



October 18th, 2022

Notice Of Meeting

You are invited to attend the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting to be held on **Tuesday, 18th October 2022 at 6:00 pm** in **Boardroom Monaghan Row Newry** and via **Microsoft Teams**.

Committee Membership 2022-2023:

- Councillor O Magennis (Chairperson)
- Councillor T Andrews (Deputy Chairperson)
- Councillor C Casey
- Councillor W Clarke
- Councillor D Curran
- Councillor A Finnegan
- Councillor G Malone
- Councillor K McKevitt
- Councillor A McMurray
- Councillor D Murphy
- Councillor K Owen
- Councillor G Stokes
- Councillor D Taylor
- Councillor M Ruane
- Councillor J Tinnelly

Agenda

- 1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's remarks.
- 2.0 Declarations of “Conflict of Interest”.
- 3.0 Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 20 September 2022.

📎 *SE Action Sheet - 19 September 2022.pdf*

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Facilities Management and Maintenance

- 4.0 Update Report on vegetation growth with Aughrim (Little) River at the Events Space, Kilkeel. (Attached).

For Decision

📎 *Report - Vegetation growth within Aughrim River at the Events Space Kileel.docx*

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📎 *Appendix 1 Aughrim River_Investigation_R2.pdf*

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- 5.0 Report of Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group Meeting 30 June and 6 October 2022. (Attached).

For Decision

📎 *Report Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group Meetings June and October 2022.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 1 Action Sheet 30th June 2022.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 2 - Christmas Illuminations Working Group - Action Sheet 6th October 2022.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 3 - Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme - Pinnacle Growth Group.pdf*

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Waste Management

- 6.0 Update on Cleansing Workshop. (Attached).

📎 *SE Committee - Report on Elected Member District Cleansing 5 Oct 2022 Workshop 18.10.22 v2.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 1 - Report on District Cleansing Workshop 5 October 2022 v2.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 2 - Cleansing Workshop - October 2022 Final Slides 18.10.22.pdf*

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**7.0 Notice of Motion - revenue from EV Charging Infrastructure.
(Officer report attached).**

To consider the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor McMurray which was referred to the

Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6. at the Council Meeting held on Monday 3 October 2022:-

"Council notes that last year's notice of motion seeking a target of between 80 and 181 EV charging points in NM&D car-parks resulted in a management report in May 2022 suggesting that such charging points would cost £12,000 each and as much as £2.7 million in total with no business case. Thus a target of 1% of parking spaces (80) or 1 per Council car-park (181) was unrealistic from a cost point of view.

Council notes that new information has emerged to back the suggestion that EV charging companies want to lease car-parking spots from Council throughout the District and are prepared to share charging revenue with Council. Far from costing money, EV infrastructure going forward can be seen as a new form of Council revenue.

Council resolves to seek long-term rental and revenue sharing opportunities with EV infrastructure companies to keep Newry Mourne and Down District Council competitive in Tourism , Business and to replace the rates being lost by the on-going closure of filling stations across the district.

Within 3 months of this motion, Council will make an open offer of 6 tranches of 20 parking spots to all 3 EV charging companies operating on the Irish/NI grid system as a trial run for a 2-year period.

Following the 2 year trial of the offerings by the different EV charging companies; and based on service and value for money to Council; long-term contracts should be made with companies offering the best solutions to residents and visitors alike to Newry Mourne and Down District Council".

[SE Committee - Report on Notice of Motion by Councillor Enright \(002\).pdf](#)

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[Appendix 1 SFWG Report 160622.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

**8.0 Proposed Phase 2 extension to Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery.
(Attached).**

For Decision

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

📄 *Report - Phase 2 Extension to Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery v1b.pdf*

Not included

📄 *Appendix 1 Business Case for Extension of Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery.pdf*

Not included

For Noting - Exempt Information Items

9.0 Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin held on 29 September 2022. (Attached).

For Information

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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 - 29September22-JC MembersBulletin.pdf*

Not included

10.0 Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting in Committee Minutes of Thursday 25 August 2022. (Attached).

For Information

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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 JC in Committee 25 August 2022.pdf*

Not included

For Noting

11.0 Historical Action Sheet. (Attached)

For Information

📄 *SE Historic Actions Tracker Sheet (updated October 2022).pdf*

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ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM SE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SE/128/2022	Monthly Action Sheet	Action Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 17 August 2022 be noted and actions removed as marked.	DSO		Y
WASTE MANAGEMENT					
SE/129/2022	Fleet replacement programme update	Agreed to note the contents of the report.	S Murphy	Noted	Y
SE/130/2022	Household Recycling Centre Usage and Access Policy	Agreed to proceed with Option 3 contained within the Report dated 20 September 2022 as follows: Option 3: Introduce an online booking system to allow access by residents disposing of household waste in to vehicles greater than 1.95 metres high across the sites. Develop and introduce an online booking system to allow access by	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		commercial users disposing of commercial waste in any vehicles greater than 1.95 metres high across the sites. Future options for weighing commercial waste at sites to be considered to better manage cost recovery. Review current charging structure for commercial waste to be accepted at designated HRSs in light of significant increase in waste disposal costs to Council.			
IN CLOSED SESSION					
SE/131/2022	Business Case – Driver CPC Training and Assessments and Loader training	Agreed to approve the Business Case as per Appendix 1, for the procurement of driver training including Driver CPC, induction and refresher training and assessment	S Murphy	In progress	N
SE/132/2022	Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin – 25 August 2022	Agreed to note this bulletin.	A Cassells		Y
SE/133/2022	Special Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting in	Agreed to note these Minutes	A Cassells	Noted	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	Committee Minutes of 30 June 2022				
FOR NOTING					
SE/134/2022	Arc21 JC Minutes – 30 June 2022	Agreed to mark this correspondence noted.	A Cassells	Noted	Y
SE/135/2022	Review of Summer Cleansing arrangements	Agreed to note the Summer Cleansing arrangements.	S Murphy	Noted	Y
NS/136/2022	Historic Actions Tracking Sheet	Agreed the Historic Actions Tracking Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meetings be noted and actions removed as marked.	DSO	Noted	Y
END					

Report to:	Sustainability & Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	18 th October 2022
Subject:	Update Report on vegetation growth within Aughrim (Little) River at the Events Space, Kilkeel
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Kevin Scullion, Assistant Director Facilities Management and Maintenance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Kevin Scullion, Assistant Director Facilities Management and Maintenance

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

For decision	X	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with the findings of an investigation into the cause of a significant growth of vegetation in a section of the Aughrim (Little) River adjacent to the Events Space and Council car park, Kilkeel.</p> <p>A copy of the report commissioned by the Council and undertaken by AECOM is provided at Appendix 1.</p>
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>It was reported at this committee in April 2021, a significant growth of vegetation in a section of Aughrim River between the bridge at Bridge Street and the bottom of the Council car park, Kilkeel.</p> <p>It was agreed at this meeting that a suitably qualified consultant/s be appointed through the SCAPE Framework to provide the consultancy support to identify the causes of the vegetation growth and the steps and possible costs to managing this part of the river to provide a more visually attractive aspect to this location.</p> <p>Attached at Appendix 1 is a copy of the report provided by AECOM who were appointed to compete this investigation.</p> <p>The investigation concludes that it appears that the build-up of vegetation may be due to the low velocities in the river. This combined with obstructions such as manhole covers and rock weirs, have resulted in the deposition of silt at these locations. As this process develops and silt builds up, vegetation can take hold. This in turn then creates areas which have lower velocities and thus the silt and vegetation continues to develop.</p>

	<p>The manhole covers referred to are NIW infrastructure within the river which serve a public sewer. The rock weirs, it is understood were installed or modified some years ago under the direction of the Council.</p>																
2.2	<p>AECOM Ecologist carried out a site inspection for the presence of terrestrial invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 Part II of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended) (the Wildlife Order) and Part 2 of the Schedule of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019 (IAS Order).</p> <p>In the area under consideration (from the bridge at Bridge Street and the bottom of the Council car park), a site inspection found extensive vegetation build-up, both along the banks and within the river channel. There is extensive Himalayan balsam across this vegetation, where it forms dense stands and is also scattered amongst other native plants. Himalayan balsam is a species listed on Part 2 of the Schedule of the IAS Order, present within the banks close to the bridge openings.</p>																
2.3	<p>Three high-level concept options were submitted by the consultants for consideration in attempting to reduce the siltation build up and the scale of vegetation growth. The primary means of doing this is by increasing the river velocities. The table below summaries the options which can be viewed in more detail within the report.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Option</th> <th>Construction Costs £</th> <th>Annual Maintenance Costs £</th> <th>Total Cost £ (30 years)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Staggered Rock Weir</td> <td>73,998</td> <td>3,250</td> <td>168,248</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Naturalise Riverbank</td> <td>91,149</td> <td>4,875</td> <td>235,524</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Continual Maintenance</td> <td>17,545</td> <td>6,500</td> <td>206,045</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><u>Note:</u> These costs do not include design fees, hydraulic modelling, license fees and environmental monitoring. Given the nature of these works it is envisaged that progressing any of these options would likely result in design and consultation fees in the region of £20,000-30,000.</p>	Option	Construction Costs £	Annual Maintenance Costs £	Total Cost £ (30 years)	Staggered Rock Weir	73,998	3,250	168,248	Naturalise Riverbank	91,149	4,875	235,524	Continual Maintenance	17,545	6,500	206,045
Option	Construction Costs £	Annual Maintenance Costs £	Total Cost £ (30 years)														
Staggered Rock Weir	73,998	3,250	168,248														
Naturalise Riverbank	91,149	4,875	235,524														
Continual Maintenance	17,545	6,500	206,045														
2.4	<p>It is not currently clear whether there is a lead authority or private individual with responsibility/authority for addressing the issues raised.</p> <p>There is no registered owner of the riverbed in this section of the river. The Council owns the land which borders the riverbed on the car park side of the river and another landowner is the registered owner of the land on the other side of the river. Both the Council and the other landowner may be considered as riparian owners which will provide them with both rights and responsibilities for the riverbed to the centre of the river from their boundary although this will require further legal consideration.</p>																

	<p>This section of the river is a designated watercourse under the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 and DfI Rivers maintain the watercourse to provide a free flow of water within the channel.</p> <p>Inland Fisheries have a fisheries interest within this section of the Aughrim River. They are supportive of works in this area to prevent heavy vegetation.</p> <p>Whilst the AECOM report provides next steps which could be undertaken, given the uncertainty on the Council's role in this matter, it is recommended that initial steps to be taken should be confined to consultation with all relevant stakeholders on the findings of the report.</p> <p>Relevant stakeholders to include Mourne DEA Councillors, Kilkeel Development Association, landowners adjacent to this section of the river, DfI Rivers Agency and Inland Fisheries. Purpose of the consultation will be to seek to agree a preferred option and agreement on a way forward.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Note the contents of the report. ➤ Agree to Council organising a consultation with all relevant stakeholders on the findings of the report. Consultation to include Mourne DEA Councillors, Kilkeel Development Association, landowners adjacent to this section of the river, DfI Rivers Agency and Inland Fisheries. Purpose of the consultation will be to seek to agree a preferred option and agreement on a way forward.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	<p>The cost of the investigative work undertaken to date is £7,718.45.</p> <p>Future costs are limited at this stage to officer time and any approved works undertaken within the river section under the Council's riparian ownership.</p>
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p>

	<p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p>Proposal initiating consultation</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>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</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> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p>
7.1	<p>Appendix 1: Aughrim River Investigation Study</p>
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p> <p><i>This relates to meeting requirements outlined in Part 8 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, Access to Meetings and Documents, wherein for four years after a meeting the following must be available at the Council Offices and on the website:</i></p> <p><i>Background papers which are defined as those documents relating to the subject matter of a report which:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) Disclose any facts or matters which in the opinion of the Chief Executive, the report or an important part of the report is based upon; and</i> <i>b) Have, in the Chief Executive's opinion, been relied upon to a material</i>

	<p><i>extent in preparing the report.</i></p> <p><i>These are documents on which the report, or an important part of the report, is based upon and have been relied upon to a material extent in preparing the report.</i></p>
8.1	None

Aughrim River

Investigation Study

Newry Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC)

Project number: 60684153_M001.005

August 2022

Aughrim River

Project number: 60684153_M001.005

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Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Edward Mason Senior Civil Engineer	Jason Doherty Principal Engineer	Bernadine Maguire Associate	Jason Doherty Principal Engineer

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
R0	15.07.2022	Draft	JD	Jason Doherty	Principal Engineer
R1	24.08.2022	First Issue	JD	Jason Doherty	Principal Engineer
R2	13.09.2022	Final Issue	JD	Jason Doherty	Principal Engineer

Prepared for:

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1. Introduction

AECOM were commissioned by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NM&DDC) to investigate the build-up of vegetation on the Aughrim River (or Little Kilkeel River). This is primarily focussed on the reach located immediately downstream of the Bridge Street crossing.

The works undertaken as part of this study and contained within this report are as follows:

1. Site Inspection (Civil/River Engineer and Ecologist)
2. Desktop investigation to determine the likely cause of vegetation growth
3. Identification of potential remedial measures with associated high-level costing
4. Potential constraints and risks associated with any works, including fisheries
5. Potential requirements for future maintenance work as part of any option

2. Site Location

The stretch of river under investigation is located within the town of Kilkeel, downstream of the Bridge Street crossing, and adjacent to the public car park off The Square. The extent of vegetation begins just upstream of the crossing and extends for approximately 85m downstream at the end of the carpark, where a footbridge is located.



Figure 1: Site Location

3. Site Inspection

A site inspection by the AECOM team took place on 13th June 2022.

On the upstream section of river, both banks are flanked by properties. On the downstream section, the left hand bank is a partially demolished building with the remaining building walls acting as the left hand bank. The right hand bank downstream is made of a stone wall and retaining wall for the toilet block and public car park.

3.1 Upstream of Bridge Street

There are signs of vegetation growth on the upstream section, primarily on the banks adjacent to the buildings as shown in Photo 1. There is however some vegetation growth located in the middle of the channel around a manhole cover, as shown in Photo 2. Records show that this manhole is related to a Northern Ireland Water (NIW) combined sewer (225mm Diameter).



Photo 1: Upstream Vegetation (1)



Photo 2: Upstream Vegetation (2)

3.2 Downstream of Bridge Street

On the downstream section of the river from Bridge Street vegetation growth is approximately two thirds of the channel width from the bridge to the bottom end of the public carpark, as shown in Photo 3.

At the location just downstream of the bridge, the channel width is approximately 11m (bank to bank). As the river flows towards the end of the carpark the channel width reduces to approximately 8m.



Photo 3: Downstream Overview



Photo 4: Downstream Bridge Openings

There are approximately 4no. curved stone weirs constructed across the channel. Two of these weirs are located at NIW manholes that are located in the middle of the channel, as shown in Photo 5 and 6.



Photo 5: Manhole Cover 1 and Weir 1



Photo 6: Manhole Cover 2 and Weir 2

According to NIW sewer records, as shown in Figure 2, Manhole 1 is related to a gravity combined sewer. There are 2 incoming sewers, a 225mm diameter sewer from the in-channel sewer upstream, and a 300mm diameter sewer from the eastern end of Bridge Street. The outgoing sewer is a 450mm diameter sewer which continues downstream, prior to diverting into the car park. Records show that there is still a further stretch of sewer which is in the river channel downstream of this point.

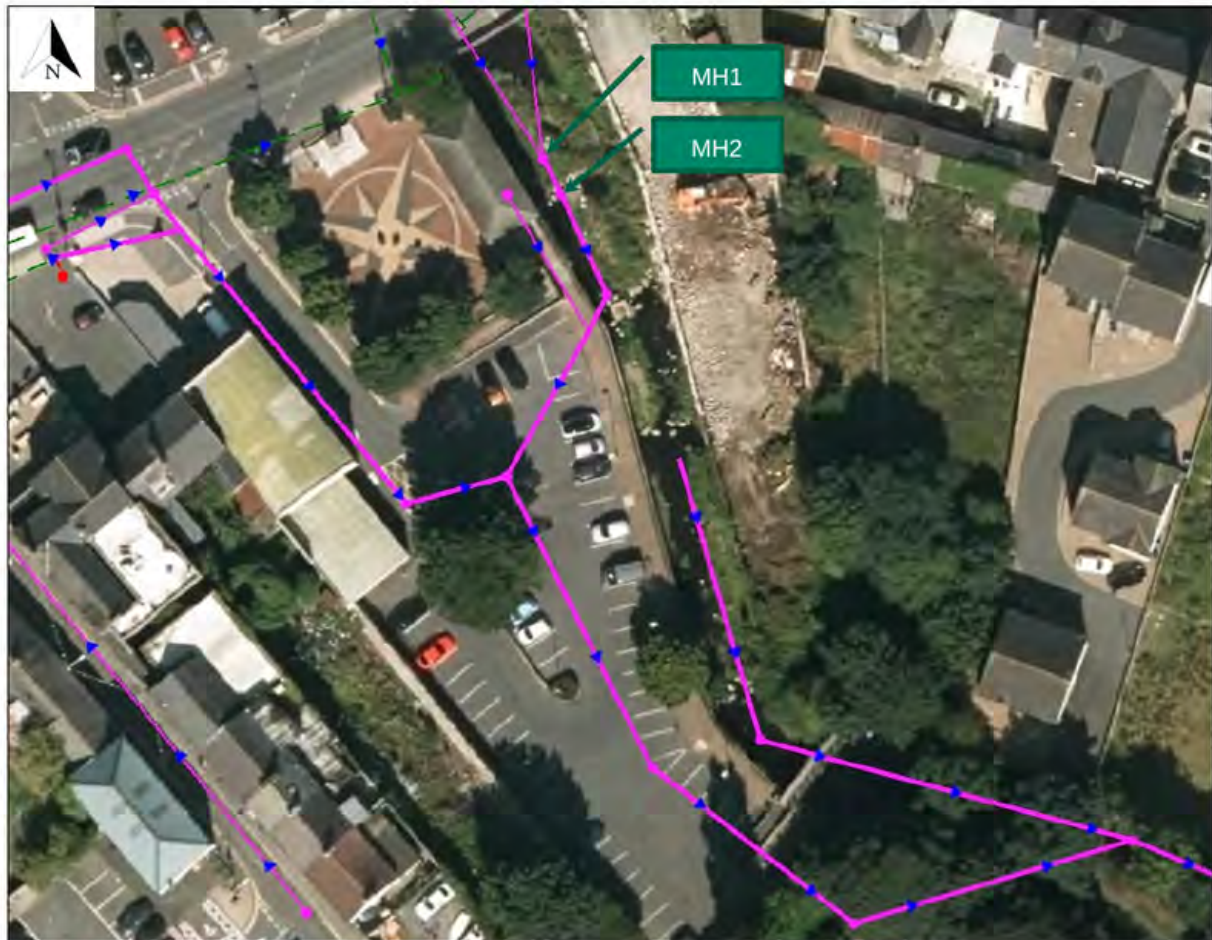


Figure 2: NIW Sewer Location

As the channel flows downstream and narrows, vegetation growth changes to approximately half of the channel width. Weirs No. 3 and 4 are no longer fully intact and the river is flowing freely through these. Weir 4 is shown in Photo 4.



Photo 7: Weir 4

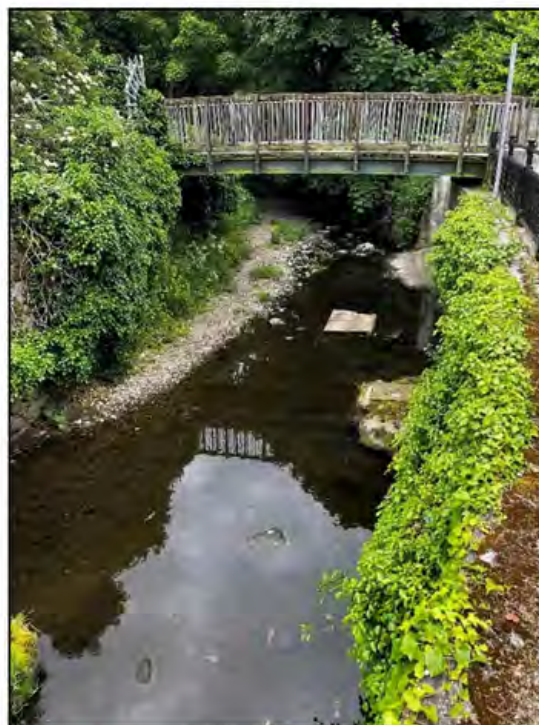


Photo 8: Downstream extents and footbridge

As the river flows further downstream, in channel vegetation reduces drastically. There are minimal instream obstructions. Some typical siltation is observed under the footbridge on the left hand bank due to this meander as shown in Photo 8.

4. Desktop Investigation

AECOM consulted with NMDDC and online records¹ regarding the history of this section of river.

Photo 9 and 10 (approximately taken 2010 & 2011) appear to show that vegetation was present prior to the placing of the stone weirs. It has been indicated that a possible reason for the installation of the stone weirs was an attempt to create a greater (normal flow) water depth, and in turn reduce the likelihood of in channel vegetation taking hold.



Photo 9: Historic Picture (2010)

Photo 10: Historic Picture

In the current conditions with the rock weirs in place, and the apparent low velocities in the watercourse at this location, silt is being deposited on the upstream side of the rock weirs. Over time this silt builds up and provides ideal conditions for vegetation to take hold.

At locations where the rock weirs have been dislodged, the flow is travelling at a greater velocity and as such a channel has been naturally created where there is no vegetation. An example of this is shown below in Photo 11.

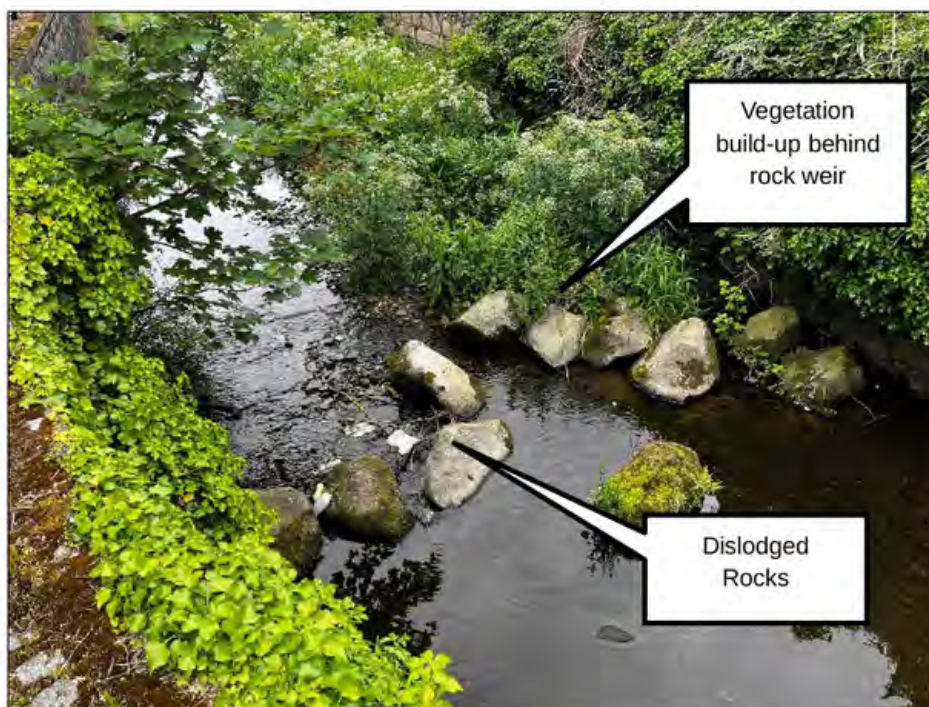


Photo 11: Dislodged Rock Weir

¹ <https://www.geograph.ie/>

4.1 Review of vegetation and potential invasive species

The below review is based on the site visit on 13 June 2022. The review has been carried out and examined by an AECOM Ecologist for the presence of terrestrial invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 Part II of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended) (the Wildlife Order) and Part 2 of the Schedule of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019 (IAS Order).

In addition, to supplement information, a search was made on the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) website for records of invasive plant species, including potential for aquatic invasive species. Google Street View photographs were examined to provide additional information.

4.1.1 Desk Study Review

One record of giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, a species listed on Part 2 of the Schedule of the IAS Order, was identified on the NBDC online maps. The record is located c. 390 m upstream of the site (IGR J305149) and was dated September 2008. Interrogation of Google Street View in this location could not verify the presence or likely absence of the species, therefore it is possible that seeds may be present within the vegetation build-up at the site.

4.1.2 Review of Site Photographs

4.1.2.1 Upstream of Bridge Street

The upstream area of the site has relatively little vegetation build-up in the main river channel, with dense ruderal vegetation at the banks, which include shrubs and small trees. There is scattered Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, a species listed on Part 2 of the Schedule of the IAS Order, present within the banks close to the bridge openings, as indicated in Photos 12-14.

In addition, on the western bank (below the wall-mounted extractor fan), are leaves which are reminiscent of giant hogweed (Photo 15).



Photo 12: Upstream of Bridge Street. Scattered Himalayan Balsam Circled in Red.

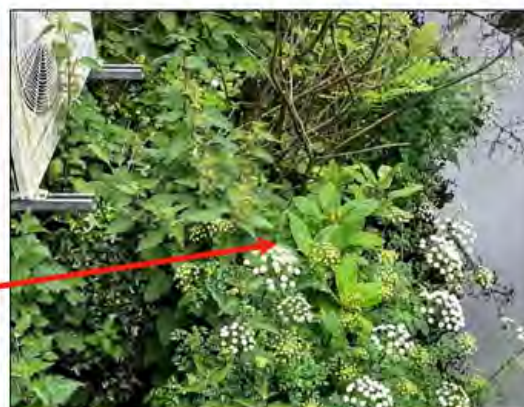


Photo 13: Close Up View of Himalayan Balsam.



Photo 14: Upstream of Bridge. Himalayan Balsam
Circled in Red.

Photo 15: Potential Giant Hogweed.

No other invasive species have been identified at this time. Other native / naturalised species identified as present in the river from the photographs include hemlock water-dropwort *Oenanthe crocata*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., nettle *Urtica dioica*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, sycamore, reed canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, and sycamore *Pseudoplatanus acer*.

4.1.2.2 Downstream of Bridge Street

The downstream area of the site has extensive vegetation build-up, both along the banks and within the river channel. There is extensive Himalayan balsam across this vegetation, where it forms dense stands and is also scattered amongst other native plants (Photos 16-19). The species is scattered as far south as the footbridge, c. 90 m south of the road bridge, and likely beyond.



Photo 16: Downstream Bridge Openings.
Himalayan Balsam Circled in Red.

Photo 17: Close-up View of Himalayan Balsam.



Photo 18: Downstream of Bridge. Extensive Himalayan Balsam Circled in Red.



Photo 19: Further Himalayan Balsam Downstream.

No other invasive species have been identified at this time. Other native plant species identified as present in the river from the photographs include hemlock water-dropwort, foxglove *Digitalis purpurea*, creeping buttercup, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, common figwort *Scrophularia nodosa*, colt's-foot *Tussilago farfara*, and grasses.

4.2 Fisheries

AECOM consulted with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Inland Fisheries in order to understand the fisheries interest within the Aughrim River.

Inland Fisheries confirmed that:

'The Aughrim and Kilkeel Rivers maintain good populations of migratory salmonids, eels and lamprey may also be present. These rivers have been shown to be productive for sea-trout (salmon also have the potential to be present) and thus there are likely to be timing restrictions as when it is best to carry out these type of works. The way in which the river-bed material is to be reinstated is also a consideration and could be an opportunity to improve habitat and fish passage at this location.'

'Northern Ireland as part of the UK is a signatory to the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic. This treaty requires signatory states to develop programmes of work to conserve, rationally manage and improve Atlantic salmon populations and their habitats within their jurisdiction. This work is scrutinised by the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO).'

5. Potential Options

Having completed the desktop investigation and review of historical pictures, it appears that the build-up of vegetation may be due to the low velocities in the river. This combined with obstructions such as the manhole covers and rock weirs, have resulted in the deposition of silt at these locations. As this process develops and silt builds up, vegetation is able to take hold. This in turn then creates areas which have lower velocities and thus the silt and vegetation continues to develop.

The below options have been developed at a high-level concept stage in an attempt to reduce the siltation build up and the scale of vegetation growth. The primary means of doing this is by increasing the river velocities during low or normal flow conditions.

5.1 Option 1 – Staggered Rock Weir

Option 1 consists of re-using some of the existing boulders and re-positioning these in a staggered configuration as shown below in Figure 3. Concept Design drawings can also be found in Appendix A.

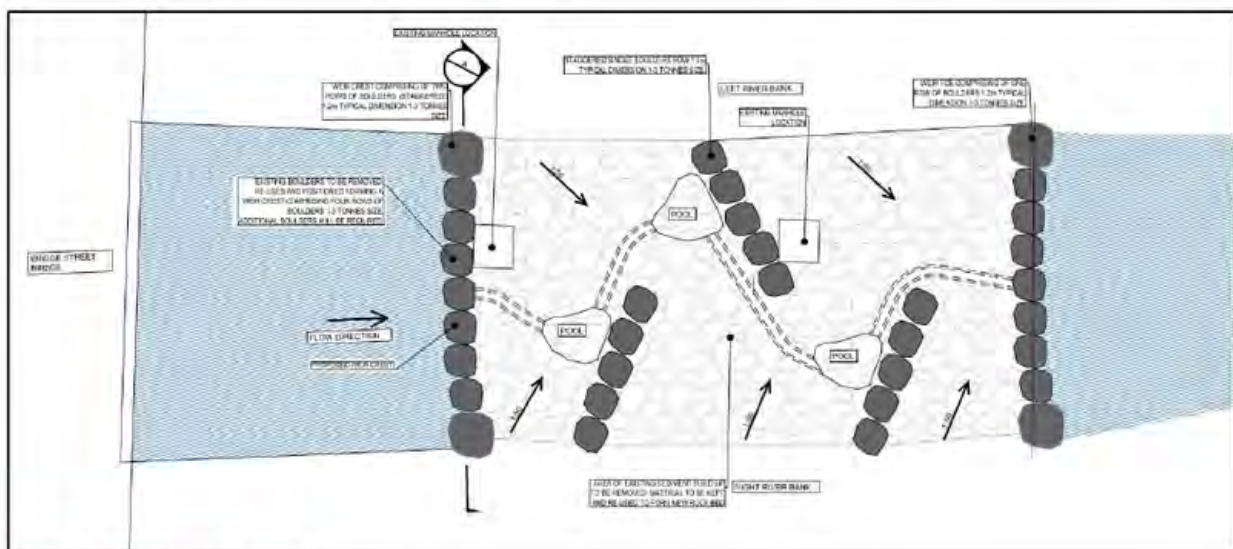


Figure 3: Option 1 Layout

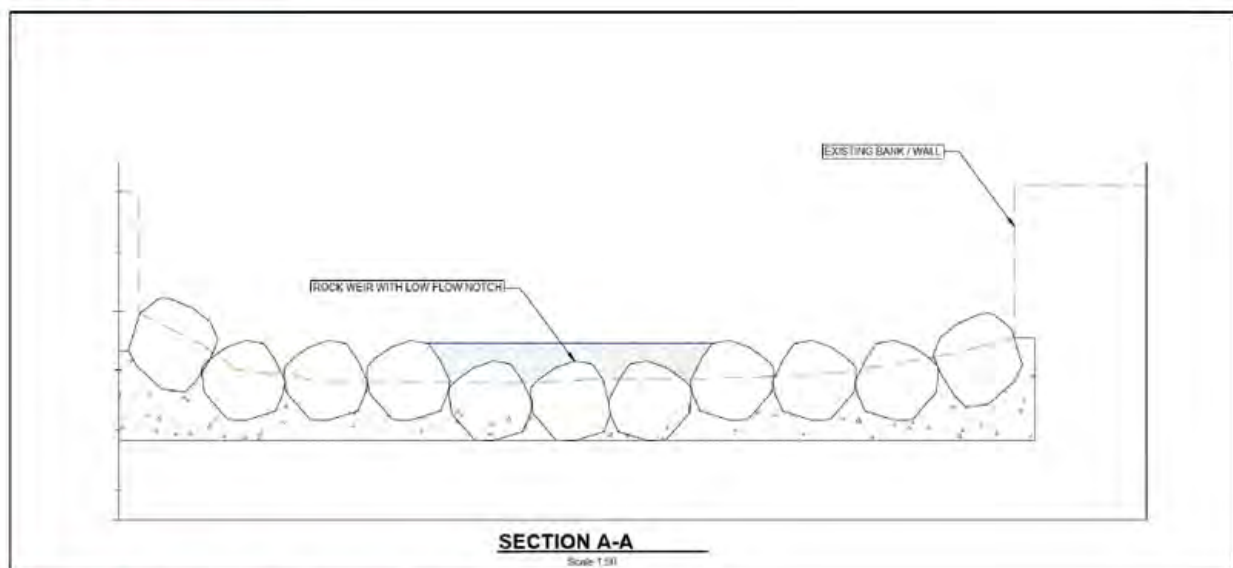


Figure 4: Option 1 Section (Upper Weir)

An upper and lower rock weir would be constructed with a lower "notch" in the centre to create a "dish" or low flow channel that meanders downstream. Boulders are arranged obliquely to the channel edge to deflect flow to the thalweg. The thalweg is a line drawn to join the lowest points along the entire length of a stream bed or valley in its downward slope, defining its deepest channel. The thalweg thus marks the natural direction (the profile) of a watercourse.

This low flow channel aims to maintain sufficient depth and velocities at low flows. This option also has the benefit of ensuring depth for fish passage at low flows.

In this option it is not proposed to carry out any works to the existing manhole covers. It is proposed that the oblique boulders or weir are designed to be positioned to the upstream side of these to ensure that the manholes do not create an obstruction on their own.

There was no topographical data available for the watercourse. If this option was to be progressed further, level data would be required to ensure that suitable gradient can be achieved to create the low flow channel. It is also important that Environment Agency guidance to aid fish passage at vertical weirs is checked. This is to ensure that the resultant flow velocities do not exceed the capabilities of many fish and benthic species (DVWK, 2002).

These works would be complete downstream of the Bridge Street bridge for an envisaged length between 30-50m. Upstream and downstream of the main works it would be recommended that de-vegetation works are undertaken to clear the channel of any low-grade vegetation. This should be done in a manner as discussed in Option 3.

5.2 Option 2 – Naturalise River Bank

Option 2 consists of removing the existing rocks weirs and the establishment of a low flow channel and natural river bank as shown below in Figure 5 and Figure 6. Concept Design drawings can also be found in Appendix A.

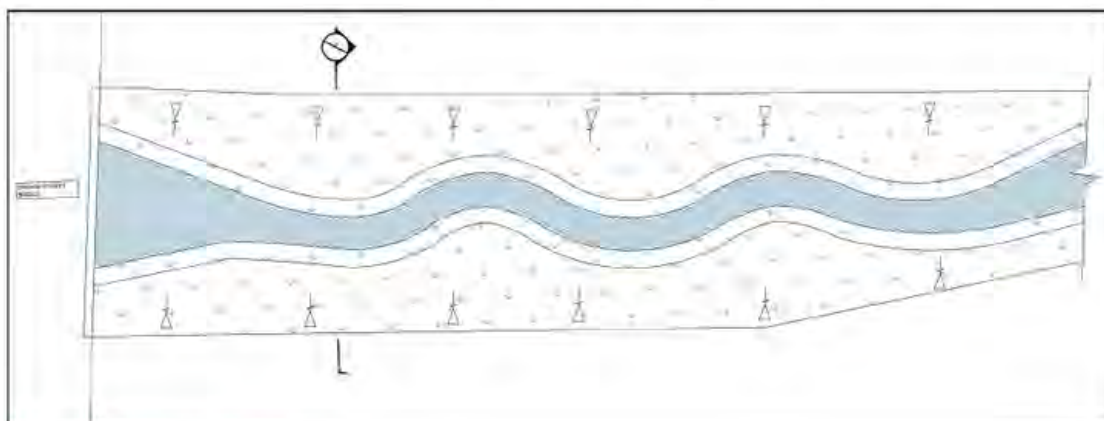


Figure 5: Option 2 (Plan)

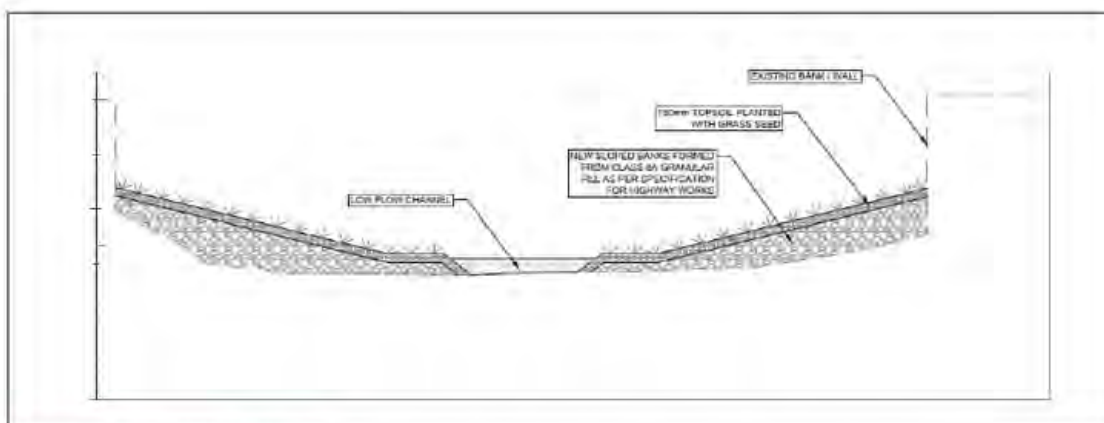


Figure 6: Option 2 (Section)

As with Option 1, a low flow channel is created with the aim to maintain sufficient depth and velocities even at low flows. The newly formed banks could be constructed by various means and methods. Fill material could be imported and raised in layers suitably reinforced with geotextile membranes. The top surface could either be seeded and grown out with more visually attractive plants. An alternative method could be the importing of fill and the facing of the slope in rock armour backed with concrete to retain in position. Both of these methods could be constructed on the right hand bank adjacent to the car park with limited constraints. However, the site on the left hand bank is currently derelict with the remains of the building wall forming the current bank. To progress this option consultation would be required with the landowner and sufficient design carried out to ensure a suitable retaining structure is in place to construct the new river bank.

In this option it would be required to carry out works to the NIW manholes. Due to the size and location of this sewer it is unlikely to be feasible to divert and relocate this sewer. However, it is likely that if the manholes were left as per their current level, they would create an obstruction to flow and the possible depositing of silt, which in turn could allow vegetation growth. It could be investigated if it is possible to meander the river sufficiently using the newly formed bank to ensure that the manholes are located out of the low flow channel. It would then be required for the manhole covers to be raised to match the new bank level, to maintain access for NIW.

This option also has the benefit of ensuring depth for fish passage at low flows. It is envisaged that under this option impacts to fisheries would be negligible, with the potential for improvement to the water quality and habitat potential.

These works would be complete downstream of the Bridge Street bridge for an envisaged length of 50-70m. Upstream and downstream of the main works it would be recommended that de-vegetation works are undertaken to clear the channel of any low-grade vegetation. This should be done in a manner as discussed in Option 3.

5.3 Option 3 (Continual Maintenance)

Option 3 consists of regular maintenance, which would require personnel undertaking cutting and removal of the vegetation that builds up within the channel. This option would include the moving of some of the existing rocks, which form the weirs, within the channel. This is shown below within Figure 7 and Figure 8.

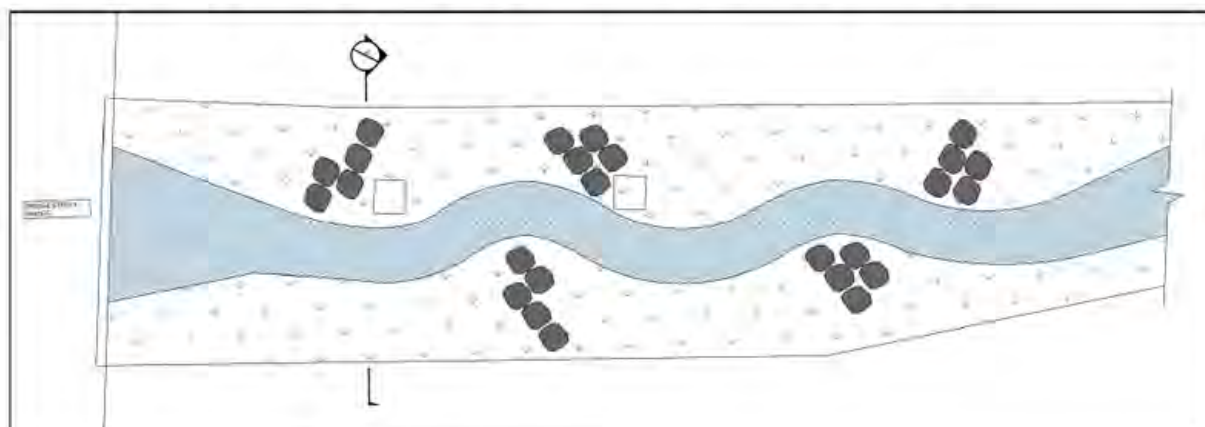


Figure 7: Option 3 (Plan)

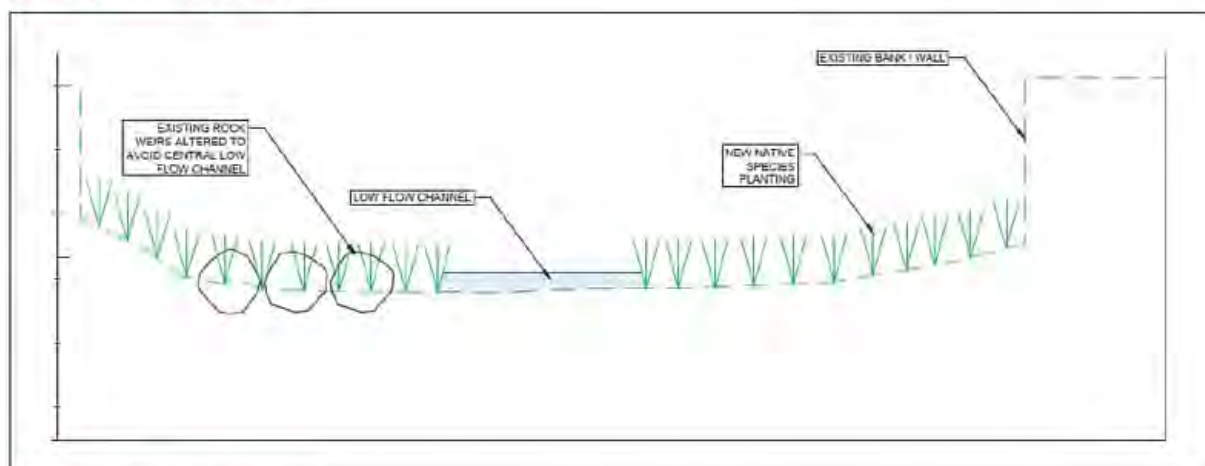


Figure 8: Option 3 (Section)

Initially it is proposed that all existing vegetation is removed from the watercourse as it tends to be of low value. The rock weirs should be altered to create space for a more natural meandering channel and where it is expected that vegetation growth is likely to establish, native species planting should be used.

The maintenance would target specific areas that require de-vegetation works. The layout of the de-vegetation works would likely see a meandering channel shape produced to allow a more natural flow through this area.

As a result of leaving rocks and manhole lids within the channel there is likely to be some further siltation resulting in more vegetation growth in these areas, and therefore this option will require a continuous maintenance regime. The maintenance regime would initially allow for frequent visits in order to assess the rate of growth, once this is understood better the frequency could be amended to suit the rate of growth following each maintenance visit.

Access into and along the channel would be required in order to undertake de-vegetation works on a semi-regular basis. The current access into the river is downstream of the proposed works area and would require personnel to travel upstream to undertake maintenance. This will require a risk assessment to be undertaken and certain restrictions / requirements set to ensure the maintenance can be completed in a safe manner.

These works would be complete upstream and downstream of the Bridge Street bridge for an envisaged length of 120-150m.

6. Constraints & Risks

The site has a number of constraints which would need to be considered if any of the previously discussed options were to be taken forward to further design or consultation.

- Hydraulic River Capacity
 - o Consultation with DfI (Department for Infrastructure) Rivers and hydraulic river modelling to determine the flows and impact of flood levels as a result of the potential options.
- Adjacent Land
 - o Currently a derelict site on the downstream left hand bank, with partial remainder of the building wall forming the river bank. Full understanding of proposals for this site, whilst ensuring compatibility with any option for the river.
- Approvals Process
 - o Consultation with DfI Rivers – with a submission of a Schedule 6 Application. A Schedule 6 application is required for plans to discharge to a watercourse or intend to carry out works that will impact on the free flow of a watercourse; approval is required from DfI Rivers.
 - o Consultation with NIW (if works are required to manholes).
- Access
 - o Further consideration given to whether the existing access is suitable for any maintenance regime required.
- Invasive Species
 - o Himalayan balsam is growing extensively within the site location, on both sides of the bridge. In addition, there is potential that giant hogweed is present (leaves present which were not confirmed during the site visit). Further inspections by an Ecologist, between May and September, is recommended prior to the next stage, to confirm the presence of giant hogweed within the site.
 - o Both species are listed under Part 2 of the Schedule of the IAS Order, which states that “any persons who intentionally keeps, breeds, transports ..., places on the market, uses or exchanges, permits to reproduce, grows or cultivates, or releases into the environment an invasive alien species commits an offence”. Any proposed works within the site could be in contravention of legislation unless, as a minimum, controls for biosecurity and prevention of spread are implemented. This will require Contractor Method Statements. Biosecurity protocols, and likely removal of infested plant material offsite. Landfill agreement and licensed waste carried will likely be required.
 - o In addition, NMDCC / DfI Rivers have a legal obligation to treat and eradicate these species, under the IAS Order. Long-term management is required and will likely require further survey of the Aughrim River to identify additional stands of invasive species.

6.1 Inland Fisheries

Following engagement with Inland Fisheries at the initial investigation stage, a meeting was arranged, to discuss the potential options. Inland Fisheries confirmed there is a fisheries interest within this section of the Aughrim River. They are supportive of potential proposed works in this area to prevent heavy vegetation build up, as they are of the view that potential options will help improve the condition of the river and maintain migration routes. Their preference would be for a more naturalised river as per option 2 and would like to avoid any weirs which would prevent fish passage. Option 1 was discussed further and explained that the upstream and downstream weirs would have a central notch created to enable all fish passage. Additionally, Inland Fisheries are keen to be involved as the development of the proposed option progresses to provide input where applicable.

Inland Fisheries highlighted that the works would need to be permitted under Section 47 & 48 of the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966. Conditions may be applied to any permit issued regarding timing of works. A method statement should be provided along with any application and this would take the form of a construction environmental management plan (CEMP). Inland Fisheries are content to advise on this further as the proposed works are developed.

7. Maintenance

All three options discussed above will require elements of maintenance. The following provides a brief explanation of the maintenance that would typically be expected with each option. It has been assumed that for all options, maintenance would be required to be carried out twice a year. This is subject to change, and for the initial 2 years, the vegetation should be continually reviewed to determine the optimal maintenance regime required

Option 1

- Removal of any debris caught on the rock weirs installed as part of the option.
- Whilst vegetation maintenance works should be reduced with this option it is likely that this is something which would still require review over time. Any unwanted vegetation should be removed.
- Maintenance of any upstream or downstream vegetation.
- Any requirements under an invasive species management plan which would likely require the on-going treatment of invasive species.

Option 2

- Maintenance of any grass / vegetation on the banks created as part of the option.
- Any unwanted non-native species vegetation should be removed.
- Maintenance of any upstream or downstream vegetation.
- Any requirements under an invasive species management plan which would likely require the on-going treatment of invasive species.

Option 3

- Frequent maintenance to cut back vegetation as per maintenance plan.
- Any unwanted non-native species vegetation should be removed.
- Removal of any debris caught on the altered rock weirs / manholes.
- Any requirements under an invasive species management plan which would likely require the on-going treatment of invasive species.

8. Order of Costs Estimate

AECOM have undertaken a high-level review of the costings for each option in order to provide an order of costs. The summary of these costs can be seen in Table 1 below and further details are provided in Appendix B.

The order of costs includes construction costs for each option and the cost for the first year of maintenance for option 3. It is assumed in option 3, two visits will be required on an annual basis. The order of costs estimates a visit to cost approximately £3,250.00, therefore an annual maintenance cost of £6,500.00 for option 3 could be expected. In order to compare a total cost of all options a percentage of this maintenance cost was applied to option 1 and option 2 on the assumption that these options will require less frequent maintenance. For costing purposes, Option 2 is assumed to be 75% of the maintenance required for option 3 and option 1 to be 50% of the maintenance required for option 3.

Table 1. Summary order of costs estimate for options

Option	Construction Cost	Annual Maintenance Cost	Total Cost (30 Years)
Option 1	£73,998.00	£3,250.00	£168,248.00
Option 2	£91,149.00	£4,875.00	£232,524.00
Option 3	£17,545.00	£6,500.00	£206,045.00

The total costs have been based on a 30-year period in order to give an understanding of the costs for each option over an extended period. The order of cost is based on construction costs with allowances for contingencies (at design and construction stage), however this does not account for design fees, hydraulic modelling, license fees and environmental monitoring. Given the nature of these works it is envisaged that progressing any of these options would likely result in a similar overall design fee; the design and consultation fees would likely be in the region of £20-30k.

9. Next Steps

AECOM have detailed the next steps which could be undertaken should it be determined by NM&DDC that further work will be progressed to address the identified issue:

- NM&DDC to consult further on potential options and identify a preferred option
- On the basis an option is progressed, a consultant should be appointed to develop the outline design of the preferred option and provide further, more detailed cost estimations. Further investigation into the invasive species should be completed along with developing an invasive species management plan. A topographical survey of the river channel would also be required to be carried out.
- Following outline design detailed, consultations should be undertaken with the following stakeholders to obtain feedback and input into the option design:
 - DfI Rivers
 - Inland Fisheries
 - Local stakeholders / property owners
 - Council Departments including planners
- The consultation responses should be used to identify any other mitigations / enhancements to be incorporated within the preferred option.
- Detailed Design & Procurement Stage
- Construction Stage

9.1 Interim Works

It is anticipated that there may be a lead in time to commence the above steps. AECOM have therefore listed a possible schedule of works which could be carried out in advance of developing a preferred option, to manage the vegetation build up in the short term;

- Application of NMDDC current Invasive Treatment Plan to this section of the Aughrim River.
 - o Typically for small areas of Himalayan balsam this can be achieved by pulling the plant out of the riverbed in advance of its flowering in June.
 - o Herbicides may be an option; however selection of the correct herbicide should be done in conjunction with the relevant body (such as NIEA) to ensure there is no adverse impact on the watercourse and ecology.
 - o Biosecurity plans and risks assessment must be in place to prevent spreading on the invasive species.
- Removal of sections of the existing rock weirs to allow a meandering flow (Similar to Option 1) and localised removal of silt build up.
 - o This is unlikely to completely remove vegetation growth for the following season, however it has the potential to create a more visually attractive meandering watercourse in the short term.

The above interim work options should be consulted with the relevant departmental bodies such as NIEA and DfI Rivers in advance of any works.

10. Conclusion

AECOM were commissioned by NM&DDC to investigate the build-up of vegetation on the Aughrim River (or Little Kilkeel River). This is primarily focussed on the reach located immediately downstream of the Bridge Street crossing in Kilkeel.

The works undertaken as part of this study included:

1. Site Inspection (Civil/River Engineer and Ecologist)
2. Desktop investigation to determine likely cause of vegetation growth
3. Identification of potential remedial measures with associated high-level costing
4. Potential constraints and risks associated with any works, including fisheries
5. Potential requirements for future maintenance work as part of any option

AECOM undertook an invasive species review and found there are some invasive species present within the river channel and this will need to be considered if any option is progressed. An invasive species management plan would need to be developed which would outline the requirements to manage the invasive species within the channel prior and post works.

AECOM developed three options at a high-level concept stage in an attempt to reduce the siltation build up and the scale of vegetation growth. The primary means of doing this is by increasing the river velocities during low or normal flow conditions. Each option has had an order of cost estimated to provide an understanding of the relative costs.

A number of constraints have been identified along with additional data and consultations required if any option was to be taken forward to a further design stage.

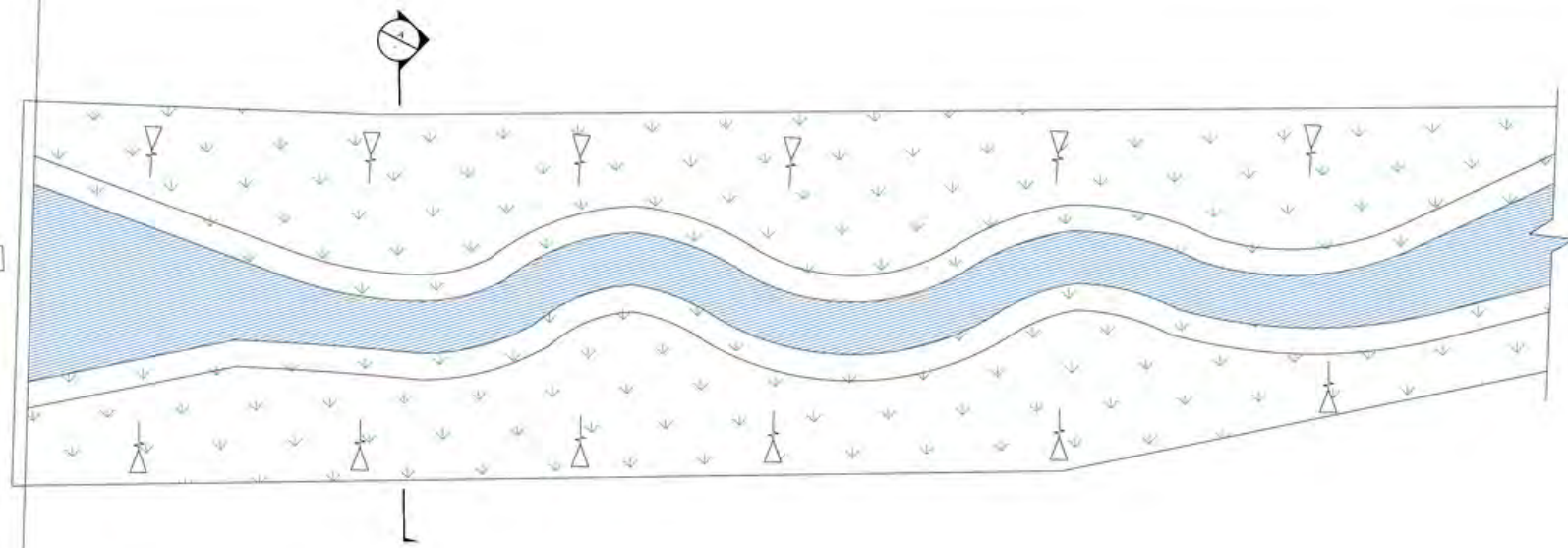
Aughrim River

Project number: 60684153_M001.005

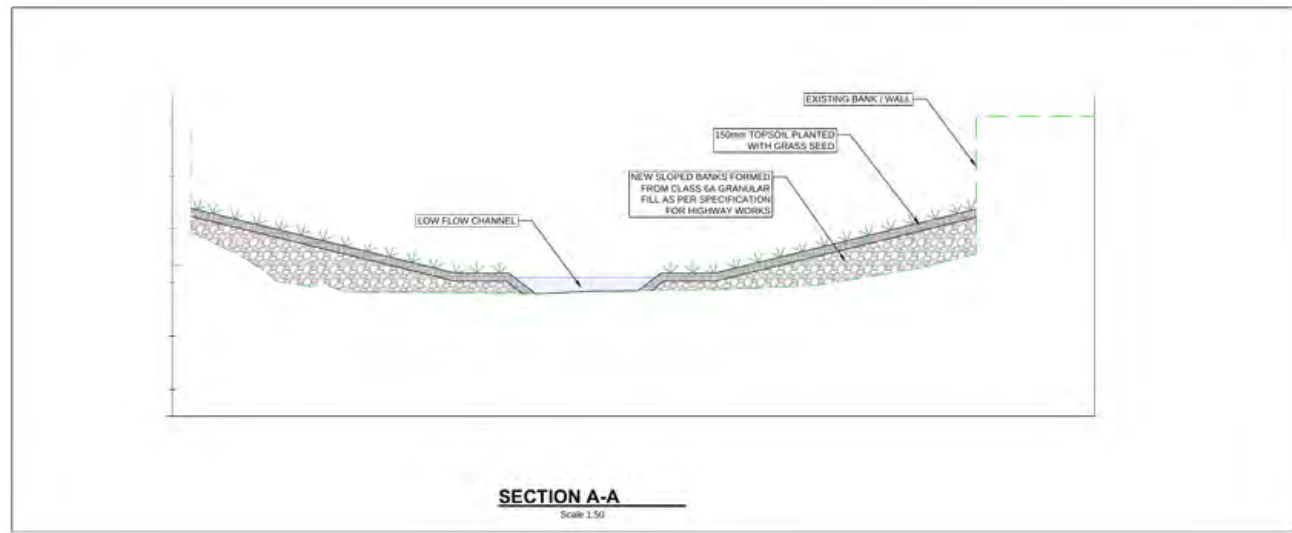
Appendix A - Drawings

ISO A1 34mm x 64mm
 Approved 3D
 Checked JT
 Designer EM
 Project Management:

BRIDGE STREET BRIDGE



PROPOSED LAYOUT
Scale 1:100



SECTION A-A
Scale 1:50

AECOM

33

PROJECT
AUGHRIM RIVER
INVESTIGATION STUDY

CLIENT

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 agus an tArd
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 and Down
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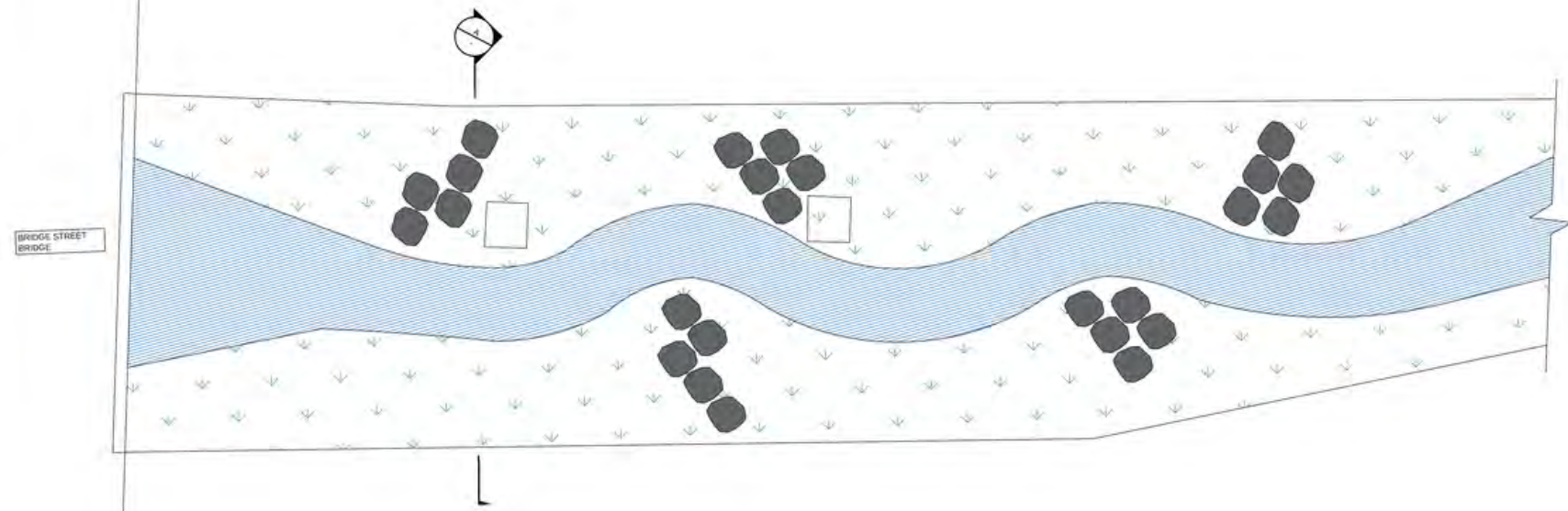
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OPTION 2 - SLOPED BANKS

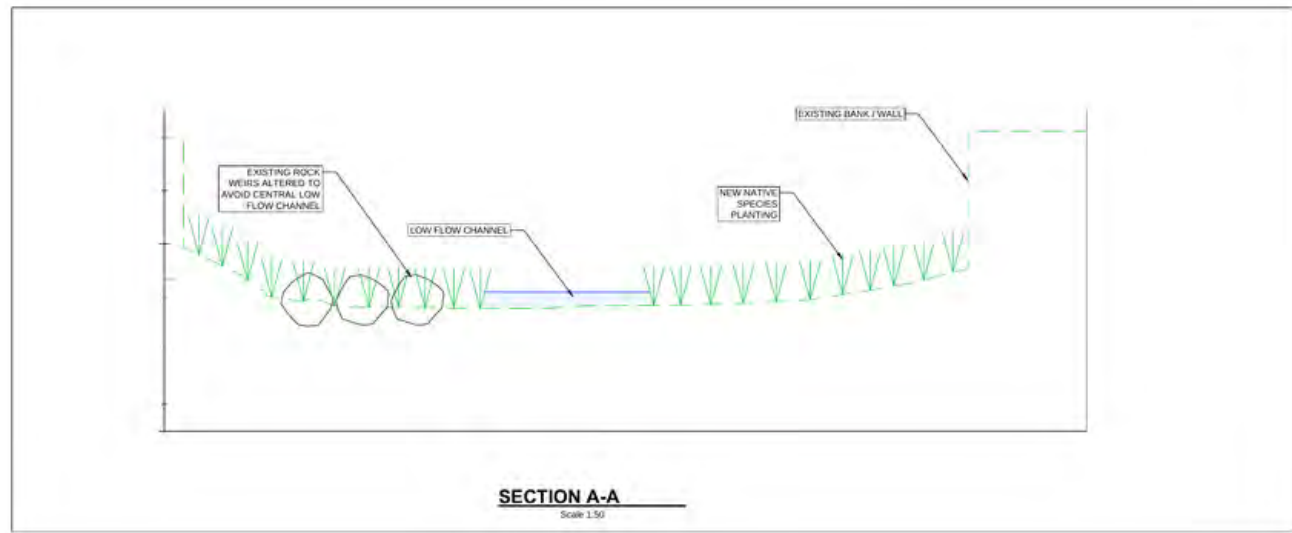
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Checked: JT
Design: EM
Project Management: Indis



PROPOSED LAYOUT
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SECTION A-A
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INVESTIGATION STUDY

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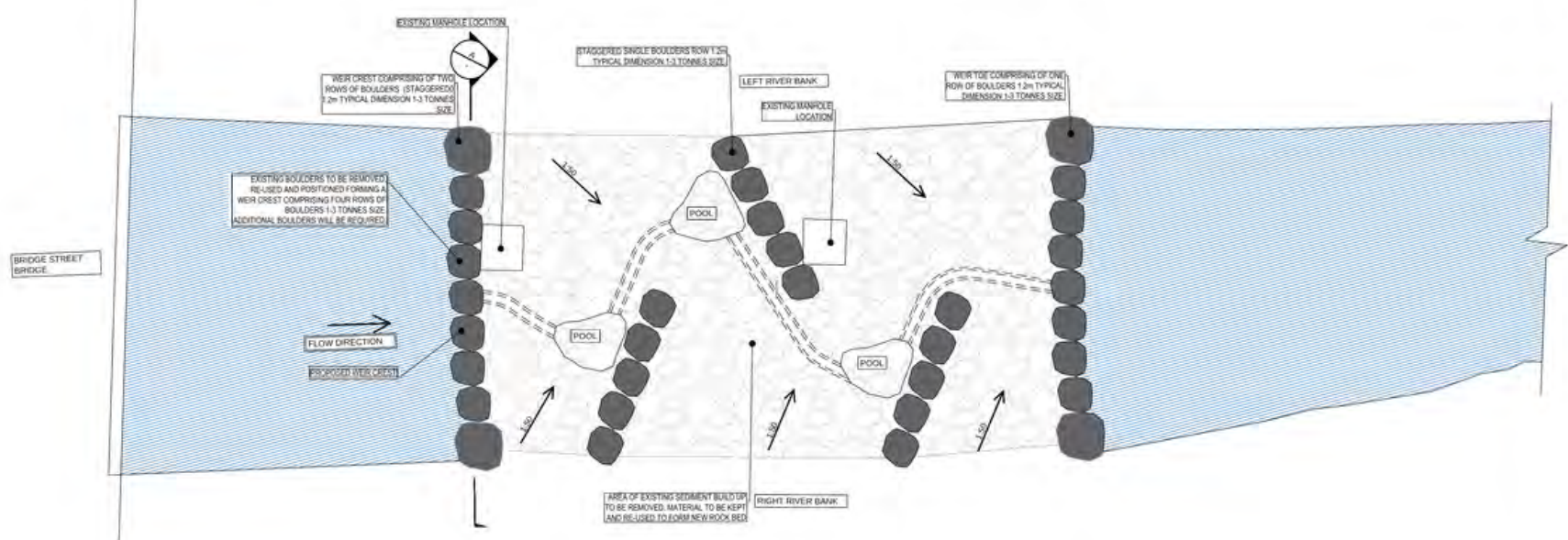
PROJECT NUMBER
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SHEET TITLE
OPTION 3 - MAINTENANCE

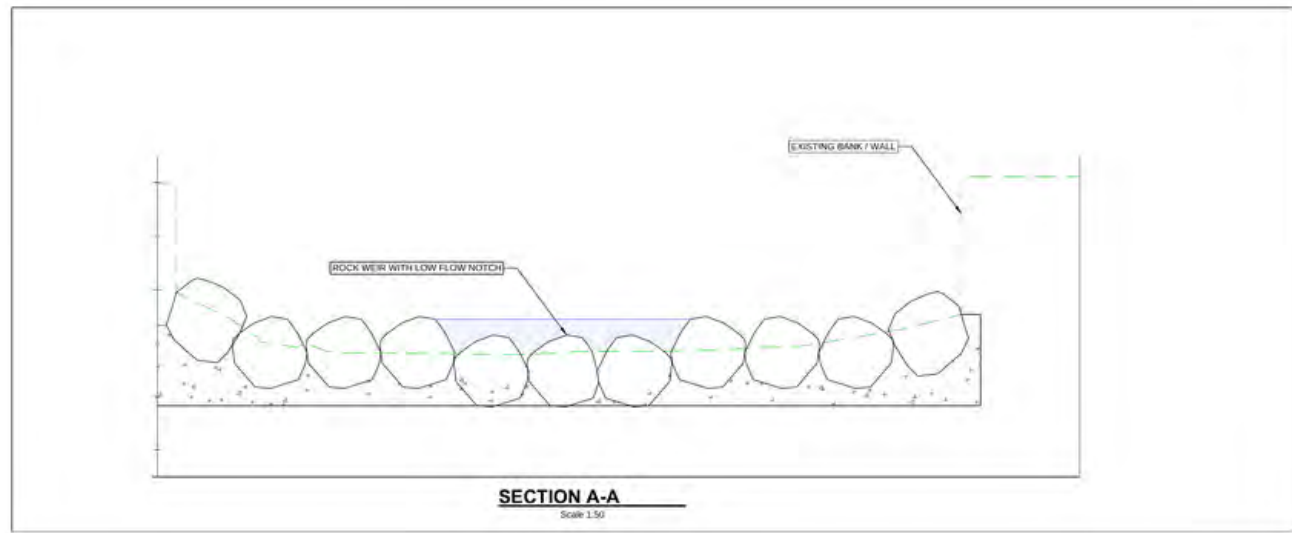
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SECTION A-A
 Scale 1:50

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PROJECT
AUGHRIM RIVER INVESTIGATION STUDY

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SHEET TITLE
 OPTION 1 - STAGGERED ROCK WEIR

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Aughrim River

Project number: 60684153_M001.005

Appendix B – Order of Cost Estimate

Aughrim River

Order of Cost Estimates

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

19 August 2022

Aughrim River

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
			
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Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position

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3.	Breakdowns.....	8

1. Basis, Assumptions and Exclusions

1.1 Basis

- 1.1.1 The rates used in the estimate are inclusive of the costs for labour, plant, materials, assembling & fixing materials in position and wastage.
- 1.1.2 Preliminaries has been included at 35% (45% in Option 3) of the estimated construction cost. Preliminaries include the costs associated with management and staff, site establishment, temporary works and services, security, safety and environmental protection, common user mechanical plant, common user temporary works, the maintenance of site records, completion and post-completion requirements, cleaning, fees and charges, site services, insurances, bonds, guarantees and warranties.
- 1.1.3 Risk contingencies have been included for the following:
 - a) Design development – an allowance for use during the ongoing design process to provide for the risks associated with design development, changes in estimating data, third party risks (e.g. planning requirements, legal agreements, environmental issues and pressure groups), statutory requirements, procurement methodology and delays in tendering. Given that the construction cost estimates are based on developing design information (e.g. limited construction details, ground investigation and services information) we consider that the design development risk allowance of 10% that has been included within the capital cost estimates is reasonable given the scale and scope of works proposed.
 - b) Construction risks – an allowance for use during the construction process to provide for the risks associated with site conditions (e.g. access restrictions, existing structures, boundaries and existing occupants and users), ground conditions, existing services and delays by statutory undertakers and additional works. We consider that the construction stage risk allowance of 10% that has been included within the capital cost estimates is reasonable given the scale and scope of works proposed.
- 1.1.4 Option 3 is a continual maintenance option and as such has an ongoing annual cost. The figures included here represent the estimated cost to carry out the works for the first year only.

1.2 Assumptions

- 1.2.1 Construction costs at 3Q 2022.
- 1.2.2 Excavation of hard rock or artificial hard material will not be required.
- 1.2.3 20% of excavated river bed material can be re-used in the weir construction.
- 1.2.4 25 tonnes of existing rock/boulders is available for re-use.
- 1.2.5 Works will be undertaken during normal working hours.
- 1.2.6 Site compound will be located in an area adjacent to the existing site.
- 1.2.7 Works will be undertaken as part of a single competitively tendered construction contract.
- 1.2.8 Diversion of existing underground / overhead services is not required.
- 1.2.9 Access points to the works locations for plant and personnel is available.

1.3 Exclusions

The following are excluded, but are known to have a cost impact and therefore need to be covered by other budgets within the overall Project Budget. The list is intended only as a guide and cannot be relied upon to be exhaustive:

- 1.3.1 Professional/legal fees; planning/building control fees; statutory fees; site surveys; monitoring costs; environmental audits; wind studies; third party fees/costs; other fees etc.
- 1.3.2 Project insurances beyond allowances for Main Contractor's Third Party, Works and Contractor's Professional Indemnity Insurance which are included within the Preliminaries.
- 1.3.3 Value Added Tax (VAT).
- 1.3.4 Inflation beyond 3Q 2022.
- 1.3.5 Site acquisition fees/costs, air rights, rights to light (or any other third party compensation settlements), over sailing licences, sale or letting fees/costs.
- 1.3.6 Archaeological survey or excavation costs.
- 1.3.7 Diversion of services.
- 1.3.8 Measures to deal with contaminated land or invasive weeds.
- 1.3.9 Measures to deal with asbestos containing materials.
- 1.3.10 Maintenance of the completed works.



Main Summary

Ref	Main Summary			£	£ / m ²
2	CONSTRUCTION WORKS SUMMARY				
2(i)	Option 1				
A	Demolitions and earthworks			23,150	
B	In situ concrete works			3,325	
C	Rock armour works			18,825	
	Building and Siteworks works sub-total (Rounded)			45,300	
*	Preliminaries	35%		15,855	
	Base Cost Estimate			61,155	
*	Design development risk contingency	10%		6,116	
	Cost Limit			67,271	
*	Construction Stage Risk Contingency	10%		6,727	
	Total Estimated Construction Cost - Option 1			73,998	
2(ii)	Option 2				
A	Demolitions and earthworks			54,315	
B	Alterations to existing manholes			1,500	
	Building and Siteworks works sub-total (Rounded)			55,800	
*	Preliminaries	35%		19,530	
	Base Cost Estimate			75,330	
*	Design development risk contingency	10%		7,533	
	Cost Limit			82,863	
*	Construction Stage Risk Contingency	10%		8,286	
	Total Estimated Construction Cost - Option 2			91,149	
2(iii)	Option 3 (cost for one year)				
A	Initial visit			6,750	
B	Second visit			3,250	
	Building and Siteworks works sub-total			10,000	
*	Preliminaries	45%		4,500	
	Base Cost Estimate			14,500	
*	Design development risk contingency	10%		1,450	
	Cost Limit			15,950	
*	Construction Stage Risk Contingency	10%		1,595	
	Total Estimated Construction Cost - Option 3			17,545	



Breakdown

Aughrim River

Ref	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate (£)	Total (£)
3(i)	OPTION 1				
A	Demolitions and earthworks				
A1	Allowance for general site clearance/demolitions	1	item	1,750.00	1,750.00
A2	Excavation of existing river bed material	395	m3	20.00	7,900.00
A3	Disposal of excavated material; off site	317	m3	20.00	6,340.00
A4	Disposal of excavated material; on site	78	m3	10.00	780.00
A5	Filling with excavated material	78	m3	10.00	780.00
A6	Preparation of excavated surfaces	700	m2	3.00	2,100.00
A7	Allowance for geotextiles	700	m2	5.00	3,500.00
B	In situ concrete				
B1	Supply and lay blinding bed concrete; grade C10	3	m3	175.00	525.00
B2	Supply and place concrete base; grade C40/20	14	m3	200.00	2,800.00
C	Rock armour works				
C1	Supply and place crest stones	54	tonne	55.00	2,970.00
C2	Place existing stones	25	tonne	15.00	375.00
C3	Supply and place staggered row stones	20	tonne	55.00	1,100.00
C4	Supply and place broken rock/gravel	272	m3	40.00	10,880.00
C5	Trimming of broken rock surfaces	700	m2	5.00	3,500.00
Carried Forward To Summary (ROUNDED)					45,300.00

Aughrim River

Ref	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate (£)	Total (£)
3(iii)	OPTION 3 (COST FOR ONE YEAR)				
A	Initial visit				
A1	Allowance for general site clearance	1	item	4,500.00	4,500.00
A2	Removal of existing rock armour stones	25	tonne	15.00	375.00
A3	Place existing rock armour stones	25	tonne	15.00	375.00
A4	Allowance for additional native species planting	1	sum	1,500.00	1,500.00
B	Second visit				
B1	Allowance for general site clearance	1	item	2,500.00	2,500.00
B2	Allowance for additional native species planting	1	sum	750.00	750.00
Carried Forward To Summary (ROUNDED)					10,000.00

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Report to:	Neighbourhood Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	18 th October 2022
Subject:	Report of Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group Meeting 30 th June and 6 th October 2022
Reporting Officer	Kevin Scullion, Assistant Director, Facilities Management & Maintenance Department
Contact Officer	Kevin Scullion, Assistant Director, Facilities Management & Maintenance Department

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	The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with an opportunity to review the Action Sheet (see Appendix 1 and 2) from the Councils Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group meetings which took place on the 30 th of June and 6 th of October 2022 and consider any recommendations arising.
2.0	Key Issues
2.1	The Council Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group was set up to agree on how Council will help local communities across the district celebrate Christmas. It has no decision-making powers with all recommendations coming to the Sustainability & Environment Committee for consideration.
2.2	Councillors are asked to note the contents of the Action Sheets and to agree to the recommendations as provided in Sections 2.3 to 2.5 below.
2.3	<p><u>Evaluation of Sustainable Christmas trees Programme</u></p> <p>The Council commissioned an evaluation of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme which was first piloted in 2018.</p> <p>Pinnacle Growth Group were appointed and attached at Appendix 3 is a copy of their report.</p> <p>Pinnacle Growth Group engaged with several Community Groups who participated in the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, along with relevant Council staff and elected Members.</p> <p>The report concludes that the programme fulfilled the objectives of reducing the number of cut trees across the district, increasing engagement with communities, and promoting a geographical balance across the district about the provision of Christmas trees. It acknowledges varied success about health of the trees and states the high salt and wind exposure in a coastal area was the single most problematic factor.</p>

	<p>The report makes three recommendations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Development of a new Service Level Agreement with communities regarding the maintenance of the trees as a more environmentally sustainable and effective method of maintenance. Council to provide groups with the necessary materials and ensure a water supply is provided closet to the tree. Council would also need to provide groups with the relevant training. In addition, Council should consider the possibility of contracting out the cutting of the trees in future to ensure correct shaping or of carrying out this work in house. 2 The Council place increased focus on capacity building within community groups to ensure sustainability and succession planning. 3 The Council investigate the possibility of future replacement of cut trees with artificial ones. Artificial trees are easier to source, do not need to be watered, fed, or pruned and may be able to be located in sites which are not suitable for a planted tree. This would meet the Council's objective to decrease the number of cut trees. <p>As noted within the Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group Action Sheet of 6th of October there are five of our sustainable Christmas trees which are showing severe signs of distress and in Officers view will not recover. They are the trees at the following locations: the settlement of Drumaroad, village of Meigh, Bessbrook, Annalong and at the Promenade in Newcastle.</p> <p>For Drumaroad, Bessbrook, Annalong and Newcastle this is the second tree located in these locations with the first tree not surviving and being replaced last year. Officers are recommending not to replace these five threes but to work with local community representatives with a view to providing practical alternatives.</p>
2.4	<p><u>Contract for provision of Christmas lighting</u> The current contract that the Council has in place for provision of Christmas lighting comes to an end in January 2023.</p> <p>It is proposed to bring forward a Business Case/Economic Appraisal to this Committee in early 2023 which will consider the options for how Christmas illuminations and indeed other illuminations may be provide by the Council over the next number of years.</p>
2.5	<p><u>Provision of additional lighting within Castlewellan</u> As noted within the Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group Action Sheet of 6th of October, there was a discussion concerning a letter from the Castlewellan Regeneration Limited concerning the Christmas Lighting Event held in Castlewellan. In recent years this has been undertaken by the Castlewellan Traders Association and prior to this by Castlewellan Regeneration Limited. This year neither group can provide this function.</p> <p>Last year Castlewellan Traders Association held a switch on event at the Lower Square when the sustainable Christmas tree was switched on. In addition, the group had received permission from Council to light the four Council trees around the lower Square. They also arranged for lighting of the external facades to buildings and other trees.</p> <p>The Council provides Christmas pole illuminations within the town and has provided lighting to the sustainable Christmas tree.</p>

	<p>It should be noted that a paper was presented to the ERT Committee in September 2022 (ratified by full Council in October 2022) in which the Council agreed it was not delivering any Christmas switch on events this year. Service Level Agreements would be in place with successful groups. No group has been identified for Castlewellaan.</p> <p>The Council is committed to the provision of the pole illuminations within Castlewellaan and is in a position to provide lighting to the four trees within the Lower Square and to light the sustainable Christmas tree at this location. It can provide this as the property is owned by the Council and it has its own power supply to provide this service. The Council is not able to provide lighting to additional trees in the town as it does not have access to an available power supply. The Council is not able to provide lighting to the external facades of other buildings as it has neither the lights nor permission to do so.</p> <p>Officers propose that for this Christmas the Council provides its pole illuminations within Castlewellaan with the additionality of lighting the four trees within the Lower Square and the sustainable Christmas tree. The lights will be turned on at a date agreed with local community representatives.</p> <p>At the Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group Meeting of 6th of October it was requested that all Slieve Croob Councillors be invited to this Committee Meeting for discussion on this item, subject to agreement with the Committee Chairperson.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Recommendations</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Note the contents of this report and the Action Sheets of the Christmas Illuminations Group Meetings held on 30th June and 6th October 2022. ➤ To approve the recommendations as set out in Sections 2.3 and 2.5 of this report.
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Resource implications</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Work under this report is funded through the Councils revenue budget.</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations</p>
<p>5.2</p>	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation</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</p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks</p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)</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</p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs.</p>
7.0	Appendices
7.1	<p>Appendix 1 - Christmas Illuminations Working Group - Action Sheet – 30th June 2022</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Christmas Illuminations Working Group - Action Sheet – 6th October 2022</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme Evaluation Report</p>
8.0	Background Documents
8.1	None

Action Sheet

Working Group Meeting Christmas Illuminations: 30th June 2022

Councillors in Attendance: Cllr J Tinnelly and Cllr K McKeivitt

Officers in Attendance: K Scullion, A Patterson, S Burns, J Ellis, C Moffett, A Rennick, S Burns, Admin C O'Neill

Apologies: Cllr M Savage, Cllr A Lewis, J Hillen, J McCann, C Burns, A Mallon,

Subject	Actions and Updates	Officer Responsible
Welcome, Introduction Apologies	Cllr J Tinnelly chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr M Savage and in line with Working Group Terms of Reference	Noted
Declarations of Interest	There were no declarations of interest.	Noted
Agenda Item 3. Review of Action Sheet 7th April 2022	<p>K Scullion advised the Action Sheet of 7th April 2022 had been approved by the Neighbourhood Services Committee on 18th May 20220 and at Council Meeting in June 2022.</p> <p>Approval is held for replacement stock for Bessbrook, Merchants Quay, Buttercrane Quay, Sugar Island and Irish Street Downpatrick. Also project approved for replacement of certain cut Christmas trees with artificial trees.</p> <p>Regarding the Review of the Sustainable Programme this will be discussed at the next meeting in October as A Rennick was unavailable for update.</p>	Noted
Agenda Item 4 Update from Neighbourhood Services (K Scullion)	Last Christmas the Christmas loaned Dundrum Village Association 22 pole illuminations which they put up themselves. This year KS met with the Group along with Slieve Croobh Councillors and Dundrum is now going to	Noted

be included in the Council list for erection of illuminations, using existing stock.

KS is currently working on tender for procurement of new stock and hire of 5 artificial trees (10-year term) – 2 In Newry, 1 in Warrenpoint, 1 in Ballynahinch, and 1 in Downpatrick.

KS has been in contact with Derry & Strabane Council who went through the same process and were very helpful regarding specifications.

Storage since the Albert Basin Fire and the loss of Saintfield storage has caused problems with access and H & S issues. KS has sourced a new storage facility and a report was approved at the Neighbourhood Services Committee to enter negotiations for its lease. KS also confirmed Albert Basin Store is to be demolished and all stored illuminations will be destroyed.

Cllr Tinnelly raised the question of the condition of the sustainable trees and Jonathan Ellis confirmed they are being closely monitored. Planting trees in urban areas with restricted root growth impacts on the size and health of the trees. Two trees are currently in pots and will be used to replace those trees suffering from die-back, if required.

Some towns and villages will continue to receive small cut Christmas trees – they did not apply under the Sustainable Christmas tree project.

It is becoming more difficult to source good sized and shaped Christmas trees from NI forests.

Importing large trees under the Sustainable Christmas tree project also has new issues to address concerning

	<p>prevention of importation of banned pests.</p> <p>Cllr McKeivitt raised a request from Drumgath Ladies Group who would like a sustainable tree in their Community Garden. It was proposed by Cllr McKeivitt and seconded by Cllr Tinnelly that KS contact with the group and a paper be submitted to NS Committee on the matter.</p>	Proposed
<p>Agenda Item 5 Update from ERT (A Patterson)</p>	<p>AP confirmed ERT are involved with the 2 main switch on events in Newry and Downpatrick. A paper will go to Committee in August to renew Service Level Agreements with 5 existing areas (Crossmaglen, Newcastle, Ballynahinch, Warrenpoint and Kilkeel).</p> <p>Proposed dates for this year's Switch On Events so far are:</p> <p>Newry - Thursday 17th November Downpatrick - Friday 18th November and Newcastle - Saturday 26th November Other event dates have still to be confirmed.</p>	Noted
<p>Update from AHC (J Hillen)</p>	<p>In the absence of J Hillen, S Burns advised the Funding Call is now open (closing date 25th July 2022) for Christmas Illuminations and Events. Letters of Offer will be sent out in September to successful applicants.</p>	Noted
<p>Agenda Item 6 Any Other Business</p>	<p>As there was no other business the meeting closed at 14:50.</p>	Noted

	Date of next meeting Thursday 6 th October 2022 2pm – 3pm	Noted
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Action Sheet

Working Group Meeting Christmas Illuminations: 6th October 2022

Councillors in Attendance: Cllr T Andrews: Cllr A McMurray Cllr J Tinnelly and Cllr G Hanna

Officers in Attendance: K Scullion, A Patterson, J Ellis, A Rennick, T McDonald, A Mallon, C Burns & Admin C O'Neill

Apologies: Cllr M Savage, Cllr O Magennis, Cllr K McKeivitt & J Hillen,

Subject	Actions and Updates	Officer Responsible
Welcome, Introduction Apologies	Cllr T Andrews chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr M Savage and in line with Working Group Terms of Reference	Noted
Declarations of Interest	Cllr Tinnelly declared an interest in Rostrevor Community Initiative Group who received funding via financial assistance. (For Halloween)	Noted
Agenda Item 3. Review of Action Sheet from 30th June 2022	<p>Dundrum is now going to be included in the Council list for erection of illuminations, using existing stock.</p> <p>Approval has been given to hire 5 artificial trees. The Hire agreement is for a 10-year period. The company own the trees so costs for repairs, storage and replacement fall to the hire company. Vandalism is not covered</p> <p>Approval has been received to hire storage in Greenbank Depot but upon review this option is not being exercised.</p> <p>Two sustainable Christmas trees remain in pots, and it is proposed to potentially use these in Bessbrook/Annalong.</p> <p>K S made contact with Drumgath Ladies Group to advise that Council do not currently plan to extend offer of sustainable Christmas trees.</p>	Noted

<p>Agenda Item 4 Update from Neighbourhood Services (K Scullion)</p>	<p>Council has carried out significant repairs to Christmas display material this year and in some cases mini pillars have had to be installed.</p> <p>This is the final year of Contract with Council Contractor for erection of Christmas lighting. Their term finishes in January 2023. Business case to be presented to Council for new contract.</p> <p>Cllrs expressed their satisfaction with the current providers performance.</p> <p>Cllr McMurray raised the possibility of tendering for 2 contractors (one for Christmas & one for other events).</p> <p>Letter from Castlewellan Regeneration re Christmas Illuminations this year. Castlewellan Traders Association had previously provided lighting to the sustainable Christmas tree, 4 Council owned trees in Lower Square and lighting to the external facades of a number of buildings. This Group is no longer operational.</p> <p>KS to prepare a paper to Sustainability and Environment Committee (18.10.22) and seek permission to invite Slieve Croob DEA for this item.</p> <p>J Ellis confirmed that Council continues to provide a number of cut Christmas trees each year and these have been selected from a forest. Quality of trees can vary from good to poor.</p> <p>Cllr McMurray raised the possibility of planting our own trees if a suitable site was available. J Ellis advised it would take 12/19 years and the success rate might vary. There would also be a resource aspect to planting our own trees.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>K Scullion</p> <p>Noted</p>
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<p>Agenda Item 5 Update from ERT (A Patterson)</p>	<p>Council has provided 38 sustainable trees throughout the district. Five sustainable trees have proven difficult to maintain: Drumaroad, Meigh, Bessbrook, Annalong Newcastle promenade.</p> <p>Cllr Hanna raised the possibility of a new tree being planted in a different location in Annalong. A Rennick to forward local community contact details to K Scullion.</p> <p>ERT paper went to Council in September and was ratified in October, Council is not delivering any events this year. SLA agreements will be in place with successful groups.</p>	<p>K Scullion</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>Update from AHC (J Hillen)</p>	<p>In the absence of J Hillen, A Rennick gave an update on the findings of the Sustainable Tree Review carried out by Pinnacle.</p> <p>Overall, the review was very favourable however a few recommendations were put forward one of which was the possibility of replacing sustainable trees in areas not suitable for growth with artificial ones.</p> <p>C Burns provided information on the Financial Assistance Call. A total of £66,259.99 has been awarded to a number of groups throughout the district.</p> <p>Cllr McMurray advised one of his Groups was disappointed at not being awarded funding and was advised the group should apply for a debrief & appeal process asap.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

<p>Agenda Item 6 Any Other Business</p>	<p>Cllr Tinnelly raised the possibility of lighting to 2 trees at the pedestrian entrance to Kilbroney Park. A Mallon is to investigate further and assess same.</p> <p>As there was no other business the meeting closed at 15:30</p> <p>Date of next meeting Thursday 5th January 2023 2pm – 3pm</p>	<p>A Mallon</p>
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Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme Evaluation

Pinnacle Growth Group

July 2022



PINNACLE
GROWTHGROUP

www.pinnacle-growth.com

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Introduction



**PINNACLE
GROWTHGROUP**
Enabling business growth

ABBREVIATIONS SUMMARY

- NMDDC – Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
- DEA – District Electoral Area
- LGD – Local Government District

SCOPE OF EVALUATION

Pinnacle Growth Group were appointed by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) to evaluate the successfulness of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, piloted in 2018.

The scope of works for the evaluation of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme included:

- Issuing stakeholder survey to community groups
- Review of survey responses
- Conducting stakeholder interviews with council representatives
- Review of interview data
- Completion of 'Programme Evaluation' report incorporating recommendations

METHODOLOGY

In completion of the requirements of this contract, the following actions were undertaken:

Date(s)	Activity
Thursday 26 th May 2022	Project Initiation Meeting
Thursday 9 th June 2022	Project Update Meeting
Tuesday 14 th June 2022	Stakeholder Survey
Thursday 23 rd June 2022	Stakeholder Interview In attendance: Kevin Scullion Aidan Mallon Jonathan Eliis
Tuesday 28 th June 2022	Stakeholder Interview In attendance: Janine Hillen Taucher McDonald Aisling Rennick Sonya Burns

PROGRAMME AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme was launched in 2018 as a pilot scheme. The total budget for the programme was £30,000 per year. The programme was designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Reduce the number of cut trees; and
- Enhance engagement with communities and community groups.

In addition to having a long-term positive impact on the environment and local communities, the programme aimed to improve inclusivity by ensuring equal participation across DEAs.

Overall, the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme achieved its objectives. As a result of the programme, 38 sustainable trees were provided to community groups between 2018 and 2021, accomplishing the goals to increasingly move away from cutting down trees and engage with communities.

Furthermore, the distribution of the trees was more evenly dispersed throughout the Council area in comparison to the prior cut trees, achieving the Council's objective to promote equality across the districts. The tree distribution across the DEAs is detailed within the geographical analysis section of the report.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The aim of the expression of interest process was to:

- Help Council develop a sustainable community-based approach to Christmas illuminations events (Sustainable Tree Programme)
- Explore and maximise existing community resources in regard to Christmas illuminations
- Ensure equality of approach across communities within the District
- Encourage community ownership of Christmas illumination events.

NMDDC took a targeted approach to the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme issuing out a closed expression of interest in 2018 to specific community groups. The community groups chosen were based on the criteria that the Sustainable Trees had to be planted in a central location in a town or village, coupled with proposals from NMDDC's maintenance team of where the Sustainable Tree could be planted.

As this was a pilot programme with limited resources, NMDDC were cautious with their approach as they did not have the resources to provide every community

group across the Newry, Mourne and Down district with a Sustainable Tree. Furthermore, as this was a pilot programme, it was essential to test its successfulness first before issuing to every community group across the district.

Following the positive outcomes of the pilot scheme which enabled 6 sustainable Christmas Trees to be planted in 2018, an expression of interest was released in 2019 with the aim to extend the programme to an additional 14 towns and villages. Each DEA was given the opportunity to contact known community organisations and invite Community Groups to submit an Expression of Interest form including possible locations. Towns/cities where the Council organise Switch on Events were not eligible for the Programme and thus applications from Newry and Downpatrick were ineligible.

Sustainable Tree locations were selected based on the following criteria:

- Land ownership and site suitability including proximity to power sources
- Locations must be shared spaces in the centre of the town/village.
- Only one site per town/village will be considered.
- Level of Community Interest/Buy-in – Preference given to areas where the Council can work with a partnership of community organisations to deliver the project.
- As this programme is aimed at increasing the sustainability of Christmas trees, preference given to areas where the Council currently erects cut trees.
- Preference given to towns/villages which are not included in the Council's major switch on programme (i.e., £5000 and above). The following towns receive assistance under that programme.

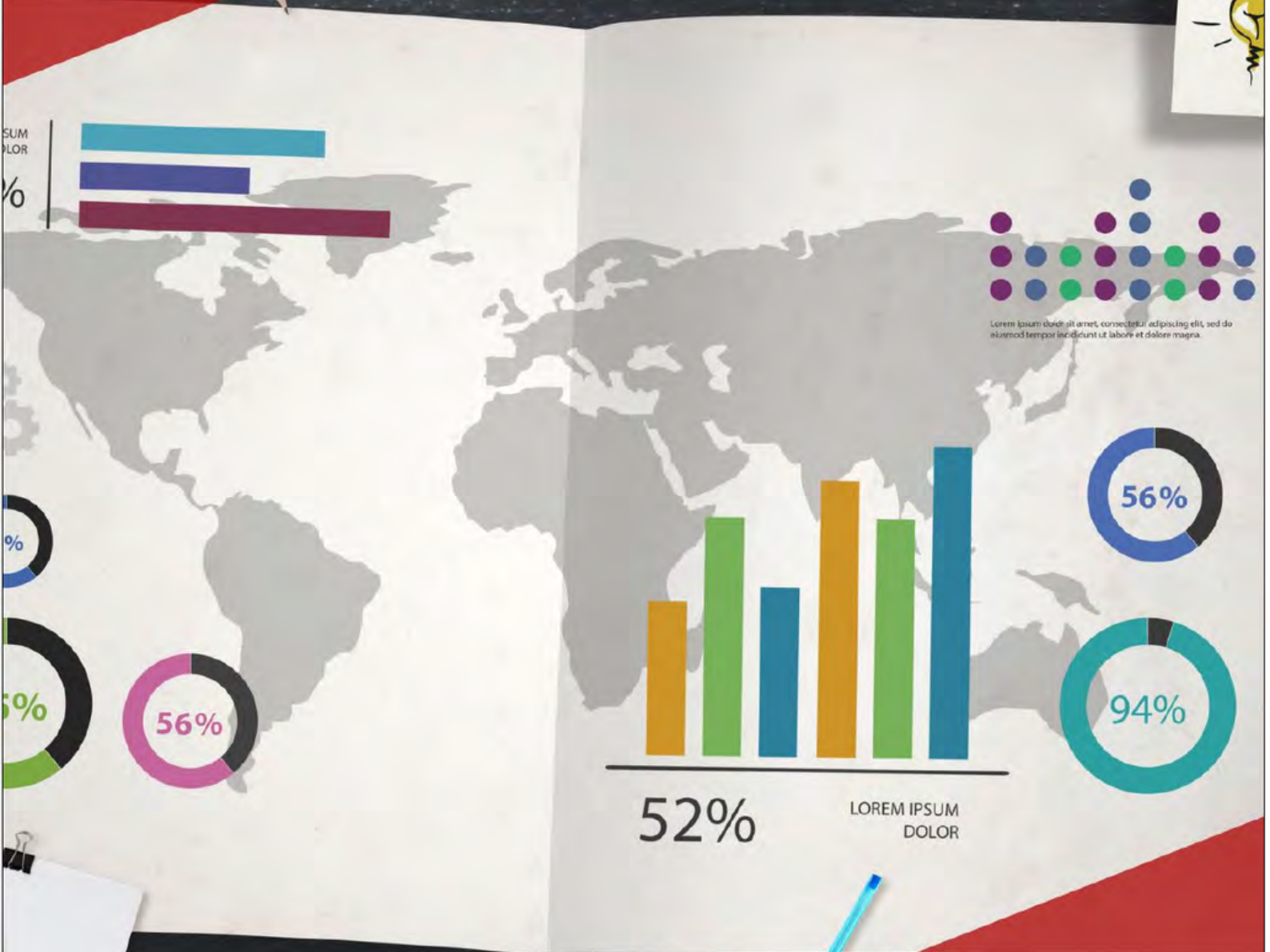
Based on the above criteria, sites were given an order of preference and the 14 highest ranking were given a site visit.

Following the identification of a suitable site, the DEAs invited the relevant representative to an informal meeting to discuss Council responsibility and Community Partner responsibility for the Sustainable Tree Programme. Additionally, a short survey was completed to determine: what current support the community currently receive from Council/other funders, what local events are rolled out (if any), and what format do these events take and attendance numbers (approx.).

Council Responsibility	Community Partner(s) Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision and planting of one No Christmas tree (Nordmanniana Fir) of approximately 4.5 m high • Annual pruning/maintenance of tree (where necessary) • Dressing the tree in Year 1 • Insurance cover • Starter pack (£2,500 approx) including: One-off tree illuminations package £1,250, Community planning event/meeting (s) £150, One-off Christmas switch on event £1,100 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Dressing/lighting of tree (including insurance) • Resourcing and organisation and delivery of Annual Switch on Event for the local community • Evaluation of local Christmas events

Following discussion regarding the Sustainable Tree Programme and responsibilities involved, interested community organisations could then enter an agreement with the Council outlining future Christmas tree provision.

Geographical Analysis



GEOGRAPHIC AND COMMUNITY SPREAD ANALYSIS

As part of the evaluation of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, a geographic and community spread analysis was completed.

GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

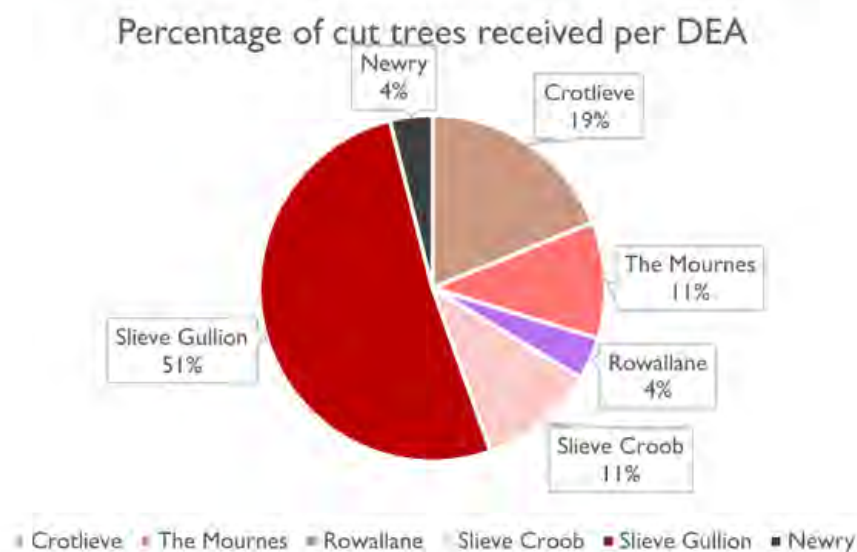
DISTRIBUTION OF CUT TREES – PRIOR TO THE NEW PROGRAMME

Prior to the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, 27 locations across the Newry, Mourne and Down Local Government District (LGD) received cut trees. Within the LGD there are 7 District Electoral Area's (DEA).

Outlined in the table below are the locations per DEA which received a cut tree prior to the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme.

DEA	Location
The Mournes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annalong • Attical • Ballymartin
Crotlieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballyholland • Burren • Hilltown • Rostrevor • Warrenpoint
Rowallane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballynahinch
Slieve Gullion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bessbrook • Camlough • Crossmaglen • Cullville • Cullyhanna • Dorsey • Forkhill • Gargory • Jonesborough • Lislea • Mullaghbawn • Newtownhamilton • Silverbridge • Whitecross
Slieve Croob	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castlewellan • Gargroy • Masford-Finnis
Newry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newry Hill St

Figure 1: Pie-chart showing the percentage of cut trees received per DEA



As clearly illustrated by the above diagram, Slieve Gullion received the most cut trees by a vast majority. The percentage of cut trees received per DEA is broken down as follows:

- Crotlieve received 5 (19%) trees
- The Mournes received 3 (11%) trees
- Rowallane received 1 (4%) tree
- Slieve Croob received 3 (11%) trees
- Slieve Gullion received 14 (52%) trees
- Newry received 1 (4%) tree

DISTRIBUTION OF SUSTAINABLE TREES

The Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme was piloted in 2018 with the introduction of 8 trees. In 2019, an additional 15 trees were introduced to alternative areas across Newry, Mourne and Down and a final instalment of 15 trees were allocated in 2020 to complete a total of 38 trees across the district. The map and pie chart below clearly illustrate the distribution of Sustainable Trees across the district.

Figure 2: Map showing the locations of Sustainable Trees

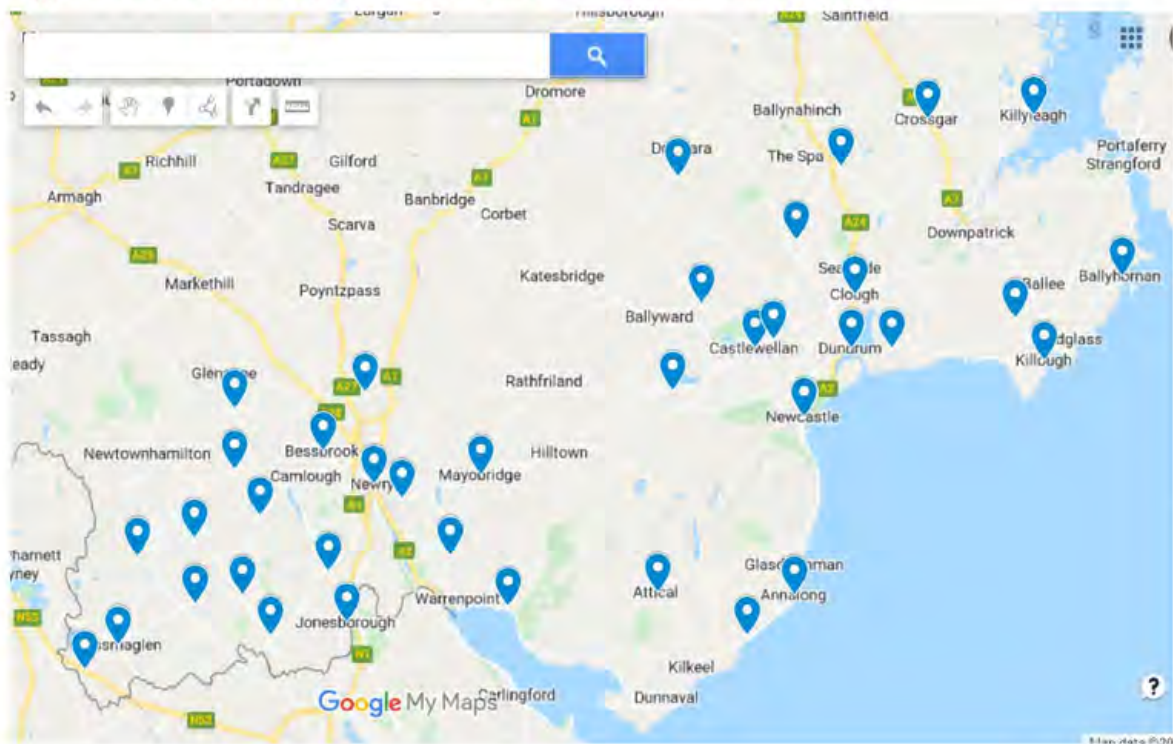
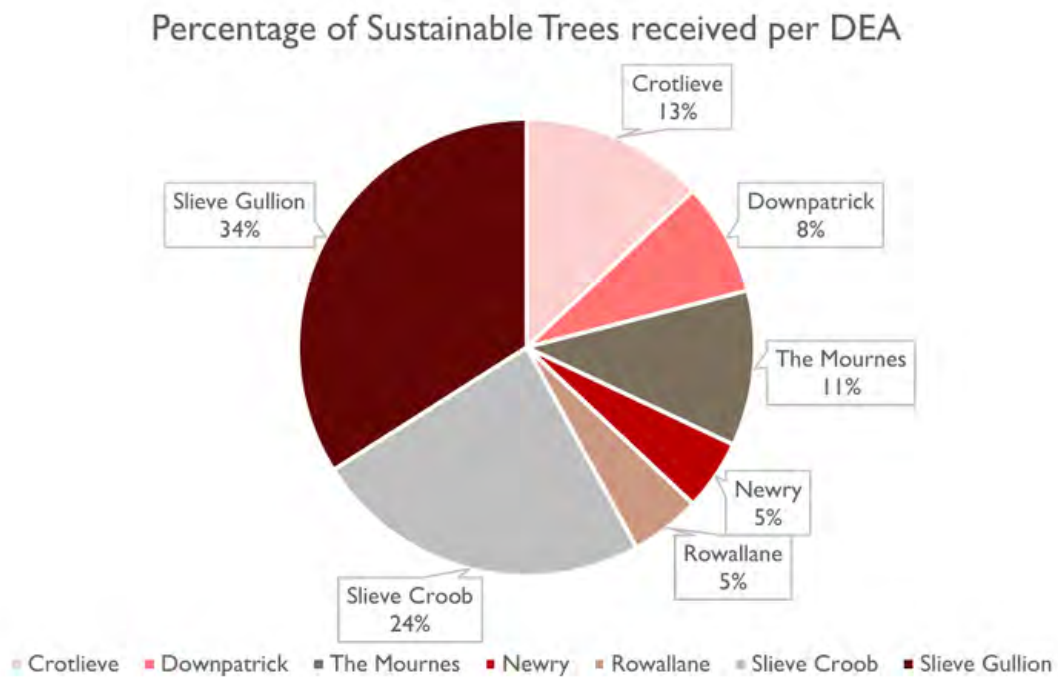


Figure 3: Pie-chart showing percentage of Sustainable Trees received per DEA



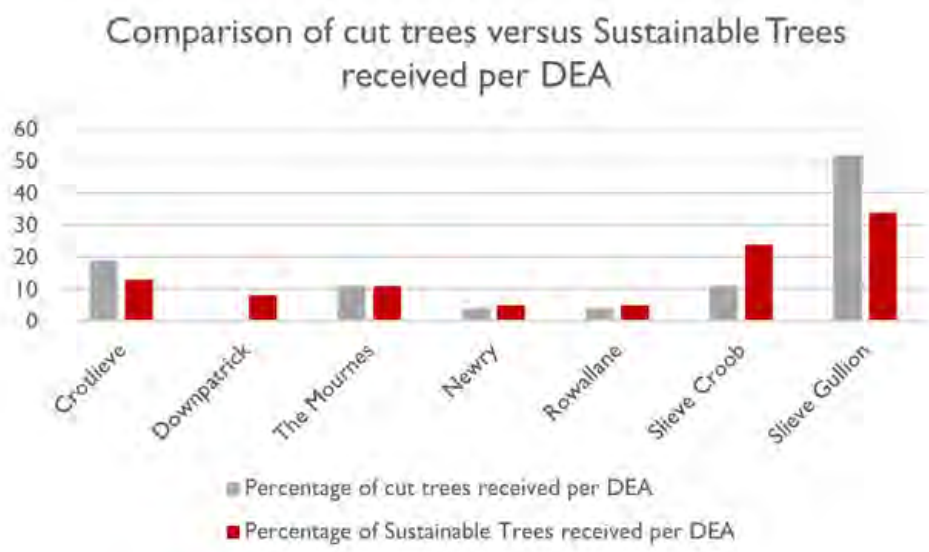
Overall, the distribution of the Sustainable Christmas Trees was more evenly dispersed among the DEA's than the prior cut trees. The distribution of Sustainable Trees per DEA was as follows:

- Crotlieve received 5 (13.2%) trees
- Downpatrick received 3 (7.9%) trees
- The Mournes received 4 (10.5%) trees
- Newry received 2 (5.3%) trees
- Rowallane received 2 (5.3%) trees
- Slieve Croob received 9 (23.7%) trees
- Slieve Gullion received 13 (34.2%) trees

COMPARISON

A comparison of the distribution of cut trees versus Sustainable Trees demonstrates that Slieve Croob saw the greatest increase in trees provided by NMDDC out of all the DEAs. Whilst Slieve Gullion still received the greatest number of trees per DEA, their overall percentage allocation dropped significantly. This exemplifies how the Sustainable Trees were more evenly dispersed across the DEAs achieving NMDDC's objective to achieve balance across the district. The geographical spread of cut trees versus Sustainable Trees is visually illustrated below.

Figure 4: Bar-chart comparing the number of cut trees versus Sustainable Trees in each council area



COMMUNITY SPREAD ANALYSIS

According to the latest available census data, out of a population of 171,533 in Newry Mourne and Down, the average religion percentages in the LGD are as follows (NISRA):

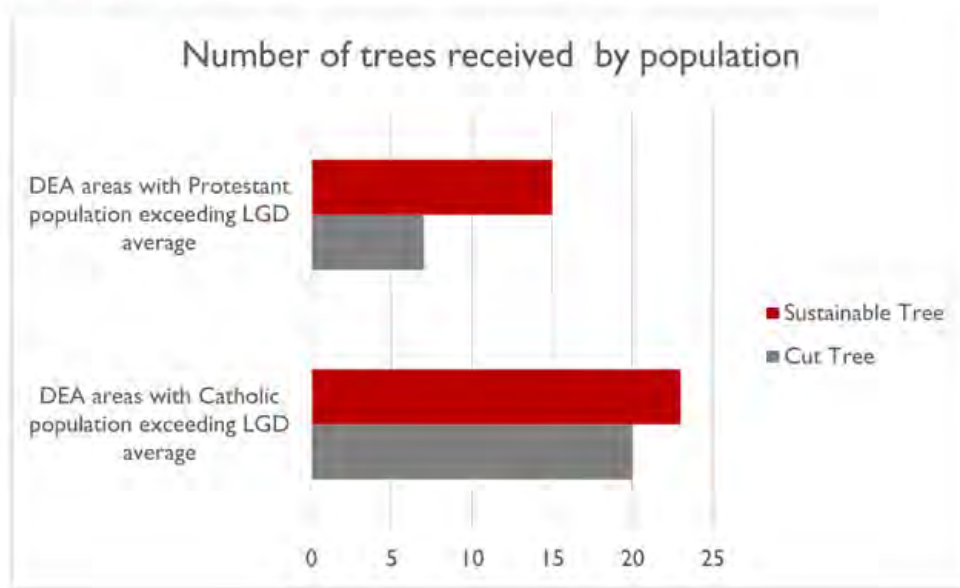
- 72.3% described themselves as having a Roman Catholic background
- 23.9% described themselves as having a Protestant/other Christian background
- 3.8% described themselves as having neither a Roman Catholic nor Protestant/ other Christian background

An analysis of the more detailed DEA census data shows that the following DEAs have a higher-than-average LGD percentage of people who described themselves as having a Roman Catholic background: Newry (89.6%); Crotlieve (84.8%); and Slieve Gullion (83.7%). The remaining DEAs have a higher-than-average LGD percentage of people who described themselves as having a Protestant/other Christian background; these include, Rowallane (58.2%); The Mournes (38.1%); and Slieve Croob (29.0%).

Based on the data above, a community spread analysis of the cut trees distributed by NMDDC prior to the new Programme shows that 20 (74.1%) of the 27 trees were placed in DEA areas that have a Catholic population exceeding the LGD average and 7 (25.9%) of the 27 trees, were placed in DEA areas that have a Protestant population exceeding this LGD average.

Through the introduction of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, NMDDC have achieved a more balanced distribution of trees across DEAs. For example, as part of the new Programme, 23 (60.5%) of the 38 Sustainable Christmas Trees were placed in DEA areas that have a Catholic population exceeding the LGD average and 15 (39.5%) of the 38 trees were placed in DEA areas that have a Protestant population exceeding the LGD average.

Figure 5: Diagram illustrating the number of cut trees versus Sustainable Trees received by population.



Stakeholder Engagement



**PINNACLE
GROWTHGROUP**
Enabling business growth

COMMUNITY GROUPS ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

To ensure a strong evidence-based assessment and evaluation of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, PGG conducted stakeholder engagement with community groups who received a Sustainable Tree.

In order to assess the overall impact of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, a stakeholder survey was deployed to gauge the community engagement with the Programme as well as the overall impact.

METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT - SURVEY

To measure the impact of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, a survey was drafted and launched on Tuesday 14th June, and was issued to all successful applicants through communication with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The initial closing date was Monday 27th June, but this was extended to the 28th June in order to maximise the response rate.

The survey asked the following questions to community groups who received a Sustainable Tree to collect accurate statistics and strong evidence to determine the impact and effectiveness of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme.

Number	Question
Information Gathering	
1	What is the name of your community group?
2	Where was your sustainable tree(s) located within your town/village?
Communications and Awareness	
3	How did you hear about the programme?
4	How straightforward was it to complete the Expression of Interest?
Programme Impact	
5	Overall, how would you describe the impact of this programme on your community group?
6	Please provide further comment on your answer
7	What was the local perception of the community's Sustainable Christmas Tree?
8	Please provide further comment on your answer
9	What was the approximate attendance of the switch-on event for your community's Sustainable Christmas Tree?
Programme Delivery	
10	Please select all responsibilities that you were able to complete in Year 2 & Year 3?
11	How straightforward did your organisation find it to complete your responsibilities in Year 2 and Year 3?

Number	Question
12	Please provide further detail on your answer above
13	Was the level of funding provided through the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme sufficient?
14	Please provide further comment in relation to your answer. If your organisation was under/over budget, what were the reasons for this?
15	Were any additional voluntary or financial resources required in order for your organisation to complete its responsibilities?
Council Support	
16	Please rate the effectiveness of the support from Newry, Mourne and Down Council staff throughout this programme?
17	Please provide further detail on your answer above
18	Please rate the effectiveness of the Council's maintenance staff at pruning/maintenance of the tree throughout the year?
19	Please provide further detail on your answer above
20	Please rate the effectiveness of the support from the Council staff for your Sustainable Christmas Tree switch-on event?
21	Please provide further detail on your answer
22	Please rate the overall quality of communication from the Council throughout the duration of the 3 year Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme
23	Please rate the overall frequency of communication from the Council throughout the duration of the 3 year Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme
24	Please specify any additional support you received? e.g. Financial Assistance Programme
Improving your community's Christmas experience	
25	What recommendations would you make to improve the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme?
26	What other Christmas related events would you like to see organised by the Council?

SURVEY RESULTS

A total of 11 community groups completed the survey pertaining to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Sustainable Christmas Tree programme– this accounted for 28.9% of the total potential responses. This was the final quantity of responses following a verification exercise which removed duplicate responses, as well as responses from organisations who did not receive a Sustainable Christmas Tree as part of the programme but had provided responses to the survey in error. This figure was confirmed as acceptable by NMDDC.

INFORMATION GATHERING

The survey asked respondents to identify their community group then provide details as to where their Sustainable Christmas Tree is located within their community. Of the 11 responses received, 8 (72.7%) groups described that their tree was located in a "central" or "main area" within their village. A further 3 respondents (27.3%) stated that their tree was located at a community building such as a youth club or community centre. The widely held response of a central location demonstrates the significance of the Programme to community groups as the Sustainable Tree was a focal point in their area. This view is furthered by the additional 3 respondents whose tree were placed outside community buildings, emphasising the importance the Sustainable Christmas Trees had on specific people within the community as well as the overarching population of the area.

COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS

Community groups were given the opportunity to provide feedback in regard to initial communication with the Council. Of the total respondents, 6 (54.5%) heard about the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme through their Council DEA Coordinator. Other answers included: 2 (18.2%) groups heard via the Council website, 1 (9.1%) through the local press, and 1 (9.1%) by word of mouth. Finally, one respondent (9.1%) replied that they "organised it themselves". The response to this question highlights the importance of Council communication with specific importance placed on Council DEA Coordinators. Of the respondents 8 (72.7%) heard about the programme through Council sources, emphasising the wide reach of the Council's communication towards community groups.

As part of the survey, community groups were also able to provide information on how straightforward they found the completion of the Expression of Interest process. To this question, 3 (27.3%) respondents stated that they found the Expression of Interest "very straightforward" to complete. A further 5 (45.5%) found completing it "straightforward" and 3 respondents (27.3%) were indifferent to its completion. Of the responses 72.7% were positive in terms of ease of completion with the remaining 27.3% responding "indifferent". Evidently, NMDDC's Expression of Interest process was satisfactory from a community groups' perspective, proving that the form was neither overly complicated nor a deterrent for community groups seeking to get involved with the Programme.

PROGRAMME IMPACT

The survey posed questions relating to overall impact of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme. These questions were designed to gauge the impact of the programme on the community group as well as on the overall community through methods such as the switch-on events.

Survey participants were asked to define the overall impact the Sustainable Christmas Tree project had on their community group. 5 (45.5%) respondents answered "very positive", indicating that their community group had benefited extremely as a result of the Programme, and an additional 3 (27.3%) groups answered "Positive". A minority, 1 (9.1%) respondent gauged the impact on their community group as indifferent. Whilst the majority of responses were positive, 1 (9.1%) respondent stated that the impact of the Programme on their community group was "negative" and a further 1 (9.1%) respondent answered "very negative".

Overall, to this question, 72.7% of respondents viewed the Programme as having a positive impact on their community groups, with the majority of this percentage signifying that the impact was "very positive". This is a high rate of positive impacts for the Programme to have been responsible for. However, one respondent stated that their group was indifferent to the impact of the new Programme, suggesting that improvements can be made. Additionally, two respondents replied that the Programme had a "negative" and "very negative" implying that they had concerns with the Programme. A follow-up question sought to assess further detail on these answers.

Each respondent was asked to provide further detail on the impact of the Programme. Of the 5 "very positive" answers, 80% of respondents provided additional comment. Each response provided unique insight into a different benefit of the Programme. One group expressed how the Programme provided their community with a Christmas tree that they could never have before due to "lack of funds". Another emphasised that the Programme "boosted confidence to be able to apply for other funding opportunities" which prior to this Programme hadn't been happening and as a result their community group was dwindling. Additional responses of the "very positive" viewpoint underlined how the Programme allowed the community group the opportunity to offer residents in the area a yearly Christmas event, in the form of a switch-on, and another respondent of this viewpoint appreciated the "simple process" of the Programme. Clearly, the Programme has had extensive benefits for the community groups as each of these respondents have detailed a different advantage from the Programme. This is reinforced further by the "positive" impact respondents who provided further detail and outlined additional benefits of the Programme such

as the “creation of a community spirit and contribution to a sustainable environment” as well as another stating that the whole concept of the Programme i.e., seeing a tree grow from year to year is a great idea. Each of these community groups have outlined differentiating benefits of the Programme which further emphasises the extensive benefits that the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme has had on community groups.

Nevertheless, with every programme there are drawbacks. Some groups felt that they required additional horticultural/ botanical support and expertise than what they were able to avail of through the programme.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

To fully assess the impact of the new Programme, survey respondents were asked to gauge the local perception of the community's Sustainable Christmas Tree of which 6 (54.5%) responded that the local perception was “very positive” Further to this another 3 (27.3%) described it as “positive” with only 1 (9.1%) describing it as “negative” and a further 1 (9.1%) describing the local perception as “very negative”.

Again, each respondent was asked to provide further detail on their answers and the “very positive” (54.5%) and “positive” (27.3%) respondents provided a range of additional comments regarding the positive local perception of the Sustainable Christmas Tree. This qualitative information highlighted that the Programme gave the local community a sense of “ownership” and “pride” in their tree, with one community group answering that “it's enjoyable watering [the tree] throughout the year in dry spells and watching it thrive and grow” and multiple answering that the decorating process is enjoyable. Additional comments were made regarding the significance of the tree as a “focal point for community groups at Christmas”, as well as positive comments on the appearance of the tree and how “hassle-free” the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme is in comparison to the cut trees which were taken down after 4 weeks. Whilst a minority, the 1 (9.1%) “negative” and 1 (9.1%) “very negative” responses highlighted that not all Sustainable Trees were as successful as others. One respondent stated that because the tree died, it “created a poor image”, and the other answered that the local community preferred the original yearly tree.

Overall, the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme was positively received by the vast majority of communities represented by participating organisations; however, there was a rare exception where the original tree and process of yearly renewal was deemed better by locals, specifically locations where the tree didn't grow as well. However, it is important to highlight that local perception is opinion

and it is very difficult to have a Programme tailored to suit the needs of every local in a community.

To determine the success of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, the survey considered the outcomes generated. For example, respondents were asked to provide the approximate attendance of their switch-on event, which have been outlined below.

- 1 (9.1%) respondent estimated their attendance was within the 26-50 people bracket.
- 2 (18.2%) respondents estimated their attendance was within the 51-100 people bracket.
- 4 (36.4%) respondents estimated their attendance was within the 101-250 people bracket.
- 3 (27.3%) respondents estimated their attendance was within the 251-500 people bracket.
- 1 (9.1%) respondent estimated their attendance was 500+ people.

It is evident that there was a significant spread of attendance for each community groups' event. This highlights the extensiveness of the Programme's outreach as small, medium and large communities benefited.

Overall, the main findings from this analysis conclude that not only were the Sustainable Trees welcomed and enjoyed by the vast majority of recipients, but also the fact that 72.7% of recipients viewed the Programme as having had a positive impact on their community group and 81.7% of recipients perceived that the Programme was viewed positively by the local community. Furthermore, the wide-spread effectiveness and success of the Programme was emphasised by the varying communities of different sizes who received a Sustainable Tree, as well as the high-attendance of the switch-on event.

PROGRAMME DELIVERY

The survey posed questions to recipients regarding multiple aspects of the delivery of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme to gauge how community groups thought the Programme was delivered by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Survey participants were asked to select all of the pre-agreed responsibilities that they had managed to complete in year 2 and year 3 of the Programme.

These responsibilities included: annual dressing/lighting of the tree (including Insurance); resourcing, organisation and delivery of the annual Switch-On Event for the local community; and Evaluation of local Christmas events.

- Of the respondents, 7 (63.6%) managed to complete all their responsibilities in year 2 and year 3 of the Programme.
- 3 (27.3%) respondents were only able to complete the annual dressing/lighting of the tree (including insurance)
- 1 (9.1%) respondent answered that they could not complete any of their responsibilities.

This evidences that the vast majority (88.8%) of community groups could complete all or the majority of their responsibilities in year 2 and 3, while a small minority (9.1%) indicated that they struggled to complete any. As a result of this, it can be concluded that the Programme was delivered in such a way that community groups were capable to meet their pre-agreed responsibilities and therefore the Council was not asking too much of them. However, NMDDC should consider additional support for the community groups who could not complete their responsibilities.

To fully examine the capability of the community groups to deliver their responsibilities as part of the Programme, a follow-up question was included pertaining to the difficulty of completing responsibilities. The vast majority of respondents answered positively. For example, 3 (27.3%) respondents indicated that they found it "very straightforward" to complete their responsibilities while a further 6 (54.5%) found it "straightforward" to do so. This is contrasted by 1 (9.1%) respondent answering that they were "indifferent" as they did not complete any of their responsibilities and 1 (9.1%) respondent stating that they found it difficult to complete their tasks despite the fact that they managed to complete them all.

When asked for further details on the ease of completing their tasks, 7 (63.6%) respondents detailed that they had carried out the work themselves and managed it adequately and 1 (9.1%) respondent answered that they had community help to aid the completion of their responsibilities. However, other answers included 2 (18.2%) respondents answering that even though they managed to complete all or some of their responsibilities they found it complicated due to difficulties with procuring funding, with one of the respondents stating "this was sometimes frustrating as only £2000 per group could be applied for. If we counted our volunteers time for the form filling and the event itself, it wasn't worth the hassle that's why we will not be looking funding for this in the

future." Finally, the 1 respondent (9.1%) who did not complete any of their responsibilities had no further comment.

In tandem with the ease of completion of responsibilities, survey participants were asked whether the level of funding provided through the Programme was sufficient. Of the respondents 6 (54.5%) said "Yes", while 5 (45.5%) said "No". Upon further additional comment to this, the "Yes" respondents highlighted that everything was within budget and all costs were covered. Interestingly, all yes respondents apart from 1 had a switch-on event attendance of either 26-50, 51-100 and some 101-250. This implies that the budget was most suitable for community groups that had a small to medium sized switch-on event. On the contrary, "No" respondents highlighted that they didn't have sufficient funding for replacement or extra lights as well as new decorations. Another "No" respondent reiterated this point but established that they only received funding for the switch-on event, whilst another stated how they have found it increasingly difficult to procure funding each year. All "No" responders had an approximate switch-on attendance of 101-250, 251-500 or 500+ indicating that the funding supplied was not adequate for larger communities or events.

Survey participants were asked if any additional voluntary or financial resources were required in order for their organisation to complete its responsibilities. Of which 6 (54.5%) respondents said "No" and 5 (45.5%) replied "Yes". Of the 5 community groups that did need to seek funding in order to complete their responsibilities, 1 highlighted that some capital (approx. £500) was provided by their committee, 2 outlined that they needed to fundraise/get volunteers to contribute towards the costs of the programme, and 2 highlighted that due to lack of funds, public and community groups were not happy with either the tree or the switch-on event. Again, the larger switch-on events tended to find the funding insufficient.

COUNCIL SUPPORT

Respondents were posed with a series of questions which sought to clarify the extent of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's support provided to the community groups. Firstly, survey participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of the support from Council staff throughout the Programme.

A large proportion of organisations stated that Council staff support was very effective with 4 (36.4%) rating the staff's support as "very positive" while a further 5 (45.5%) described it as "positive". Further to this, another (9.1%) replied "indifferent" to the effectiveness of Council support and 1 (9.1%) viewed it as "negative". Those who responded positively, stated: "Staff were top notch", "Good

help from programmes unit and fund holder" and "available and helpful with any queries or questions". The respondent who said "indifferent" stated that Council staff fulfilled their responsibilities. Overall, 81.9% viewed council staff in a positive manner and commended everything they did in terms of queries and questions. This is evidence that the vast majority of community groups were satisfied with the effectiveness of the Council's support.

Further to this, Community groups were asked to rate the effectiveness of the Council's maintenance staff in the pruning and all-round maintenance of the tree. 1 respondent (9.1%) highlighted that the effectiveness of the maintenance staff was "very positive". 2 (18.2%) stated "positive" while 3 (27.3%) were indifferent to the effectiveness of the Council's maintenance staff. Furthermore, 3 (27.3%) rated it "negative" while another 2 (18.2%) scored it "very negative". When asked for further information regarding this the "very positive" respondent was content with the annual check and the positive respondents clarified that there were "no issues". However, those who responded negatively referred to the difficulties with maintenance and upkeep of the trees.

Survey participants were then asked to rate the effectiveness of the support from Council staff for their sustainable Christmas Tree switch-on event. 5 (45.5%) respondents described the council staff support of the Switch-on event as "very positive". 2 (22.2%) answered "positive" while 4 (44.4%) found the Council's support of the Switch-on event "indifferent". Those who found the support very positive or positive shared how "The assistant mayor made themselves available for our light switch on, small villages can be overlooked for towns, but we weren't" and "councillor was present at our switch-on" as well as general commendations of "helpful and queries handled in a timely fashion".

Overall, while there were some who viewed the support as indifferent, the overall satisfaction rate of community groups towards the Council's support of the Switch-on event was widely held as positive.

QUALITY OF COMMUNICATIONS

Data was also collected in relation to the satisfaction levels with regard to the quality and frequency of communications from Newry, Mourne and Down. In response to the overall quality of the communication from the Council the most common response, provided by 4 (36.4%) community groups was "positive", whilst an additional 3 (27.3%) of community groups answered "very positive". However, the overall quality of communication was "negative" for 2 (18.2%) community groups and "indifferent" for 2 (18.2%).

FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATIONS

In response to the frequency of communication from the Council the most common response was "limited" provided by 6 (54.5%) respondents. This was furthered by 1 respondent (9.1%) saying the council "never" communicated. Conversely, 3 (27.3%) respondents said that communication was "very frequent" with 1 (9.1%) stating that the communication was "frequent".

SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATIONS

Overall, the feedback provided highlights a high level of satisfaction with the quality of communications received from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. However, more community groups had an issue with the frequency of communication and as such the communications for them were not regular or reliable and therefore they may have missed out on support. However, some did display that communication was frequent and as such were very grateful for it.

When the survey participants were asked about any additional support, they may have received such as Financial Aid Support, 9 (81.8%) community groups said they didn't receive any additional support with 1 (9.1%) highlighting that they received Christmas Switch-on event support and 1 (9.1%) suggesting Financial Support should be increased due to the increasing inflation rate. Overall, most respondents displayed that they did not receive any additional support throughout the duration of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme which would suggest that additional support was difficult to ascertain.

IMPROVING YOUR COMMUNITY'S CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE

In this section participants were asked to recommend improvements to the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme as well as suggesting other events they would like to see available for their communities.

In response to the recommended improvements to the programme, 6 (54.5%) community groups suggested increasing the budget provided to them for resources such as increased or renewal of decorations, illuminations and lights. One respondent specified the following: "We believe the funding for the switch on should be on a 3-year rolling basis. And not have to apply annually". Another 1 (9.1%) respondent suggested more organised maintenance especially over the late spring/summer period.

Overall, the key recommendation is an increased budget. Most community groups believe this would solve any complications that they encountered during the Programme.

Respondents put forth suggestions for alternative events they would like to see available for their communities. These have been listed below:

- Carol Services
- Children's Entertainment
- Christmas Fun Day
- Christmas Party for children and the elderly
- Concerts
- General Support at a local level

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY GROUPS STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The survey was created in order to facilitate an in-depth analysis and evidence-based evaluation of the impact of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme on community groups. In total, 11 of 38 community groups submitted a response to the survey, and the feedback obtained was used to meticulously assess and verify the effectiveness and impact of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme ran by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Overall, the survey responses were largely positive, indicating that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme was successful, and the Sustainable Trees were of benefit to community groups across the council area. The responses also highlighted how the support from the Council staff was generally viewed as positive in most cases and that the overall local perception of the tree and concurrent Switch-on event was well-received.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

As well as conducting engagement with community groups, PGG also engaged with relevant Newry, Mourne and Down Council members who were involved in the delivery of the Programme. This provided a strong evidence base to assess the overall successfulness of the Programme.

METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT - INTERVIEWS

An unstructured interview approach was adopted to attain information regarding the successfulness of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme. This generated qualitative data through the use of open questions which enabled the respondents to talk in depth and choose their own words.

FINDINGS

COMPLEXITY OF SOURCING THE TREES

Originally, in 2018 when the pilot programme was first launched, a contractor procured and planted the Sustainable Trees. Whilst this was successful, to improve the Programme from a cost perspective, NMDDC opted to buy the trees themselves. Since this decision was made, NMDDC have been sourcing the trees directly from Italy as there are no suppliers in Britain or Ireland that will grow trees to the size or maturity required.

Over the past number of years, it has become increasingly difficult to import and transport larger specimen plants on a European scale due to an increase in biosecurity. NMDDC were able to import the trees relatively easily once they had applied for a special licence; however, once imported the trees had to be held within an identified area for plant inspectors to examine to ensure they contained no alarm species. Had alarm species been found on a tree it would have needed to be destroyed.

TREE MAINTENANCE & GROWTH

A range of environmental and geographical factors impacted the successful growth of the Sustainable Trees.

Across the Newry, Mourne and Down district there is a wide range of locations; for example, the coast, villages, sheltered locations and urban areas. Due to the different growing environments, there was a significant variation between the trees and their growth rate across the district.

The two main species of Christmas tree are Abies and Pinus. However, the trees do not transplant easily and are very hard to grow commercially. To address this issue, NMDDC tried a range of growing methods including pot growing and root balling which had various success.

Newry, Mourne and Down is a coastal district with high salt levels and high wide exposure. In order to address the unsuccessful growth of a number of Sustainable Trees within coastal areas, NMDDC tried two different types of pine with the toughest and best survival rate; however, these trees also had dieback. In 2021, NMDDC sourced specimen Hollies from Italy. These were coned shaped and covered in red berries, meeting expectations of what a Christmas tree should look like. Holly is a species that survives best by coastal areas with high exposures and winds, but although the species survived, it also had dieback.

OUTCOMES

The aims of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme were to reduce the number of cut trees and enhance engagement with communities and community groups.

As part of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, 38 communities were granted a Sustainable Tree. However, for several locations there was no community group available to take on the project. As a result, there are currently 33 locations with Sustainable Trees growing district wide.

For the majority of locations, the original planting of the Sustainable Tree was successful. However, for a number of locations, a re-plant was required due to significant dieback; for example, Newcastle Promenade, Crossmaglen.

COMMUNITY BUY-IN AND PARTICIPATION

A key objective of the Sustainable Tree Programme was that NMDDC would engage with communities and community groups in looking after a tree and that this engagement would be sustainable.

Whilst community groups did get involved in the Programme, meeting NMDDC's objectives, there were set backs initially with community engagement including selling the sustainable concept and relying on volunteers for a substantial celebration in their local towns and villages which is a significant responsibility. In a few cases, community groups who had previously carried out the responsibility of decorating their community tree were not keen on getting involved in the Sustainable Christmas Tree initiative; for example, Castlewellan. As a result, NMDDC had to work to form a group to take on such responsibilities in these areas.

Another issue in relation to community buy-in was meeting community expectations. Initially, the trees put in were extremely small and the public had expected a tree that would be comparable to the 7-12m cut tree prior to the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme. To address this issue, NMDDC used wireframes and hung Christmas lights out wider than the actual tree to give it a fuller appearance.

Additionally, particularly in year 1 of the Programme, there was an issue with a number of trees looking better than others. For example, the Castlewellan and Kilkoo trees varied greatly in their appearance with Kilkoo's tree looking significantly better despite the two areas being close in location.

Identifying a community group was key to the success of the Programme. This was clearly illustrated when NMDDC identified within Garvagh a 'good location spot' for a Sustainable Tree. However, there was no group in the area to take responsibility for looking after the tree. This exemplifies that the identification of an area first followed by community engagement does not work and that engagement must take priority.

The Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme is a long-term programme. As the Sustainable Christmas trees are mature, they get transplantation shocks and sit for approximately 3-4 years before they grow again. Therefore, it will take a number of years for the trees to grow to reach the size expected of a Christmas tree. Whilst a number of difficulties presented themselves, particularly in year 1 of the Programme, it is anticipated in the years going forward that community participation will improve as the trees grow and meet community expectations.

The successfulness of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme is heavily reliant on the input of community groups. Where community groups got most involved during the pilot Programme, the Sustainable Tree was more successful. For example, although the original planted Christmas tree in Dundrum died, the re-plant was extremely successful and the community group in Dundrum have been very supportive of the Sustainable Programme, organising Christmas events around the tree. For example, in 2021, the NMDDC maintenance team coordinated the illuminations in Dundrum to match the tree. This demonstrates a successful model of engagement as the community have been onboard, engaged with and want to continue the Sustainable Christmas Tree programme.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In order to aid community groups and promote participation in the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme, NMDDC provided financial assistance.

For example, NMDDC tailored the Christmas Illuminations Fund to complement the sustainable Christmas tree initiative, creating a criterion to assist groups who may have received a Sustainable Christmas Tree to organise events and have illuminations. For example, it could not be a stand-alone event, but an event that would engage the wider community and compliment the 'switching-on' of lights to build the tree initiative.

The financial assistance process and expression of interest for the Programme compliment each other. For example, the financial assistance is very public. It is an open call; you have to be a constituted group and there are certain criteria you must fulfil. On the contrary, the expression of interest is closed. The council identified gaps across the district and took a more targeted approach. The two

processes compliment each other in relation to how NMDDC engage with communities; for example, often community groups who are targeted are those who are more likely to believe they don't have the ability to apply for financial assistance. This allows for capacity building and creates a pathway for such community groups to then move over to financial assistance for the longer-term.

COUNCIL RESOURCES AND BUDGET

The total budget for the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme was approximately £30,000 per year. This budget was originally put in place for the provision of the cut trees; however, it was able to cover the majority of the costs of the pilot programme.

The most money spent on a tree was €1,100; however, in 2021 NMDDC bought specimens for €680 each. Other costs included transportation costs, maintenance costs and the provision of power supply. The maintenance cost of a Sustainable Tree varied greatly; however, it cost approximately £400 to water the tree, £100 for fertilisers and compost, and £125 to prune, totalling approximately £625 per annum.

The additional cost associated with the provision of a power supply to locations had not been factored into the original budget and therefore a separate budget was needed to deliver this.

Prior to the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme there were cut trees which had an infrastructure in place to provide electricity to the site. Whilst several cut trees were replaced with Sustainable Trees as part of the new Programme, in many cases a Sustainable Tree was planted in a new location where such infrastructure did not exist. As a result, NMDDC had to make an application to NIE to get a power supply close to the tree and then employ an electrical contractor to build a small mini-pilar where a connection could then be made. This cost approximately £5,000 per site and must be considered an added cost to the Programme going forward.

However, whilst this is an additional cost to the Programme, it is a positive expenditure rather than a negative cost. A power source for the Christmas tree can also be used for community activities taking place around the tree location meaning community groups would not need to hire a generator. Therefore, the infrastructure is a good investment with a number of advantages.

¹ Trees were sourced from EU countries

Taking the actual cost of the tree, maintenance costs and the provision of power supply into account, overall, the cost per tree is approximately £7,625.

At present, NMDDC's maintenance team has reached their max threshold of how many trees they can feasibility maintain with their current resources. Whilst they can sustain the trees at the minute, they have experienced difficulty finding the resources to water a number of the existing trees which is why a small percentage has died. Therefore, should the programme continue, a new model would need to be considered.

Conclusion & Recommendations



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GROWTHGROUP**
Enabling business growth

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sustainable Christmas Tree has made a positive impact on the environment and community groups; however, the Programme has had varied success due to uncontrollable factors. Typically, Newry, Mourne and Down is a coastal district with high salt and wind exposure and this was the singular most problematic factor to the success of the Programme. Nevertheless, the Programme fulfilled the objectives it set out to achieve which included reducing the number of cut trees across the district, increasing engagement with communities and promoting balance across NMDDC. Prior to the Sustainable Tree Programme, a significant number of the cut trees provided were in the Legacy Newry area. The pilot Programme aimed to address this imbalance as villages and towns in the Legacy Down area had nothing, and successfully achieved this objective by more evenly dispersing the planted trees across the DEAs. This demonstrates the significance of the Programme to ensuring equal council support is distributed across Newry, Mourne and Down and increasing engagement with communities.

Considering stakeholder findings and analysis, the following recommendations have been made.

RECOMMENDATION 1: A NEW SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY GROUPS.

Currently, NMDDC's maintenance team have reached their threshold of how many trees they can feasibly maintain with their current resources.

One suggestion for the continuation of the Programme is that communities who have a sustainable tree enter a new Service Level Agreement with the council in terms of providing local maintenance.

This approach would be more environmentally sustainable as currently members of NMDDC's maintenance team have to travel to the various Sustainable Tree locations across the district. However, if a person/people in the local community were able to maintain their Sustainable Tree this would be more cost-effective and efficient.

To ensure community groups are able to complete this task, it is advised that NMDDC provide community groups with the necessary materials for feeding the tree. Additionally, NMDDC would need to ensure community group have a water supply close to the tree location which may be a potential additional cost. Finally, to optimise the success of the Sustainable Tree Programme, it is recommended that NMDDC provide community groups with training on how to maintain their tree.

However, NMDDC would need to consider who will cut the Sustainable Tree going forward to ensure it is the correct shape expected of a Christmas tree. This may be a task which NMDDC will need to contract out in its entirety unless there is someone in-house qualified to do this.

RECOMMENDATION 2: INCREASE CAPACITY BUILDING

As acknowledged continuously throughout the report, the Council rely on volunteers and community groups to deliver a successful programme. A long-term problem is the issue of a community group falling apart which would significantly impact the success of the Sustainable Christmas Tree Programme. Therefore, it is recommended that the Council increase capacity building and their understanding of community groups so that if a particular individual(s) leave the community group, it will not dissolve. This will reduce risks by ensuring there is always people(s) in place to complete the necessary responsibilities to ensure the successfulness of the programme.

RECOMMENDATION 3: USE OF ARTIFICIAL TREES GOING FORWARD.

NMDDC have looked at sustainability in its simplest form – a cut tree replaced by a planted tree. However, a sustainable initiative could also be an artificial tree. Therefore, an alternative approach NMDDC may want to consider is the use of artificial trees to replace cut trees. There are many benefits to using artificial trees; for example, they are easier to source, and they do not need to be watered, fed and pruned placing less stress on the Council's maintenance resources. Importantly, they prevent the cutting down of a live tree. Artificial trees are visually appealing and more cost-effective and will avoid any disappointment community groups may experience with a planted tree should it not reach full height or have the appearance expected of a Christmas tree. Furthermore, it would avoid the disappointment of the community groups who weren't able to participate in the Sustainable Tree initiative as there was no suitable site to plant a tree. Significantly, similar to a planted tree, artificial trees also meet the council's objectives to decrease the number of cut trees.



**PINNACLE
GROWTHGROUP**
Enabling business growth

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	18 October 2022
Subject:	Report on Elected Member District Cleansing Workshop
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Murphy, Assistant Director: Waste Management (Acting)
Contact Officer:	David Hanna, Performance & Operations Manager

For Decision	X	For Noting Only
1.0	Purpose & Background	
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval on the report of the Elected Member District Cleansing Workshop, held on 5 October 2022, to consider proposed new direction for District Cleansing Services, in line with recommendations from the previous Cleansing Workshops in November 2021 and February 2022.	
2.0	Key Issues	
	Elected Member Workshop	
2.1	Members were provided with a recap from the last Workshop, which included a summary of the preferred option to provide an equitable service across the District to consistent service standards, with increased budget allocation. The significant challenges to be addressed including varying staff and vehicle resource levels, differing terms and conditions, resource diversion due to Covid-19, were outlined.	
2.2	<p>An overview of proposals for future delivery of District Cleansing Services were presented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common methodology (mechanical and manual) for cleansing services applied across the District to deliver an equitable standard of cleansing which would achieve compliance with legal requirements. • The proposal for a 7-day week planned cleansing service delivered through ten Areas across the District and supported with Quick Response Teams and additional resources when required, e.g., seasonally. • Staffing levels required to deliver the service, including the reprofiling and upskilling of existing staff resources, with associated revenue implications. • Arrangements for the routine deep cleansing of specific paved areas across the District • Outline proposals for capital investment • Implementation of a Litter bin audit, planned inspection and replacement programme and policy on litter bin provision. 	
2.3	Members were largely supportive of the proposed changes. A number of queries were raised and responded to as detailed in the full report of the workshop is provided at Appendix I .	
2.3	<p>The following next steps were noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Table report of Workshop at October 2022 Sustainability and Environment Committee ii. Approval for Capital Investment and Revenue Budget (2023/23) iii. Seek further advice from Human Resources/Finance on HR implications of changes to working patterns and Revenue costs 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Consultation with Trade Unions and affected staff v. Commence phased implementation of new District Cleansing Regime. 	
2.4	A copy of the presentation delivered at the workshop is provided at Appendix II .	
3.0	Recommendations	
3.1	Members are asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the report of the Elected Member District Cleansing Workshop 	
4.0	Resource Implications	
4.1	There are no resource implications arising from this report, however any decision(s) arising from the finalisation of the review may have resource implications for the Members to consider. It is currently estimated that the proposals will require a capital investment of c. £1m. Revenue costs are estimated at £260,000 approx. pa for basic staff costings, £9,000 approx. for other staff costs, e.g. upskilling, and £80,000 approx. for other revenue costs associated with the provision of additional vehicles. Members will be aware that these will require consideration in the future capital and revenue budgets for 2023-24.	
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)	
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>	
	<i>n/a</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i>	
	Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be 12 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Rationale:</i> <i>n/a</i>	
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service	

	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following:	
	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix I – report of District Cleansing workshop 5 October 2022. • Appendix II – copy of presentation provided at the workshop. 	
8.0	Background Documents	
8.1	NS Committee Report - NS/188/2021: ELECTED MEMBER DISTRICT CLEANSING WORKSHOP NS Committee Report - NS/032/2022: ELECTED MEMBER DISTRICT CLEANSING WORKSHOP	

REVIEW OF DISTRICT CLEANSING WORKSHOP 3**WEDNESDAY 5 OCTOBER AT 5.00 PM****COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOWNSHIRE CIVIC CENTRE, COUNCIL CHAMBER
(DOWNSHIRE CIVIC CENTRE)**

In attendance:

Elected Members:

Councillor T Andrews (Chair)

Councillor D Curran

Councillor L Devlin

Councillor C Enright

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor D Taylor

Councillor A McMurray

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor A Lewis

Councillor K Owen

Councillor D McAteer

Councillor L McEvoy

Councillor R Howell

Officials:

Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment

Mrs S Murphy, Assistant Director: Waste Management (Acting)

Mr K Scullion, Assistant Director of Facilities Management and Maintenance

Mrs L Burns, PA to Director of Sustainability and Environment

Mr D Hanna, Performance and Operations Manager

Aim of the Workshop

Mr A Cassells welcomed Elected Members and advised them of the aim of the workshop was to present Elected Members with proposed new direction for District Cleansing Services and seek consensus on the proposed option. Mrs S Murphy delivered the presentation to the meeting.

Elected Members thanked S&E staff and commended management for an excellent paper. Members raised various queries which were responded to by management as follows:

Query	Response
Litter picking in rural areas needed to be considered in the new review	Litter picking in rural areas is included in manual cleansing requirements and would be completed as required across the District. Liaison with DfI in relation to verge cutting times will continue as this is when litter becomes most exposed.

Increase level of Enforcement across the District	Management working with HR to fill Seasonal posts that were not filled earlier this year.
Frequency of mechanical sweepers in various areas.	Each area has specific cleansing frequency allocated based on assessed needs from information held locally. This will be kept under review and adjusted if necessary.
Increase in litter bin capacity including solar compaction bins and dual recycling litter bins.	Solar powered compaction bins were not successful based on a previous trial in Newcastle. Options for various types of bins will be explored, including increased capacity bins, and trialled for potential use across the District.
How often was the scrubber washer function going to be used in Newcastle	Scrubber washer/sweeper will be deployed daily in Newcastle.
Litter bin replacement update for Castlewellan	An Environment Improvement Scheme is being introduced in Castlewellan. However, due to the timescale badly deteriorated litter bins will be replaced as soon as possible. Elected Members were advised that money is in budget for replacement of bins and a procurement exercise is currently underway.
Consider the option of retaining some of the cleansing vehicles that have been confirmed for replacement pending delivery of the new vehicles.	Management agreed to consider the option of retaining some of the cleansing vehicles that have been confirmed for replacement pending delivery of the new vehicles.
The issue of litter created by waste falling from the back of bin lorries during the emptying of blue bins on windy days was raised.	Options to deal with this issue will be reviewed and implemented.

Next Steps

The following next steps were agreed:

- i. Table report of Workshop at October 2022 Sustainability and Environment Committee
- ii. Provide copy of presentation to all Elected Members

- iii. Approval for Capital Investment and Revenue Budget (2023/23)
- iv. Seek further advice from Human Resources/Finance on HR implications of changes to working patterns and Revenue costs
- v. Consultation with Trade Unions and affected staff
Commence phased implementation of new District Cleansing Regime.

Close

The workshop closed at 6.00pm

District Cleansing Workshop 3

5 October 2022

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



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agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
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Agenda

1. Welcome, introduction and workshop purpose
2. Brief recap of previous workshops
3. Proposal for future service delivery
4. Next steps
5. Discussion

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Welcome, Introduction and Workshop Purpose

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Aim of the Workshop

“To present Elected Members with proposed new direction for District Cleansing Services and seek consensus on the proposed option.”

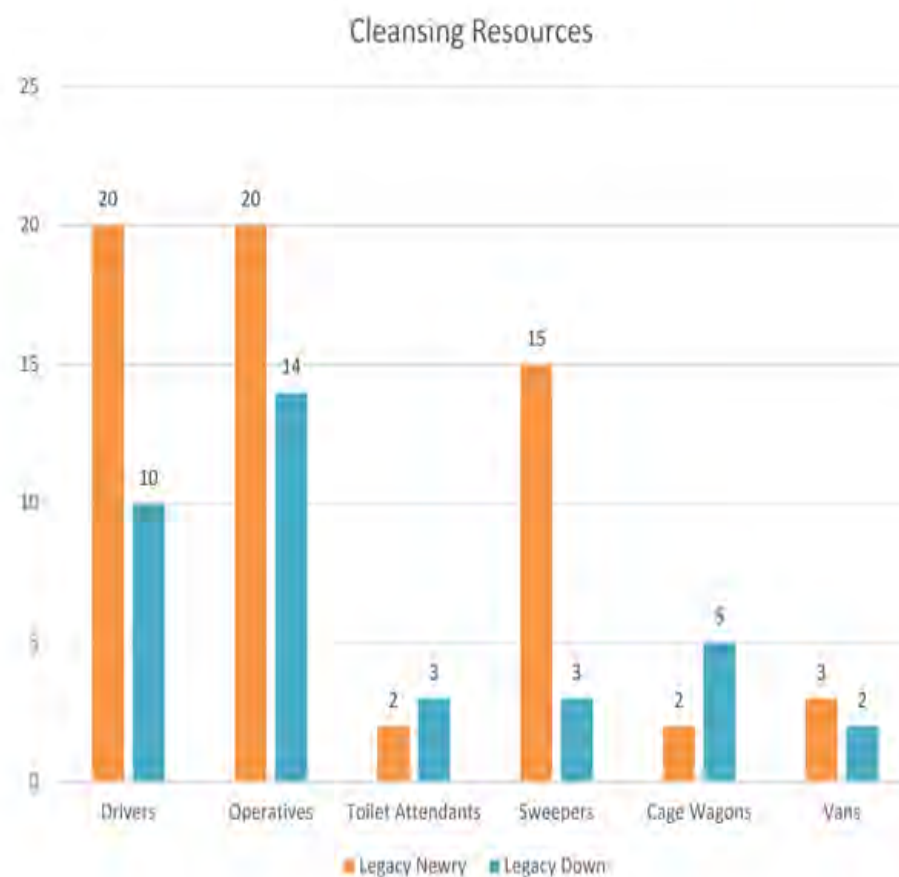


Recap from last workshops Nov 2021 & Feb 2022



Challenges

- Varying resource levels – staff and vehicles
- Varying scope of cleansing
- Differing terms and conditions
- Resource diverted to refuse
- Seasonal variations in service demand
- Night time economy
- Rural nature of the District





Options for Future Service Delivery

Option 1 – Status quo

Option 2 – Provide equitable service across the District to the same service standards, within existing allocated budget

Option 3 – Provide equitable service across the District to higher service standards, with increased budget allocation



Agreed Option for Future Service Delivery

Option 3 – Provide equitable service across the District to higher service standards, with increased budget allocation

Considerations

- Additional resources to achieve higher standard consistently across the District
- Equitable cleansing services across the District
- Common service delivery methods across the District.
- Based on recognised cleansing standards.
- Increase in budget allocation – Payroll, Non-Payroll and Capital.
- Human Resource, Trade Union and legal considerations.

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Proposal for Future Service Delivery

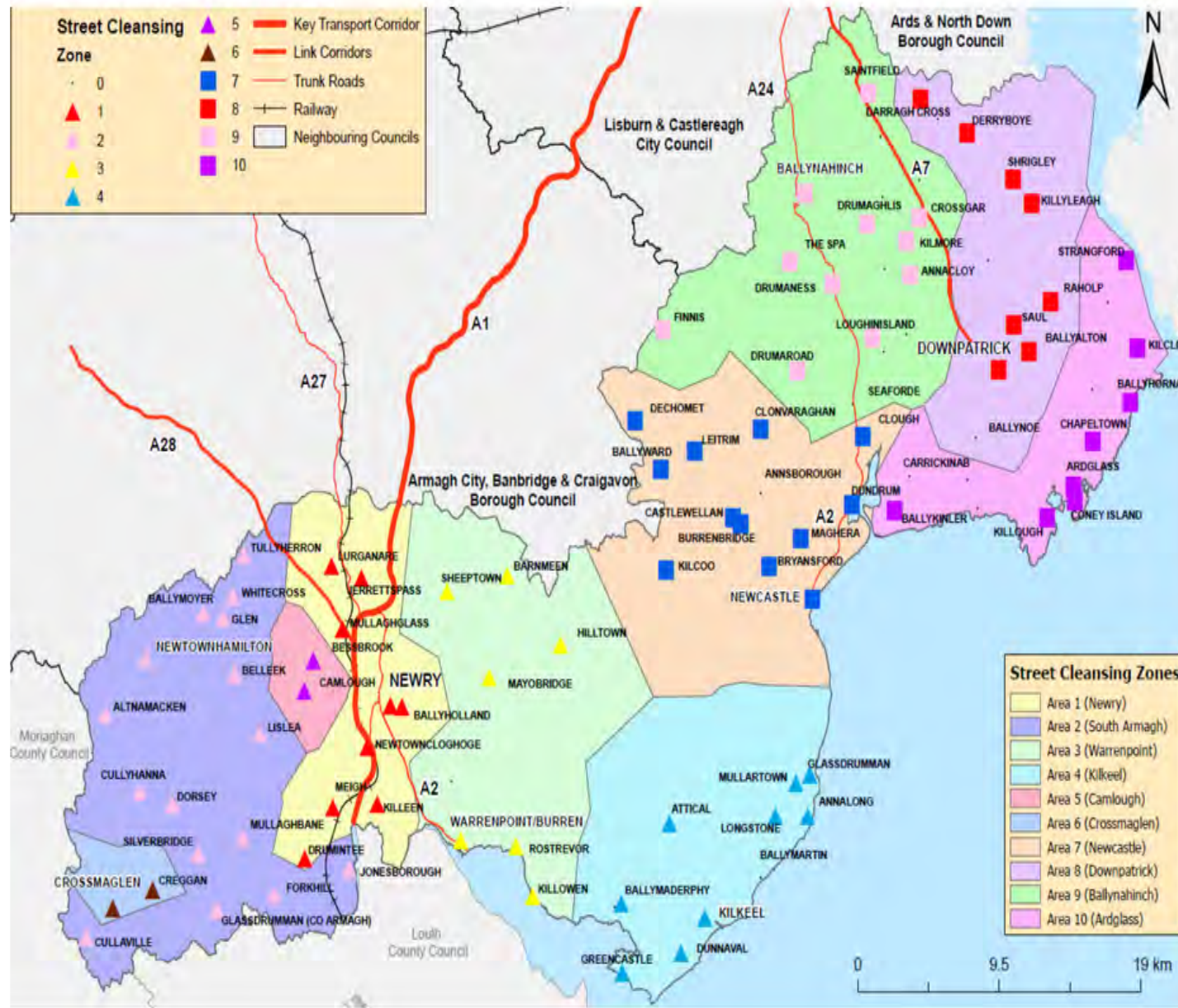


Methodology

- Review current Cleansing operations in legacy Newry & Mourne area to identify efficiencies and improvements to operations
- Apply standardised cleansing frequencies required to ensure compliance
- Identify resource requirements to achieve an equitable standard of services
- Consider any additional requirements, i.e. seasonal, events

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Proposal for New Cleansing Service

- Seven day week service
- Consistent approach to routine cleansing across the District for streets, roads and housing developments in the city, towns and villages
- Quick response teams – react quickly to issues and incidents
- Additional resources when needed, i.e. seasonal, events

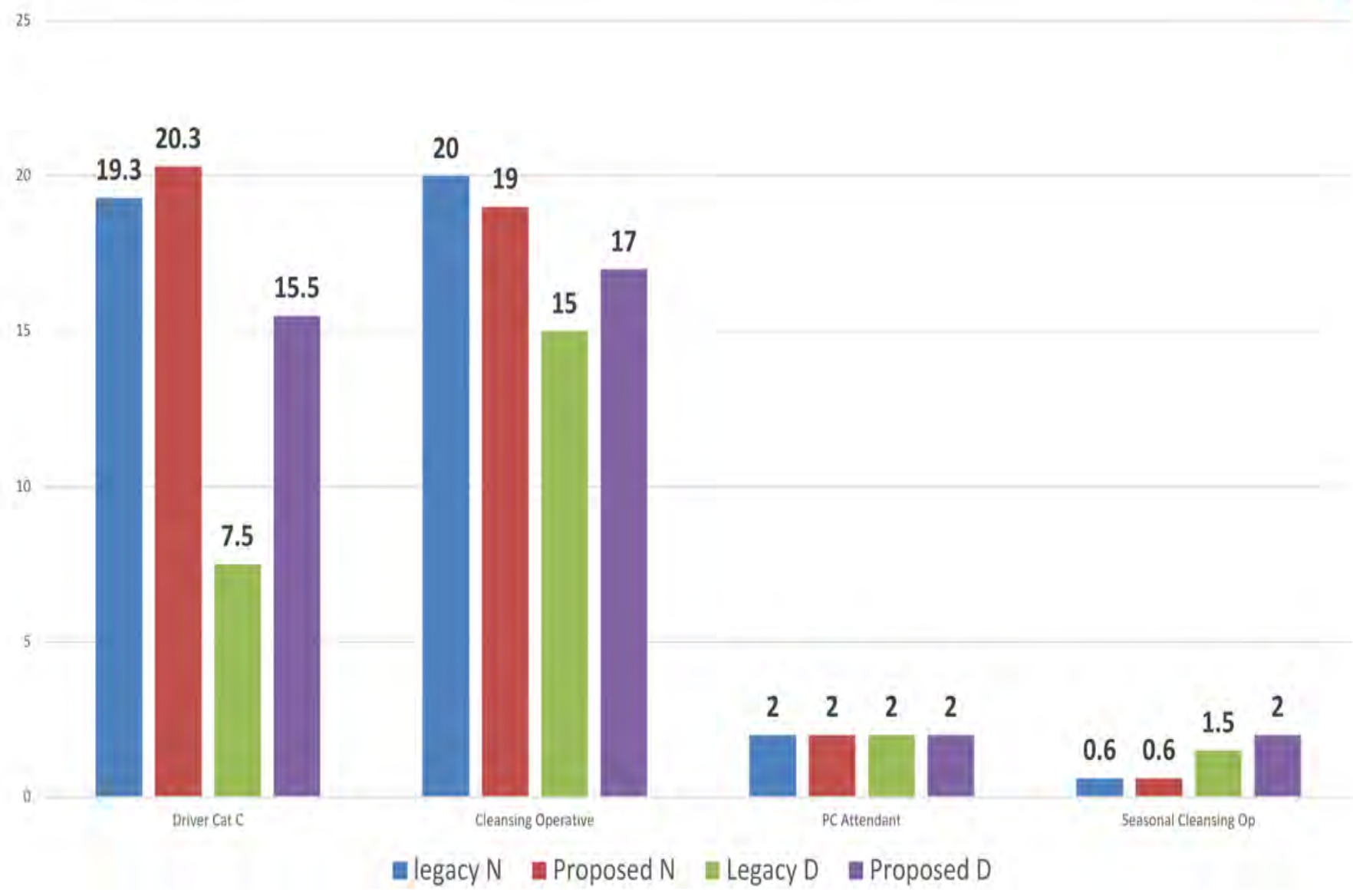


Staffing Levels

- Maintain current staff levels in legacy Newry & Mourne and increase staff levels in legacy Down
- Includes reprofiling of staff resources requirements and upskilling of staff

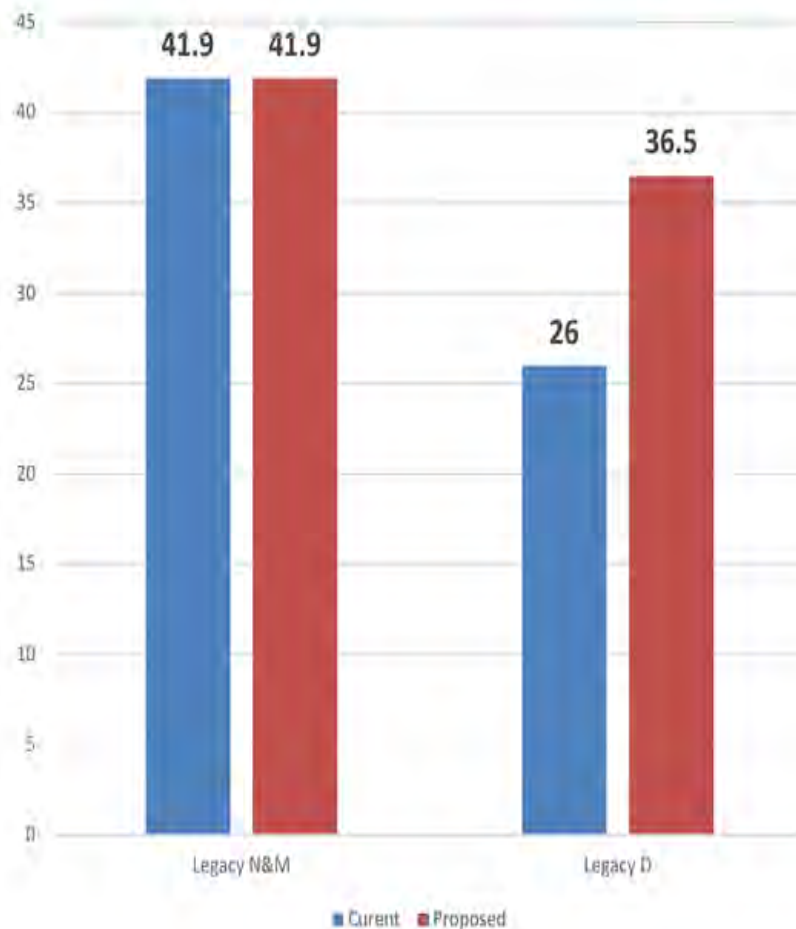
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Revenue Implications



Basic Staffing Costs – approx.
£260,000 additional pa

Other costs (upskilling) – approx.
£9,000

Estimated revenue costs for vehicle
running, etc. – approx. £80,000 pa



Seasonal Cleansing

- Additional resources deployed in areas with increased local and tourist footfall during summer season through seasonal staff resources.
- Additional resources deployed during peak holiday periods on an overtime basis.





Routine Deep Cleansing

- Paving – challenging to maintain
- Proposal to purchase multi function mini sweepers with interchangeable scrubbing decks, eco-friendly detergent dispenser and power hose attachment for cleansing pavements
- Deep cleansing schedule in place with external contractor – need to be reviewed following implementation of new regime







Proposed Capital Investment

Vehicle	Number required	Estimated Cost
12T HGV Sweeper	1	£147,000
7.5T Sweeper	6	£870,000
3.5T Cage Wagon	1	£45,000
Scrub deck attachments*	2	£24,000
TOTAL		£1,086,000

*Compatible compact sweepers to be purchased through vehicle replacement programme

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Chewing Gum Fund

- Two handheld gum removal units
- 36 'gum drop' style bins
- Signage and PR





Litter Bin Provision

- Litter bin audit – GPS mapping and condition report
- Planned inspection and replacement programme
- Clear policy for provision of litter bins





Manual Cleansing Requirements

- Solo sweep/orderlies for main town centres – Newry, Downpatrick, Newcastle & Warrenpoint





Manual Cleansing Requirements

- Litter squads – litter picking rural roads, litter bin emptying, beach cleaning



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Manual Cleansing Requirements

- Public Convenience cleansing





Additional proposals and considerations

- Performance measurement – Keep NI Beautiful, Additional surveys - £8,000 – 3 surveys
- Collaborative work with Community groups
- Education and Enforcement



Positive Outcomes

- Consistent and improved standards of cleansing across the District
- Positive image of District for Residents and Visitors
- Equitable service provision across the District
- Stabilised workforce

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Next Steps



Next steps for implementation

- Approval for Capital investment
- Approval for Revenue budget – Rates estimates 2023/24
- HR implications
- Trade Union consultation
- Commence phased implementation of new District Cleansing Regime

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Questions/Comments

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Workshop Close

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	18 October 2022
Subject:	Report on Notice of Motion in relation to EV Infrastructure
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Contact Officer:	David Hanna, Performance & Operations Manager

For Decision	X	For Noting Only
1.0	Purpose & Background	
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide background and context regarding Electric Vehicle Infrastructure in Council Car Parks in relation to the Notice of Motion received from Councillor Enright as deferred from the Council Meeting of 3 October 2022.	
2.0	Key Issues	
2.1	<p>At the Council Meeting of Monday 3 October 2022 the following Notice of Motion was tabled by Councillor Enright; at the Council Meeting it was agreed that this be referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee;</p> <p>Notice of Motion received from Councillor Enright:</p> <p>"Council notes that last year's notice of motion seeking a target of between 80 and 181 EV charging points in NM&D car-parks resulted in a management report in May 2022 suggesting that such charging points would cost £12,000 each and as much as £2.7 million in total with no business case. Thus a target of 1% of parking spaces (80) or 1 per Council car-park (181) was unrealistic from a cost point of view.</p> <p>Council notes that new information has emerged to back the suggestion that EV charging companies want to lease car-parking spots from Council throughout the District and are prepared to share charging revenue with Council. Far from costing money, EV infrastructure going forward can be seen as a new form of Council revenue.</p> <p>Council resolves to seek long-term rental and revenue sharing opportunities with EV infrastructure companies to keep Newry Mourne and Down District Council competitive in Tourism , Business and to replace the rates being lost by the on-going closure of filling stations across the district.</p> <p>Within 3 months of this motion, Council will make an open offer of 6 tranches of 20 parking spots to all 3 EV charging companies operating on the Irish/NI grid system as a trial run for a 2-year period.</p> <p>Following the 2 year trial of the offerings by the different EV charging companies; and based on service and value for money to Council; long-term contracts should be made with companies offering the best solutions to residents and visitors alike to Newry Mourne and Down District Council".</p>	
2.2	The Motion appears to refer to an earlier Motion by Councillor Enright which was tabled at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 17 February 2022 and subsequently considered	

	<p>by the Strategic Finance Working Group of 16 June 2022 through a paper entitled "Notice of Motion in relation to Council EV Charging Points" (attached as Appendix 1).</p> <p>The Recommendation of that Report was as follows: "That Committee consider report and agree the recommendation of the SCCF (Sustainability & Climate Change Forum) on 19 May 2022 to allow current pilot schemes proceed and be evaluated before any further work takes place"</p> <p>The note of the Meeting states that "Members were asked to note the content of the report and approve recommendation at 3.1 of the report. Members agreed to accept the recommendation and retain on the Agenda for review in the future."</p>
2.3	<p>The current Motion relates to the option to essentially invite expressions of interest from EV charging companies in relation to income sharing and providing addition EV charging points.</p>
2.3	<p>In principle this proposal may be a reasonable way for Council to get involved in the EV charging world and also act as a mechanism to generate moderate income.</p> <p>However, Members should be aware it is a complex and rapidly changing business and involves knowledge and expertise that we do not have at Council level.</p> <p>It remains to be seen how Cllr Enright's motion would work in practice as although the Council will have numerous Public carparking spaces Council would need to evaluate which would be suitable from an infrastructure aspect for charging points and also which would be attractive from a commercial point of view.</p> <p>It is not currently clear how this might also conflict with current projects i.e., ORCS (On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme) funding with the NI consortium and ERT as well as the INTERREG Faster project which will hopefully be providing an additional 19/20 ChargePoints across the district.</p> <p>There are clearly a number of unknowns that would need resolved prior to adopting the proposals contained in the Notice of Motion.</p> <p>The actual process of offering spaces within Council Car Parks would also need to comply with the Councils Procurement procedures.</p>
2.4	<p>As stated in the 16 June 2022 report the Capital Estates team have since advised that Council own around 140 sites that could be considered as car parks however it is not known how many of these sites may be suitable for the provision of charge points; note that it has only been possible to confirm 2487 designated parking bays in 36 of these.</p> <p>In the first instance, therefore, it would be appropriate to assess the suitability of availability spaces in terms of both numbers and electrical charging infrastructure potentially on a DEA basis.</p>
3.0	<u>Recommendations</u>
3.1	<p>That Members consider the Motion in the context of the report and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the Recommendation made at the Strategic Finance Working Group of 16 June 2022 as set out at section 2.2 above.

	2. 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.	
4.0	Resource Implications	
4.1	Unknown until further feasibility examined.	
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)	
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>	
	<i>n/a</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i>	
	Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be 12 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Rationale:</i> <i>n/a</i>	
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
7.1	Report to the Strategic Finance Working Group of 16 June 2022; Notice of Motion in relation to Council EV Charging Points.	
8.0	Background Documents	
8.1	None	

Report to:	Strategic Finance Working Group
Date of Meeting:	6 June 2022
Subject:	Notice of Motion in relation to Council EV Charging points
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Eoin Devlin Assistant Director Health and Wellbeing
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Eoin Devlin Assistant Director Health and Wellbeing

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

For decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	That SFWG consider the report and agree that existing EV work should proceed and be evaluated before any further consideration
2.0	<p>Key issues</p> <p>At the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee meeting of 17 February 2022 the following Notice of Motion was tabled by Councillor Enright.</p> <p>"In the Newry Mourne and Down District Council area there are over 7000 officially designated parking bays spread over 180 carparks between Carryduff and County Monaghan. Mostly managed by AHC with a small number managed by ERT. These have a total of 13 charging points with 6 of these not currently working. This means that only people with large front gardens with the capacity for charging points can have electric cars in Newry Mourne and Down.</p> <p>Council sets a target for every carpark to have one charging point within one year, and for 5% of all Council-managed parking bays to have charging points by the year 2022/23. Ramping up from there to meet the Government's target (both North and South) of no new diesel or petrol cars being sold by 2030. If possible, this program of investment will mimic Dundee Council and be a long-term revenue generator for Council."</p> <p>At that meeting it was requested that a further paper was tabled at this forum and the Sustainability and Climate Change Forum to allow further discussion.</p> <p>At the meeting of the SCCF on 19 May 2022 it was decided to allow the current EV projects as noted below to proceed and be evaluated prior to any further specific Council work in this area.</p> <p>The Capital Estates team have since advised that we would own around 140 sites that could be considered as carparks however it is not known how many of these sites may be suitable for the provision of charge points. In addition, it has only been possible to confirm 2487 designated parking bays in 36 of these.</p>

2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several projects are currently taking place to help develop a comprehensive charging network across the District. • The current public charging network is now managed and maintained by ESB. They are currently replacing all of the 180 existing charge points across NI. This replacement programme will be completed by July 2023. These points are currently free to use. • The Council are an Associate Partner in the INTERREG Funded FASTER [Facilitating a Sustainable Transition to EVs in the Region] Project. The FASTER project is funded through the EU's INTERREG VA programme and will see the installation of 73 electric rapid charging points at areas of defined need across the 3 partner regions of Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Scotland. <p>The FASTER Project Team has been working with the Council to identify suitable locations within the District for this vital infrastructure which will be installed (approximately 3 Charge Points within the council area) on a rolling basis over the next 6 to 12 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council are working with Derry City & Strabane District Council and 9 of the other Local Authorities as part of an NI EV Consortium. The aim of the consortium is to work with councils and key stakeholders to work together to prioritise actions needed to progress the strategic development of an EV ChargePoint network in Northern Ireland. The Consortium have been in discussion with the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), DFI and NIE regarding an NI wide application for funding under the On Street Residential Charge Scheme Programme (ORCS). Council have been requested to put forward a number of sites as potential charge point locations for ORCS funding, to be initially considered by NIE. It is anticipated that a NI wide funding application to ORCS will be submitted in March 2022 to meet programme deadlines. These sites must meet specific criteria to show that they are being sited in locations that will be accessible for large numbers of dwellings without off street Parking. <p>It is estimated that around 70% of our Housing stock is detached or semi-detached and as such should be able to facilitate off street domestic charging.</p> <p>It has recently been announced that a Private operator intends to invest around £20 million in providing 1500 ChargePoint's across Northern Ireland</p>
2.2	<p>There are several potential costs which must be assessed when deciding where charge points can be located. As well as the actual cost of the Charging Point and installation there will also be connection costs. In the NI EV consortium application referred to above these costs have been identified as amounting to approximately £12 000 per charge point. This comprises £1700 for Hardware, £3500 for connection and around £7000 for installation. These are the costs that have been identified for a project which aims to install up to 150 such points.</p>
2.3	<p>Installation costs are very site-specific and investment decisions will be made on a site-by-site basis. The criteria used differ depending on the supplier and the contract type, but they are likely to include investigating the power supply available and confirming the electricity network connection costs. Charge point operators need sufficient time to obtain quotes from the relevant Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and develop a business case. DNO budget estimates are generally too inaccurate for suppliers to base their responses on.</p>

<p>2.4</p>	<p>Were Council to proceed with a programme of providing this charging infrastructure we would take on full ownership of the charge points and have the autonomy to select charge point locations and set charging tariffs, while receiving 100% of the revenue. An operating and maintenance contract would be agreed, often with the same charge point supplier. We would be responsible for covering the ongoing costs for example, insurance, back office software and electricity supply, as well as maintenance of the charge points. With this approach, the commercial risk sits with the local authority. Therefore, this model has mainly been seen where very substantial grant funding was available to cover the initial capital expenditure.</p> <p>There is not currently any grant scheme which would apply to this infrastructure proposal</p> <p>Using the information available the potential up-front costs for the Council could be as follows</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One Charger in every Council owned carpark (140 Chargers) £1.6 Million approx 2. 5% of all designated spaces (230 Chargers) £2.7 Million approx <p>We do not have figures as to the potential income and payback periods for this initial investment and we have no way of knowing currently if there will be a demand for a charging network of this nature and how it will be possible to futureproof such provision in such a rapidly developing technology.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Recommendations</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>That Committee consider report and agree the recommendation of the SCCF on 19 May 2022 to allow current pilot schemes proceed and be evaluated before any further work takes place.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Resource implications</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Unknown until further feasibility examined. Indicative capital costs as stated above.</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.2</p>	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p>

	<p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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	<p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</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> <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>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>None</p>
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p>
	<p>None</p>

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE**HISTORIC ACTIONS TRACKING SHEET**

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MEETING – 23 OCTOBER 2019					
NS/073/2019	Proposed Property Maintenance Policy and Strategy 2019 to 2023	Council's Facilities Management and Maintenance Department develop for agreement with the NS Committee a Property Maintenance Policy and Strategy for the Council to cover the term of this Council 2019 to 2023. If required to assist officers in the development of this Strategy, external support to be procured in accordance with Council Procurement Procedures.	K Scullion	Update provided to NS Committee May 2022 – work progressing on agreement of a Property Maintenance Policy and Strategy.	N
NS/075/2019	Household Recycling Centres (HRC) Update	Investigation to be made through WRAP Capital Fund for grant-aid toward additional container capacity at selected sites.	S Murphy	Ongoing	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING – 20 OCTOBER 2020					
NS/230/2020	Business Case – Provision of new public toilet in Killough	Agreed to note the content of the report and associated Business Case and to accept the conclusion of the business case that the Council proceed with the proposal to provide a new public toilet in Killough.	K Scullion	In progress - AECOM appointed for consultancy support for project. Feasibility study in draft – t be presented to future S&E Committee.	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 17 NOVEMBER 2020					
NS/243/2020	Notice of Motion – Green New Deal Strategy	Grant approval to Officers to further scope the issues contained within the Notice of Motion and to prepare a report which summarises the status of existing and planned activity in this area. A report to be tabled at a future Meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee and to also write to the Northern Ireland Executive clarifying what actions are currently being taken and what actions are being planned by the NI	S Murphy	Response received from DAERA Minister and considered by NS Committee. Scoping of the issues delayed by on-going COVID-19 pandemic.	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Executive in respect of climate change.			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 21 APRIL 2021					
NS/062/2021	Feasibility study for EV infrastructure at the Council's Depots	<p>Agreed to note the content of the report and to approve the recommendation that a Business Case be prepared which examined the investment and benefits of the EV charging system, together with costings.</p> <p>It was further agreed as part of the Business Case, that officials consider the need for a generator at the proposed sites, in the event of an interruption to electricity supply.</p> <p>It was also agreed officials investigate potential sources of funding for the provision of electric vehicle charging points from the East Border Region Committee.</p>	K Scullion	In Progress - AECOM appointed to help deliver Business Case.	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 19 MAY 2021					
NS/079/2021	Monthly Action Sheet Wind-blown litter at Damolly Retail Park	Mr Dinsmore said he had engaged with the owners and the restaurant franchise and would now formalise the request that a green fence be erected at this location and that he continue to update Cllr. Casey on progress	S Murphy	Ongoing	N
	Litter pickers for schools	The Sustainability Officer to advise Councillors on how litter pickers would be distributed to schools	S Murphy	Litter pickers procured and issued to schools	Y
NS/089/2021	Purchase of new industrial heavy grade tractor and side arm flail/cutting unit for grounds maintenance at various locations District wide	Agreed to note the content of the report and associated Business Cases and accept the conclusion of the Business Cases that Option 3 from each be chosen as the preferred option. This would see the procurement of an industrial tractor and a side arm flail.	K Scullion	Tender was issued but preferred bidder was not established. Tender to be reissued.	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 23 JUNE 2021					
NS/099/2021	Proposed Memorial Gardens Landscape Scheme	Agreed to recommend approval of the choice of locations for both Memorial Gardens as	K Scullion	The site at Ross Monument, Rostrevor is	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		outlined in the report and the implementation of the proposed design for each site.		complete. The site at the Quoile Amenity Area, Downpatrick, still to be established.	
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY 18 AUGUST 2021					
NS/125/2021	Distribution of compostable food bags and food waste caddy bins	Agreed to that Officers explore the feasibility of deploying brown bins to residents of high-rise buildings, who were not previously provided with these, and a report be brought back to the next Committee Meeting.	S Murphy	Report to be presented at future committee meeting	N
NS/127/2021	Enforcement Improvement Plan	Agreed to note the content of this report. Agreed that officers prepare a report for the next Committee Meeting on options for future staffing levels to improve the enforcement service, including the possibility of supplementing the service with a contractor on a short-term basis.	S Murphy	Report to be presented at future committee meeting	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Also agreed officers replace the existing signage with updated Newry, Mourne and Down signage, in relation to keeping dogs on a lead on Newry Towpath.		In progress	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2021					
NS/137/2021	Translink proposed programme – Bus Shelters in Council area	To approve Option 2 – to delay installation of a bus shelter in Burren pending outcome of Translink’s deliberations in October / November 2021 with the option to reconsider this position if Translink were deemed to be making limited progress in providing the bus shelter in Burren.	K Scullion	Noted	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2021					
NS/149/2021	Report re Council Sites receiving Green Flag Awards	Investigate Tidy NI criteria for Green Flag awards with the view to possibly having Newcastle Harbour included for future consideration for a Green Flag award.	K Scullion	Contact has been made with Tidy NI who have confirmed that an application for the Harbour on its own would not	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
				<p>meet the criteria due to absence of green space. However, should the green space incorporating the Promenade be included within the application it would be accepted for evaluation.</p> <p>Applications for consideration in 2023 must be made by early January 2023.</p>	
NS/150/2021	Report re: Social Enterprise Partnership Offer – Planting Trees on Council Land	a) Council seek through an expression of interest exercise, to form a partnership with a not for profit organisation who would link Council with individuals who wish to have a tree or trees, planted on Council designated land. The agreement to be for an initial two-year period and may be	K Scullion	In Progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>extended for a further two years subject to Council approval.</p> <p>b) Officers to determine suitable sites and tree species for the scheme.</p> <p>c) Any agreement to be formalised through a Licence Agreement drawn up by Council Legal Advisors.</p>			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2021					
NS/174/2021	Business case for maintenance of town clocks	<p>Note the content of the report.</p> <p>Approve the findings of the business case that reviews options for maintenance of five town clocks. The preferred option (Option 3) would see a suitably qualified maintenance contractor appointed through tender to undertake routine maintenance of the six town clocks and provide breakdown cover for up to a maximum three-year period. The contract would include the option to remove existing clocks or</p>	K Scullion	Tender issued and now closed. Submission under assessment.	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>add additional clocks from the service provision.</p> <p>Council consider undertaking a project which would lead to the restoration of the clock at Dan Rice Hall and if agreed to proceed then to approve the recommendations within section 2.3 of this report.</p>			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 21 DECEMBER 2021					
NS/192/2021	Business case for replacement of the air conditioning water chiller at the Downshire Civic Centre	<p>Note the content of the report.</p> <p>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 supply and install a new air conditioning water chiller.</p>	K Scullion	Complete.	Y

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> <p>2. Collection Arrangements and Charges at Caravan Sites</p> <p>Integration and alignment of the waste collection service for</p>	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>Caravan site customers with the waste service provided for Trade Waste customers by offering an alternate weekly collection service as required throughout the year.</p> <p>Commercial refuse charges for caravan parks to be increased to align with and be equitable to charges applied to other businesses from April 2022.</p>			
NS/005/2022	Estates Management and Security Audit Findings	Agreed to approve the Estates Management and Security Action Plan and agree to quarterly updates being provided to the Committee on the implementation status of the Plan	K Scullion	In Progress	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 23 FEBRUARY 2022					
NS/015/2022	Revision of Facility Management and Maintenance Department charges	Agreed to recommend adoption of the Facility Management and Maintenance Department charges as set out in Appendix 1,	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	for financial year 2022/2023	<p>circulated at the meeting, for the financial year 2022/23.</p> <p>Also agreed that officers consider the 3 scenarios referred to by Councillor Andrews i.e. if administration fees charged for headstone erections could be waived for under-18 burials along with the administration fees for post 3.00 pm burial times and cremation charges and that a report be brought back to the Neighbourhood Services Committee for consideration.</p>			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 23 MARCH 2022					
NS/031/2022	Grounds Maintenance – Six Month Review and six-month Programme	<p>Agreed to approve the proposed actions within the report (Sections 2.1 to 2.3 and Appendix 1).</p> <p>Also agreed officials investigate the history of the removal and continued spraying of hogweed by the legacy Council at Carnmeen Park/Rossmara Park/Mourne</p>	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Drive Warrenpoint and report back to the Committee on how this recurring problem would be dealt with going forward.			
NS/039/2022	Business Case for replacement of mini excavator and dumper	Agreed to note the content of this report and associated Business Case and accept the conclusion of the Business Case to proceed to tender to procure a replacement mini excavator and dumper.	K Scullion	Tender with Council Procurement Section for issue.	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 21 APRIL 2022					
NS/048/2022	Update on the development of the Council's Tree Strategy	Agreed to note the contents of the report and approve the presentation of the draft Tree Strategy to the Neighbourhood Services Working Group in May 2022 along with a review of progress in the Council achieving a cessation in the use of herbicides containing glyphosate.	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NS/049/2022	Applications for bus shelters in Crossgar and Killyleagh	<p>To note the contents of the report.</p> <p>Agree to the recommendations in Appendix 1 for the erection of a bus shelter at Cross Street Killyleagh and the relocation of the shelter at Downpatrick Street Crossgar.</p> <p>In relation to the application for a bus shelter at Catherine Street, Killyleagh, a decision be deferred pending further consultation with the PSNI in light of the anti-social behaviour issues raised by Members</p> <p>Officers to consult further with Translink on the option for Council to enter into an agreement with Translink for the provision of bus shelters at official bus stops.</p>	K Scullion	<p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p>
NS/050/2022	Trial of solar lights at Council bus shelters	Agreed to recommend to proceed with the installation of solar lighting at 2 bus shelters near Attical with their effectiveness	K Scullion	Solar lights have been installed and are working. In period of review.	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		monitored and this information to be reported back to Committee.			
NS/051/2022	Vegetation growth within Aughrim River at the Events Space Kilkeel	Agreed to note the contents of the report and approve the recommendation to appoint a suitably qualified consultant/s through the SCAPE Framework to provide consultancy support to identify the causes of the vegetation growth in the Aughrim River adjacent to the Events Space, Kilkeel, and the steps and possible costs to managing this part of the river to provide a more visually attractive aspect to this location.	K Scullion	Update report to be provided to October Meeting of Committee.	N
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. 1. Publication of new collection calendars 2. Issuing of 'No food waste'	S Murphy	Complete	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>stickers for placement on black bins</p> <p>3. Distribution of 100 new/replacement food caddies through Elected Representatives</p> <p>4. Issue of 10 food waste caddies to primary schools on request. (Max distribution 1000 caddies), to further promote food waste recycling in the home, as per previous Council decision.</p> <p>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.</p>		<p>In progress</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>	
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</p>	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>separate report to be provided to the Council once this has been considered further.</p> <p>Council's electricity supply at the Events Space, Kilkeel to provide decorative lighting to a new statue. This will be subject to a suitable legal agreement being in-place between the relevant parties. The legal agreement will cover the installation of the electric supply and how ongoing electricity charges will be apportioned."</p>		Complete	Y
NS/058/2022	Proposed Phase 2 Extension to Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery	<p>Note the content of the report.</p> <p>Committee approve that the Council's Design Team complete the contract drawings and associated information for the proposed Phase 2 extension to Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery to include the new extension and the option of refurbishment of Phase</p>	K Scullion		N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>1 of the cemetery and provision of a works compound.</p> <p>Committee approve that once complete, the contract drawings and associated information will be provided to the Council's Civil Engineering and Minor Works Framework contractor for pricing. A further report will be made at that stage to Committee with recommendation on the extent of the project to be completed.</p>		In progress	N
NS/058/2022	Business Case for Christmas Illuminations Replacement Programme	<p>Note the content of the report and associated Business Case.</p> <p>Approve the recommendation that Option 3 as detailed within the Business Case is accepted as the preferred option. Option 3 will see the delivery of this project through a combined procurement of Christmas illuminations and a 10-year hire agreement for five artificial Christmas trees with</p>	K Scullion	Update report to be provided to October Meeting of Committee.	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		ongoing annual maintenance costs.			
NS/059/2022	Business Case for the removal of leachate from closed landfill sites	Agreed to approve the business case for the removal and transport of leachate from Drumanakelly, Aughnagun and Croreagh closed landfill sites to a licensed treatment plant.	S Murphy	In progress	N
NS/060/2022	Business Case for replacement hook-lift vehicles	Agreed to approve the Business Case at Appendix I for the replacement of three 32T Hook Lift Vehicles the Waste Processing section to service Household Recycling Centres in the legacy Newry and Mourne District Council sites.	S Murphy	Procurement of hook vehicles completed	Y
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 18 MAY 2022					
NS/076/2022	Contract for the transport of Mixed Dry Recyclable Waste	Agreed to approve that the contract for the receipt, storage, transfer and haulage of the Council's Mixed Dry Recyclables (MDR) waste be extended	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		with the Council's current contractor from the 10 September 2022 for one year.			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 22 JUNE 2022					
NS/090/2022	Portable toilet trial as part of Council public toilet provision	Agreed that officials meet with representatives of Newcastle Yacht Club to discuss the potential of an SLA to enable the provision of shared public toilet facilities at their Club premises. Officials consider a request to investigate if there was adequate litter/dog fouling bins along the Greenway.	K Scullion	In progress	N
NS/091/2022	Enforcement Improvement Plan Update	Agreed to note the content of this update report and to agree review of key actions from the Enforcement Improvement Plan to be incorporated into a timebound programme of work for 2022/23 and annually thereafter.	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Test case footpaths – small footpath leading to WIN – officers to examine this area for dog fouling.			
NS/092/2022	Business Case – to support the implementation of the Public Toilet Strategy	<p>To note contents of this report.</p> <p>Approve the recommendation within the Business Case for the provision of consultancy support to deliver on the objectives of the Public Toilet Strategy. Option 2 will see the appointment of the Councils nominated contractor under the SCAPE Framework to provide identified consultancy support and associated investigatory work up to the delivery of an economic appraisal</p>	K Scullion	AECOM appointed to complete Economic Appraisal.	N
NS/093/2022	Business Case for the provision of maintenance services for the Council's Public Toilets	<p>Note the content of the report and associated Business Case.</p> <p>Approve the recommendation within the Business Case for provision of maintenance services for Council's Public Toilets –</p>	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Option 3 is chosen. Option 3 will see the appointment of a suitably qualified contractor to provide routine maintenance and provide break down cover for the Council Public Toilet Service which cannot be addressed by its own in-house maintenance team.			
NS/094/2022	Business Case for Annual Fixed Electrical Wiring and Emergency Lighting Testing	Note the content of the report and associated Business Case. Accept the conclusion of the Business Case that Option 2 is chosen as the preferred option. Option 2 will see the appointment, through a tender process, of a competent electrical contractor who will undertake these annual tests and where required, agreed remedial works to supplement in-house provision.	K Scullion	In progress	N
NS/095/2022	Business Case – provision of Bi-annual service of oil fired boilers and emergency	Note the content of the report and associated Business Case. Approve the recommendation within the Business Case for	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	breakdown cover for Council properties	<p>provision of maintenance services for Council's oil-fired boilers – Option 3 is chosen.</p> <p>Option 3 will see the appointment of a suitably qualified contractor to provide biannual servicing of Council oil fired boilers, emergency breakdown cover and minor capital works.</p>			
NS/096/2022	Proposed lease of storage facility for Christmas illuminations	<p>Agreed to Officers entering discussions with a named Group to seek to agree the terms of a Lease in respect of a Storage Unit at Greenbank Industrial Estate for a term of 5 years at a market rental value agreed by Council's valuer. A further report to be presented to the SP&R Committee detailing any financial implications for consideration/approval.</p>	K Scullion	Complete	Y
NS/097/2022	Request to sub-lease the Bog Road Amenity Site, Forkhill	<p>Agreed to Officers entering discussions with Trustees of a named Charitable Trust and the third-party commercial operator concerning the Council's</p>	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		lease of lands known as the Bog Road Amenity Area. A further report to be provided to the SP&R Committee on options available once these initial discussions have concluded.			
NS/098/2022	Business Case for Marine Services covering Council harbours and navigational aids	<p>Note the content of the report and associated Business Case.</p> <p>Approve the recommendation within the Business Case for maintenance of the Council's LAtNs and other marine services works – Option 3 is chosen. Option 3 will see the appointment of a suitably qualified marine services engineering contractor to undertake maintenance of the Council's LAtNs, other marine services works and inspections.</p>	K Scullion	In progress	N
NS/100/2022	Facilities Management and Maintenance Procurement Action Plan	Approve an extension to the Facilities Management & Maintenance Procurement Action Plan to the 31st December 2022.	K Scullion	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Note that services will continue "out of contract" until new contracts are awarded and regularised.			
NS/101/2022	Waste Management Procurement Action Plan	<p>Approve the progress update report.</p> <p>Approve an extension to the Waste Management Procurement Action Plan to the 31st December 2022.</p> <p>Note that services will continue "out of contract" until new contracts are awarded and regularised.</p> <p>Note procurement update concluding issues previously highlighted.</p>	S Murphy	In progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 17 AUGUST 2022					
SE/119/2022	Business Case – replacement of 4x4	Agreed to approve the Business Case as per Appendix 1, for the replacement of one Four Wheel	S Murphy	In progress	N

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	vehicles for closed landfill sites	Drive Vehicle for use by the Waste Processing section to access and service closed landfill sites across Newry Mourne and Down District Council area.			
END					