<p>The below items are deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – <b>information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)</b> and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Business Case - 1.2 enhancement of Community facilities</li> <li>2. Business Case - 1.2 enhancement of Sporting facilities</li> <li>3. Business Case - 2.6 intergenerational Arts and crafts</li> <li>4. Business Case - 2.6 intergenerational EVAWG</li> </ul>
8.0	<p><b>Background Documents</b></p>
	<p>N/A</p>

<b>Report to:</b>	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Quarterly Museums Report (Q2 25/26 July-Sept)
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Alan Freeburn (Museum and Heritage Services Manager)

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	<b>X</b>
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p><u>Purpose</u> To provide a regular update on the activities, programming and achievements of NMD Museums.</p> <p><u>Background</u> NMD Museums consists of Down County Museum and Newry and Mourne Museum. Together they provide a museum service for the whole of NMDDC.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<p><b>Newry and Mourne Museum (NMM)</b></p> <p><u>Donations/Acquisitions</u></p> <p>Notable donations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• archive from the previously Newry-based Family Caring Trust</li> <li>• a collection of historic images of the Norton family of Clooneavin, now Moygannon House, in Rostrevor;</li> <li>• a collection of photographic slides taken by Cecil Newman for the Mourne area plan in the 1960s and 70s;</li> <li>• a journal written by Eiber Magenis of Poyntzpass, a young farmer and future political activist documenting political upheavals and the arrival of the potato blight in the 1840s.</li> </ul> <p>Paintings and photographs from Newry and Warrenpoint Town Halls and Monaghan Row have also been added to the museum's collection.</p>

### Conservation

Condition and treatment reports have been carried out on the portrait of John Martin that has been added to the museum collection after it was moved from Newry Town Hall.

### Funding

NMM has received an award of £2,500 from the Natural History Museum, London as part of its *Generation Hope: Fixing Our Broken Planet* initiative. It will be used to support a programme of talks, lectures and workshops aimed at 18–24-year-olds, exploring the historic and current impact of the fashion and textile industries on the environment, to be held in NMM next April as part of a UK-wide initiative.

NMM was also awarded £1522.64 from NI Museum's Council as part of its Local Museums Small Capital Grant Programme. This will be used to develop two new handling collections—a total of six boxes—for the Museum's outreach activities and workshops.

### Visitor Nos

Schools	158
Other Groups/Events	304
Outreach	98
General Visitors	1103
<b>Total</b>	<b>1663</b>

### Events

August Bank Holiday

European Heritage Open Days

Art History Festival

Iúr Cinn Fleadh

'Tenant Purchases before and after Partition' talk

### Misc

The Museum team have contributed 12 articles to the local press and online on a wide range of subjects including items from Newry Town Hall, the Hilltown Fair, shoes in the collection and gaming in the region.

Research has also been undertaken on the *flowering* (home piece-work embroidery) industry and on social housing in the region for the forthcoming PeacePlus projects that are commencing in 2026.

Throughout the summer months both museums ran free taster tours every day at 2pm

## Down County Museum (DCM)

### Exhibitions

A pop-up exhibition, 'Art in the Attic' was held on the top floor of the historic cell block in September as part of the Association for Art History's annual Art History Festival. It featured eight pieces from the museum collection that are normally in store.

The lighting in the display cases in the permanent galleries in the Governor's Residence was upgraded and replaced with LEDs. This will reduce energy costs and help staff to maintain the environmental conditions in the gallery as the LEDs do not produce heat.

### Conservation

Two items were conserved in the last quarter:

- Elise Sandes' writing desk
  - The desk required stabilisation to its structure, with a new castor, re-fitting of worn fixtures, re-gluing of dovetail joints and a new historically appropriate varnish/wax finish. It was discovered that a commemorative plaque, thought to be made of brass, is in fact silver.
- Tate of Down Clock
  - The clock has been off display for several years due to a displaced panel. This was re-secured, and the case has been polished using historically appropriate materials. It is now back on public display

### Donations/Acquisitions

Donation of objects relating to former Down High School/New Gaol including glass plate negatives of the New Gaol building, 1920s documents relating to the formation of a new school committee and correspondence from notable members of Co Down society.

### Funding

Down County Museum was awarded £4,733.90 from NI Museums Council's Museum Collections Capital Grant Programme for 'Capturing the Collection: Digitisation & Storage of Down County Museum's historic photographic collection'.

This project will allow the museum to acquire specialist equipment for scanning and photographing the museum collection for the purpose of digitisation. Specifically, it will focus on the museum's exceptional photographic collection, providing public access to thousands of historic images.

### Visitor Nos

Schools	44
Other Groups/Events	335
Outreach	0
General Visitors	3,211
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,590</b>



	<p><u>Events</u>  Curator's Talk x2 - Art History Festival  Forage and Print Workshop - Art History Festival  European Heritage Open Days  August Bank Holiday - Bricks4kidz Lego Experience  Downtime SummerFest</p> <p><u>Misc.</u>  Throughout the summer months both museums ran free taster tours every day at 2pm</p> <p>Popular local Youtuber, Adam B, used the museum as a location to shoot a video that has amassed 1.1 million views.</p> <p>Following a council motion, a plaque was unveiled to acknowledge the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE and VJ day.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	To note the update provided on the activities, programming and achievements of NMD Museums.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>
5.1	<p><b><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></b></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></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	<p><b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b></p>
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	<p><b>Appendices</b></p> <p>n/a</p>
8.0	<p><b>Background Documents</b></p> <p>n/a</p>

<b>Report to:</b>	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Monday 10 November 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Newry – Business Improvement District
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	<b>X</b>
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p><u>Purpose</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To note that Council have received formal notification from Newry BID, of their intention to hold a renewal ballot for a Business Improvement District for Newry</li> <li>b) To note that a report will be tabled at a future committee meeting to consider the detail of the business plan</li> </ul> <p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Newry BID was established in 2016 following introduction of Legislation to permit Business Improvement Districts to be established. This allowed businesses within a defined area to develop a business plan, put it to a formal ballot of all businesses within that area and if approved apply a levy based on NAV of properties which could be used to implement the Business plan objectives. Since establishment in 2016 Newry Bid has delivered a range of projects aligned to the BID Business plan around the key themes of; Marketing, City centre Access, Business Support, improving how City Centre Looks and Innovation.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council have received formal notification from Newry BID, of their intention to hold a renewal ballot for a Business Improvement District for Newry</li> <li>• The proposal is to renew the current Newry BID (2021 – 2026) for a five-year term</li> <li>• The proposed timescale is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ballot Opens: January 2026</li> <li>○ Ballot Closes: January 2026</li> <li>○ Declaration of result: March 2026</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council awaits the formal submission of a business plan from Newry BID in order to set the vision and objectives for a further 5-year term and support the progression of the above ballot.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	<p>It is recommended:</p> <p>a) To note that Council have received formal notification from Newry BID, of their intention to hold a renewal ballot for a Business Improvement District for Newry</p> <p>b) To note that a report will be tabled at a future committee meeting to consider the detail of the business plan</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	The ballot will be managed by CIVICA Election Services and this cost will be met by Newry BID
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>
5.1	<p><b><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b></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><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></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 checked="" 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>

<b>6.0</b>	<b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b>
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:                  Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:                  The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	n/a
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	n/a