

May 20th, 2024

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Sustainability & Environment Committee meeting to be held on Wednesday, 22nd May 2024 at 6:00 pm in Monaghan Row.

Committee Membership 2023 - 2024

Councillor T Andrews **Chairperson**

Councillor W Clarke **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor J Brennan

Councillor C Enright

Councillor K Feehan

Councillor D Finn

Councillor J Jackson

Councillor G Kearns

Councillor M Larkin

Councillor O Magennis

Councillor L McEvoy

Councillor K Murphy

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor D Taylor

Councillor J Truesdale

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 23 April 2024.

📎 *Action Sheet - 23 April 2024 inc. historic actions.pdf*

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For Consideration and/or Decision

4.0 Working Groups and Forums

For Decision

📎 *SE Committee Report - Working groups and forums 22.05.24.pdf*

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5.0 Report on Treatment of Invasive Species on Council Estate and Property

For Decision

📎 *SE Committee Report - Treatment of Invasive Species 22.05.24.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 1 - Invasive Species Results Newry City Park.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 2 - Photographs Giant Hogweed.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 3 Potential alternative control methods advantages disadvantages.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

6.0 Report on Sustainability & Environment Single Tender Action

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

📎 *SE Committee Report - Single Tender Actions 22.05.24.pdf*

Not included

 **Appendix 1 - Sustainability STA Report.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 2 - Environment STA Report.pdf**

Not included

7.0 Business case for the Occasional Hire of Hook Lift and Driver

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

 **SE Committee Report - Business Case for Occasional Hook Hire (Cover Report) 22.05.24.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 1 - Full Business Case - Occasional Hook Vehicle & Driver Hire 22.05.24.pdf**

Not included

8.0 Waste Management – Contract extensions

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

 **SE Committee Report - Waste Contract Extensions 22 May 2024.pdf**


Not included

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

9.0 Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin held on 25 April 2024

For Information

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.

 **ARC21 - JC086-25April24-JC MembersBulletin.F.pdf**

Not included

10.0 Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting in Committee Minutes of Thursday 29 February 2024

For Information

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.

📎 **ARC21 - JC086-25April24-Item7-JC InCommMinutes29Feb24.F.pdf**

Not included

For Noting

11.0 Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes of Thursday 29 February 2024

For Information

📎 **ARC21 - JC086-25April24-Item3-JC Minutes29Feb24.F.pdf**

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12.0 Report on Northern Ireland Environment Forum 2024

📎 **Report to Council on Conference.pdf**

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Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews
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Cllr Callum Bowsie
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Fionnuala Branagh
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Cllr Jim Brennan
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Lorraine/Emma Burns/McParland
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Cllr Pete Byrne
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Cllr Philip Campbell
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Cllr William Clarke
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Cllr Laura Devlin
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Ms Louise Dillon
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Cllr Cadogan Enright
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Cllr Killian Feehan
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Cllr Doire Finn
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Cllr Aoife Finnegan
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Cllr Conor Galbraith
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Cllr Mark Gibbons
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Cllr Oonagh Hanlon
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Cllr Glyn Hanna
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Cllr Valerie Harte
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Cllr Roisin Howell
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Cllr Tiarna Howie
.....
Cllr Jonathan Jackson
.....
Cllr Geraldine Kearns
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Miss Veronica Keegan
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Mrs Josephine Kelly
.....
Mrs Sheila Kieran
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Cllr Cathal King
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Cllr Mickey Larkin
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Cllr David Lee-Surginor
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Cllr Alan Lewis
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Cllr Oonagh Magennis
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Mr Conor Mallon
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Cllr Aidan Mathers
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Cllr Declan McAteer
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Cllr Leeanne McEvoy
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Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston
.....
Cllr Declan Murphy
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Sinead Murphy
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Cllr Kate Murphy
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Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
.....
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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Mr Conor Sage
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
.....
Nicola Stranney
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Sarah Taggart
.....
Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Ms Sinead Trainor
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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 COMMITTEE MEETING 26 JANUARY 2022					
NS/004/2022	Trade Waste and Caravan Refuse Collection Services	<p>Agreed to approve the report and recommendations:-</p> <p>1. Alternate Weekly Commercial Waste Collection Service</p> <p>Commercial refuse customers (shops and businesses) to be contacted and advised of the 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>	S Murphy	In progress	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 21 APRIL 2022					
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.	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		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.			
NS/057/2022	Various issues concerning the Events Space Kilkeel	<p>Note the contents of the report.</p> <p>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.</p>	K Scullion	In progress	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 22 JUNE 2022					
NS/091/2022	Enforcement Improvement Plan Update	<p>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.</p> <p>Test case footpaths – small footpath leading to WIN – officers to examine this area for dog fouling.</p>	S Murphy	In progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 18 OCTOBER 2022					
SE/143/2022	Notice of Motion – revenue from EV	Agreed to endorse the recommendation made at the	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	Charging Infrastructure	Strategic Finance Working Group 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.			
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TUESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2023					
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/018/2023	Business Case for the appointment of a contractor to	Agreed to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the content of the report. 	K Scullion	In Progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	undertake Legionella Control Measures on behalf of the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 			
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
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 22 MARCH 2023					
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

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 17 OCTOBER 2023					
SE/105/2023	Notice of Motion – Clean Indoor Air	It was agreed to adopt the Notice of Motion subject to including that before proceeding with any works, that officers obtain costings for air filtration systems in Downshire Civic Centre and the new civic centre in Newry and report same back to the Sustainable and Environment Committee for consideration in due course.	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/107/2023	Notice of Motion – Animal Welfare	It was agreed to remove the final sentence of the notice of motion. It was agreed to defer a decision on the Notice of Motion until the outcome of the legal process was known.	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/114/2023	Procurement of Deep Cleansing Services	It was agreed to procure Deep Cleansing Services as outlined in appendix 1 of the officer's report.	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 22 NOVEMBER 2023					
SE/125/2023	Report on Notice of Motion in relation to Livestock worrying	It was agreed that a meeting be organised with relevant partners to discuss a way forward to produce a publicity campaign highlighting the importance of ensuring dogs are kept under control in the Mourne Mountains	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/126/2023	Consultation response on creating a smokefree generation and tackling young vaping	It was agreed to approve the consultation response to the UK Government and devolved administrations consultation on creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping in Appendix 1	S Murphy	In Progress	N

SE/128/2023	Upgrade to Town Centre CCTV and Council Facilities CCTV	It was agreed that members note the content of the report, and a business case be developed and brought to the committee with a number of options for a way forward for the proposed development of a new suite of digital CCTV systems for the Council's facilities	G Kane	In Progress	N
SE/129/2023	Summer Pitch Maintenance 2024-2026	The committee agreed to endorse the key pitch work principles and the commencement of the tender process for maintenance works as outlined in Section 2 of the report	A Mallon	In Progress	N
SE/135/2023	NFLA Membership	It was agreed to retain membership of the NFLA and to pay the current 2023/24 membership fees as outlined within the officer's report. It was also agreed to seek representation on the NFLA Steering Committee via Party Leaders and that as part of the Council's membership we look at the possibility of hosting an event.	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/137/2023	Business case for the purchase of Forklift Truck	It was agreed to approve the business case for the purchase of a replacement forklift truck	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/141/2023	Sustainable Food Places Bridging the Gap Funding Application	It was agreed to note the recent support for the "Bridging the Gap" funding application. Committee would be advised on the outcome of the application at the earliest opportunity	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/142/2023	Biodiversity Strategy	It was agreed to note the draft Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, along with the attached consultation questions, and the proposed public consultation. Members to provide any	S Murphy	In Progress	N

		further feedback through NMD Speak Service or besustainable@nmandd.org			
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 20 DECEMBER 2023					
<u>ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014</u>					
SE/147/2023	Business case for renewal of service contract for supply of Wood Pellets to Greenbank Council Depot, Newry.	It was agreed to note the contents of the report and to approve the business case for the supply of wood pellets for the Greenbank Depot biomass boiler for a 5-year period.	G Kane	In Progress	N
SE/148/2023	Review of Public Convenience opening/closing times	It was agreed to note the contents of the report and approve the opening/closing times contained within Appendix 1 of the officer's report, based on the review of the cleansing review and liaison with Council's HR department to ensure consideration of aspects contained within point 2.4 of the officer's report.	G Kane	In Progress	N
<u>FOR NOTING – These items are deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014</u>					
SE/154/2023	Update on rebranding/ redevelopment of Newry Market	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	G Kane	In Progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 24 JANUARY 2024					
Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N

SE/004/2024	Report on Notice of Motion – Flood Defences	The following was agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further investigate the possibility of a Shared Island application to assist with flood defences - Write to DFI Rivers and request a river maintenance schedule. - Seel legal advice to clarify if a meeting with DFI Rivers and the Drainage & Flooding Council would compromise the ongoing independent review of the recent flooding in the district. 	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/005/2024	Report on Notice of Motion – Flood Preparedness	The following was agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaise with local DEA forums to discuss and plan the set-up of Community Resilience Groups - Investigate the facilitation of sandbag availability and management through these Community Resilience Groups - Look into sharing information the website from the Regional Community Resilience Group 	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/006/2024	Business Case for firefighting equipment contract	It was agreed to note the content of the report and associated business case, and to accept the conclusion of the attached Business Case	C Sage	In Progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 21 FEBRUARY 2024					
Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N

SE/018/2024	Report on Notice of Motion – Climate Change	<p>It was agreed that this Council acknowledges the work done to date to help address the climate emergency; reaffirms previous motions regarding the degenerating global situation; and again, reiterates that the crisis is the biggest threat posed to our constituents, our district, and our planet.</p> <p>Further acknowledges, however, that recent data collated by Climate Emergency UK ranks NMDDC 8th out of the 11 Councils within NI; and thus, pledges to include ambitious targets in the forthcoming Sustainability and Climate Strategies and Action Plans to expedite implementation</p>	S Murphy	In progress	N
		<p>It was also agreed that a benchmark report would be brought back to Committee regarding Council actions and progress to mitigating climate change impact.</p>	S Murphy		N
SE/021/2024	Home to Hospital Schemes	<p>It was agreed to approve the continued funding for the Mourne and Slieve Gullion Home to Hospital Volunteer driver schemes from 1 April 2024.</p>	S Murphy	In progress	N
		<p>It was also agreed that Council seek Expressions of Interest from suitable Community/Voluntary sector organisations to administer the schemes, subject to funding being identified</p>	S Murphy	In Progress	N

SE/023/2024	Waste and Environmental Health Charges 2024/25	It was agreed to approve the proposed Waste Management Services Scale of Charges 2024/25 It was also agreed to approve the Ship Sanitation Inspection Charges in section 2.2 of the Officer's Report	S Murphy	Approved and updated	Y
SE/025/2024	Business Case for Minor Construction Works	It was to accept the conclusion of the Business Case to proceed with option 3 to appoint 2 minor construction works contractor to complete minor works across the Council for 3-year period. To be procured through tender or use of a suitable Framework	C Sage	In Progress	N
SE/026/2024	Business Case for upgrade to fuel pumps and vehicle wash at Greenbank depot	It was agreed to approve the recommendations contained within the business case.	C Sage	In Progress	N
SE/028/2024	STA for additional repairs to Christmas Illuminations	It was agreed to approve a second STA to cover all outstanding costs associated with Christmas Illuminations 2023	C Sage	In Progress	N
SE/029/2024	Recycling of Paper at Household Recycling Centres	It was agreed that Council avail of the Bring Bank Servicing Contract – Lot 3: Mixed paper via arc21 at Downpatrick, Newry, Warrenpoint, Kilkeel, Camlough, Crossmaglen and Newtownhamilton HRCs from 1 April 2024.	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 20 MARCH 2024					
Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SE/036/2024	Former landfill site review – Aughnagun and Drumanakelly	It was agreed that officers develop a Business Case for the installation of Solar Panels at the former landfill site Aughnagun for further consideration.	S Murphy S Murphy	In Progress	N

		It was agreed that Council further explore the benefits of installing reed beds at both sites in order to make the sites self-sustaining in terms of the management of the leachate generated on site	S Murphy S Murphy		
SE/037/2024	Business Case for Mini-Tractor at Castlewellan Forest Park	It was agreed to note the contents of the report and associated business case, and to accept the conclusion of the business case to proceed with the procurement of effective replacement machinery.	C Sage	In Progress	N
SE/040/2024	Electric forklifts	It was agreed to note that in line with Council's Climate Change Emergency Declaration and environmental objectives, Council officers will progress with the procurement of a battery powered forklift truck.	C Sage	In Progress	N

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
23 APRIL 2024

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SE/045/2024	Action sheet of meeting held 20.03.2024	It was agreed to note the action sheet	S Murphy	Noted	Y
SE/046/2024	Notice of Motion – Newry Market	Officers continue their commitment to revitalise the market through engagement with traders, the business community and other potential stakeholders. It was also agreed that Officers reach out to other local councils with successful markets and explore additional uses to	S Murphy S Murphy	In progress	N

		encourage footfall, including with arts and community groups It was further agreed that a report be brought back to committee in 6 months to provide detail of any progress made	S Murphy		
SE/047/2024	Review of Caravan Site License Conditions	It was agreed to approve a review of Council's Caravan Site Licence conditions for Residential Caravan Sites and Holiday and Touring Caravan Sites	S Murphy	In progress	N
		It was also agreed to revisit the motorhome strategy in partnership with all relevant Directorates, alongside addressing any relevant by-laws to ensure a strategy could be developed that suited the needs of the motorhome community and the local population.	S Murphy	In progress	N
SE/048/2024	Christmas Illuminations 2024-2026	It was agreed to note the content of the report and business case.	C Sage		
		It was agreed to approve Option 3 of the Business Case to tender for a competent electrical contractor	C Sage	In Progress	N
		It was further agreed that a report would be brought back to a future Committee meeting on the re-establishment of the Sustainability and Environment Working Group.	S Murphy	Report being brought to May 2024 S&E Committee	Y
SE/049/2024	STA – Lubricants for Fleet Workshops	It was agreed to approve the STA for the procurement of fleet related lubricants for Fleet Workshops	C Sage	Actioned	Y
SE/050/2024	District Council Waste Management Resource	The following was agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the update on discussions at a national level with regard to UK-wide proposals in respect of 	S Murphy	Actioned	Y

		<p>draft regulations for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the proposed annual financial contribution in 24-25 and 25-26 to appoint District Council collaborative waste specialist to deal with the implications of EPR. 			
SE/051/2024	STA – Waste Management	It was agreed to approve the extension of the STA for collection, treatment and processing of residual waste, rigid plastics and mixed paper from Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Castlewellan Recycling Centres as outlined in the Officer's Report.	S Murphy	In progress	
SE/052/2024	Occasional Hire of Hook Lift and Driver	It was agreed to defer this item to a future committee date	S Murphy	Report being brought to May 2024 S&E Committee	Y
SE/053/2024	Consultation on Rethinking Resources – Climate Action	It was agreed to note the verbal update	S Murphy	Noted	Y

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 May 2024
Subject:	Sustainability and Environment Working Group and Forums
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment

<table><tr><td>For decision</td><td>X</td><td>For noting only</td><td></td></tr></table>		For decision	X	For noting only	
For decision	X	For noting only			
1.0	Purpose and Background				
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Member approval on future meetings of the Sustainability and Environment Working Group and Forums.				
1.2	<p>At SPR committee in October 2022, a review of Council working groups was undertaken and members agreed to amalgamate the following working groups into an overarching Sustainability and Environment Working Group (SEWG), formally the Neighbourhood Services Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fairtrade Steering Group• Review of Public Convenience Working Group• Strategic Waste Working Group• Sustainability & Climate Change Forum. <p>At this meeting it was agreed that the Southern and South Eastern Health Forums were to be kept under review.</p>				
1.3	Following a Notices of Motions at the September 2023 S&E Committee, members agreed the establishment of Disabled Users Forum and a Notice of Motion at the 2023 S&E Committee saw the establishment of a Cleansing and Refuse Task Group chaired by the Council Chairperson and open to all Elected members to attend.				
2.0	Key Issues				
2.1	A number of meetings of the SEWG did not progress unavailability of members to attend. It is proposed that future meetings would be held quarterly prior to S&E Committee meetings, commencing in June 2024.				
2.2	The Southern and South Eastern Health Forums have not met for some time. Officers request feedback from members on future need and frequency of meetings.				
2.3	<p>The Disabled Users forum met on 15 November 2023. It is proposed that a further meeting of this forum is planned to take forward the proposals from the Notice of Motion and the initial meeting. As this is cross-cutting across Directorates, this forum will sit outside the SEWG.</p> <p>The Cleansing and Refuse Task Group met on 24 January 2024. As this task group is open to members outside of S&E Committee, it will also sit outside the SEWG. The next meeting is to be held on 22 May 2024. It is proposed to continue to be held quarterly</p>				

	prior to S&E Committee meetings on an alternative sequence from SEWG and to give opportunity for members outside of S&E Committee to attend, it will be set up on a hybrid basis.
3.0	Recommendations
	<p>Members are asked to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability and Environment Working Group to be held quarterly prior to S&E Committee meetings, commencing in June 2024. • Cleansing and Refuse Task Group meetings to be held in a hybrid format, quarterly prior to S&E Committee meetings. • Members to provide feedback on the future need and frequency of Southern and South Eastern Health Forum meetings.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	No additional resources 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 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 checked="" 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> <i>n/a</i></p>
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
	None
8.0	Background Documents
	SE/086/2023 – Notice of Motion SE/106/2023 – Notice of Motion

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 May 2024
Subject:	Treatment of Invasive Species across the Council Estate
Reporting Officer	Conor Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability
Contact Officer	Aidan Mallon, Head of Maintenance

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



For decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background																								
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval to treat invasive species, for example Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed, at Albert Basin with herbicide separately from the existing weed control programme.</p> <p>The report will also provide Members with an update on meeting the Councils objective to phase out completely the use of herbicides containing glyphosate for controlling weeds and invasive species on Council property and highlight the significant operational challenges from the overall reduction of herbicides when managing invasive species.</p>																								
2.0	Key Issues																								
2.1	<p>At the Council Meeting held in January 2020 the following recommendation was approved. <i>To undertake a 12-month review with a target to phase out completely the use of herbicides containing glyphosate for controlling weeds and invasive species on Council property within 3 years or as soon as possible.</i></p> <p>It was also agreed that Officers would provide an annual review to Council concerning achievement of this recommendation.</p> <p>This target was set on usage of herbicides containing glyphosate during the financial year 2018/19. The quantity of glyphosate used during this period was 498 litres, as detailed in the table below.</p> <table><tr><th colspan="4">Specific Herbicide Application 2019</th></tr><tr><th>Location</th><th>Herbicide</th><th>Herbicide Litres</th><th>Actual Glyphosate Litres</th></tr><tr><td>Newry Section</td><td>Roundup</td><td>900</td><td>432</td></tr><tr><td>Downpatrick Section</td><td>Roundup</td><td>115</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>CDA Roundup</td><td>100</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Totals</td><td></td><td>1115</td><td>498</td></tr></table> <p>The annual reduction programme proposed was:</p> <p>Year 1 (2020) - 25% reduction (375l) was the target, and this was achieved. Year 2 (2021) – 50% reduction (250l) was the target, and this was achieved. Year 3 (2022) - 75% reduction was this target (125l), and this was achieved. Year 4 (2023) – 75% reduction of target maintained (125l).</p>	Specific Herbicide Application 2019				Location	Herbicide	Herbicide Litres	Actual Glyphosate Litres	Newry Section	Roundup	900	432	Downpatrick Section	Roundup	115	55		CDA Roundup	100	11	Totals		1115	498
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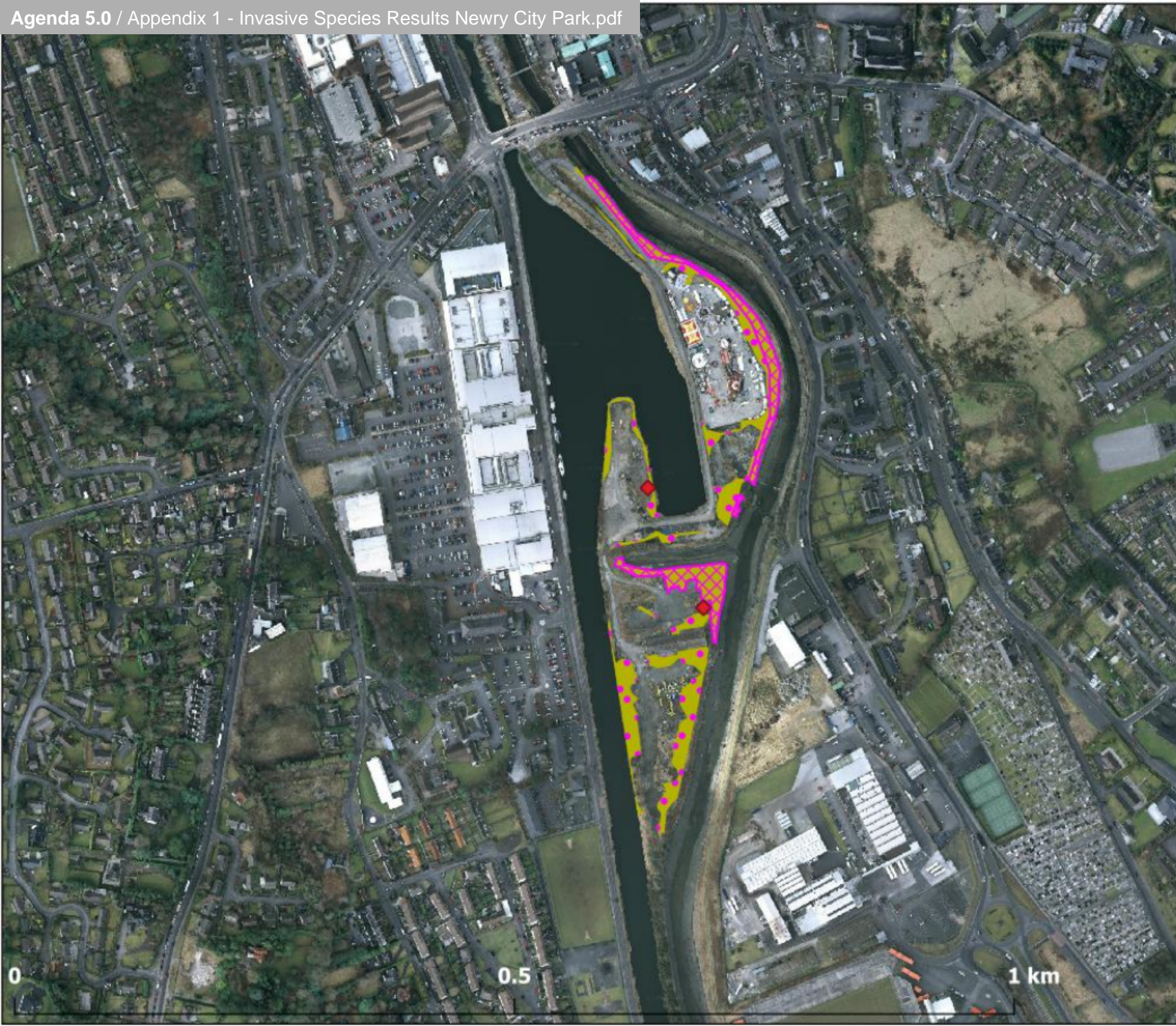
2.2	<p>At the March 2023 S&E Committee, members agreed to the use of herbicides containing glyphosate for controlling weeds and invasive species on Council property during the calendar year 2023 with a target of applying no more than the amount of glyphosate applied in 2022 and to continue to work towards a 100% reduction.</p> <p>Adhering to the 75% reduction in herbicides has caused significant issues with control of weeds and invasive species on sites under Council management. The reduction of herbicide has placed an increased pressure on manual resources for eradication of weeds by strimming, hand weeding, hoeing etc. This impedes the ability of grounds maintenance staff from completing other duties e.g. planting for upcoming Irish Open Golf Tournament.</p> <p>The reduction of herbicides is having a significant impact on the ability of Council to manage invasive species. There is an acute risk to the Newry City Park project at Albert Basin from the proliferation of Giant Hogweed. The amount of Hogweed has spread significantly since 2022. Ecologists have advised that the presence of Giant Hogweed could cause a significant constraint to the construction programme and have advised that management options are considered as quickly as possible to extend the treatment regime to prevent the plant going into seed this year, further exacerbating the problem. Appendix 1 shows the presence of Invasive Species at Albert Basin and appendix 2 shows photographs examples of current Giant Hogweed at Albert Basin, Newry.</p>
2.3	<p><u>Alternative Treatment Methods</u></p> <p>Potential alternative methods for weed and invasive species control, such as steam, hot water, flaming, acetic acid, strimming, manual weeding have been explored, as detailed in Appendix 3. These methods are more labour intensive and result in resources being diverted to manual weed and invasive species control rather than resources being allocated to more general grounds maintenance roles, including planting.</p>
2.4	<p><u>Invasive Species</u></p> <p>It is a statutory requirement for Council to control invasive species effectively.</p> <p>Through implementing the programme for reducing application of herbicides containing glyphosate the following issues have arisen.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manual methods of control for invasive species, specifically hog weed, are limited due to health and safety risks associated with burns from contamination with sap. 2. Invasive species control has been limited considerably and spread and growth has increased considerably. This poses an environmental and public health risk. 3. Increase in the complaints from public regarding issues with Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed. 4. Structural damage to property both Council and private. 5. Insurance claims from public who have come in contact with Invasive Species on Council properties.
2.5	<p>Officers are seeking S&E Committee approval for separate treatment of Giant Hogweed at Albert Basin under a targeted Invasive Species Management Plan to avoid potential delays to the Newry City Park project.</p> <p>It is proposed that during 2024 the Council will identify all areas affected by invasive species and put in place a Council wide Invasive Species Management Plan with estimated required volumes of herbicides containing glyphosate.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the content of the report.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the use of herbicides containing glyphosate for controlling invasive species at Albert Basin outside of the current allocation for normal weed control and the development of an Invasive Species Management Plan for the Council Estate.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Costs associated with the control of weeds and invasive species are attributed to the Councils Revenue Grounds maintenance budget.
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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
7.1	Appendix 1 – Invasive Species at Albert Basin
7.2	Appendix 2 – Photographs of Giant Hogweed Albert Basin, Newry
7.3	Appendix 3 – Potential alternative control methods, advantages / disadvantages
8.0	Background Documents
8.1	SE/037/2023 - March S&E Committee Report – Treatment of invasive species and weeds.

Legend

-  Japanese Knotweed
-  Dense Giant Hogweed
-  Sparse Giant Hogweed

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Client: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Project: Newry City Park

Title: DRAFT Invasive species results

Figure No. N/A


Project No.	Date	Revision
NI2887	09.04.2024	D01

Invasive Species: Example of Giant Hogweed: Albert Basin, Newry – May 2024







<div>  </div>			
Potential Alternative Control Methods for NM&DDC			
Method	Use	Advantages	Disadvantages
Steam	Hard surfaces	Relatively safe to use around people and animals however a heat application is utilised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat is rapidly lost to the atmosphere, immediately reducing effectiveness as the plant is not kept long in the “kill zone”. Loses effectiveness when treating soft surfaces due poor ground penetration. Multiple applications across the season due to little or no effect on the plants root structure. Expensive – time & labour Diesel - vehicular & machine consumption pollution.
Hot Water	Hard surfaces	Relatively safe to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atmosphere impacts temperature of hot water rapid heat loss. Only kills 50-60% of targeted weeds - multiple applications required due to intact root structure. Expensive – time & labour Diesel consumption pollution.
Foamstream (Potentially a Consideration)	For weeds & moss on hard surfaces. Play area safety surfacing; grass growth around trees	Biodegradable foam, travels down the stem & into root, sufficiently killing plant. Useable in all weather.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs (min of £30k for machine +20k plus for van) Cost of operative(s) Diesel consumption & pollution. Unit operates from hose / machine concept – only limited radius for application. <u>Machines & vehicles cannot access many pathways, banks, woodlands etc.</u>
Flame weeding	Hard surfaces	No chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and safety issues Vegetation quick to grow back, regular treatments to prevent regrowth - 14 times a season. High cost in terms of labour
Electricity		No Chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High health and safety risk. If not used correctly, electrical currents potential to initiate fire or cause death or serious injury.

Acetic acid	Hard surfaces	No licence required. Kill most vegetation by burning through wax coating of leaves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and unpleasant smell, cause of irritation to the airway, headaches for operatives. • Only used in dry weather conditions. • <u>Operative health effects ???</u>
Mechanical methods	Hard Surfaces	Cleans detritus from kerb lines, paving etc reducing chances of weeds growing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brushes don't fully remove the plant structure below ground leads to fast regrowth. • Repeated treatments required over the season to keep weeds at bay. • Diesel consumption & pollution • Increased H&S issues with roadside working etc.
Strimming	Hard surfaces	Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strimming ineffective long-term solution Disturbs the seed bed & spreads seeds increasing total weed coverage. • Causes rapid regrowth across area via almost pruning plants as opposed to removing.
Manual weeding	All surfaces	Very targeted approach to controlling weeds Instantly visible results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed of regrowth high never effectively get all the root. • Weed coverage increases year on year - disturbed seed bed, spreading of seeds when pulling out weeds. • Increasing time and cost of treating the same area. • Labour costs • Operatives suffer from repetitive stress injuries – bending continually
Doing nothing	NA	Apparent cost savings. Some apparent environmental benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative impact on public perception. <p>Organisations have a responsibility to control weeds to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain aesthetics of area • Preserve infrastructure • Avoid health and safety risks for the public. • The cost of doing nothing leads to a dramatic increase in the seed bank, increasing overall weed population. This Dramatic increase in future cost and time controlling unwanted vegetation.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irreparable damage to playing fields & bowling greens.• <u>Infrastructure damage – weeds grow, expand into pavements, roots expand, further detritus gathers, weeds increase & become stronger. Stronger growth expands the surfaces further opening more degradation.</u>• <u>If alternatives not employed. Perennials and self-sown trees start to emerge which will ultimately significantly degrade infrastructure causing massive renovation capital schemes from year 5 onwards.</u>
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Please note this is an ongoing process of research, trial and practical feedback.

ITEM 3
ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting No 85
MINUTES
Thursday 29 February 2024

Members Present:

Councillor C Blaney	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor T Kelly	Belfast City Council
Councillor A Givan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor P Kennedy	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor G McKeen (<i>Deputy Chair</i>)	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor T Andrews	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor K Murphy	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Members' Apologies:

Councillor M Goodman (<i>Chair</i>)	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor E McLaughlin	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Alderman P Michael	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor J Cochrane	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor A Cathcart	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor E McDonough-Brown	Belfast City Council
Councillor B Smyth	Belfast City Council
Alderman S Skillen	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor R Quigley	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor A Wilson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor C Enright	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers Present:

T Walker	arc21
H Campbell (<i>Secretary</i>)	arc21
K Boal	arc21
B McKeown	arc21
M Lavery	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
D Lindsay, N Martin	Ards & North Down Borough Council
B Murray	Belfast City Council
J Knox	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
D Carey	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

Officers' Apologies:

C Matthews, John McConnell	Belfast City Council
R Harvey	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
P Thompson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
S Murphy	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
J Green	arc21

Apologies were noted from the Chair and the Deputy Chair took the Chair for the meeting.

Item 1 - Conflicts of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality Statement, and none were noted.
Action: Noted

Item 2 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 3 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 084 held on 25 January 2024

The Joint Committee approved the minutes. Proposed by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Murphy.

Action: Agreed

Item 4 - Matters Arising

Any matters arising, and updates on relevant issues were provided during the meeting.

Action: Noted

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move "*in committee*" which was agreed. Proposed by Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Andrews.

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 five matters discussed.

Item 5 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 084 held on 25 January 2024 'in committee' (*approved*)

Item 6 - Matters Arising (*noted*)

Item 7 - Residual Waste Treatment Project (*noted*)

Item 8 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues (*noted*)

Item 9 - Provision of Services for the Receipt, Storage and Transfer of Municipal Waste - Contract Award (*approved*)

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Proposed by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Murphy.

Item 10 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Service Status

Ms Boal reported that all services were operational during the month of January 2024 and no contractors required to put in place any of their contingency measures.

Performance

Ms Boal reported that turnaround times had been reviewed for January, and in most cases the contractors provided adequate reasons for these except for Bryson for which service credits were applied due to some vehicles exceeding the service levels.

She advised that overweight vehicles on all contracts continue to be monitored by arc21 at contractor meetings and from December, there was a minor increase in the Landfill contract and a decrease in the Organics contract tonnages.

In January, she reported that most reports were submitted on time and there were only minor issues with Heatricks reporting that required revision due to incorrect data.

She noted that there were ten rectification notices in relation to Bottle Banks in January, three for Paper Banks and one for Banks containing cans. All rectification notices were responded to within the specified timeframes meaning that no service credits were issued.

She advised that arc21 has been asked by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to consider bringing the paper banks into the contract and that we will start conversations with the contractor which was awarded the contract.

Health & Safety

Incidents

During January, Ms Boal reported that there had been three Health & Safety incidents reported to arc21 by contractors, and they were presented for information.

She advised that arc21 is starting to see trends which could ultimately indicate changes in management practice leading to injury or potential loss of life and that arc21 is doing as much as it can to bring these incidents to the attention of councils' officers.

As such, she noted that a review of the reported incidents and near misses across the arc21 contracts had been undertaken and in conjunction with our external health and safety advisor, two Safety Alert notices had been drawn up and issued to the councils and their contractors to seek to highlight good practice. It is intended that more of these alerts will be issued over the course of the year to continue to raise awareness of the importance of Health & Safety at the sites.

Audits

She reported that the external health and safety consultants continue to undertake audits, and the new schedule of audits for 2024 was now underway.

In January, an audit was conducted at Bryson's MRF site in Mallusk when only one minor health and safety issue was identified, and arc21 was working closely with the contractor to resolve these as quickly as possible.

Rejected Loads

In terms of rejected loads, Ms Boal reported there had been one rejected load delivered into Organics delivery sites in January and this was due to residual waste being left in the vehicle.

Accordingly, 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

The contract tonnages for January 2024 were presented as follows:

November:

- an increase of 3.3% for MDR material delivered into Bryson;
- a 0.4% decrease for MDR material delivered to ReGen;
- a 21.5% increase for Type 1 organics material;
- an increase of 2.8% for Type 2 organics material; and
- a 17.1% decrease for the Landfill Residual Waste Contract.

And she reported that no residual waste was sent direct to landfill by Belfast City Council (BCC), and Mid & East Antrim Borough Council (MEABC) bulky waste was sent direct to landfill in January 2024.

Supplies

The summary of the aspects pertinent to the supplies contract were presented and Ms Boal reported that the contractor had advised that there had not been any significant impact on supplies in relation to the Red Sea issues as expected.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Item 11 - Waste Tonnage Trends

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

She highlighted the following:

- landfill - following similar trend to the previous year although at a lower level with the BCC residual now taken out, but hadn't dropped significantly;
- BCC residual tonnage - shows same upward trend Dec to Jan as landfill;
- Organics type 1 - following same line as 2021/22 from October and close to same trend as the 2022/23 year;
- Organics Type 2 - coalesced in Jan with previous years and following similar trend to the 2022/23 year but quite weather dependent; and
- MRF combined tonnage - coalesced in Jan for past 4 years.

The other contracts were also presented in graph form for information.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Item 12 - Call for Evidence on Reforming The Producer Responsibility System for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

Ms Boal presented the proposed arc21 response to the Call for Evidence, which was launched on 28 December 2023 with the closing date for submissions of 7 March 2024.

She advised that a first draft had been discussed with the Steering Group Officers and their views had been considered and reflected as appropriate.

She noted that a large part of the Call for Evidence centred around the allocation and targets for the Producer Compliance Scheme or is asking for specific evidence that arc21 does not hold.

In these instances, arc21 is recommending that no response is provided. The main focus of the arc21 response is in relation to considerations around increasing and capturing data in relation to increasing re-use.

The Joint Committee was asked to consider and approve the proposed response for submission by the deadline of 7 March 2024.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee agreed to submit the proposed response. Proposed by Councillor Givan and seconded by Councillor Murphy.

Action: Agreed

Members thanked Ms Boal for the work taken in producing this response.

Item 13 - Consultation on Reforming The Producer Responsibility System for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

Ms Boal presented the proposed arc21 response to the consultation, which was launched on 28 December 2023 with the closing date for submissions of 7 March 2024

She advised that a first draft had also been discussed with the Steering Group Officers and their views had been considered and reflected as appropriate.

She reported that the policy proposals centre around the introduction of a UK-wide collection system for small and bulky items that would be financed largely by importers and manufacturers of the equipment.

The key areas covered in the consultation are increasing collections of Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) from households, increasing distributor collections infrastructure, new producer obligations for online marketplaces and fulfilment houses, dealing with environmental impacts of vaping products and system governance, the creation of a WEEE Scheme Administrator and performance indicators.

The Joint Committee was asked to consider and approve the proposed response for submission by the deadline of 7 March 2024.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee agreed to submit the proposed response. Proposed by Councillor Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Murphy.

Action: Agreed

Item 14 - Waste Management Plan Addendum

Mr Walker reported on the work underway in terms of the review of the existing arc21 Waste Management Plan (WMP). He advised that the most recent arc21 WMP was developed in 2015 and had been broadly considered as lasting until 2020. However, since this date there have been the outworkings of the Brexit referendum, and the subsequent diversion of resources within DAERA which has culminated in revisions to the DAERA Waste Strategy being delayed by several years. This has resulted in the councils similarly deferring the commencement of a new WMP until such a time as the new DAERA Strategy was finalised as to do otherwise risked failing to incorporate adequately some of the changes which may be introduced [in the Strategy] reflecting the multiple environmental policies now being introduced in Great Britain.

Given the length of time that the WMP had been standing on, discussions were held between the eleven councils, and it had been agreed that the WMP should be updated through the development of three addendums which could provide a light touch update. This approach would permit the WMPs to remain current until DAERA had published a new Waste Strategy and the councils had considered how to update their own WMPs.

Consultants had been appointed and first drafts have been presented and considered amongst the councils. arc21 has responded and a further draft has now been received and is in the process of being reviewed, and the comments will be presented to Steering Group officers shortly to sense check its content. It is anticipated that when the final draft is completed, the addendum will be presented to the councils in order to be considered appropriately.

In terms of updating the Waste Strategy, he speculated that a consultation document was likely to be released imminently, once Ministerial sign off has been agreed.

Given any consultation document is going to need to include delivery of extended producer responsibility (EPR), deposit return scheme (DRS), waste electrical and electronic equipment, waste tracking, emission trading for waste facilities and landfill availability (amongst other items), it is expected that the consultation term will last for several months. In response, in due course a new WMP will need to consider the councils' response regarding the resourcing and delivery of these new policies.

Members will be kept updated on developments accordingly.

Action: Mr Walker

Item 15 - arc21 Corporate Plan 2024-2028

Mr Walker advised that arc21's current Corporate Plan runs to March 2024 and a new Corporate Plan is currently being drafted. He advised that arc21 has been working with consultants to develop a new Plan and it is expected that this will be finalised within the next month. In order to complete the Plan, he reported that a meeting was to be held with the Steering Group officers to ensure that this Plan appropriately prioritises actions for the next four years.

It is planned to present a draft of the Plan to the Joint Committee in March for consideration by Members, after which it will be issued to the councils and CEXs for their consideration to ensure it aligns with their corporate agendas.

He reiterated that the four-year term of the plan accords with the period as a sitting council, offset by one year. This offset would allow for new Members to familiarise themselves with arc21's activities prior to the development and approval of a new Plan.

Action: Mr Walker

Item 16 - arc21 annual seminar

Mr Walker reported that the arc21 annual seminar is online and is scheduled for 20 March 2024 from 10-12.30. This year, the seminar will focus specifically on packaging and packaging waste which should help inform Members and officers of developments which may have an increasing bearing with the introduction of EPR next year.

He advised that a variety of speakers had agreed to present, including from NILGA, BIFFA, CAFRE, CIWM, UK Research and Innovation, WRAP etc.

He noted that invitations to register would be sent out to Members and Officers imminently and that arc21 is extending the invitation to a wider audience, including other NI councils, Department officials etc.

Members and Officers were encouraged to attend, and Mr Walker advised that should other Members or officers be interested from within the councils they would be welcome.

Mr Walker and Ms Campbell are progressing with arrangements.

Action: Mr Walker/Ms Campbell

Item 17 - AOB

DfI Minister meeting – Mr Walker referred to the proposal discussed in the ‘in committee’ section of the meeting in regard to writing to the Minister for Infrastructure to request a meeting with the Chair, Deputy Chair and arc21 Chief Executive. This was again proposed by Councillor Givan and seconded by Councillor Kennedy, and agreed unanimously.

Action: Mr Walker

Mr Walker also referred to a recent flurry of activity in the media regarding the illegal Mobuoy dump on the outskirts of Londonderry and the issue of the magnitude of spend which complicated DAERA achieving finances closure on its accounts.

He advised that in relation to residual waste, the arc21 councils continue to produce waste and without appropriate facilities for the treatment and disposal of this material, other outlets have to be secured elsewhere. The ongoing need for facilities remains a real grounding issue for councils and one which will not go away.

Action: Noted

Item 18 - Next Meeting Thursday 28 March 2024 using MS Teams.

Mr Walker advised that the current legislation concerning the use of online platforms for Committee meetings expires on 24 March 2024 and arc21 are keeping a watching brief to see if this will be extended. Members will be kept informed of developments and if this is not extended, then meetings will return to in person and suitable arrangements will be confirmed.

Action: Mr Walker/Ms Campbell

The Chair thanked Mr Walker and Ms Boal for their extensive reports and continued effort.

Date: _____ **Chairman:** _____

Report on Northern Ireland Environment Forum 2024

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POSITIVES

- Conference speakers clearly outlined the new regulatory frameworks now in force in NI for biodiversity, the natural environment, natural resources and climate change. **All this will have personnel and cost implications for Council.**
- The methodologies for reporting by public bodies and the private sector were outlined with examples
- Private corporations and public bodies made presentations on how they were fulfilling these increasingly demanding regulations.
- Conference was well attended across public sector including council officers from Newry Mourne and Down

NEGATIVES

The positive financial impact of the economics of the 'Green Economy' were not covered. The focus was on reporting requirements and the methodology of carrying it out and the non-economic environmental and health benefits to the community or customers of corporations and benefits to biodiversity. The fact that a positive approach to the Green Economy could pay for all this, and more, was not considered.

An example of this point was NIWater who made an excellent presentation but failed to mention that they were NIE's biggest NI customer for energy and that their second largest revenue cost is power. Having worked with NIWater I know that by 2027 they will have a surplus of energy being produced on their lands across NI and that the profits from their renewable energy farms and installations would likely meet more than all the costs of the new systems of environmental regulation and reporting. More macro-economic considerations were also missed like;

- Growth in well paid employment around NI driven by the Green Economy
- Moving NI to cheaper energy sources and reducing imports – keeping more buying power in the local economy, more companies paying rates and taxes
- Lowering costs in public sector bodies (NIWater example above **or our Council**)
- Increased competitiveness for private sector actors.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The Office for Environmental Protection is now live in NI and already has 15 staff. It is UK wide. (IMO it partly compensates for NI being the only place in the UK or Europe without an Independent Environmental Agency)

- a) They will be starting to report on Public Bodies in NI
- b) They are empowered to investigate issues they see as systemic – eg water quality in rivers, river basin management and bathing waters
- c) They will be policing Environmental Improvement Plans , biodiversity plans etc– **e.g. in our Council**
- d) Likewise Stormont's Climate Action plan.

2. The new Minister Andrew Muir made a good presentation starting with noting that 14 of the 18 factors essential for life on the planet were in decline. He noted that 75% of land in NI is under agriculture and thus his department had a key role in working with the sector.

The 'Working With Nature' package for local farmers was now close to being launched.

3. The Legal background to citizens taking Judicial Reviews against public bodies on all of the above was addressed; .

- a) The Aarhus Convention gave citizens the right to information on the environment in a far stronger manner than convention FoI legislation
- b) It limits the costs that can be awarded against those taking judicial reviews to £5k for an individual or £10 for an organisation
- c) It clarifies (with the help of recent case law) the rights of individuals to take judicial reviews if they can demonstrate that they have the knowledge and ability to bring a case, the resources, are directly affected or are representing those directly affected (e.g. an NGO)

4. Tackling resource and waste management at a regional level were examined by speakers from England and Wales where the gross inputs and outputs to the economy at regional level, including intermediate stages like energy, were mapped and aggregated to highlight opportunities to tackle biodiversity, energy or waste issues at a regional level.

The models they used were clearly applicable to NI and Ireland as a whole.

5. Air pollution was mapped and reported upon by QUB research from monitoring equipment across NI. Car emission, fuel burning and especially the recent increase in coal use was having a negative impact on health with 1000's dying annually as a result.

Outside the Greater Belfast Area, there were hot-spots in areas like Downpatrick where the absence of a by-pass still brings all regional traffic through the town centre,

6. ClimateNI outlined how they were going to get the main sectors in NI to 'decarbonise'.

How they were going to drive a NI Climate Change Adaption Program that will **likely affect our Council**.

7. There were a number of "Environment Social and Governance" presentations (ESG) by a number of organisations. The purpose of an ESG Strategy is to demonstrate the environmental, social, and governance factors that your organisation believes to be intrinsically important to consider within your current and future business operations.

ESG is highly relevant to our Council. The three pillars of ESG are:

- Environmental – this has to do with an organisation's impact on the planet.
- Social – this has to do with the impact an organisation has on people, including staff and customers and the community.
- Governance – this has to do with how an organisation is governed. Is it governed transparently?

NIE Networks, a large private company and John Woods of the NI Countryside Commission for food and farming all made ESG related presentations in which the mechanisms for any organisation were outlined.

There were also 4 question and answer sessions throughout the day.

Councillor Cadogan Enright 23/04/2024