

**CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2020**

<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary of Key Recommendations</b>
<b>1.</b>	Apologies	<b>Councillor C McShane</b>
<b>2.</b>	Declarations of Interest	<b>None</b>
<b>3.</b>	Minutes of Meeting held Tuesday 22 September 2020	<b>Confirm</b>
<b>4.</b>	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor McCaw, seconded by Alderman Boyle ( <i>Openness and transparency are key values of this Council and therefore we will use video conferencing software to livestream to media and the public all Full Council and Committee Meetings, within the exception of 'In Committee' items and deputations where presenters object. Furthermore, the videos will be recorded and placed on the Council website</i> )	<b>Motion Lost</b>
<b>5.</b>	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Dallat O-Driscoll, seconded by Councillor Beattie ( <i>This council recognises that hospice care is a vitally important part of our care system; considers it necessary that people approaching the end of life, their families and carers get the right care and support where and when they need it; notes that hospice staff deserves recognition for world-class medical care and emotional support they provide not just to patients but also to their families; and looks forward to the hospice</i> )	<b>Support amended Notice of Motion; Write to Finance Minister and Minister for Health and ask them to respond explaining how they will provide for this</b>

	<p><i>movement going from strength to strength in years to come.</i></p> <p><i>Accordingly, this council agrees to write to the Minister of Health, Robin Swann MLA calling upon him to ensure fair and transparent funding in line with patient demand, and continued high quality palliative and end of life care <b>and to write to the Minister for Health as well and ask both to respond explaining how they will provide for this</b></i></p>	
<b>6.</b>	Business Plans 2020-21 (Draft)	
	<b>6.1</b> Performance	<b><i>Recommend approval</i></b>
	<b>6.2</b> ICT	<b><i>Recommend approval</i></b>
<b>7.</b>	Performance Improvement Plan	<b><i>Noted</i></b>
<b>8.</b>	Prompt Payment Statistics	<b><i>Noted</i></b>
<b>9.</b>	Scheme of Allowances	<b><i>Defer to November CP&amp;R Committee</i></b>
<b>10.</b>	Elected Member Training	<b><i>Re-establish the Elected Member Steering Group to continue work on the application for Charter status.</i></b>
<b>11.</b>	Dignity and Respect Training for Elected Members	<b><i>Deferred to early 2021</i></b>
<b>12</b>	General Registrars Office (GRO) – Review of Funding Model	<b><i>Recommend that Council notes the content of the report in relation to the General Registry Office Review of Funding Model for District</i></b>

		<b>Registration Offices</b>
<b>13.</b>	Community Planning Update	<b>Noted</b>
<b>14.</b>	Conferences	<b>Nil</b>
<b>15.</b>	Correspondence Somme Association Invitation	<b>Recommend Expression of Interest in Council delegation</b>
<b>16.</b>	Consultations Northern Ireland Audit Office Consultation for the Local Government Audit 2021	<b>Noted</b>
<b>17.</b>	Matters for Reporting to Partnership Panel	<b>Report to November CP&amp;R Committee</b>
	<b>'In Committee' (Items 18-20 inclusive)</b>	
<b>18.</b>	Debt Management Report	<b>Noted</b>
	<b>18.1</b> Debt Recovery Case	<b>Director of Environmental Services, ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████</b>
<b>19.</b>	APP Forecast	<b>Noted</b>
<b>20.</b>	Minutes of Land and Property Sub-Committee Meeting held Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	
	<b>Matters Arising</b> <b>20.1</b> Limepark Playing Fields, Armoy (8.1)	<b>Recommend that Council refer the matter to the Land and Property Sub- Committee for further consideration</b>
	<b>20.2</b> Ballycastle Foodbank (7.2)	<b>Amendment LOST</b>

	<b>20.3</b> Approval of Land and Property Sub-Committee meeting Minutes 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	<b><i>Recommend approval including 20.1</i></b>
	<b>20.4</b> Fireworks at Portballintrae	<b><i>Agreed this matter was a PSNI Enforcement matter</i></b>
	<b>20.5</b> Filming at Ballintoy Harbour	<b><i>Agreed to pursue company for damage and storage cost retrospectively</i></b>
<b>21.</b>	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12 (o))	<b><i>Nil</i></b>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CORPORATE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS,  
AND VIA VIDEO-CONFERENCE ON  
TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER AT 7.00 PM**

**In the Chair:** Alderman Hillis (C)

**Present:** Alderman Baird (C), Fielding (C), S McKillop (C); Duddy (C)

**Councillors :** Beattie (R), Chivers (Vice-Chair) (R), Dallat O’Driscoll (R), Knight-McQuillan (C), McCaw (C), McGurk (R), McLean (C) Wilson (R)

**Substitution:** Councillor Callan (R) substituted for Alderman McCorkell

**Members in Attendance:** Alderman Boyle (R)

**Officers Present :** M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services (C)  
A McPeake, Director, Environmental Services (R)  
A Ruddy, Audit, Risk and Governance Officer (R)  
P Donaghy, Democratic & Central Services Manager (R)  
P McColgan, Head of ICT (R)  
S McMaw, Head of Performance  
J McCarron, Performance Manager  
L Clyde, Financial Accountant  
J Mills, Land and Property Services Solicitor (R)  
I Owens, Committee and Member Services Officer (C)

**In Attendance:** C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer (C)  
A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer (R)

Press (3 No.) (R)

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

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were recorded for Councillor C McShane.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2020

The Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Tuesday 25 August 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

**AGREED** – To Change the Order of Business and take Agenda Items 16 and 17 (Notice of Motions) and permit (2 no.) Urgent Business Items under Land and Property Minutes requested by Alderman Baird (20.3 and 20.4).

## 4. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR MCCAW, SECONDED BY ALDERMAN BOYLE (REFERRED FROM 7<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020 COUNCIL MEETING)

*‘Openness and transparency are key values of this Council and therefore we will use video conferencing software to livestream to media and the public all Full Council and Committee Meetings, with the exception of “In Committee” items and deputations where presenters object. Furthermore, the videos will be recorded and placed on the Council website.*

Councillor McCaw proposed and spoke in support of his Notice of Motion and read from a prepared statement:

*“Thank you very much Chair. Members, the motion is before you. I believe this is something that has been discussed to some degree already on this council, however I believe that we need to set in stone exactly how we plan to make our meetings more open and transparent.*

*My proposal is that all committee meetings be live streamed to the public, with the videos then recorded and available on the council website once the minutes of the meeting have been ratified. This would obviously not include “in committee” discussions, which are not recorded at the moment, although as an aside I would say that we do discuss too many issues behind closed doors.*

*We have had numerous issues surrounding discussions in our committees, such as, for example, the Audit Committee. If there were a live stream or video of these committees, this would clear up a lot of confusion and allow less room for error or speculation. It has already been recommended that planning meetings be recorded. It would allow the public to see what is discussed during the actual decision making process, as the full council tends*

*simply to ratify the minutes of committees.*

*We should hold ourselves to the same degree of accountability as our party colleagues in Stormont, Westminster and Leinster House. Everything they say is not only documented in written form, but also in video form. Three members of our Council are former members of the NI Assembly, where they would already have been under this form of scrutiny. We should have nothing to fear from the public being able to view our meetings.*

*I need to remind anyone of the low standing this council has in the eyes of our ratepayers. As an organisation we are seen as remote and out-of-touch. This is one way we can connect with the public and they can form their own opinion on what we are discussing. The public can lobby us if they feel issues are not receiving adequate discussion in our meetings. They can see who is speaking up on a particular issue and who is not.*

*One of the few advantages of the current situation is that we now have the technology to do this. We should be using this fully and not just during the time of the pandemic. When all forty councillors once again meet in this chamber, the public should be able to view and listen to our meetings.”*

Alderman Boyle seconded and concurred with the comments made by Councillor McCaw and read from a prepared statement:

*“I am pleased to second the motion of my colleague Cllr Chris McCaw.*

*Openness and transparency are ongoing values of this Council, both in times of equilibrium and times of crisis, but particularly important during the latter.*

*Live-streaming Council and Committee Meetings would help share information with the media and the public in a straightforward way. It would help improve specific reporting, reduce suspicions about ‘what is going on’ and increase a sense of democratic participation.*

*It is regrettable that there is currently a high level of leaking of information from Council business. These measures would ensure that what has been said and agreed can be shared more widely and efficiently and can be verified, thus increasing accountability.*

*The matters we debate are both crucial and complex. They cannot usefully be reduced to competing soundbites.*

*While our debate can be robust at times, these measures would help reduce rumours and provide clarity. They will also increase our constituents’ confidence that they are included in the processes of local government in this area.”*

During the ensuing debate Members spoke against and support of the motion. Those speaking against raised issues of the costs involved, demand from the public for streaming and the fact that Council makes its minutes available online and recordings of Council meetings are already made available. Meetings are also open to those who wish to request access both remotely and when meetings were held in the Chamber.

**AMENDMENT:**

Proposed by Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll

Seconded by Councillor Beattie

That the Motion be amended and deferred when information on costings can be included.

Alderman Duddy raised a Point of Order in relation to Standing Order 16.1 in relation to the proposed amendment. He stated that the proposer of the motion, Councillor McCaw should withdraw his motion and re-submit it with costings.

Councillor McCaw indicated that he accepted the amendment to his motion and his seconder, Alderman Boyle indicated her consent.

In order for the Chair to consider Standing Orders in relation to the proposed amendment a recess was called.

\* **The Chair declared a recess at 7.40 pm.**

\* **The meeting reconvened at 7.50 pm.**

The Chair confirmed under Standing Order 18.2, that the meeting would signify its consent to the alteration through a vote.

The Chair put the request to amend the motion to a vote

7 Members voted against, 7 Members voted for.

The Chair used his casting vote, against.

8 Voted against. The Chair declared the Amendment lost.

The Chair put the substantive motion to a vote.

Councillor McCaw requested a recorded vote.

3 voted for, 9 voted against and 2 abstained.

The Chair declared the motion lost.

For (2)	Councillor Chivers, McCaw and McGurk
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Against (9)	Alderman Hillis, Baird, Fielding, Sharon McKillop and Duddy
	Councillors Callan, Knight-McQuillan, McLean, Wilson
Abstain (2)	Councillor Beattie and Dallat O’Driscoll

Councillor McCaw said it was obvious how vote would go but was disappointed as due to the large geographic complexity of the borough some were at a disadvantage due to the location of the meetings.

\* **Alderman Boyle left after discussion of this matter at 19.58.**

**5. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR DALLAT O’DRISCOLL, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR BEATTIE (REFERRED FROM 4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2020 COUNCIL MEETING)**

‘This council recognises that hospice care is a vitally important part of our care system; considers it necessary that people approaching the end of life, their families and carers get the right care and support where and when they need it; notes that hospice staff deserves recognition for world-class medical care and emotional support they provide not just to patients but also to their families; and looks forward to the hospice movement going from strength to strength in years to come.

Accordingly, this council agrees to write to the Minister of Health, Robin Swann MLA, calling upon him to ensure fair and transparent funding in line with demand, and continued high quality palliative and end of life care.’

Councillor Dallat O’Driscoll spoke in support of her Notice of Motion and read from a prepared statement:

*“Members, there is no party political edge to this debate; it is entirely non-partisan.*

*If the subject palliative or end-of-life care hasn’t already touched you, it is almost guaranteed that it will one day and in a profound way.*

*People go through an unbelievably traumatic time when faced with their own death or the death of a family member.*

*Unless you have been there, the emotional rollercoaster that a terminally ill person and their immediate family inevitably go through is incredibly difficult to describe. I believe it is only those who go through such times who can really understand it.*

*As many of you know, in May this year my dad died after a brave and tenacious battle with cancer. It was the most difficult experience that I have*

*ever had to cope with. He was my first great loss. He was my father, my mentor, my go-to and a dear friend rolled into one.*

*After his terminal diagnosis, it was hard to fathom the magnitude of what we as a family were about to face and our situation was made all the lonelier by COVID-19 and its harsh although necessary restrictions.*

*However, having our Northern Ireland Hospice community hospice nurse, Ciara, walk us through that experience enabled us all to learn invaluable lessons.*

*With the help of our hospice nurse, we quickly learned about symptom assessment and pain relief but also the preciousness of life and how to let someone with so precious little time left 'live' as fully as possible until the end.*

*Right until dad's last breath, he was filled with gratitude for all the care that he received. Indeed, we all were.*

*We are so lucky to have hospices that provide high-quality, innovative, world-class care.*

*It is probable that only when we go through that process personally do we fully understand just how wide and deep provision is in the hospice movement.*

*Hospices are not add-ons; they provide core services. Our hospices care for people with cancer, COPD, Motor Neurone Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and Dementia amongst other illnesses.*

*They provide day care, essential respite care and terminal care, while promoting clinical excellence. Hospices provide a holistic approach and involve psychological, social and spiritual support for the patient and their family. That is a significant challenge for any healthcare provider.*

*They also play a significant advisory role for other health professionals on palliative care and provide bereavement care for those who have been left behind and need help to see which way is forward.*

*The demands on hospices are increasing all the time as people are living longer. Since April this year, Northern Ireland Hospice alone has seen a 20% increase in referrals from Health and Social Care and Primary Care for community specialist services and in-patient unit, which in real terms is approximately 800 additional new patients and their families.*

*The hospice service is growing, but the percentage of annual expenditure funded from Government sources is falling. Funding for these vital services is in no way keeping pace with increasing demand.*

*The present funding methodology is flawed and devoid of evidence base or up-to-date benchmarks. We need to find urgent sustainable solutions.*

*Without urgent support, the additional cost of appropriately supported palliative care can only be found by either increasing the call on already hard-pressed communities to give more support to their hospices, and/or by hospices reducing the services they provide.*

*COVID-19 has already put communities under tremendous financial pressure and waiting lists and bed closures are simply not acceptable, especially at the end of life.*

*I believe there are plans to release some funds to directly address the fundraising crisis, in the context of the pandemic, and they will no doubt be gratefully received, however, the focus must firmly be on addressing the historic underfunding of Hospice services.*

*What we need now is a new funding system based on need.*

*Hospices are not asking the Government to meet all their costs, but just to give fair payment for services that the NHS would otherwise have to provide.*

*To quote Mahatma Gandhi, “the true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members”.*

*Members, I urge you to support the motion so that we can ensure that the most vulnerable in our society get the help and support that they need.”*

Councillor Beattie concurred with the comments made by Councillor Dallat O’Driscoll and read from a prepared statement:

*“Hospice care, whether provided in one’s own home, a hospice, hospital or nursing home, is a vitally important part of our care system and these staff deserve recognition for the world-class medical care and emotional support that they provide not just to patients but, as already pointed out, also to their families. The hospice movement aims principally to ensure that death is as pain free and as dignified as possible. Their outstanding services are free to patients and their families and that is the way it should be.*

*This year, COVID has given rise to great uncertainty for our charitable organisations. Throughout this pandemic there has been a continued decline in fundraising as events and other initiatives have had to be cancelled and many households are operating with a much reduced budget.*

*If the situation is not addressed families will miss out on these vital services at a time when they are at their most vulnerable.*

*We must never forget that hospices are lifting the burden from the NHS, which is why core funding is so important. If independent hospice services ceased to exist, the NHS would have no option but to pick up the slack. The Executive should be acutely aware of that fact and address the funding shortfall while there is still time.*

*We must ensure that future funding arrangements are flexible enough to enable hospices to continue to provide high-quality sustainable services, whether in a hospice building or in the patient's home.*

*Hospices also need to be given the freedom and confidence to plan future services. We need to enable our hospices to get back to focusing on what matters most: care and support in our local communities so that those approaching the end of life can do so in comfort and with dignity.*

*I can't contemplate a society where a family has to go without access to quality end-of-life care. We cannot accept a society with waiting lists for front line services for people for whom time is so precious.*

*We need a funding system that is fair and based on patient need. We need a transparent funding system that will ensure all qualified providers of palliative care, whether they be statutory, voluntary or independent, are adequately funded.*

*I would be grateful if you could consider this vitally important sector of our health care system and ensure that all families that need their services can continue to access high quality care when they are at their weakest."*

Councillor Wilson thanked Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll for speaking about a matter close to her heart which he said sadly will impact on us all at some stage in our lives and proposed an amendment be included with the permission of the proposer as follows:

'that Council write to the Minister of Finance to ask if funding will be made available to the Department of Health to ensure the vital changes can be made.'" The proposer, Councillor Dallat O-Driscoll and seconder, Councillor Beattie agreed to amend their Notice of Motion.

It was **AGREED** – to recommend that Council support the Notice of Motion and further recommend that Council write to the Minister of Finance to ask if funding will be made available to the Department of Health to ensure the vital changes can be made.

Alderman Duddy thanked Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll and spoke of his knowledge of the experience of providers in terms of the journey they take with the patient and their family and the detrimental factors of their own mental and physical well-being. He spoke in support of the proposed amendment and asked if the proposer and Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll would also add the words:

'that Council write to the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Health to ask if funding will be made available to the Department of Health to ensure

the vital changes can be made and for both to write to Council to explain how this funding will be provided for.”

Other Members also spoke in support of the motion and proposed amendments.

The Chair put the motion to the vote which was passed unanimously.

## 6. BUSINESS PLANS 2020-21 (DRAFT)

### 6.1 Performance

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Performance.

#### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Elected Members of the 2020/21 Performance business plan.

#### Background

The Performance Section comprises a number of Council functions. These are as follows:

- Corporate Performance Improvement
- Management of Civic Facilities and Town Halls
- Council Estates Strategy
- Corporate Health and Safety Management
- Corporate Health and Well being
- Council Insurance Services

#### The 2020/21 budget for the section is as follows

Expenditure area	Annual Budget	Other
Corporate Insurance Services	£48,122	£1.07M allocated across Council Departments
Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing	£171,978	Includes Well-being funding
Corporate Well-Being	£20k	
Civic Buildings and Town Halls	£1.58m	
Performance Improvement	£178,096	Includes annual audit cost

In the 2020/21 financial year the outturn of the Performance Section has been impacted on by the Covid-19 pandemic. The work plans have been changed to reflect the needs of the Council.

## **Functions**

### **1. Corporate Performance Improvement**

Corporate Performance Improvement planning is one of the new functions prescribed within the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. There is a requirement for the Council to have in place annually a Performance Improvement Plan across Council functions. The planning process must involve consultation with ratepayers, users of Council services and any other stakeholders. Each year the Corporate Performance Improvement Plan is subject to two audits from the NI Audit Office. A forward looking audit to assess if the plan is likely to meet the requirements of the Act and a year-end audit to assess the Council's actual performance against targets. The assessment of performance must be published on the Council's website. The Act also requires Council's to compare their performance with other providers as part of the on-going performance improvement process. Due to the impact of Covid -19, the 2020/21 Northern Ireland Audit Office audit will focus on the Council's Performance Improvement Plan self- assessment that was published in September 2020. Legislative changes are required to alter the Council's performance improvement requirements under the Local Government Act and these are unlikely to be in place before March 2021.

### **2. Management of Civic Facilities and Town Halls**

The section is responsible for the management of Cloonavin, Riada House, Limavady Offices and Sheskburn House. Responsibility also extends to the Town Halls in Coleraine, Ballymoney, Portstewart, Portrush and Kilrea. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Town Halls are closed at present and the Civic Buildings are occupied by essential staff only. Staff have been provided with the capacity for home working.

### **3. Council Estates Strategy**

The Estates Strategy initially concentrated on the relocation of Council services across the four Civic Buildings. This involved key strategic decisions such as moving the Planning function into Cloonavin from County Hall, relocating Environmental Services to Riada House and the Limavady Offices, retaining Cloonavin as the Council Headquarters and basing central functions such as ICT, Finance, Member Services and Human Resources in Cloonavin.

#### **4. Corporate Health and Safety Management**

The purpose of the Corporate Health and Safety Unit is to assist all sections of the Council to meet their statutory responsibilities specified in the Health and Safety at work Order 1978, the Management of Health Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 and any other relevant legislation. To this end advice, training and guidance is provided to all Council Service areas and in conjunction with this staff carry out site inspections and incident investigations as and when required. Council Health and Safety staff work with the Northern Ireland Health and Safety Executive and other statutory bodies as part of on-going duties to keep abreast of legislative updates and best practice. The Health and Safety unit has in place a Health and Safety strategy and action plan that is reviewed annually. Due to Covid-19, the Health and Safety unit has been focusing attention on ensuring compliance with regulations as facilities open and close and carrying out inspections to ensure risk assessments and control measures are in place.

#### **5. Corporate Health and Well-being**

Corporate Health and Wellbeing applies to all staff across the Council. The Council has signed up to a best practice Charter and this provides focus on the various good practice activities and practices that an employer should embark upon when addressing the health and well-being of its employees. The Health and Well-being function relies heavily on volunteers across the Council who are members of the Corporate Health and Well-being Working Group. This group formulate an annual programme of activities and events that are offered to staff. Some activities are weekly such as lunchtime/after work exercise classes and some annual events such as the golf outing. Other activities are health focused particularly the programme of health fairs organised at Council locations across the Borough and booking of the breast cancer screening bus. The Health and Well-being programme of work is further enhanced by our colleagues in Human Resources who work along with an external mental health advisory body called "Inspire", circulating advice to staff on a wide range of issues such as stress, family pressures, mental health and depression. Due to Covid-19, the annual programme of activities and events has not taken place. Attention has moved to providing advice and guidance to staff who have concerns about their safety and their well-being. Risk assessments are enabling the identification of potential issues from home working such as the need for proper chairs, desks and ICT equipment. This is on-going.

#### **6. Council Insurance Services**

The Council has in place 17 Insurance policies to cover the various liabilities arising from the range of services that it provides. Policies include Public

Liability, Employers Liability, Fleet Insurance, Environmental Insurance, Building Insurance, Civic Regalia and Business Interruption. Each year the Council's broker assists in the procurement exercise for the Insurance cover. The costs are allocated across Council Departments. Performance staff deal with all claims, investigations, court case preparations, administration of all insurance processes and upkeep of all files.

## **Proposals**

The Performance Section business plan for 2020/21 is attached as Appendix 1 (previously circulated).

**It is recommended** that the Corporate Policy and Resources approve the Performance Section business plan as set out in Appendix 1 (previously circulated).

Councillor Wilson raised the issue of the Corporate Health & Well being of staff in environmental services who have not been given permanency due to the structure and harmonisation not being progressed satisfactorily.

Councillor Callan said that 5 years into Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council it was not acceptable that harmonisation had not progressed, having been informed in 2016 it would be done within 18 months. Alderman Duddy concurred with these comments, saying a report was expected at the November meeting.

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed a report on Population of the Organisation Structure would be available for the December meeting.

Councillor Callan also felt that in terms of the Estates Strategy, Sheskburn House and other assets should be realised and asked if the Head of Performance was feeding into the CART process. The Head of Performance confirmed that strategic work is needed to be undertaken in advance of feeding into CART. He further explained that consideration had to be given to leisure facilities which shared the heating system is Sheskburn and accommodation of staff, delivery of services and the geographic configuration of the borough. The Head of Performance suggested tabling this matter for a cross-party working group in January, however Councillor Callan suggested there was no need for a further working group when the matter could be fed into perhaps the Land and Property Sub-Committee and the Governance Working Group. The Director of Corporate Services agreed at the request of members to look into this in advance of next meeting.

At the request of Councillor Callan, the Head of Performance gave an update on the status of Kilrea Town Hall. The Head of Performance explained that this building was ran by a management group and council paid for caretaking.



He explained that at present there were a number of maintenance issues and a review would be prudent given that there are other provided sports facilities in the town of Kilrea. Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll pointed out that Kilrea Town Hall was well used including for yoga, pilates, children facilities, training sessions, social groups and housed the library.

Alderman Baird asked for clarity on the need for 5 Town Halls, especially in Portstewart as there was an excellent provision at Flowerfield. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that in relation to Portstewart Town Hall further consideration of this matter would be brought to Council through the Land and Property Sub-Committee.

At the request of Alderman Baird, the Head of Performance gave an update on insurance services including accidents, claims, recording mechanism and associated cost to Council. The Head of Performance explained that GIS software was used record accident occurrences which were wide-ranging and the insurance company largely determined the outcome of claims. He further explained that the software cost of the driver audit had been driven down £10,000 from £15,000 to £5,000. In terms of self insuring the Head of Performance explained that the Council were not in readiness for this.

Councillor Beattie enquired about the reference in the Business plan regarding software. The Head of Performance referred to Driver Audit Software and the accident reporting system software and further confirmed that a software system was being developed by in-house ICT which would allow the capture of Performance information for members and that the Performance Manager was looking into this at present. Further guidance is expected from NIAO and DfC which will not be available to February as has to go through legislation and re-writing of statute books at Stormont.

Alderman Duddy expressed concerns about the viability of staff working from home, and made reference to the small numbers of staff present in offices which he had observed on his visits to offices. He commented on the staff working from home and enquired as to what they were doing commenting that Members were not being provided with hard copy papers. He felt it was time to take a step towards a degree of normality and made reference to the private sector working arrangements.

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan

Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council approve the Performance Section of the business plan as set out.

## 6.2 ICT

Report, previously circulated, presented by The Head of ICT.

### **Purpose of this plan**

To provide a modern and integrated Information & Communications Technology (ICT) environment, which sustains and strengthens the Council's ability to deliver its strategic objectives, facilitating collaboration, and efficient business processes in a challenging budgetary environment. This background will provide staff and Members with appropriate digital services tool to deliver our Corporate Strategy to ratepayers, visitors and the general public.

### **The Vision for ICT**

Our vision is that ICT is a key driver for the development, delivery and transformation of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and the services it delivers to citizens. It will provide flexible and scalable solutions that adapt to the dynamic environment the Council operates in. ICT will be a proactive agent for change and will be fundamental to the review of all the Council's strategies and services. Staff and Members will have the appropriate skills and knowledge to make best use of ICT facilities and systems, whilst adhering to appropriate policies and procedures associated with relevant data protection regulation.

### **Covid-related ICT Issues**

Since the Covid-19 lockdown, the approach to ICT has changed markedly in the following areas:

- Home-working for the majority of formerly office-based staff, necessitating the rollout of laptops to those staff.
- Installation of Virtual Private Network (VPN) to allow those staff to access the Council's internal network in a secure fashion.
- Increased network capacity to facilitate VPN.
- Rollout of smartphones and other mobile devices for other staff where appropriate.
- Increased investment in ICT security to reflect the additional security issues of remote working.
- Provision of MS Teams to enable Members and staff to attend meetings, both remotely and in a hybrid meeting setup.

- Upgrade of the Council Chamber technology, such that the relevant ICT hardware is fully integrated with MS Teams and other associated software packages.
- Facilitate a Covid-19 \*Hub\*helpline facility at Flowerfield Arts Centre.
- Provision of online booking system for Household Recycling Centres.

The next stage is for ICT, with direction from Members, to convert these short-term measures into a robust ICT solution for the long term.

### **Strategic ICT Themes / Functions**

Within a wide range of ICT services and functions, there are a series of key applications, with a further documentation of the prerequisite platform requirements as illustrated below, previously circulated.

### **Strategic Aims of the ICT Service**

Council aims to enhance service provision via a range of ICT solutions and ensure that service users have access to the information and tools that they need in a timely and appropriate manner. This will be delivered by:

Engaging with stakeholders to identify further requirements;  
 Employing rigorous governance arrangements including adherence to legislation and Council policies;  
 Ensuring that there is a well-trained, professional ICT workforce. The application of formal project management methodologies and robust performance management;

The provision of a robust, resilient and secure ICT technical and core systems infrastructure that supports the business requirements of the Council and which is suitably planned and resourced;

The introduction of technologies to enable flexible working;  
 Ensuring that end to end business processes are reviewed and revised to take advantage of technology and workflow, ensuring the automation of processes and information flows wherever possible;

Identification of innovative technologies to aid the implementation of new working methods, processes and delivery of efficiency gains;

The raising of awareness of the Council's ICT capabilities by ensuring that new technologies are researched and information disseminated within the Council;

The integration of ICT systems and the sharing of information across the Council and with other partners and agencies, subject to suitable controls over access and Data Protection adherence;

Ensuring that good quality data is captured once and where relevant disseminated across the Council;

The standardisation of processes and IT systems across the council and where possible with partners;

Facilitating secure communication between all stakeholders via electronic channels, e.g. telephone, e-mail, web and text.

### **ICT Organisational Structure**

Included in the report, previously circulated.

### **1 Year priorities:**

#### **ICT Infrastructure:**

- Maintain integrity and reliability of current systems;
- GDPR implementation with relevant partners;
- Business Continuity Strategy;
- ICT Security strategy;
- On-going wind-down of remaining legacy council systems and amalgamation into CCG;
- Disaster Recovery strategy;
- Network design and rollout of new linkages;
- Flexible working strategy;
- Design of replacement core infrastructure;
- Digitalization Strategy – how to use ICT to improve communication, collaboration and services;

#### **ICT Operation:**

- Facilitate Estates relocations;
- GDPR implementation with relevant partners;
- Enhance mobile device security;
- Rollout of wifi to Civic sites and Caravan sites;

- Enhance network links;
- Enhance support with service desk;
- Flexible working;
- Telephony Strategy;
- Print management Strategy;

### **Digital Services:**

- Asset management digitalization;
- GDPR implementation with relevant partners;
- Planning developments;
- Enhance Environmental Planning digitization;
- Digitize carpark portfolio;
- Develop on-line Causeway Coastal route;
- Document Caravan portfolio;
- Development controlled multi-site WEB approach;

**It is recommended** that the Corporate Policy and Resources approve the ICT business plan.

The Head of ICT confirmed that Covid-19 had necessitated home-working and the provision of laptops and VPN connection to allow staff full access to drives as well as the introduction of MS Teams for effective communication at Council meetings, workshops and staff meetings.

The Head of ICT paid tribute to the ICT team who have had to work under difficult circumstances. Members applauded the work undertaken by the ICT department and welcomed the efforts made to assist members individually and ensure efficient organization of hybrid meetings.

Some members wished to see an improvement in the Council website which included sharing of information between departments, incorporation of a library and making it more user friendly.

Alderman Baird referred to issues with connectivity.

Councillor Callan enquired if there was a digital champion and felt that there were ways in which services could be streamlined and digitalization enhanced on the Council website giving an example of dog licences and provision of maps.

The Head of ICT confirmed that there was the digital champion in the section who had worked in conjunction with department representatives in

development of website section for each service area. He agreed that the website composed in 2014 need revisited and is happy to move with forward with this project.

Proposed by Alderman Baird  
Seconded by Alderman Duddy

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council approve the ICT Section business plan as set out.

## **7. PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT UPDATE**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by The Performance Manager.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members an update on the current Performance Improvement cycle, as well as providing the final published version of the Council's self-assessment of performance against the indicators set out in the 2019/20 Performance Improvement Plan.

### **Background**

The Council's Performance Improvement Plan for 2019/20 was approved by Council in June 2019. The Plan contained improvement projects which will help to meet the Council's Performance Improvement Objectives for 2019/20. In September 2020 this committee was presented with the self-assessment analysis against the central indicators as set put in the 2019/20 Performance Improvement Plan. On 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, Council published its completed 2019/20 Self-Assessment which is attached for your information.

The performance improvement cycle for the year 2020/21 is very different from standard years as Councils react and adapt to the implications of Covid-19 and the associated restrictions placed on society. Department for Communities (DfC) has confirmed that there is no requirement in 2020/21 for a Council Performance Improvement Plan. All Local Authorities were still required to publish their performance improvement assessment report covering 2019/20 which Council has complied with.

The NI Audit Office (NIAO) led annual Performance Audit of Council has commenced. The Terms on the audit this year is greatly reduced in light of the impact of Covid-19 on the requirement for a 2020/21 Performance Improvement Plan. NIAO has confirmed that the audit will focus entirely on the performance of Council in 2019/20 as set out in the Self-Assessment. Furthermore, the scope of the audit will be 25-30% of that which it has been in previous years, and this will be reflected in the level of information requested, Council resource required, and indeed a reduced audit fee.

Council's integration into the APSE led National Performance Benchmarking Network has been progressing well with the initial focus being on staff training and the identification of data requirement for the prescribed APSE Performance Indicators. In the next few months, Directorate leads will bring their own Directorate level APSE related updates to their relevant oversight committees.

Council, as part of the NI Performance Improvement Working Group (PIWG), has been working closely with the DfC and the NIAO to ensure that we continue to strive to build a culture of performance across local government in the coming years whilst navigating the long term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, the following actions for progress at the national level have been agreed across the 11 local authorities (previously circulated).

Councillor McGurk referred to an Indicator Report which was being developed to capture motions and decisions reached at meetings by agreed timeframe to avoid the possibility of motions and decisions not being followed through and asked if the Performance Officer could become involved.

At the request of Councillor Callan the Performance Manager agreed to participate in a meeting with members to discuss further matters relating to Performance Improvement.

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council note the report.

## **8. PROMPT PAYMENT STATISTICS**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

### **Background**

Department for communities (DfC) requires Council to record and publish statistics regarding the payment of supplier invoices with specific reference to two distinct measures namely invoices paid within 10 working days and invoices paid within 30 calendar days.

### **Detail**

These figures are published on a quarterly basis by DfC with Councils required to do likewise. The purpose of the statistics is to encourage Councils to support businesses especially those local and/or small businesses for whom cash flow is of vital importance to their continued survival. In addition as part of Council's performance improvement plan for this year the payment of our suppliers has been identified as one of the performance improvement objectives with a target of 90% of suppliers being paid within 30 calendar days. The tables, previously circulated, detail Council's performance since

April 2017 the latest data being for quarter 2 of 20/21 year being up to and including end of September 2020. Q2 performance has improved significantly from the previous year with 68.61% of invoices paid within 10 working days and 89.30% paid within 30 calendar days, there is a number of factors impacting on this as follows. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic Council are currently processing a significantly lower number of invoices. In addition, due to many staff working from home we have introduced where possible email approval for those invoices that don't require a purchase order, which has improved turnaround times.

### **Improvement Actions**

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic Council had introduced electronic purchase order processing (POPs) in January 2020, staff were trained and this was working well. For staff to access the system they need access to the Council network which has caused issues for some staff working from home without VPN connection. Many staff enter the council buildings at designated times to raise and approve orders but it is anticipated that as more staff return to the workplace this will improve.

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council note the report.

## **9. SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

### **Background**

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has established a scheme of allowances payable to Members for the current period. The scheme provides for the payment of allowances to Councillors on the basis that:

- 1 – The maximum level of basic allowance as determined by the Department for Communities (DfC) is paid
- 2 – The maximum level of carers allowances as determined by the DfC are paid
- 3 – The maximum level of mileage rates as determined by the DfC are paid
- 4 – Councillors' payments are made on the third last banking day of each month

### **Detail**

The updated scheme of allowances, a copy of which has been included with this report, takes into account a number of factors:



- 1 – Basic allowance – budget allows for 2% increase, 2.75% increase to be applied but not yet notified
- 2 – Mileage rates
- 3 – Rates for dependant carer's allowance
- 4 – Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)

The four items are in keeping with the normal periodic update of the scheme of.

### **Amendments**

In October 2019 Council formed a new Finance committee which was not provided for in previous schemes of allowances therefore the Chair was not allocated any SRA. This new scheme does allocate the same SRA to the Finance Committee chair as to the other main committees (£3,000 p.a). This does however present a problem in that there are now 22 positions of responsibility and regulation only permits 20 members to be in receipt of SRA. Until now we have dealt with this issue by making the Partnership Panel representative a member of the Planning committee thereby creating a double responsibility but only one SRA can be received, the higher of the 2 being applicable.

### **Current positions of responsibility**

The current positions of responsibility which are governed by the 20 member limit are as follows:

- 1 CP&R Committee Chair
- 2 L & D Committee Chair
- 3 ES Committee Chair
- 4 Planning Committee Chair
- 5 Finance Committee Chair (to be agreed)
- 6 Audit Committee Chair
- 7 Partnership Panel Representative
- 8 -22 Planning Committee Member (15)

The current postholders of the above positions include 2 members with dual roles therefore currently only 20 payments will be made under the current regulations.

## **Rates of Special Responsibility Allowance**

The current rates of SRA are as follows:

Committee chair (except Audit)	£3,000	(x5)
Audit Committee chair	£ 750	
Planning Committee Member	£1,200	(x15)
Partnership Panel rep.	£1,000	

## **Application**

The new scheme of allowances will be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> of the month of approval by Council until 31 March 2021 unless previously amended or updated.

## **Previous decision**

This report was previously tabled at this committee on 28 January 2020 at which time the decision was to defer the decision regarding the scheme of allowances until an application was made to DfC for council to be allowed to pay SRA to a number of members in excess of the statutory limit (50% of members i.e. 20).

## **Department application**

An application was made to DfC in February seeking permission for Council to pay SRA to up to 22 members based on the breakdown of SRA in 1.4 above. DfC issued a response in March 2020 which is copied below:

*Thank you for your email of 26 February 2020 applying for permission, under regulation 5 of the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019, to pay Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) to more than 50% of the councillors in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.*

*As Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has 40 elected members the 50% limit would be 20 (excluding any SRA payable to Mayor/Deputy Mayor). You have requested that SRA be payable to 22 out of 40 councillors which is 55% of the councillors.*

*The intention of the special responsibility allowance is to recognise greater commitment by councillors and should only be paid to those councillors who have significant additional responsibilities, over and above the generally accepted duties of a councillor. The essential intent of the legislation is to*

*limit the number of councillors in receipt of SRA within the maximum limit of 50% of a council's total number of councillors. The Department has flexibility to increase the limit, for a short period of time, where a council has exceptional circumstances.*

*This restriction has been an operational policy from 2006 and was considered by the independent Northern Ireland Councillor's Remuneration Panel in 2014. That Panel had recommended that this allowance be further restricted to a maximum of 10 councillors per council. The then Minister of the Department of the Environment did not accept this recommendation. The intention of the limitation is to support payment of the allowance only where a councillor has undertaken considerable extra responsibility. The basic allowance for councillors was greatly increased from 1 April 2015 following the Panel's report and this took into account the extra duties the reform of local government and transfer of functions placed on councillors from that date.*

*The circumstances set out below may be considered to be exceptional in that there may as you have stated be a significant reshaping of the governance structure of your Council due to the current situation. However, you have stated that 15 members of the planning committee receive SRAs. As stated in paragraph 4 the basic allowance was greatly increased from 1 April 2015 to take account of the extra duties the reform of local government and the transfer of functions placed on councillors. You will be aware of course that the additional responsibilities that your council decides attract SRA can be rotated during the year.*

*Before the Department could consider approving the additional SRA allowances above the 50% maximum currently allowed, the Council should first consider whether the SRAs for all the members of the Planning Committee (taking into account the intention of the enhanced basic allowance) are paid to councillors who have significant additional responsibilities, over and above the generally accepted duties of a councillor.*

*Therefore at this stage the Department could not agree to the increase of 5% above the maximum 50% limit for SRA but will reconsider the Council's application if more information is provided. (If the Department were to consider additional information and then decide to agree to any increase it is likely that this would only be for a limited time period (probably one year) and the council would have to re-apply for permission).*

## Consideration

DfC's refusal of the application now leaves Council with a decision to make regarding the allocation of SRA specifically about ensuring that the maximum number of 20 is not exceeded. This position is further complicated in that the existing SRA positions have continued to be paid at the rates detailed in 1.5 above since 1 April 2020, subject to the application of regulations where a member holds more than one position of responsibility, therefore any decision will affect the application of SRA from the date of approval of this scheme until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 meaning potentially a recipient of SRA up to this point may no longer receive it dependant on Council's decision. As stated 1.4 the current list of postholders does include 2 members with dual roles therefore under the current regulations only 20 payments would be made, this position however cannot be guaranteed to occur every year therefore the scheme does require amendment so that in the event all positions of responsibility are occupied by different members then the 50% (20 member) limit would not be breached. The Council could decide to dual two roles in the Planning Committee with for example, Audit Chair and Partnership Panel rep, with an increased allowance, to comply with the 20 payment allowance.

**It is recommended** that Members consider the allocation of positions of responsibility and associated special responsibility allowance so that the new scheme of allowances can be approved.

Discussion ensued around the linking of roles, work involved in positions and a way of ensuring equity when reaching decisions. Members felt that this matter should be deferred to the November Corporate, Policy and Resources Committee when party leads, nominating officers and members had the opportunity to consider carefully all aspect of the Scheme of Allowances. Members also requested further information in relation to Scheme of Allowances in other Council's.

Proposed Councillor Callan

Seconded by Councillor Knight-McQuillan and

**AGREED** – to defer the decision to the November Corporate, Policy and Resources Committee to allow members to give further consideration to the report.

## 10. ELECTED MEMBER TRAINING

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the steps required for Council to progress its application for Charter status.

## **Background**

In order to achieve Charter status Council is required to submit online evidence in a number of areas in relation to Elected Member Development. Since 2016 a number of actions have been completed which will contribute towards Charter status. Council is currently at Stage 1 of a 5 stage process to achieve Charter status.

### **Stage 1: Commitment to the Charter and an action plan**

The council will undertake a self-assessment against the criteria and, based on self-assessment, will develop an action plan supported and approved by NILGA.

### **Stage 2: Improving the development of councillors**

The council works towards achieving the Charter and meeting the requirements of the action plan.

### **Stage 3: Assessment**

When a council considers it has everything in place to demonstrate it has achieved the Charter, it will inform NILGA who will make a judgement. An on-site assessment will be carried out by a trained team of an officer, a member and NILGA. A comprehensive report will then be sent to the council following the assessment visit, outlining good practice, areas for improvement and whether it has achieved Charter status.

### **Stage 4: Awarding the Charter**

When the council has been assessed and awarded Charter status, a certificate from NILGA will be presented.

### **Stage 5: Reassessment**

Once awarded, the Charter has a 'lifespan' of three years, after which a council will be required to submit details of how it has sustained the standard. The council is then reassessed against the Charter. An informal review after 18 months is also carried out to check progress and identify any needs.

It is clear from the stages outlined above that significant time and commitment from officers and Members is required to work through the process.

### **Work to date**

The completed actions include a Council Declaration committing to the principles for Member Development, establishment of a Steering Group and Terms of Reference, a Training Needs Analysis carried out and an associated Action Plan agreed by Council in January 2017. The Training Plan prioritised the training across three strands – Corporate Training, Accredited Academic Training and Personal Development. An extensive training programme has been offered to Elected Members and delivered under these themes since 2017.

The recommendations of the 2017 Training Needs Analysis have been largely delivered during 2017-2020. Further progress is required under the theme of Accredited Academic Training for Elected Members.

### **Next steps**

Re-establishment of the Elected Member Steering Group

In order to demonstrate a clear commitment to elected member development and support Council had previously set up an Elected Member Steering Group and agreed its Terms of Reference. Council agreed that the Steering Group be comprised of 6 Members nominated by d'Hondt from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

When the Steering Group is re-established it will begin work on the actions required at each stage of the Charter application process, including review of the current Training Needs Analysis and an Action Plan. The work of the Steering Group will be supported by officers and NILGA. The Steering Group will report to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

**It is recommended** that Council re-establishes the Elected Member Steering Group to continue work on the application for Charter status.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Alderman Baird and

**AGREED** - to recommend that Council re-establishes the Elected Member Steering Group to continue work on the application for Charter status.

## 11. DIGNITY AND RESPECT TRAINING FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

Report, previously circulated, presented by The Director of Corporate Services.

### Background

In 2019 Council developed and adopted a Dignity & Respect at Work Policy and training was subsequently provided by Charis Consulting to make employees aware of the policy, its purpose and the responsibility to ensure that it becomes part of the organisation's culture.

Arrangements have now been made for the training to be delivered to Elected Members in two sessions as follows:

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	Council Chamber, Cloonavin	3 pm – 5 pm
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	Council Chamber, Cloonavin	6 pm – 8 pm

All members are encouraged to attend this important training and are asked to register their interest.

### **Please note that this training cannot be delivered remotely.**

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that there were now sufficient numbers for the training to take place on 11th November 2020.

Councillor Knight-McQuillan and Alderman Fielding felt the training should be re-scheduled as it was being held on Armistice Day.

Alderman Duddy asked that the training be undertaken remotely. The Director of Corporate Services explained that the provider would only be prepared to offer training face-to-face at this stage.

Councillor McGurk suggested that the training be deferred to the New Year given the current pandemic unless the training was time bound. The Director of Corporate Services agreed this could be arranged at the request of members.

**AGREED** - to recommend to Council that the Dignity and Respect Training be deferred to early 2021.

## 12. GENERAL REGISTRARS OFFICE (GRO) – REVIEW OF FUNDING MODEL

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

## **Purpose of Report**

### **Review of Funding Model for District Registration Service**

The General Register Office (GRO) is taking forward plans to carry out a review of the funding model in relation to the provision of the registration service. The last review was completed in 2015 and a number of changes have been introduced since then including a new computer system, the Northern Ireland Registration Office System (NIROS), the ability of humanists to conduct civil marriages and the introduction of same sex marriage and opposite sex civil partnerships.

The Department of Finance Business Consultancy Service (BCS) has been engaged to conduct the review and the terms of reference are stated below.

### **Terms of Reference (TOR)**

*“To review the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current funding model for DROs and design an optimal funding model.”*

*Specifically, the review will address the following:*

- *Review the workload of each DRO in light of its funding allocation to establish the extent of excess/insufficient capacity in the current system and inform future funding decisions.*
- *Review and verify timings and formulae for each of the working processes/activities used to inform funding decisions.*
- *Verify the appropriateness of funded activities e.g. specific registration tasks, non-registration and core Council activities.*
- *Review working practices and procedures in light of prescribed practices and procedures, and identify any areas for improvement.*
- *Review existing reporting arrangements (e.g. frequency, content etc.) and identify optimal reporting arrangements.*
- *Make recommendations in relation to the optimal future funding model for DROs.*

The review is being completed within an environment of Covid-19 restrictions and therefore where possible meetings, interviews and workshops will be completed virtually using telephone and/or video calling. It is anticipated that this should not reduce access to stakeholders or to the information required and should not therefore act as a constraint to the review. The interviews will be carried out remotely during September and October.



On completion of the review GRO will share a summary of the findings with each district council in order to agree the level of staffing required to deliver the function of the registration service on behalf of the Registrar General.

**It is recommended** that Council notes the content of the report in relation to the General Registry Office Review of Funding Model for District Registration Offices.

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council notes the content of the report in relation to the General Registry Office Review of Funding Model for District Registration Offices.

### **13. COMMUNITY PLANNING UPDATE**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

#### **Introduction**

The Community Plan is a long term plan (from 2017 to 2030) based on sound, robust evidence with a focus on improving social, economic and environmental well-being and contributing to sustainable development.

The Community Plan is a strategic planning tool for the Causeway Coast and Glens area and it is the key over-arching framework for partnerships and initiatives in the Council area. It is not seen as an additional or parallel process to structures already in place.

Phase 1 of the community planning process was the development of a Strategic Framework for the Community Plan. This document was finalised in April 2017 and officially launched in June 2017. It outlines the high level outcomes identified for the Causeway Coast and Glens area based on an extensive public consultation process and a statistical analysis of the area.

Phase 2 of the community planning process was the development of a comprehensive Delivery Plan in 2018 which put in place 44 practical actions and activities to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic Framework.

Phase 3 of the community planning process put in place mechanisms to monitor and report on performance against the Community Plan objectives/outcomes. An Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) process was utilised to monitor and report on performance with Action Leads using report cards to provide information on the following areas in relation to each of the 44 actions within the Delivery Plan:

- What did we say we would do?
- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Who is better off?

The legislation also requires that the Community Planning Partnership reports to the public by way of a published statement, highlighting progress on outcomes achieved and actions taken. This Statement of Progress has to be published once every two years with the first of these required within two years of the Community Plan. Causeway Community Planning Partnership published its first Statement of Progress in November 2019.

### **Review of Delivery Plan**

Following the publication of the Statement of Progress the Partnership decided that this would be an appropriate time to conduct a full review of the Delivery Plan and consider which actions had been completed, whether actions needed to be reviewed and amended or if new actions should to be included.

A process for this review was developed which was to include the establishment of a range of Delivery Design Groups and a full consultation process involving partners and stakeholders. This review process was to begin in February 2020 but the intervention of the pandemic severely impacted the planned review process and a new approach had to be taken over the summer period to conduct this review.

A draft revised Delivery Plan has now been developed with 34 actions and this draft was considered by the Community Planning Partnership at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Following discussion at the Partnership meeting, the draft will be finalised by the Action Steering Group and will go out for a short period of public consultation in November with the aim of bringing the final draft to the next meeting of the Partnership in December.

During the review process work continued on a number of projects within the Delivery Plan and the monitoring/reporting process will continue in relation to Delivery Plan activity.

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council note the report.

## 14. CONFERENCES

There were no conferences.

## 15. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

The following correspondence has been received:

### **The Somme Association – Expression of Interest Registration Form**

Correspondence has been received from the Somme Association informing Members of a commemorative event to take place on 19 November 2021 in the grounds of the Ulster Memorial Tower (time to be confirmed), to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Tower. To assist with logistics the Somme Association are seeking Expressions of Interest to attend this event. Expressions of Interest to be returned by 27 November 2020.

Please note that due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic all events are subject to restrictions, change and cancellation in line with Government Guidelines.

The Director of Corporate Services invited members to express an interest at this stage if there was a desire to attend.

Councillor Callan felt that there should be an expression of interest shown which at this stage should provisionally include the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Veteran's Champion and potentially additional members although he confirmed this would need to be further examined.

Alderman Duddy said it would be useful to have the necessary facts and figures explored for those paying their own way.

**AGREED** – to recommend to Council that an expression of interest in sending Council delegation be confirmed with the Somme Association.

## 16. CONSULTATIONS

The Director of Corporate Services presented the Consultation report, previously circulated:

Northern Ireland Audit Office Consultation for the Local Government Audit 2021.

Members wishing to respond to the Consultation should submit their responses to Democratic Services by Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November, to allow a draft Corporate response to be presented to CPR at its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November, and then to Council meeting on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council note the Consultation schedule.

## 17. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO PARTNERHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to Partnership Panel.

Councillor Callan asked that an update on the recent meeting of the Partnership Panel be brought to the December Council meeting.

**AGREED** to recommend to Council that an update on meeting of the Partnership Panel be tabled for December Council meeting.

### **MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'**

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan

Seconded by Alderman Baird and

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

- \* **Members of the Press / Public left the meeting at 10.45 pm.**
- \* **The information contained in the following items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.**

## 18. DEBT MANAGEMENT

Confidential report, previously circulated, presented by The Director of Corporate Services.

## Purpose of Report

This report informs members of the current position surrounding debt owed to the Council by its customers.

## Background

Council implemented a revised Debt Management Policy in February 2017.

## Detail – Aged Debt Analysis

As at 30 Sept 2019

Total Debt	Current	30 Days	60 Days	Over 90 Days
£962,802.31	£381,334.96	£70,985.14	£26,719.99	£484,762.22
	40%	7%	3%	50%

As at 30 Sept 2020

Total Debt	Current	30 Days	60 Days	Over 90 Days
£ 915,559.02	£462,456.89	£ 119,045.93	£ 15,020.37	£ 321,171.31
	50%	13%	2%	35%

Movement and comparison between last year and this year (30 Sept 2019 and 30 Sept 2020)

Total Debt	Current	30 Days	60 Days	Over 90 Days
Decrease of £47,243.29	Increase of £81,121.93	Increase of £48,060.79	Decrease of £11,699.62	Decrease of £163,590.91

The tables, previously circulated, detail the status of any debt which was over 90 days in excess of £10 at the previous report but which has now been cleared.

## Over 90 Days analysis

The tables, previously circulated, detail the status of any debt which was over 90 days in excess of £10 currently (excluding BID accounts):

### Options

#### Debt write-off under £1,000

In accordance with our debt management policy The Chief Finance Officer is required to report to Council any debts under £1,000 which the Chief Finance Officer has the authority to write-off. The Chief Finance Officer recommends the following be written off, previously circulated.

None of the debtors have responded to final demands, amounts are too small for Court Action.

#### Debt Write-off over £1,000

In accordance with our debt management policy, Council approval is sought in order to write off any debts in excess of £1,000. There are no such debts this month.

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council note the report.

## 18.1 Debt Recovery Case

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by The Director of Environmental Services.

### Purpose of Report

This report informs members of the current position surrounding debt owed to the Council by the owner of [REDACTED] Property in Portstewart.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Current Position**

Normal invoicing and debt recovery processes have been followed to ensure payment but despite numerous attempts to seek resolution and payment [REDACTED] no payment has been made.

It is therefore recommended that a writ is served on the owner of the property, [REDACTED].

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to approve the serving of a writ on the owner [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Knight-McQuillan and

**AGREED:** to recommend to Council that Director of Environmental Services, [REDACTED] seeks to secure [REDACTED] offer from debtor.

**19. APP FORECAST**

Confidential report, previously circulated, presented by The Director of Corporate Services.

## **Background**

Land and Property Services (LPS) who issue bills and collect rates on behalf of Councils issue in year forecasts on the Actual Penny Product (APP) and projected outturns with regards the amount of rates actually collected.

## **Detail**

LPS has issued to Councils the second in year forecast for the APP based on figures at 30 September 2020. The forecast for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council indicates that we are on course to receive a positive finalisation in terms of rates income amounting to approximately £740k. The figure has been calculated on the basis of a number of assumptions which are detailed below:

## **The Assumptions**

Gross Rate Income (GRI) calculated to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 from the rating system without any further adjustments.

Rates foregone from vacant property in the non-domestic sector for the initial three month exemption period have been calculated based on the monetary value of losses used in the EPP, at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Losses in the “50%” and “Exempt” categories were calculated based on the monetary value of losses used in the EPP, at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 or 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, whichever is higher. In this regard losses built into the forecast exceed actual losses in the LPS accounting system at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 by £300K inclusive of district and regional rates. Accordingly unless losses in those categories increase by that amount between now and year end then there is the potential for further improvement in the forecast.

Rates foregone (exclusions including developer) from REH have been calculated based on the monetary value of losses at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Discount by way of landlord allowances has been calculated based on the monetary value of losses used in the EPP, the position at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 or the position at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, whichever is the higher.

Write-offs based on losses of £14.5 million (split across the 11 councils) based on the outturn position for 2019-20 rating year. The write-off positions will be kept under very close review throughout the course of the year. LPS will be reviewing this year’s approach to their usual legal recovery procedures due to the ongoing covid-19 pandemic, which may result in lower than otherwise expected levels of write-off. On the other hand, should the volumes



of businesses facing insolvency events start to rise again, this will push the write-off upwards. LPS will keep the situation under scrutiny and will be alerting councils to how this changes throughout the year.

Cost of Collection estimated at £18.9 million for the rating year apportioned across the 11 councils on the basis of statutory formula. Rateable values used were the average of those in the Valuation Lists at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

The CAP based on losses in the system at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

With regard to losses in the non-domestic sector and in particular vacant property we should not be complacent. The economic climate remains challenging particularly with the recent impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on businesses and the planned changes to future relations with the EU and can impact without warning and sometimes significantly on revenue streams, thus making projections very difficult. We therefore believe that Council need to take a prudent approach to penny product figures at this stage of the year.

Councillor Callan said it would be helpful if members could be provided with an update on the Domestic and Non-Domestic rate and referred to the housing market at present which was holding up well.

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council note the report.

## **20. MINUTES OF LAND AND PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020**

### **Matters Arising**

#### **20.1 Limepark Playing Fields, Armoy (8.1)**

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by The Director of Corporate Services.

#### **Purpose of Report**

To update the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on information received since 7<sup>th</sup> October when the Land and Property Sub-Committee considered a request from Armoy Community Association to lease land at Lime Park Playing Fields, Armoy and other expressions of interest in the site.

#### **Background**

At its meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October the Land and Property Sub-Committee Considered the request from Armoy Community Association to lease land at

Lime Park Playing Fields, Armoy (02/20/P). A copy of the report presented is attached as Appendix 1, previously circulated. The Sub-Committee was also informed of an expression of interest to use the site from Causeway Giants' American Football Club Ref No 04/20/ and of an expression of interest to purchase the site in purchasing the site (03/20/P). Both of these requests were received after the papers for the Sub-Committee's meeting had been issued. Following consideration of the request from Armoy Community Association, which included information provided during the discussion by an officer from Council's Planning Department, the Sub-Committee recommended that the matter be further considered when the Leisure and Development Committee had considered the report to declare the asset surplus.

The Leisure and Development Committee received a report at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 in relation to declaring the asset surplus. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix 2, previously circulated. In accordance with Council's Land and Property policy, adopted in February 2020, land identified as surplus in term of service need is brought to the Land and Property Sub-Committee in terms of disposal. Currently Council has not earmarked capital expenditure for this site and there is no requirement for the Leisure and Development Directorate to retain the land for service delivery.

### **Planning consideration**

Since the Land and Property Sub-Committee met on 7<sup>th</sup> October further clarification has been sought on the planning issues raised at the meeting in relation to the current planning approval granted at the site E/2014/0055/F which expires on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The current planning approval granted in 2015 is for proposed re-development of Lime Park, inc. replacement Clubhouse, floodlight 3G training facility, upgrading of existing pitches inc. floodlighting, trimtrail and associated car parking and access upgrade. Further information is attached at Appendix 3, previously circulated.

### **Further request from Armoy Community Association**

Since 7<sup>th</sup> October, additional correspondence has been received from Armoy Community Association in relation to its request. This correspondence is attached at Appendix 4, previously circulated.

### **Options**

The Council or the Community Association could

1. To ensure that the permission does not lapse, before the expiry date of the permission granted, carry out an element of construction for the clubhouse in accordance with the approval. The works do not have to be extensive but they must be a clear act of construction that is in accordance with the stamped approved plans showing the location and design of the clubhouse and ensure that visibility splays are provided in accordance with the conditions on the approval.
2. Apply to renew the existing planning permission
3. Submit a new planning application for a different proposal at the site.
4. The matter is referred to the Land and Property Sub-Committee for further consideration.

### **Legal Implications**

Council's Land and Property Solicitor will provide legal advice at the Committee meeting.

### **Financial Implications**

This project and associated funding to commence/complete is not included in Council's Capital Projects Programme.

Estimated costs to undertake this project be provided at the meeting.

**It is recommended** that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee considers the report and options presented and makes recommendation to Council on one of the options noted 1-4 or an alternative option.

Alderman Baird felt that the Community Association would need to be included in any negotiations around the future of this asset as the village had lost out on the Village Plan and were high on the social deprivation scale. She asked that the Leisure and Development Directorate carry out community consultation on the future of the site.

The Director of Environmental Services confirmed that in order to make the material start to validate the planning permission there was an associated cost of £133,000 including: sightlines at the entrance and foundations for the Clubhouse, given the size of the building which was 40 m x 25 m (1100 m<sup>2</sup>).

The Council Land and Property Solicitor explained that the site was deemed surplus to requirements and referred to the Land and Property Sub-Committee for realisation.

The Land and Property Solicitor further explained that at this stage the timescale in relation to preserving the existing planning permission would be difficult in terms of Council ratifying the decision (including call-in period), tender options and consultation with interested parties.

Alderman Duddy and Councillor Knight McQuillan were concerned that the Council could not justify such a significant spend when not factored into capital expenditure or any other budget and suggested that Council could not afford this cost.

Discussion ensued and members were keen to engage all interested parties, where possible going forward.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Alderman Sharon McKillop and

**AGREED:** to recommend that Council approves option 4 and refers the matter to the Land and Property Sub-Committee for further consideration and that the community in Armoyle are consulted by the Leisure and Development Directorate on the future use of the site and that Council's Asset Realisation Team are involved in exploring options for the future use of the site.

## **20.2 Ballycastle Foodbank Ref 51/20 (7.2)**

Councillor McGurk advised that the representatives of the Food Bank had provided further information to Councillor McShane regarding their request to use Sheskburn House as follows:-

The facility may not be needed out of hours as first anticipated and that sole use of Council Chamber now not expected.

Alderman Baird and Alderman Duddy felt that there had been lengthy and detailed discussion on this matter at the Land and Property Sub-Committee. Although they wished to endorse the work of the Food Bank and would wish Council to assist in finding an alternative venue they felt that Sheskburn House was not a suitable site for this organisation.

### **Amendment:**

Proposed by Councillor McGurk

Seconded by Councillor Chivers

-that the decision not to facilitate the Food Bank at Sheskburn House be re-visited.

The Chair put the amendment to a vote

5 Members voted for; 8 Members voted against.

The Chair declared the amendment LOST.

### **20.3 Approval of Land and Property Sub-Committee meeting minutes - 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Alderman Fielding and

**AGREED:** to recommend that the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee held 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and recommendations therein are approved including 20.1 above.

- \* The Chair permitted Alderman Baird to raise urgent items in relation to the use of Council's land of which he had been given notice.

### **20.4 Fireworks at Portballintrae**

Alderman Baird raised the following issues in relation to Fireworks at Portballintrae:-

*1 What is the Council's policy on private individuals organising a public fireworks display at the present time?*

*2 Is special permission from Council required to organise such an event?*

*3 A fireworks display was carried out last week using the green area in front of the Bayview Hotel, Portballintrae. Does this area belong to Council and was permission sought and granted for this event?*

*4 A previous Motion to Council sought to have local residents alerted to firework displays due to the hugely detrimental impact on animals - has this been adopted as policy.*

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that this was on Council land, and was against current Council policy, no licence had been obtained from the Department of Justice or a request to use Council Land application made.

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed this was a PSNI Enforcement matter.

### **20.5 Filming at Ballintoy Harbour**

Alderman Baird raised the following issues in relation to Filming at Ballintoy Harbour.

*1 Who on Council authorised the above mentioned use and closure of Ballintoy Harbour and the adjacent right of way as noted.*

*2 How much rental did Council charge the film company for usage?*

*3 What consultation was carried out with local residents and landowners who were inconvenienced by the closure?*

With Committee's consent, Alderman Baird provided photos of the damage, including stiles, caused accessing the area and referred to the state of the path which formed the Causeway Coastal Path and the Ulster Way.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that permission to use the Council's car park had not been formally sought.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Councillor Knight-McQuillan and

**AGREED** to recommend that that Council pursue company for any damage to Council's land and storage cost retrospectively, and re-affirm Council's policy on 'Request to Use Land'

**21. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINES (NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12 (O))**

There was no other business.

**MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'**

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Knight-McQuillan and

**AGREED:** to recommend that Committee move 'In Public'.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 11.58pm.

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Chair