



**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2023**

<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary of key Recommendations</b>
1.	Apologies	<i>None</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>Alderman Stewart, Councillor Schenning</i>
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 20 June 2023	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>
4.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)	
(i)	JDLC gym opening hours and associated budgetary issues (Councillor Wilson)	<i>Update from Director of Leisure and Development provided</i>
5.	Leisure & Development Committee Terms of Reference	<i>To recommend to Council the approval of the Terms of Reference as set out in this report</i>
6.	Blackburn Path Extinguishment Order	<i>To recommend that Council progress the Order - Council must now make the Public Path Extinguishment Order. It should be noted that the Order when made will not come into force until it is confirmed at a later date</i>
7.	Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust	<i>To recommend to Council the approval of funding of £35k p/a to CCGHT for services being undertaken within the work plan at Annex B (for the period 2023 - 2026) which will be subject to a staged approval and</i>

		<b>satisfactory delivery of the outputs detailed</b>
<b>8.</b>	Sperrins Partnership Project	<p><b>To recommend to Council the following:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. To consider making budget provision of approximately £4,000 per year for 2-year period commencing April 2024 up to September 2026 to support continuation of The Outdoor Partnership Project in the Sperrins as outlined;</b></li> <li><b>2. To accept the terms and conditions of the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028. Letter of Offer attached at Annex A, previously circulated;</b></li> <li><b>3. To commence with the recruitment of an AONB Project Officer to assist with development of the Sperrin AONB Management Plan and Action Plan;</b></li> <li><b>4. To agree to the suggested amendment to the current Sperrins Partnership Structure as set out at Annex B, previously circulated, and budget allocation to salary costs</b></li> </ol>
<b>9.</b>	Causeway Coast & Glens Sports Grant Programme	<b>To recommend that Council approves the Sports Grant programme for 2023/24, to be launched October 2023</b>
<b>10.</b>	DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund	<p><b>To recommend that approval is sought for the following:</b></p> <p><b>Provide funding of £47,073 from the DfC</b></p>

		<p><b>Social Supermarket Support Fund to the 2 established Social Supermarkets in CCG (£15,452 to Vineyard Compassion and £31,621 to Limavady Community Development Initiative) respectively to both support the increased costs of operating and an increase in number of households participating in the scheme. The funding to be allocated to Vineyard Compassion as the DfC recognised provider, to work in partnership with LCDI.</b></p> <p><b>1. Invite expressions of interest from organisations that might be interested in exploring and setting up a social supermarket model to cover the areas where there currently are gaps ie The Glens DEA and lower Ballymoney DEA. An amount of £12,000 be allocated from the DfC funding for capacity building and seeding support;</b></p> <p><b>2. Seek to engage a consortium capable of collectively providing social supermarket coverage across Causeway Coast and Glens in 2024-25 by preparing a procurement</b></p>
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		<i>process and supporting interested organisations to develop a collaborative approach.</i>
<b>11.</b>	Council Memorial Policy	<i>To recommend that Council:- Approves the memorials policy in principle as presented with the report, subject to the outcome of an Equality Impact Assessment including any mitigations that may arise. That following the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment, the final draft be brought back to council for consideration and approval</i>
<b>12.</b>	Asylum Seekers Support Services	<i>To recommend that Council provide funding of £14,000 to Vineyard Compassion for the provision of support services to Asylum Seekers placed in the Borough as outlined within the report</i>
<b>13.</b>	PCSP Annual Report	<i>Noted</i>
<b>14.</b>	Good Relations Programme Funding	<i>Noted</i>
<b>15.</b>	Growth Deal Executive Programme Board Minutes	<i>Noted</i>
<b>16.</b>	Leisure Facilities Project Board Minutes	<i>Noted</i>
<b>17.</b>	Correspondence	<i>None</i>
<b>18.</b>	Matters for Reporting to Partnership Panel	<i>None</i>

19.	Consultations	<b>None</b>
	<b>For Confidential Consideration (Items 20-28 inclusive)</b>	
20.	LD Financial Position P4	<b>Information</b>
21.	Benone Holiday & Leisure Park Strategic Outline Case	<b>To recommend that Council approve the findings of the Benone Holiday and Leisure complex SOC and to advance to stakeholder consultation</b>
22.	Holiday & Leisure Parks Laundry Equipment	<b>To recommend to Council the appointment of CE Tech to provide the laundry equipment as specified within the Terms of Reference (Annex A, previously circulated) for the following Parks, Carrick Dhu, Juniper Hill and Benone. An investment decision of £162,240 ex VAT is required which has been budgeted for within the Capital reserve allocated for HALPs</b>
23.	Growth Deal	<b>To recommend to Council following presentation to the Executive Programme Board on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023, Members are asked to approve the Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case prepared for the Growth Deal projects and the resultant list of 8 prioritised projects (detailed within Section 4.2); and agree the formal submission of the associated Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case to government for approval and consideration within the Heads of Terms which are to</b>

		<p><b>be agreed with Council by March 2024.</b></p> <p><b>At this early stage of the process, Members are also asked to approve the budget allocations to each of the projects (table within Section 4.3) and an indicative Council capital contribution to the overall Growth Deal of c.£5m over the next 5 years subject to affordability.</b></p> <p><b>Members will note that unallocated funds of c.£9m will be brought to the Growth Deal Executive Programme Board ahead of the next Leisure &amp; Development Committee meeting for decision</b></p>
<b>24.</b>	Enterprise Appeals Fund	<p><b>To recommend Council award additional funding to 2 businesses as outlined totalling £10,000, under the auspices of the Enterprise Fund 2023</b></p>
<b>25.</b>	Business Seed Fund & Mentoring Programme	<p><b>To recommend to Council that the contract is awarded to Tangible Consulting Ltd for the contract sum of £28,000 (excl. VAT), delivery concluding on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024</b></p>
<b>26.</b>	Work Ready Employability Programme	<p><b>To recommend to Council that the contract is awarded to North West Regional College for the contract sum of £18,000 (excl. VAT), delivery concluding on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024</b></p>

27.	Contract for Provision of ESOL Classes	<b><i>To recommend to Council that Acacia Path be awarded the contract as per the tender submission for the provision of a 12 week ESOL programme in 3 areas to the value of £16,043.55</i></b>
28.	Contract Variance for Gym Equipment	<b><i>To recommend that Council notes the progress to date in terms of the Gym Upgrade Projects and recommends to Council to issue a variation to the awarded Contract to Pulse Fitness for additional equipment at a cost of £58,394</i></b>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE ON TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00 PM**

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

**Members Present:** Alderman McAuley (C), Scott (C), Stewart (C)  
Councillors N Archibald (C), Bateson (R), Kennedy (R), Kyle (C), McCully (C), McGurk (R), McShane (R), Stirling (C), Schenning (C), Watson (C), Holmes (R/C), Wisener (C)

**Non Committee Members In Attendance:** Councillors Wilson (Item 4), MA McKillop

**Officers Present:** D Jackson, Chief Executive (R)  
R Baker, Director of Leisure and Development (C)  
J Welsh, Head of Community and Culture (C)  
N McGurk, Head of Prosperity and Place (C)  
W McCullough, Head of Sport and Wellbeing (C)  
J Beggs, SIB Project Officer (R)  
N Harkness, SIB Project Officer (R)  
P Harkin, Good Relations Manager (R)  
R Gillen, Coast and Countryside Manager (R)  
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)  
I Owens, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

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

Press 1 no. (R)

Press 1 no. (C)

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

The Director of Leisure and Development undertook a roll call of committee members present.

The Chair advised that Alderman Scott was substituting for Councillor Anderson.

The Chair advised of a change to the order of business to permit non-committee member, Councillor Wilson to present his AORB which would be considered as Item 4.



## 1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Schenning declared an interest in Item 10 - DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund. Having declared an interest Councillor Schenning did not participate or vote on the Item.

Alderman Stewart declared an interest in Item 7 - Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust. Having declared an interest Alderman Stewart did not participate or vote on the Item.

## 3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 20 JUNE 2023

Summary previously circulated.

**AGREED** – to recommend that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 20 June 2023 were signed as a correct record.

## 4. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12 (o)

### (i) JDLC gym opening hours and associated budgetary issues (Councillor Wilson)

*'To ask the Director to outline costs associated with extending the opening hours of the gym at the JDLC in the evenings and at weekends;*

*To ask the Director to present options to mitigate the above-mentioned costs from with the current L&D budget.'*

Councillor Wilson congratulated the Director and staff at JDLC on the upgrade undertaken at the gym saying it was a fantastic cutting-edge project which was inclusive and accessible.

Councillor Wilson said that he was aware of budgetary restraints but would like Officers to explore longer opening hours on a Saturday and Sunday and table a feasibility paper to determine membership, footfall and finances.

The Director of Leisure and Development acknowledged the remarks made by Councillor Wilson regarding the new facility at JDLC gym. The Director of Leisure and Development advised that he would bring back a report detailing the requested information.

At the request of Councillor Stirling, the Director of Leisure and Development advised that, to ensure a consistent approach, the report would include Coleraine Leisure Centre and Roe Valley Leisure Centre.

\* **Councillor Wilson left the meeting at 7.10pm.**

## **5. LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

### **Purpose of Report**

This report reviews the existing Terms of Reference for the Leisure and Development Committee.

### **Background**

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council decided to utilise the traditional committee system as its preferred form of governance and, as a result, it has created a number of Committees to progress the work of the new Council from 1st of April 2015.

### **Scope**

The Leisure and Development Committee (“the Committee”) will be responsible for recommending to Council the key decisions and actions required to be taken specifically in relation to the work of the Leisure and Development (L&D) Directorate.

This will include:

- The oversight of the following service areas, including financial performance:
  - Community and Culture.
  - Prosperity and Place.
  - Tourism and Recreation.
  - Sport and Wellbeing.
  - The Funding Unit.
  - The Council’s Growth Deal.
- Overseeing the delivery of the aforementioned services and strategies for the L&D Directorate and making appropriate recommendations to Council;
- Recommending to Council relevant policies and procedures for the L&D Directorate;
- The future development of the organisational structure for the L&D Directorate;
- Developing, Monitoring and Reviewing annual business and service delivery plans for the L&D Directorate;
- Recommending to Council the establishment of external partnerships where considered relevant to the role of the L&D Directorate;
- The development and delivery of Capital Projects that exist within the scope of L&D Directorate;

- Making recommendations to Council and monitoring funding sources and mechanisms to assist with various initiatives, projects and actions within the remit of the L&D Directorate;
- Recommending to Council the resolution of any associated issues;
- Considering the resource implications of any recommendations.

### **Membership**

The Committee is comprised of the sixteen Elected Members and they were appointed to the Committee at the Annual General Meeting of Council on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Members may be required to represent the Committee and Council at pertinent consultation and capacity building events. The membership list for the Committee is provided at Annex A, previously circulated.

### **Chair**

The Committee will be chaired in 2023/24 by Councillor Sean Bateson (SF). In the absence of the Chairperson, the Committee will be chaired by the Deputy Chairperson, Alderman Aaron Callan (DUP). In the absence of the Deputy Chairperson, a chair for the meeting will be agreed by the Members present.

### **Meetings**

The first meeting of the Committee of the newly elected Council was held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The L&D Committee will normally meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 7.00 pm except when this falls within a recess period agreed by Council. A schedule of meetings for the Committee for the 2023/24 year are attached as Annex B, previously circulated. All meetings of the Committee will be governed by the Council's Standing Orders and the Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors.

### **Sub-Committees and Working Groups**

The Committee has the facility, if it so wishes, to establish and appoint any number of Sub-Committees and Working Groups it deems necessary to consider in more detail the work of the Committee concerning specific issues related to the Leisure & Development Directorate. The following Working Groups are proposed for 2023/24 year:

Title	Remarks	Frequency
Executive Programme Board	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth Deal Programme &amp; Projects.</li> <li>• Enterprise Zone.</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Economy and Tourism	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regeneration CAPEX</li> <li>• All Events including Air Show and Lammas Fair.</li> <li>• Rural and Agricultural Matters.</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Wellbeing, Community and Funding.	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport Facilities CAPEX.</li> <li>• Grant Governance.</li> </ul>	Quarterly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism friendly WG;</li> <li>• Age friendly alliance</li> </ul>	
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### **Communication and Reporting**

The Minutes of the Committee will be reported at each meeting of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council by the Chair of the Committee.

### **Recommendation(s)**

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council the approval of the Terms of Reference as set out in this report.

At the request of Alderman McAuley, the Director of Leisure and Development confirmed the method of appointment to the Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
 Seconded by Alderman McAuley and

**AGREED** - to recommend to Council the approval of the Terms of Reference as set out in this report.

## **6. BLACKBURN PATH EXTINGUISHMENT ORDER**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Coast and Countryside Manager.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to present to Members the proposed Blackburn Path Extinguishment Order 2023, which if approved will facilitate the permanent closure of the pathway between Irish Green Street and Blackburn Park, Limavady.

### **Background**

At the Leisure and Development Committee Meeting on 20 June 2023 a request from the Education Authority to close the path linking Irish Green Street with Blackburn Park which runs between Limavady High School and St Mary's High School was tabled. Subsequent to this Council provided approval that a Public Path Order is initiated, and this report advances this process. This path is a Public Right of Way based on long-term use.

The path dissects the sites of the two high schools which will form the Limavady Shared Education Campus, construction of which is due to be completed by May 2023.

The Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983, provides Council with the power to make Public Path Orders that can create, close, or divert a path which is considered to be a Public Right of Way.

The Leisure and Development Committee on the 20 June agreed to recommend to Council that a Public Path Order is initiated for the path linking Irish Green Street and Blackburn Park between the Limavady Shared Campus. This would potentially lead to the extinguishment of the existing path that runs between the two schools.

Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 20 June 2023 adopted by Full Council meeting held Thursday 29 June 2023.

### **Next Steps**

Having carried out the steps recommended in the June report of initiating the Public Path Order by consulting Statutory Undertakers and Prescribed Bodies, if the council wish to move the proposed Order forward then the next stage is to make the Order.

Any public path order which the council prepares will be an important legal document. The Order must first be advertised, and any objections formally determined. For these reasons procedures are laid down which council must follow.

The Council must make the Public Path Order, this is still the initial stage, not the end of the process. The right to object comes when the notice of making the order has been published in a local newspaper, served on everyone with an interest in the land and displayed on the path. If no objections are received within 28 days, or any that are received are withdrawn, the council may itself decide to confirm the order.

If objections are made that are not withdrawn and the council still wishes to proceed, it must submit the order and the objections to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. The Department will deal with the order by exchange of correspondence or, if this does not seem likely to reach a conclusion, by holding a public local enquiry.

### **Options**

The Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983 Article 14 – (1) Where it appears to the Council that it is expedient that a public path should be closed on the ground that the path is not needed for public use, the Council may by order (a public path extinguishment order) made by the council and submitted to and confirmed by the Department , or confirmed by the Council as an unopposed order, extinguish the right of way over the path.

Council makes the Blackburn Path, Public Path Extinguishment Order 2023 and publicises for 28 days.

Attached at Annex A, previously circulated - Public Path Extinguishment Order, Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, Extinguishment of Public Right of Way Blackburn Path and Order Map attached at Annex B, previously circulated.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council that to progress the Order Council must now make the Public Path Extinguishment Order. It should be noted that the Order when made will not come into force until it is confirmed at a later date.

Alderman Scott said he was concerned about the potential for a legal challenge in respect of an Extinguishment Order and felt there was no

justification for this recommendation, suggesting Council did not have the required powers to take this approach. Alderman Scott said that due process could still be followed, once clarification of legalities was established.

Proposed by Alderman Scott  
Seconded by Alderman McAuley

-to recommend that expert legal advice be obtained before proceeding.

The Director of Leisure and Development invited the Coast and Countryside Manager to advise on adherence to legislation.

The Coast and Countryside Manager advised that, in accordance with The Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983, guidance was sought from the Department of the Environment through the Northern Ireland Environment Agency specifically in relation to the task. The Coast and Countryside Manager explained this proposal would provide opportunity for public consultation.

Councillor Schenning said she was in support of the proposal and spoke of some of the safety concerns relating to Blackburn Path.

#### Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Councillor McGurk

-to recommend that Council progress the Order - Council must now make the Public Path Extinguishment Order. It should be noted that the Order when made will not come into force until it is confirmed at a later date.

Alderman McAuley requested a Recorded Vote.

The Chair put the Amendment to the Committee to vote.

11 Members voted For; 5 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.

The Chair declared the Amendment Carried.

#### Recorded Vote Table

For (11)	Alderman Stewart
	Councillor Archibald, Bateson, Holmes, Kennedy, McCully, McGurk, McShane, Schenning, Watson, Wisener
Against (5)	Alderman Callan, Scott, McAuley
	Councillor Kyle, Stirling

## **7. CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS HERITAGE TRUST**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Coast and Countryside Manager.

## **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an update on the work of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) that has taken place for the financial period 2022-2023 and seek approval for the support of the ongoing work of CCGHT for a three-year period from 2023 to 2026.

## **Background**

At the February 2023 Leisure & Development Committee meeting it was recommended that Council approve funding to CCGHT for services being undertaken within the 2022 - 2023 work plan subject to a staged approval and satisfactory delivery of the outputs detailed and that Council looks at increasing funding in line with inflation in the next financial year (24/25).

Council's Funding Unit and the Coast and Countryside Team reviewed the 2022-23 work plan and can confirm that these outputs were completed as agreed, attached at Annex A, previously circulated.

The focus of CCGHT continues to be based around the development and implementation of environmental and landscape management plans for the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); Binevenagh, the Causeway Coast and the Antrim Coast and Glens. CCGHT also has a role working on a regional basis to develop awareness of environmental management and to promote sustainable tourism. Council's Coast and Countryside remit continues to be complimented by the activities provided by CCGHT.

Any agreement to provide financial support will be based on a single tender action for services that only CCGHT can provide as specialists in this area of work. These services include the following:

- Developing sustainable and effective partnerships such as the World Heritage Site Steering Group and implementation of the new World Heritage Site plan for Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS.
- Key partner in the £4.5 million EU LIFE Rathlin project which focuses on natural heritage and community.
- Delivering protected area management provision through action plans for Antrim Coast & Glens, Binevenagh and Causeway Coast AONBs.
- Ensuring best practice in sustainable development principles delivered through the AONB action plans and assessing the development potential of a Co. Antrim Geopark.
- Deliver sustainable, efficient, and effective core activity/management for CCGHT.
- Facilitating the delivery of a range of projects through the Binevenagh & Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme £3.4 million investment in the project area.

- Undertaking community engagement as part of the Binevenagh & Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership, with respect to outdoor recreation and heritage.

### **Update on proposals**

To adopt a more efficient and sustainable approach, it is recommended that Council agrees to provide appropriate funding for CCGHT for a three-year period from 2023 – 2026. This will allow for further project work to be undertaken that will compliment the wider Tourism & Recreation remit, especially in the context of Destination Management. Additionally, a three-year agreement will allow for more efficient long-term planning for the Trust which will in turn benefit Council through the services delivered on its behalf. Members will recall that at the February 2023 meeting of Leisure and Development Committee it was recommended that funding should be increased in line with inflation from 2024 -2025.

CCGHT, in consultation with Council officers, have developed an activity plan with identified outputs for the three-year period 2023 to 2026 which is provided in Annex B, previously circulated. This builds on the existing work identified by Council and CCGHT, ongoing activity that is necessary with respect to AONB and World Heritage Site planning and reflects work identified within CCGHT's operational plan. In a further development the plan includes research into Community Tourism which will link directly to community engagement programme in the context of the Destination Management Plan.

A three-year agreement will be subject to regular review and be flexible to incorporate additional project work where necessary or appropriate.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council the approval of funding of £35k p/a to CCGHT for services being undertaken within the work plan at Annex B (for the period 2023 - 2026) which will be subject to a staged approval and satisfactory delivery of the outputs detailed.

Councillor Schenning said the service provided by Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust was value for money. At the request of Alderman Callan, the Coast and Countryside Manager confirmed there would be an annual review of service provision.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Alderman McAuley and

**AGREED** - to recommend to Council the approval of funding of £35k p/a to CCGHT for services being undertaken within the work plan at Annex B (for the period 2023 - 2026) which will be subject to a staged approval and satisfactory delivery of the outputs detailed.

## **8. SPERRINS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Coast and Countryside Officer

### **Purpose of Report**



To provide members with an annual update on the Sperrins Partnership Project and to seek approval for continued support from Council with respect to The Outdoor Partnership and the preparation of the Sperrin AONB Management and Action Plan.

## **Background**

The Sperrins Partnership Project (previously Sperrins Future Search) is a joint collaboration between 4 councils; Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council, who back in 2018 committed to equal financial contribution towards its delivery and have also funded the Sperrins Future Search initiative.

Project activity is overseen by a Project Officer and part time Administrative Support who took up their respective roles in October 2020. Derry City and Strabane District Council agreed to lead on the recruitment and employment of the officers in agreement with the partner councils. The information in this report has been provided by the Partnership.

Work completed or progressed to date includes:

- Approval of the Sperrins Partnership Agreement between partner councils (currently under review);
- Governance Structure agreed and formation of a Sperrins Partnership Board;
- Development and launch of a new website dedicated to the project [www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com](http://www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com);
- Development of a communication Newsletter;
- Official Launch of the Sperrins Future Search Report and Actions Plans;
- Initiation of the Brand and Tourism Thematic Group;
- Review and update of the Brand and Tourism Action Plan;
- Audit of the Sperrins tourism product offering;
- Engagement and regular meetings with Statutory Agencies;
- Delivery of Sperrins Walking Programme;
- Raise profile of the Sperrins as a place to visit, live, work and invest;
- The Outdoor Partnership – funding secured through National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) to recruit a Sperrins Outdoor Activity Development Officer. Post commenced Feb 2023.

At the February 2023 meeting of Leisure & Development Committee it was recommended that Council provides financial support for the continuation of the Sperrins Partnership Project at a cost of £22,000 annually subject to confirmation of the reciprocal financial contribution of all partner Councils. Funding for 2023/24 was subject to the rates setting process. Officers recommended a 3-year term moving forward a decision ratified by full Council.

## Projects and Proposals

### The Outdoor Partnership (TOP)

The Sperrins Partnership in collaboration with and with support from Sport NI and Partner Councils secured funding through The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) to appoint an Outdoor Activity Development Officer for the Sperrins for a 4-year funded period. The Outdoor Partnership is an organisation based in Wales who work to support people across the UK to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit. Their vision is: *“Enhancing people’s lives through outdoor activity.”*

This means enhancing people’s physical and mental health and wellbeing, while improving the economic return and the social value of outdoor activity such as walking, cycling and adventure sports. The Outdoor Activity Development Officer role is to build capacity, identify training and education needs within outdoor sports and recreation in Sperrins Communities.

The Outdoor Partnership employs the project officer and manages the project with support from Partner Councils. The project also seeks to include enabling communities through promoting sustainable use of the environment, enhancing partnership working through local delivery and improving coaching, education and opportunities coach and opportunities for volunteering.

The Officer is currently focused on completing an audit across the region which will identify gaps and opportunities. Projects are currently being identified across a range of sports and recreational activities.

Breakdown of Funding for the post of Sperrins Outdoor Activity Development Officer is as follows:

B: Financial Years	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4		
	Feb 23 - Mar 23	Apr 23 - Mar 24	Apr 24 - Mar 25	Apr 25 - Mar 26	Apr - Sep 26	Total
OADO Salary (inc Oncosts)	6,083	36,864	37,601	38,353	19,366	138,267
Administration (Laptop/phone)	2,625	625	500	500	250	4,500
Total Costs (incurred by TOP)	8,708	37,489	38,101	38,853	19,616	142,767
UK Lottery Funding	6,883	26,430	26,821	27,347	13,806	101,287
Balance of Funding Required	1,825	11,059	11,280	11,506	5,810	41,480

The financial contribution up to 31 March 24' totalling £12,884.00 has been provided by the Sperrin Partnership budget. This was agreed by partner councils due to underspend during the early stages of the project because of the pandemic.

Consideration to financial contributions for years 3 and 4 is required. It is suggested that partner councils make budget provision for these years to ensure the project can continue for its duration.

Broken down, the contribution requested for each year is circa £4000 per Partner Council. This figure will allow for some programming costs to be included.

Members will be kept updated on project developments. Further information on the project can be found here Northern Ireland-The Sperrins - The Outdoor Partnership.

### **Sperrin AONB Management Plan**

Sperrin Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is the only one of 8 AONBs in Northern Ireland without a Management Plan. This is a long-standing matter which the Sperrins Partnership Board had supported as a key issue facing the region. The Partnership engaged with NIEA to assess options and to understand the role/ remit of the agency and explore funding opportunities available to write and deliver a management plan. As a result of this, the Sperrins Partnership undertook internal consultation amongst the partner councils to confirm if there is an appetite, resource, and commitment to deliver an AONB Management Plan for the Sperrins.

The Sperrins Partnership Board agreed to apply for funding to the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028 in November 2022. The application was successful. The funding will allow a 10-year Management and 5-year Action Plan to be developed for the Sperrins. This is welcome news as following almost 55 years since it was originally Designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it will now benefit from a multi-agency coordinated approach to protect and promote the unique landscape.

The Letter of Offer sets out the financial allocation for each year of the project and the work plan for each year thereafter will be agreed in advance with NIEA and Councils. The final Letter of Offer is attached at Annex A, previously circulated. There is no further financial request to Partner Councils.

The funding will allow for recruitment of an AONB Project Officer who will assist with developing the Management Plan and Action Plan. The post will be guaranteed initially for a 2-year period and subject to delivery of the work program in years 1 and 2, the post will be extended for the remainder of the funding period.

A slight change in the current Sperrins Partnership structure will be required to include the recruitment of the AONB Project Officer and the suggested structure amendments are included at Annex B, previously circulated.

Considering the suggested structural changes, it is anticipated that salary costs for current staff will increase by c£1k per council per year. There is enough budget from the existing financial contributions from each council to cover this slight increase. Members are asked to note this slight increase and the allocation of overall budget to this.

### **Sperrins Walking Festival**

The 2022/2023 Sperrins Walking programme was a huge success with a high majority of walks selling out and feedback from Partner Councils and those who took part was extremely positive. Due to the success and to build on the event the four partner councils are working in collaboration to deliver the programme again commencing in Autumn 2023 with one element taking place in Spring 2024. Budgets have been identified and the range of walks will include individual Council specifications.

An activity provider has been appointed to oversee the events and councils have agreed for a single procurement exercise be undertaken (Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to act as procuring authority) to plan and deliver a walking weekend in each of the four council areas in the 2023/2024 financial year on behalf of the Sperrins Partnership. Further information and updates can be found at [Sperrins Walking Festival - Sperrins Partnership Project](#)

### **Sperrins Partnership Project – Financial Contributions and Invoicing Arrangements**

Current invoicing arrangements for Partner Council contributions to support the Sperrins Partnership cover the period October to October each year which falls in line with staff employment dates.

However, invoicing arrangements for the contributions currently takes place in February/March each year falling in line with Council financial year. This current arrangement is proving problematic as essentially invoicing is being carried out retrospectively to account for contributions for the 6 months prior to March each year.

To align invoicing arrangements, it is suggested that partner Councils are not invoiced in October 2023 and instead the next invoices for contributions are issued in March 2024 to align with Councils financial year. Respective Council finance teams are content with this arrangement which members are asked to note.

### **Future Financial Support**

The Sperrins Partnership Project is presently funded by 4 councils at a total annual cost of c£88,000. Officers are currently looking at options to secure additional funding from external sources for relevant projects. This contribution includes salary and programming costs and concludes in October 2023.

Each council had committed c£22,000 for the current financial year and commitment to continue to fund each year thereafter annually is requested during

the project lifetime, to extend the project to maintain momentum and build on early success and allow for effective forward planning and project management.

This funding will be vital to ensure that the Sperrins Partnership Project can deliver on its vision as outlined at the Sperrins Future Search Conference subject to matching agreement from all partner councils.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council the following:

1. To consider making budget provision of approximately £4,000 per year for 2-year period commencing April 2024 up to September 2026 to support continuation of The Outdoor Partnership Project in the Sperrins as outlined.
2. To accept the terms and conditions of the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028. Letter of Offer attached at Annex A, previously circulated.
3. To commence with the recruitment of an AONB Project Officer to assist with development of the Sperrin AONB Management Plan and Action Plan.
4. To agree to the suggested amendment to the current Sperrins Partnership Structure as set out at Annex B, previously circulated, and budget allocation to salary costs.

Councillor McGurk spoke of the significance of this project and the level of funding which it attracted.

Proposed by Councillor McGurk  
Seconded by Alderman Scott and

**AGREED** - to recommend to Council to approve the following:

1. To consider making budget provision of approximately £4,000 per year for 2-year period commencing April 2024 up to September 2026 to support continuation of The Outdoor Partnership Project in the Sperrins as outlined.
2. To accept the terms and conditions of the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028. Letter of Offer attached at Annex A, previously circulated.
3. To commence with the recruitment of an AONB Project Officer to assist with development of the Sperrin AONB Management Plan and Action Plan.
4. To agree to the suggested amendment to the current Sperrins Partnership Structure as set out at Annex B, previously circulated, and budget allocation to salary costs.

## **9. CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS SPORTS GRANTS PROGRAMMES**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Sport and Well Being.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the Sports Grant programme for Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council.

## **Background**

In February 2022 Council approved the creation of an annual programme for sports grants to support the development of a sporting club or an individual's participation in high level competition.

Council further agreed that the Funding Unit administer the grant programme on behalf of Council with a standardised process for applications, assessed and reported to Council in line with the existing Council Grants programme.

## **Overview of the Sports Grant Programme**

### **Purpose of the Grant Programme**

The Causeway Coast and Glens Sports Grant Programme is available to local individuals, local sports clubs and National Governing Bodies representing a sport recognised by Sport NI who wish to apply for grant assistance under any of the following categories:

- Representative / International Expenses (maximum grant available £400) e.g., Ulster, Northern Ireland, Ireland, GB.
- Safety Equipment for a Club (maximum grant available £200) e.g., Equipment to aid player safety when participating.
- Club Coach / Official Education (maximum grant available is £300 for a generic course and £200 for a sports specific course).  
e.g., NGB Level 1 / officials / umpire / judge / referee (Sports Specific courses)  
e.g., Safeguarding, first aid (Generic courses).
- Seeding Grant for a New Club (maximum grant available £150) e.g., Available to a 'new' sports club as a start-up grant.

### **Amount available in grant-aid**

Council will consider up to 100% funding of total eligible costs up to a maximum of £400 per application. Applications will be open all year round, April to March (subject to funding availability). To be eligible for this Grant you must be one of the following:

- A Constituted Sports Club within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area. **or**
- An Individual who is a resident of Causeway Coast and Glens or belong to a Club based in Causeway Coast and Glens.

### **Note:**

- Sports Clubs / Individuals must be involved in a sport that is recognised by Sport Northern Ireland.

- National Governing Bodies of Sport must be recognised by Sport Northern Ireland.

**and**

- All applicants (individuals or sports club) must be at ‘amateur’ status.

### **Eligible costs**

The following eligible items are not exclusive / exhaustive; all items will be considered on individual merit. We will fund:

- Representative / International Expenses.
- Safety Equipment for a Club.
- Coach / Official Education.
- Seeding Grant for a New Club.

### **Ineligible costs**

The following ineligible items are not exclusive / exhaustive.

- General running costs of current activities.
- Insurance.
- Affiliation, entry, or membership fees.
- Publications, marketing, and websites.
- Consultancy fees.
- Access NI registration fees.
- Capital costs; Office equipment/ furniture/ maintenance equipment.
- Entertainment costs, food, or beverages.
- Secondary, further, or higher education costs.
- Activities promoting religious or political beliefs.
- Fundraising Events.
- Clothing.

### **Criteria for assessment**

Applications will be evaluated as follows:

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score awarded out of 5</b>	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Possible Score</b>
1	<p><b>Application detail</b> e.g..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an international tournament where you are representing your country, with dates, venue, competition level and costs of travel and accommodation;</li> <li>• a coach education course, with dates, level, the Awarding National Governing Body and costs.</li> </ul>		<p><b>EXAMPLE</b></p> <p>x6</p>	<p>30</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an item of safety equipment required to take part in your sport. Name the item and cost</li> <li>• seeding grant to use towards the costs of starting up a 'new' sports club.</li> </ul>			
2	<p><b>Identified Need. Who will benefit?</b> e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• travel to international competition to further your representative career.</li> <li>• requirement that my Club has a Level 2 coach at each age group.</li> <li>• helmets are a compulsory item to play our sport.</li> <li>• a new club looking to buy equipment to get started.</li> <li>• who are the main beneficiaries e.g., a player, coach, official or sports club.</li> </ul>		x10	50
4	<p><b>Sustainability</b> e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you ensure that your application will assist with keeping people involved in sport or progressing their careers?</li> </ul>		x4	20
	<b>Total</b>			<b>100</b>

Applications must score at least 65% in order to avail of funding.

Guidance notes are available at Annex A, previously circulated.

### Timeframes

If approved, the grant programme will open in October 2023 and run for the remainder of the financial year. Thereafter it will open in April of each year and remain open until the following March – subject to funding availability.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee approves the Sports Grant programme for 2023/24, to be launched October 2023.

Proposed by Alderman Scott

Seconded by Councillor Stirling and

**AGREED** - to recommend that Council approve the Sports Grant programme for 2023/24, to be launched October 2023.

## 10. DFC SOCIAL SUPERMARKET SUPPORT FUND

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.



## **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for spend of Social Supermarket Support Fund monies received from Department for Communities (DfC) for 2023-24 and to agree a forward approach for the Social Supermarket Support Fund transferring in full from DfC to Council in 2024-25.

## **Background**

Social Supermarkets provide members, who are struggling financially and meet certain criteria, with the opportunity to shop in a reduced cost food shop for a set period of time (usually 3- 6 months) alongside engaging in wraparound support including advice on debt, budgeting, benefits advice, healthy eating, training and employability skills, signposting, for example to family support programmes etc. It is a membership programme where members pay a weekly membership subscription to shop for a variety of fresh, frozen & store cupboard food products.

The aim of the social supermarket model is to offer a longer term and sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to help address the root causes of poverty rather than the short term crisis food provision that foodbanks provide.

Department for Communities has operated a Social Supermarket (SSM) Pilot Programme since October 2017, where it has directly funded 5 pilot social supermarkets, one of which is in Causeway Coast and Glens, called Reset which is operated by Vineyard Compassion in Coleraine. There is a second social supermarket operating in Causeway Coast and Glens, operated by Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI) which does not receive DfC funding.

The DfC pilots have rolled over annually since 2017 and following a positive evaluation of pilot programme DfC now wishes to extend the programme to all of NI, to be delivered through Councils.

Last year funding from the Department's Welfare Reform budget was provided through a Social Supermarket Support Fund (SSMSF) to Councils to support the co-design of a social supermarket model in the Council area.

Council contracted Ulster University to undertake a Scoping Study to look at how to extend the existing social supermarket provision in Causeway Coast and Glens and this was presented to Council in September 2022.

In February 2023, Council agreed to provide the remaining funding of £25,973 from the DfC 2022-23 SSMSF to Vineyard Compassion, as the DfC recognised provider, to work with the other Social Supermarket provider LCDI, to help sustain, develop and extend the reach of the Social Supermarket services within the Borough.

Officers have since worked with the 2 current providers to determine what is feasible for Council and the current Social Supermarkets to deliver with the resources available, both in the short and medium term.

## **Proposals**

### **DfC funding for 2023-24**

DfC have provided direct funding to Reset, the pilot Social Supermarket operated by Vineyard Compassion for the 23-24 financial year. In addition to this an offer of funding for £59,073 has also been made available by DfC to Council.

### **DfC direction for 2024-25**

When an approach has been agreed with DfC for next financial year ie. 2024-25 DfC will cease funding to the pilot at Vineyard Compassion and provide the full allocation for social supermarkets in Causeway Coast and Glens to Council to fund a service directly. This is expected to be in the region of £115-120K in 2024-25.

### **Current coverage**

In 2022-23 the Reset Social Supermarket at Vineyard supported 101 households. The funding secured from DfC has a target of supporting 90 households (each household receiving support over an approximate 6 month period). By securing other funding and their own fundraising Vineyard were able to support the additional number of households. The amount of DfC funding has remained at the same level since 2017 while the energy costs of operating the storage facility with fridges and freezers have tripled in the last 2 years. The social supermarket is on track to support 140 households this year based on demand to date and is in need of additional funding to deal with this demand.

LCDI operates a social supermarket which supports approximately 120 households per year over a 12 week period, which is equivalent to 60 households per year over a 6 month period. Following the loss of annual ESF funding they will struggle to be able to deliver the service without external funding.

In order to make a decision about how to allocate the £59K funding from DfC to council in 23-24, and to plan for allocation of the full funding pot in 24-25, Council officers have reviewed the current catchment area of the 2 current providers, Vineyard Compassion and LCDI. Staff have calculated, based on the number of households across the borough, what proportion of the households that the current social supermarkets cover and identify any gaps.

Vineyard Compassion's current catchment is the DEAs of Coleraine, Bann, Causeway and the upper part of Ballymoney DEA. LCDI has a catchment of Limavady and Benbradagh DEAs. Gaps were identified in coverage for The Glens DEA and lower Ballymoney DEA; these tend to be areas that are over 15 miles from the existing 2 social supermarkets. While households from those areas could avail of the social supermarket at Vineyard Compassion, there are factors such as travel distance, time and cost that may affect how worthwhile it is for someone living in these areas to participate in the social supermarket programme.

## **Addressing gaps in coverage**

The Ulster University scoping study highlighted that no one organisation has the optimal location, premises or staffing capacity (support workers) to meet the current need; operating costs are concerning, with energy prices, which are particularly high given the amount of refrigeration and freezers required, cited most often as a pressing issue; and face to face support that can offer the services with the required intensity is not achievable via remote/online delivery.

Officers have worked with the current providers and other stakeholders on the Anti-poverty Stakeholder Steering Group to consider a number of ways that the service could be extended to provide borough wide coverage: delivery and storage of food items (perishable and non-perishable) and other essentials in outreach locations with one to one support provided in outreach locations or online; or a contribution towards the cost of transporting service users to Coleraine or Limavady.

All of these accommodations come at significant additional cost, particularly in relation to staff time, suitable delivery vehicles and refrigeration equipment. The learning from the pilot is that, while the food aid is important, the wraparound support offered is at least equally as important and should food shortage form a critical aspect of support needs on a short term basis, clients are still able to access support from foodbanks in Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Coleraine and Limavady. In terms of medium to long term positive impacts, relationships are key to keep participants supported and accountable on their journey. Those clients who don't engage fully with the one to one support are the people that don't always achieve a positive outcome.

The demand for the services of both the current providers exceeds their current capacity and both operate waiting lists, meaning that they are unable to meet the cost and time involved in providing one to one support on an outreach basis in other areas, without significant additional long term funding.

Both Social supermarkets are keen to collaborate and share learning and would be willing to partner with organisations in other areas where there is a gap in coverage if there was another organisation interested and able to deliver a SSM model.

In order to address the gap in provision it is proposed that Council invite expressions of interest from organisations that would be interested in exploring and setting up a social supermarket model to cover the areas where there currently are gaps ie The Glens DEA and lower Ballymoney DEA. Capacity building and seeding support will be provided including expert mentoring in governance, financial planning, policies and procedures, as well as purchase of equipment, training for volunteers and some staffing costs. The organisation/s will be encouraged to aim to achieve DfC criteria/ standards for social supermarkets which includes:

1. the person is experiencing food insecurity;
2. has a low disposable income;

3. that a financial transaction takes place (membership or donation);
4. that it is a time bound intervention;
5. that there is a healthy eating element and
6. wrap around supports are in the form of debt, budgeting, benefits advice, healthy eating, training and employability skills;
7. signposting is provided.

### **Proposed spend of DfC 2023-24 SSMSF**

An amount of £12,000 will be allocated from the DfC funding for a social supermarket capacity building and seeding support programme for those organisation/s that respond to the expression of interest invitation in areas where there isn't currently coverage.

It is proposed that the remainder of the DfC SSMSF monies provided to council this year (£59,073) are allocated to Vineyard Compassion and LCDI to deal with the increased costs of operating and an increase in number of households. Based on the current demand for Vineyard SSM it is estimated that they will support 140 households this year (an increase of 60 from DfC initial target) while LCDI SSM projected equivalent number of households participating is 60. It is recommended that this funding is allocated to Vineyard Compassion, as the DfC recognised and contracted provider through its funded pilot scheme, to work in partnership with the other social Supermarket provider, LCDI. The calculations are as follows:

DfC DIRECT funding for Causeway Coast and Glens - pilot SSM Reset at Vineyard Compassion	£58,331
DfC funding for Causeway Coast and Glens - balance offered to Council	£59,073

Therefore, it is proposed that council funding should be apportioned as follows:

<b>Proposed providers</b>	<b>Allocation of DfC funding to council</b>	<b>DfC direct funding 23/24 to existing pilot</b>
SSM capacity building and seeding support to cover gaps in areas in CCG – invited through EOI	<b>£12,000</b>	

Allocation of funding to Vineyard (due to 70% of current coverage of 2 existing SSM)	<b>£15,452</b>	£58,331 <i>(does not cover additional numbers supported)</i>
Allocation of funding to LCDI (due to 30% of current coverage of 2 existing SSM)	<b>£31,621</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£59,073</b>	£58,331

### Planning ahead for 2024-25

Planning ahead for transfer of DfC funding in full for 2024-25 it is proposed that Council seeks to engage a consortium capable of collectively providing social supermarket coverage across Causeway Coast and Glens in order to promote collaboration, reduce gaps in and avoid duplication of provision. This could include the 2 current providers and any other organisation/s that come forward as a result of the call for expressions of interest for coverage in the gap areas. If approved, Officers will take guidance as to the appropriate procurement process in the form of tender or grant funding, and external independent support may be sought to support the organisations to develop a collaborative approach.

### Recommendation:

That approval is sought for the following:

Provide funding of £47,073 from the DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund to the 2 established Social Supermarkets in CCG (£15,452 to Vineyard Compassion and £31,621 to Limavady Community Development Initiative) respectively to both support the increased costs of operating and an increase in number of households participating in the scheme. The funding to be allocated to Vineyard Compassion as the DfC recognised provider, to work in partnership with LCDI.

- 1) Invite expressions of interest from organisations that might be interested in exploring and setting up a social supermarket model to cover the areas where there currently are gaps ie The Glens DEA and lower Ballymoney DEA. An amount of **£12,000** be allocated from the DfC funding for capacity building and seeding support.
- 2) Seek to engage a consortium capable of collectively providing social supermarket coverage across Causeway Coast and Glens in 2024-25 by preparing a procurement process and supporting interested organisations to develop a collaborative approach.

Councillor Archibald said the work was vital and asked if Council had engaged with interested bodies in an attempt to fill the gaps referred to.

The Head of Community and Culture advised that this was being progressed through the Anti-Poverty Working Group utilising existing services providing fuel and food assistance in conjunction with St Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army,

Social Supermarkets and a plethora of other providers. The Head of Community and Culture advised that a study by Ulster University had determined, that while foodbanks existed, there was no infrastructure in rural areas to deliver a wraparound service to deal with the root of the problem and a seek a longer term solution. The Head of Community and Culture advised that Council act as a support and mentor in relation to these projects.

Proposed by Councillor Wisener  
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

**AGREED** - to recommend to Council that approval is sought for the following:

Provide funding of £47,073 from the DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund to the 2 established Social Supermarkets in CCG (£15,452 to Vineyard Compassion and £31,621 to Limavady Community Development Initiative) respectively to both support the increased costs of operating and an increase in number of households participating in the scheme. The funding to be allocated to Vineyard Compassion as the DfC recognised provider, to work in partnership with LCDI.

1. Invite expressions of interest from organisations that might be interested in exploring and setting up a social supermarket model to cover the areas where there currently are gaps ie The Glens DEA and lower Ballymoney DEA. An amount of £12,000 be allocated from the DfC funding for capacity building and seeding support.
2. Seek to engage a consortium capable of collectively providing social supermarket coverage across Causeway Coast and Glens in 2024-25 by preparing a procurement process and supporting interested organisations to develop a collaborative approach.

## **11. COUNCIL MEMORIAL POLICY**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

### **Purpose of the report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the draft Council Memorials Policy for consideration, and approval to move to formal consultation including an Equality Impact Assessment including any mitigations that may arise.

That following the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment, the final draft be brought back to council for consideration and approval.

### **Project Background**

Memorialisation's and commemorations take many forms. They can be personal as well as political and can be anything from murals, structures, gardens, plaques to church services, walks, parades, silences to name but a few.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council does not currently have a Memorial Policy. This has created a lack of clarity for Council and staff when considering

memorials and commemorations of any kind. Council does have other policies where a new policy may have impact and these policies should also be taken into consideration e.g Environmental Services have an Open Spaces Memorial policy which deals with requests such as memorial benches, trees, etc., on Council land/cemeteries.

The consultation undertaken as part of the Coleraine Bomb memorial project presented a recommendation that council give consideration to the development of a policy for implementation when considering memorials and commemorations. The report stated that *“future policy environment around memorials should be considered and Council should reflect upon any Section 75 implications that could arise as a result of engaging with memorialisation and commemoration more broadly. Furthermore, advice and guidance should be sought from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, in order to ensure that any Council initiative would be Section 75 compliant”*.

In April 2021, council agreed to implement the recommendations contained within the report, including development of relevant memorial policy for council.

Subsequently officers, with the support of the Junction, undertook research and consultation with key stakeholders to inform the development and production a policy framework to be used within council when considering memorialisation and commemoration.

#### **The process adopted:**

Desk research was completed to identify any existing internal council policies which a new policy may have impacts upon, legislation and any other existing policies (or developmental work) on memorialisation and commemorations, including how they have been implemented in other Council and / or regional areas throughout Northern Ireland. This included seeking advice and guidance from the Equality Commission and any other relevant bodies.

Engagement/initial consultation was completed to ensure relevant stakeholders were consulted in terms of legislative and policy expertise, impact on services and political perspectives from council. This included relevant council departments, senior management, Elected Members (via workshop), other councils (to establish the existence of similar policies), key institutions such as the Equality Commission and academic/research expertise. Consultees included:

- Equality Commission (NI).
- NI Human Rights Commission, (Legal, Research and Investigations, and Advice to Government).
- Community Relations Council.
- Prof. Dominic Bryan Anthropology, Fellow of the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice, School of History, Anthropology, Politics and Philosophy |Queen’s University Belfast. Dominic Bryan is on the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition, set up through Stormont as part of their remit to address legacy related issues. The paper to inform local Councils has not yet been published.

- Chris Reynolds, Professor of Contemporary European History and Memory Studies, School of Arts and Humanities, The Nottingham Trent University. Chris is the founder of Transnational Perspectives of 1968 and has been working closely with agencies across NI on Remembering and Commemoration.
- Commission for the Administration of Justice.
- 10 other Councils within Northern Ireland.
- A facilitated councillor workshop delivered to ensure that consultation with elected representatives was carried out in such a way as to warrant confidence, legitimacy and a consensus in how the final policy framework can be implemented.
- Consultation meetings with council's senior leadership team and workshops were facilitated for relevant council departments/staff.

Due to the significant time/effort in the completion of all the stages in the Coleraine Bomb memorial, which had been sensitive and complex, and the need to review this approach against the proposed policy, the draft was completed in August of this year.

A policy framework for considering memorials and commemorations has now been completed in draft form, subject to EQIA. The purpose of the policy / framework aims to provide elected members, council staff and the broader public with clarity, guidance relating to memorialisation and commemoration, with a view that moving forward there would be consistency surrounding advice, information, public engagement and general decision-making on what can be at times, sensitive subject matters.

In the development of this draft policy, staff have followed the council policy development process. The flowchart is attached in Annex A, previously circulated.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

In relation to EQIA's, The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland states in its guidance:

*'Where screening would not be an adequate means of gathering the information that is needed to assess the relevant equality impacts or opportunities, the public authority should proceed to do an EQIA'*

Additionally, the Commission advises that an EQIA is likely to be necessary:

- Where the policy is highly relevant to the promotion of equality of opportunity
- Where it affects fewer people but where its impact on them is likely to be significant.
- Where it is a strategic policy or has a significant budget attached and
- Where further assessment provides a valuable opportunity to examine evidence and develop recommendations.



The development of this particular policy has been complex in terms of the breadth and nature of memorials and other forms of commemorations, some of which in the Northern Ireland context, can be particularly sensitive.

Consideration had been given in the development of the draft policy framework regarding good relations issues and community impact when exploring issues of memorialisation and remembering. It is recognised that there may be political sensitivities and challenges around the issues of memorialisation and as such, progression to full EQIA will assist council in agreeing a policy that has fully considered and mitigated against any significant impacts on any of the Section 75 groupings.

### **Draft Memorials Policy**

The draft Policy Framework, as contained in Annex B, previously circulated, sets out principles of good practice in the management and decision-making of memorials/installations that fall within the remit of the Council. These principles are put in place to safeguard the interests of Elected Members, Council Officers and the wider constituency it serves.

In the context of the proposed policy, public memorials include monuments, statues, markers, or other landscape features that honour significant historical figures or events.

The purpose of the policy is to provide an overview of the Council's principles and conditions regarding memorials, together with a framework and set of criteria to be applied in the assessment of all applications made to Council.

The guiding principles set out in the policy framework are designed to assist Council Officers and Elected Members to ensure informed, transparent, and fair decision making, and a framework and criteria applicable to requests of this nature, taking into account the responsibilities of Council and of those making the request (applicant).

The policy framework also takes into account existing policies already in place that deal with other particular forms of personal commemorative practice such as the Guidelines and Procedure for Open Spaces Memorial Provision ie benches, trees, personal remembrance etc (Environmental Services Estates Department), in Council owned open spaces. No changes or amendments have been made to existing policies however they will be included in the overall policy as an appendix and there is no change to their current application process.

As an alternative to a public structural memorial, the policy also makes provision for Council to consider requests for a public commemorative name; in the form of naming or renaming of premises, buildings, rooms, council owned halls or centres. This could be considered a cost-effective method for supporting a public memorial.

The policy sets out the details of who can make an application and the process for a range of requests as follows:

- a) Support to fund the erection of a public memorial on Council property by a third party.

- b) Support to third parties to utilise council land to erect/site a public memorial.
- c) Support to fund a public memorial in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area on land not in Council's ownership.
- d) Request for Council to lead on and fund a public memorial.
- e) Request for a public commemorative name (change) on a property owned by council.
- f) Request for a Private Memorial Tree dedicated to a loved one.

Application form/s and assessment matrix have also been developed to ensure the process is straightforward and transparent. All relevant documents are contained within the draft Policy framework (Annex B, previously circulated) as appendices.

A proposed timescale for processing requests is also included within the policy to provide clear indication of how long it may take for a decision to be returned to those applying.

### **Next Steps**

- a) Final draft policy will be provided to council for consideration and, if necessary, any amendments.
- b) Draft policy will be released for public consultation for a period of 12 weeks, including the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA).
- c) Findings from the public consultation including recommendations arising as a result of the EQIA, will be presented to council with suggested adaptations/mitigations to the policy for adoption. Any changes to the Rural Impact Assessment will also be considered at this point.
- d) Implementation of policy.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that council:

Approves the memorials policy in principle as presented with the report, subject to the outcome of an Equality Impact Assessment including any mitigations that may arise.

That following the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment, the final draft be brought back to council for consideration and approval.

Councillor McShane said she welcomed the recommendation.

Proposed by Councillor McShane  
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

### **AGREED** – to recommend that Council:-

Approves the memorials policy in principle as presented with the report, subject to the outcome of an Equality Impact Assessment including any mitigations that may arise:

That following the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment, the final draft be brought back to council for consideration and approval.

## 12. ASYLUM SEEKERS SUPPORT SERVICES

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to allocate funds for the provision of essential services as part of Council's Asylum Seeker and Refugee Plan.

### **Background**

In June 2023, Council received and approved the Asylum & Refugee plan which allocated a total sum of £162,095 from TEO sponsored by The Home Office. This funding was allocated to Council for; Research and development of local action plan, Staff resource costs for the co-ordination and overseeing the delivery of the action plan and programme costs for the development and provision of resources to support activities and services to aid integration.

The aim of the funding is to provide support and signpost users to access key information and relevant services applicable to their asylum seeker status. The funding bid also included support to establish and/or build upon the necessary networks and infrastructure for integrating asylum seekers following full dispersal. In order to support the implementation of the cross sectoral plan, an inter-agency working group has been established to deliver actions using a community planning approach.

### **Proposal**

As the needs of those seeking asylum emerge, the issue of access to support has become more evident, including mental wellbeing and counselling services, volunteering, access to clothing and food banks, transport to access services, befriending, including appointments to progress asylum applications, and other inclusion opportunities.

Local infrastructure has not been available to specifically provide direct wrap around support to Asylum Seekers, however Vineyard Compassion do have the support structures in place, have been identified as the sole provider of services in the triangle area and are providing these services through the anti-poverty network for those who are most in need, albeit there *are* additional specific needs which need to be taken into account for asylum seekers.

In response to this gap in provision, and increased demand on existing wrap around services, Vineyard have recently employed a Welcome Co-ordinator for new arrivals to the CCGBC area. The Welcome Co-ordinator will visit the accommodations which house both individuals and families in Portrush, Portstewart and Coleraine on a regular basis to provide information on local support and services to new arrivals, while providing access to their direct provision such as welcome activities, befriending, counselling, food and clothing banks to name but a few.

Council's Asylum Seeker & Refugee plan has identified the following relevant key actions, including:

- Welcome, information and networks.
- Cultural Awareness.
- Health and Wellbeing.

In response to these needs, officers would recommend the following essential support services be provided by Vineyard to assist delivery of the local plan:

- Access to and provision of essential basic items of new clothing and food via their food and clothing bank;
- Travel cards to attend solicitor appointments in Belfast;
- Volunteering opportunities at Vineyard;
- Access to computer suite and internet for digital inclusion;
- One-to-one counselling and trauma based group sessions.

There are currently over 100 individuals residing in the triangle area with spaces for 50+ additional individuals. As existing residents are moved to dispersal accommodation outside of the borough, these are replaced with new individuals, therefore provision of support for up to 200 clients has been costed.

The project is funded at 100% from the Home Office/TEO with no additional cost to council and is costed at £14,000.

### **Recommendation**

Provide funding of £14,000 to Vineyard Compassion for the provision of support services to Asylum Seekers placed in the Borough as outlined within the report.

Alderman Stewart spoke of cultural sensitivity and difficulties for families travelling to schools and nurseries as well as some of the language barriers encountered by teachers around communicating.

The Head of Community and Culture said this had been a topic of discussion between statutory bodies including the Education Authority, Libraries and Health Trust and support was being provided to schools, where applicable.

Alderman McAuley enquired why there was no legal support in the triangle area to avoid people having to be given travel cards to be provided with legal advice in Belfast.

The Head of Community and Culture advised that local legal firms had declined the opportunity and it had explored the option of Solicitors travelling to Causeway Coast and Glens Council, but there was no uptake.

Councillor Schenning asked how assistance to asylum seekers was being monitored in terms of adherence to their religious beliefs and spoke of the opportunities they could avail of which were hindered by lack of transport.

The Head of Community and Culture said that churches from all organisations with a Christian ethos were supporting people by providing bespoke services including the provision of accommodation, clothing and counselling. The Head of Community and Culture said the Vineyard counselling was via accredited bodies

and signed off by British Counselling service, was quality assured and are required to report monthly to the Working Group.

The Head of Community and Culture acknowledged that travel was an issue, that bus travel was particularly expensive, even for short journeys.

Proposed by Alderman Stewart  
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council provide funding of £14,000 to Vineyard Compassion for the provision of support services to Asylum Seekers placed in the Borough, as outlined within the report.

### **13. PCSP ANNUAL REPORT**

For information report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

#### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to present the PCSP Annual Report 2022-23 for committee's information.

#### **Background**

Under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, a Joint Committee was established to oversee the work of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships. It consists of representatives of the Department of Justice and Northern Ireland Policing Board. The committee provides strategic direction to PCSPs.

As per legislative requirement, all PCSPs must submit an Annual Report to the Joint Committee not later than 3 months after the end of the financial year i.e. by 01 July each year and submit the report to Council for information.

The report covers both the work of the Policing Committee and the wider PCSP and must contain specific information as to how the PCSP has carried out its functions on engagement and enhancing community safety.

This report contains general information on the exercise of functions, both in terms of policing and community safety.

Members are asked to note the PCSP Annual Report 2022-23 attached at Annex A (circulated) for information.

Committee NOTED the report.

### **14. GOOD RELATIONS PROGRAMME FUNDING**

For information report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

#### **Purpose of Report**

To inform members of the funding cuts being imposed by The Executive Office on the District Council Good Relations Programme for 2023 to 2024 and implications to Council's Business Plan for 23/24 period.

## Background/Context

Good Relations was first introduced into law by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which requires public authorities to comply with two related yet independent statutory duties. These duties were intended to change the practices of government and public authorities so that equality of opportunity and good relations are central to policy making and service delivery.

The Equality of Opportunity Duty can be found in Section 75(1) of the Act, requiring public authorities in carrying out their functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between a total of nine equality categories. The Good Relations Duty in Section 75(2) states;

*‘Without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. This duty requires that public authorities must be proactive in contributing towards a shared society.*

As such, The Executive Office has provided local Councils with funding via the District Council Good Relations Programme to assist in implementing their Good Relations Duty since the Good Friday agreement.

The overall annual contribution from the Executive Office to the Council’s Good Relations programme has been £174,452.51. Of this amount the salary contribution has been £106,084.30 and the contribution to programme costs has been £68,368. The total costs allocated in 2022/23 were as follows: Programme costs £90,000. Salary and admin costs £157,480.34. Total costs £247,480 with a total net cost to council of £73,027.

In 2023/24 council submitted the annual action plan to The Executive Office reflecting the costs allocated to council in the previous years *requesting a total amount of £174,452,51 from TEO*. Council’s net 23/24 budget is £83,519 towards staff and programme costs.

On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023, Council received notification via an EQIA consultation that the Executive’s grant towards the District Council Good Relations programme would be reduced by 47% across all councils for the 23/24 period. The rationale provided was that councils were in a better position than arm’s length bodies to absorb such cuts into their own budgets.

Officers have significant reservations regarding the impacts these cuts will have on the progress made on good relations issues locally, the knock-on effects on local community efforts and adverse impacts on Section 75 groups. Council submitted a response to the EQIA prior to the first deadline of 7th June for initial responses, attached in Annex A, previously circulated, for reference. The Head of Service subsequently met with NIEO management to reaffirm concerns and to reiterate the financial pressures are not confined to the third sector and that councils also face significant financial challenges across Northern Ireland.

Council received the annual Letter of Offer on 7<sup>th</sup> July which states that TEO contribution to Causeway Coast and Glens Good Relations Programme will be £92,459.83 towards salary and programme costs.

As per the 2023/24 business plan for Good Relations, the total (gross) costs are £252,275. Council contribution was agreed as £83,519. This is an increase in last year council contribution which is to cover the agreed pay increment and back pay. With the reduction in TEO contribution, this currently means a shortfall of £74,296.17 (programming and staff) for the delivery of the Good Relations programme as submitted to TEO.

### Impact / Risks

	Action	Outcome	Impact
EQIA response	Council has submitted a response to the EQIA reflecting the negative impact on both the Equality and Good Relations as a result of cuts to the DCGRP.	The final EQIA report has been published by TEO however no changes to the allocation of funding was made. The report states the negative impact on the DCGRP and says that should further funding become available, the DCGRP will be prioritised.	The EQIA report shows no change to the position on 47% cuts to the District Council Good Relations Programme. If further money becomes available at a later stage, with limited time to spend, the GR impact is still negative on local communities as meaningful GR work requires time to engage with local communities to build positive relationships.
GR Action Plan	Prioritise actions within the plan to reflect the reduction in programme costs which will decrease by 47% from £90,000 to £47,700.  <i>Annex B provides a the revised prioritisation of projects based on</i>	Continue regular liaison/ communications with TEO to highlight any issues that arise and the impact of lose of funding via cuts  Provide council with briefing papers and funding options for 24/25	This places the GR programme in a negative position where meaningful GR work and engagement may be negatively impacted because of significant reduction in funding. This will have a knock-on effect on local communities who avail of / or are supported through the Council's Good

	<i>the most pressing priorities and those projects which provide maximum impact</i>		relations Programme as well as having a negative impact on some section 75 groups.
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### **Mitigations**

Due to the significant reductions in funding to the District Council Good Relations Programme, a number of projects have been removed from the Good Relations Action Plan for 2023/24 to reflect the 47% reduction in programme costs (from £90,000 to £47,700).

*Annex B, previously circulated, provides detail of planned projects and those 'on hold' based on the most pressing priorities and projects which provide maximum Good Relations impact.*

There still remains, at this time, a deficit of £34,000 towards staffing costs, however, staff continue to work at full capacity, in part due to delivering aspects of the asylum seekers programme funded through the Home Office for the 2023/24 period. As such a percentage of management /delivery costs can be utilised for staffing costs to help mitigate reduction in budget for staff, potentially reducing the staffing deficit to circa £20,000.

Moving forward, should the current budget deficits remain, an options report will be provided to council in terms of how to proceed in the 24/25 financial year.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the report is noted and that officers will provide updates regarding any funding agreements and considerations for council moving forward.

Committee NOTED the report.

### **15. GROWTH DEAL EXECUTIVE PROGRAMME BOARD MINUTES**

Minutes, previously circulated, presented as read.

Committee NOTED the report.

### **16. LEISURE FACILITIES PROJECT BOARD MINUTES**

Minutes, previously circulated, presented as read.

Committee NOTED the report.

### **17. CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of Correspondence.



## 18. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to Partnership Panel.

## 19. CONSULTATIONS

There were no Consultations

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

Proposed by Alderman Scott  
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

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

- \* **Public and Press were disconnected from the meeting at 7.55 pm.**

*The information contained in the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.*

- \* **Councillor Bateson left the meeting remotely at 8.00 pm.**

## 20. LD FINANCIAL POSITION P4

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report to provide Members with a financial summary of the 2023/24 in-year position at Period 4.

### **Background**

Council has approved the annual budget for Leisure and Development and delegated authority to officers to utilise this budget in the provision of services to the rate payers. The L&D budget for 2023/24 is £13,248,062 (\*this includes estates transfer of £1,351,637 not included below). The net budget is a calculation of the forecast:

- Gross Expenditure of £22.301m.
- Gross Income of £9.053m.

Table 1, Illustrates a P4 Net Position of £1,310,088, which is favourable by £568,436.

The service area financial positions are also shown in Table 1, previously circulated.

The following information was circulated within the confidential report:

Income and Expenditure:

- Salaries and Wages.

- Energy and Utilities.
- Repairs and Maintenance.
- Supplies and Services
- Customer & Client Receipts

Income Opportunities / Cost Reduction Measures

The Director of Leisure and Development provided commentary on the report.

## **21. BENONE HOLIDAY AND LEISURE PARK STRATEGIC OUTLINE CASE**

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to update Elected Members on the work completed to date, to assess options for the future development of Benone Holiday and Leisure Park Complex.

### **Background**

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has commissioned Cogent Management Consulting to complete a strategic outline case relating to the future of Benone Holiday and Leisure Park Complex. This is part of a planned review of the Council's Holiday and Leisure Park portfolio over the next number of years to identify the future planning and investment requirements, and Benone has been prioritised for initial assessment. The primary reason for this prioritisation is due to the Park operating in a deficit position.

### **Benone Holiday and Leisure Park Complex**

CCGBC owns and manages six holiday and leisure parks (HALPs) and one Aire de Service facility for motorhomes;

Benone Holiday and Leisure Park is situated approximately 11 miles from Coleraine and 12 miles from Limavady, and is within an Area of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Area of Conservation and the Binevenagh Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is located adjacent to Benone Strand Blue Flag Beach.

Benone opens on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April and closes on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September. It then re-opens from 23<sup>rd</sup> of October until the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. It has received 4-star accreditation through the Graded Holiday Parks Scheme. Its accommodation facilities include:

- 95 touring pitches with electric, 33 of which are 'super pitches';
- Six glamping lodges;
- Four camping pitches with electric hook-up;
- "Waves Bistro", which offers food and beverages;

- The Benone Centre offers local visitor information and stocks a range of local tourism literature and a variety of Morelli's ice-creams and beach accessories;
- A 9-hole par three golf course, driving range, crazy golf and a putting green;
- Onsite shower and toilet block;
- Laundry facilities for washing and drying;
- Cooking/ BBQ facilities;
- Tennis courts;
- Outdoor activities area;
- Indoor games room;
- Events in July and August; and
- Outdoor heated splash pools.

During 2022, Benone received 3,361 bookings. The majority (89%) of bookings are derived from UK-based customers.

### **Key Outputs of Strategic Outline Case (SOC)**

The completion of the SOC will provide Elected Members, Management and key Stakeholders with a good understanding of the robustness of proposals, making the case for change and exploring the preferred way forward.

Benone Holiday Complex Strategic Outline Case is attached for information at Annex A, previously circulated, and covers the following:

- Introduction and Background
- Strategic Case
- Economic Case
- Commercial Case
- Financial Case
- Management Case

The SOC identifies a number of options for achieving business needs, potential scope and service requirements . These are:

- Close the facility.
- Business as Usual – Essentially maintain the Status Quo position. Likely to continue to make losses (perhaps increasingly so) on an annual basis;
- A Council-financed capital project to bring the facilities up to modern, commercially viable standard, maximise revenue income and reduce operational cost to a minimum (perhaps through the introduction of static caravan provision, but considerable cost anticipated). Considered to be difficult to achieve in the near-medium term given restrictions on Council's capital budget.
- Release the site to the open market under a 'development brief', limiting future use to tourism related (albeit planning policy and environmental designations may influence this to a great extent in any circumstance);
- Release the site to the open market through disposal.

The SOC makes the recommendation that at this stage the preferred way forward is to release the site to the open market via a development brief.

The primary purpose of the Development Brief is to transfer the risk and liabilities of this under performing Council operated facility via a development opportunity. In doing so return the site to viable and sustainable economic use with an appropriate tourism / leisure redevelopment scheme in accordance with the Area Plan and that supports job creation and economic development within a satisfactory timeframe.

### **Next Steps**

Subject to Elected Members approval, Officers would like to enter into wider engagement with key stakeholders and the public, to determine views and ensure proper consultation and feedback, that can be fed into the Council's decision-making process.

### **Recommendation**

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to approve the findings of the Benone Holiday and Leisure complex SOC and to advance to stakeholder consultation.

The Director of Leisure and Development gave a definition of a 'Development Brief' and spoke of the legacy arrangement regarding this facility as well as providing an overview of the options available to Elected Members. The Director of Leisure and Development also explained the rationale for proposing a public consultation.

Alderman Callan said that he welcomed this matter being brought for consideration which required key investment and Alderman Scott referred to the high running costs incurred of this facility.

Proposed by Alderman Scott  
Seconded by Councillor Stirling and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council approve the findings of the Benone Holiday and Leisure complex SOC and to advance to stakeholder consultation.

## **22. HOLIDAY AND LEISURE PARKS LAUNDRY EQUIPMENT**

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development in the absence of the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek Elected Members' approval to appoint the preferred supplier for the provision of laundry equipment for the Council's Holiday and Leisure Parks.

### **Background**

At Council's Leisure and Development Committee Meeting in December 2021 approval was given to proceed with the procurement process to replace aging laundry equipment at the Council's Holiday and Leisure Parks. The Council operates six Holiday and Leisure Parks and the demand for usage across the

Parks varies with Carrick Dhu, Juniper Hill and Benone receiving the greatest footfall. Therefore, prioritisation for the replacement of aging equipment has been allocated to the above three Parks.

### **Project Details**

With the heavy usage, particularly at the three sites mentioned above, Officers from the Holiday and Leisure Parks remit, and Council's Estates Team have sought specifications that provide replacement machines that meet the minimum requirements for commercial/professional equipment.

### **Specification**

Table 1, previously circulated, details the individual site requirements for washing machines, dryers and central payment systems. Annex A, previously circulated, provides full details of the Terms of Reference including the specification for each piece of equipment.

Whilst 3 Parks have been prioritised for initial investment, Officers plan to integrate a payment system in due course across all the Parks and when required new washing and dryer facilities will be procured as per the specification issued in this tender process.

**Tender Process was circulated within the confidential report.**

### **Next Steps**

Subject to Council approval, Council's Holiday and Leisure Parks team will proceed with the appointment of CE Tech (the preferred tender) for the provision and installation of commercial/professional laundry equipment at Carrick Dhu, Juniper Hill and Benone Holiday and Leisure Parks.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council the appointment of CE Tech to provide the laundry equipment as specified within the Terms of Reference (Annex A) for the following Parks, Carrick Dhu, Juniper Hill and Benone. An investment decision of £162,240 ex VAT is required which has been budgeted for within the Capital reserve allocated for HALPs.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Alderman Stewart and

**AGREED** – to recommend to Council the appointment of CE Tech to provide the laundry equipment as specified within the Terms of Reference (Annex A, previously circulated) for the following Parks, Carrick Dhu, Juniper Hill and Benone. An investment decision of £162,240 ex VAT is required which has been budgeted for within the Capital reserve allocated for HALPs.

## 23. GROWTH DEAL

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the paper is to request Members approval of Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case prepared for the Growth Deal projects and the resultant list of 8 prioritised projects; and agree the formal submission of the associated Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case to government for approval and consideration within the Heads of Terms, which are to be agreed with Council by March 2024.

At this early stage of the process, Members are also asked to approve the revised budget allocations to each of the projects and an indicative Council capital contribution of c.£5m to the overall Growth Deal over the next 5 years subject to affordability.

Members will note that unallocated funds of c.£9m will be brought to the Growth Deal Executive Programme Board ahead of the next Leisure & Development Committee meeting for decision.

### **Background to the Growth Deal Programme**

Causeway Coast and Glens is set to receive £72m capital funding for a Growth Deal after the NI Executive agreed to match fund the UK Government's Growth Deal allocation of £36m. The UK Government's Growth Deal capital funding will be used to support digital and innovation projects. The NI Executive investment of £36m will focus additional funding on supporting infrastructure, tourism, and regeneration along with employability and skills.

In line with Growth Deal criteria, it is critical that Council prioritise key catalyst projects over the next 5-10 years to help shape and grow our local economy. Growth Deals are models of economic growth which provide regions with the opportunity to:

- Take charge and responsibility of decisions that affect their area.
- Do what they think is best to help businesses grow.
- Identify priorities for economic growth in the region.
- Decide how funding should be spent to meet those priorities.

The City & Growth Deal process is designed to promote longer term economic growth. Whilst Council is the Deal owner and decide at a local level which projects can proceed within the budget available it is not the final investment decision maker. Ultimately both governments and the nominated lead Departments will approve budget allocations subject to the robust business case review process (contained in Annex A, previously circulated):

Council is currently approaching Step 4. Approval of Strategic Outline Cases. As projects progress from Head of Terms towards the Deal Document the level of flexibility to make project changes reduces. Up until the Deal Document is signed, projects must progress in parallel. After this point, projects can disconnect and move through procurement, Full Business Case and delivery at different paces suited to the requirements of each project.

### **Council Decisions to date**

In October 2020, following approval from Council, Grant Thornton was engaged to independently assess the long list of Growth Deal projects proposed by the Growth Deal Sub-Committee. Grant Thornton developed a scoring criterion in line with Growth Deal criteria: strategic alignment, project impact and state of readiness which was approved by Council in January 2021.

In May 2021, Council ratified six key themes and 14 projects at a total indicative cost of £157m to be taken forward by way of Strategic Outline Cases.

In October 2021, Members asked Officers to undertake a further 'risk and state of readiness assessment' to reduce project numbers to better meet the available budget (£72m + 10% = c.£80m).

In December 2021, Council approved a Growth Deal Governance Framework. These governance arrangements established a Growth Deal Executive Programme Board and Programme Management Office which enabled initial decisions relating to the development of the SOCs to be taken, including the appointment of Business Case Call-Off Contract List.

In March 2022, Council approved the PMO's recommendation that 10 projects progress to Strategic Outline Case (including one at Outline Business Case). The six key themes were further rationalised across three themes: Digital & Innovation (3 projects), Tourism & Regeneration (5 projects) and Infrastructure (2 projects). The initial budget allocation at this stage was previously circulated.

It is noted that the initial capital estimates were very high level / not based on any technical assessment and prepared prior to unprecedented construction inflation in 2021-22. The above budget was balanced on the basis of £72m Growth Deal and matching 10% capital contribution from project promoters and additional DfI Greenway funding bids at 50% of project costs.

In March 2023, Council approved the cessation of the OBC for Ballycastle to Ballymoney Greenway and it was removed from the Growth Deal leaving only Portrush to Bushmills Greenway for exploration at SOC.

### **Strategic Outline Cases**

Over the past year, SOCs have been developed and independently appraised by Council's appointed business case consultants and associated technical teams. The SOCs comply with DoF's Better Business Cases NI ('Five Case Model') and HMT Green Book Guidelines and the original Specification tendered for the Call-off Contract (included as Appendix II, previously circulated).

The SOC's have involved extensive research and analysis in support of the need and demand for each project alongside key stakeholder engagement and community consultation (where applicable).

Furthermore, each SOC has included ongoing engagement with lead government Departments, formal workshops during business case development (where applicable) and informal feedback on early draft reports.

This work culminated in the presentation of key findings and recommendations to the Growth Deal Executive Programme Board on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The final draft SOC reports are available in the Members Library and will be subject to minor amendment based on informal feedback.

A project overview, spending objectives and description of the 'Preferred Way Forward' from each of the SOC's was summarised in the table previously circulated.

### **Budget Allocation**

The budget allocations have been updated to reflect the SOC estimates which have been prepared by the business case consultants and associated technical teams. All capital costs include construction costs, professional fees, risk allowances, optimism bias and inflationary uplifts to the estimated mid-point of construction (future proofed at this early stage).

The completed SOC's have identified a preferred way forward for 8 prioritised projects and resulted in significant changes to the project budget allocations with the following PMO recommendations for the proposed projects:

- (i) Agree priority projects for submission to Government:
  - 1. Centre for Drug Discovery & Pharmaceutical Innovation (SOC)
  - 2. Business Innovation & Incubation Hub (SOC)
  - 3. Bushmills Regeneration (SOC)
  - 4. Dungiven Regeneration (SOC)
  - 5. Glens of Antrim Co-Worker Hub, Cushendall (OBC)
  - 6. Connected Causeway Traffic & Parking (SOC)
  - 7. Portrush to Bushmills Greenway (SOC)
  
- (ii) Agree retention of indicative budget for priority project element where proof of need and sustainability to be further evaluated:
  - 8. Food Innovation & Incubation Hub (North West Regional College - Limavady Campus business plan and OBC to be developed at next stage of Growth Deal)
  
- (iii) Agree where some project elements can be combined with other projects and progressed:



8. Food Innovation & Incubation Hub elements within Business Innovation & Incubation Hub (2. above)
9. Dunluce Castle elements within Connected Causeway Traffic & Parking (6. above)

(iv) Agree projects to be removed from Growth Deal:

10. Mountsandel Development

The impact of these proposed recommendations is highlighted within the table, previously circulated. The updated budget position results in unallocated Growth Deal funding of c.£9m (NI Executive).

### **Recommendations**

Following presentation to the Executive Programme Board on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023, Members are asked to approve the Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case prepared for the Growth Deal projects and the resultant list of 8 prioritised projects (detailed within Section 4.2); and agree the formal submission of the associated Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case to government for approval and consideration within the Heads of Terms which are to be agreed with Council by March 2024.

At this early stage of the process, Members are also asked to approve the budget allocations to each of the projects (table within Section 4.3) and an indicative Council capital contribution to the overall Growth Deal of c.£5m over the next 5 years subject to affordability.

Members will note that unallocated funds of c.£9m will be brought to the Growth Deal Executive Programme Board ahead of the next Leisure & Development Committee meeting for decision

The Head of Prosperity and Place said he wished to acknowledge the work of the SIB Project Officers and the Director of Leisure and Development for their assistance regarding the Growth Deal.

Councillor N Archibald expressed disappointed that Mountsandel had been removed from the Growth Deal, that this project could enhance the tourism offering to the area and spoke of its significance.

The Director of Leisure and Development explained this project did not meet the criteria and expectations of the Growth Deal funding but would remain on the Capital Programme. The Director of Leisure and Development said that funding opportunities would continue to be explored alongside the Heritage and Discovery Group, Ulster University and Statutory Agencies with Terms of Reference specific to this project developed by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed the Head of Tourism and Recreation would provide an update to Councillor N Archibald regarding the Mountsandel Project.

Councillor Schenning sought clarity on the financial element and deliverability of the Business Innovation and Incubation Hub.

The Director of Leisure and Development invited SIB Project Officer, N Harkness to respond to Councillor Schenning.

SIB Project Officer (N Harkness) said that it had become apparent the North West Regional College does not have the legal authority to own business incubation units and with college agreement, this element was removed and included with general incubation hub.

SIB Project Officer (N Harkness) stated wetland space, which is lacking in Northern Ireland, and food grade units, will be housed at the business incubation unit at the Enterprise Zone in Coleraine and will have the potential to create capital build and enhance affordability and management operation efficiency. The other two elements of this were shared kitchen space and support for businesses.

SIB Project Officer (N Harkness) stated that in relation to the food innovation, an indicative amount of circa £2m is to be retained to create a similar food innovation at North West Regional College in Limavady to create a similar to that already in place in Londonderry. He advised responsibility for writing of the business case to OBC standards will sit with North West Regional College.

In conclusion, SIB Project Officer (N Harkness) said this project will create some efficiencies and will attract business which will result in full occupancy and a management agent will be sought to manage and take on financial risk in advance of going to the open market.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Councillor McCully and

**AGREED** – to recommend to Council following presentation to the Executive Programme Board on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023, Members are asked to approve the Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case prepared for the Growth Deal projects and the resultant list of 8 prioritised projects (detailed within Section 4.2); and agree the formal submission of the associated Strategic Outline Cases/Outline Business Case to government for approval and consideration within the Heads of Terms which are to be agreed with Council by March 2024.

At this early stage of the process, Members are also asked to approve the budget allocations to each of the projects (table within Section 4.3) and an indicative Council capital contribution to the overall Growth Deal of c.£5m over the next 5 years subject to affordability.

Members will note that unallocated funds of c.£9m will be brought to the Growth Deal Executive Programme Board ahead of the next Leisure & Development Committee meeting for decision.

## **24. ENTERPRISE FUND APPEALS**

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to update Members on successful appeals to Enterprise Fund 2023.

### **Background**

The Enterprise Fund seeks to help young businesses, under two years old, who need assistance in taking the next step in their growth plan. The funding is to address barriers to growth via innovative approaches.

In 2023, Enterprise Fund was open to businesses and Social Enterprises in all sectors but particularly welcomed applications from the following local sectors of priority:

- Advanced Manufacturing, Materials & Engineering.
- Construction.
- Financial, Business & Professional Services.
- Retail.
- Tourism & Hospitality.
- Agri-Food.
- Sustainable Energy

Grants of up to £5,000 were available.

This grant opened on Monday 3rd April 2023 and closed at noon on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023, with expenditure to be completed and claimed by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

### **Members are reminded:**

- Of the 44 applications received at closing, 16 were deemed ineligible – reasons included trading over 2 years, previous Enterprise Fund recipient, not actively trading commercially and failure to supply a business plan or bank statement.
- 28 progressed to assessment and scoring.
- 16 applications scored above the 65% threshold for funding.
- 12 applications did not score above the 65% threshold and were therefore unsuccessful.

Enterprise Fund 2023 award decisions were subsequently ratified by Council on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

## Appeals

A total of 4 appeals were submitted as follows:

- 3 applicants appealed an eligibility decision.
- 1 applicant appealed a scoring decision.

An independent appeals panel was convened on 28<sup>th</sup> July to consider all appeals received and outcomes were as follows:

- The appeal submitted on scoring decision was unsuccessful and outcome remains unchanged.
- Of the 3 appeals on eligibility decisions, 2 were successful and both these applications were subsequently scored and achieved a score above the 65% threshold.

This outcome results in an award of £5,000 to each of the 2 businesses, details previously circulated.

## Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council to award additional funding to 2 businesses as outlined in Table 1 totalling £10,000, under the auspices of the Enterprise Fund 2023.

Further information in respect of this grant is attached – See Annex A, previously circulated.

- \* **Councillor Holmes joined the meeting in the Chamber at 8.40 pm, having previously attended remotely.**

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Alderman Scott and

**AGREED** - to recommend that Council award additional funding to 2 businesses as outlined totalling £10,000, under the auspices of the Enterprise Fund 2023.

## 25. BUSINESS SEED FUND AND MENTORING PROGRAMME

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the outcome of the procurement process to appoint a delivery agent for the Labour Market Partnership Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund.

### Background

Action 27 of the Causeway Community Plan aims to:

*‘Support the development of the Labour Market Partnership - supporting educational and skills initiatives within the Causeway Coast and Glens area to match current and future business needs.’*

The 2023/24 Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan was approved by Council on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023. It aims to address the employability needs of Causeway Coast and Glens (CC&G) Borough Council area, also building on the achievements of the previous year's action plan.

The following 3 strategic priorities and programmes have been identified within the LMP Action Plan and are consistent with the labour market activation proposals in the Borough's economic development strategy.

- **Strategic Priority 1:** To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area;
- **Strategic Priority 2:** To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally;
- *SP2.2 Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund: To support and empower individuals enabling their progress into employment and self-employment.*
- **Strategic Priority 3:** To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision available either regionally or locally.

Strategic Priority 2.2 in the LMP Action Plan is the Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund. This programme aims to develop and provide a support programme for 80 people who are long-term unemployed or economically inactive to consider starting a business, with 40 of these candidates progressing to grant award of up to £1,000.

A budget of £28,000 was approved by DfC for programme delivery and management for a third party delivery contractor. The Work Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund is 100% funded by DfC.

An additional £40,000 of budget for the programme will be issued in grants of up to £1,000. This will be administered by the Grants and Funding Unit, supported by LMP staff.

### **Procurement Process**

In August 2023, a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund delivery contractor were issued to 21 organisations including consultants, enterprise agencies, and training companies. Key programme components are included in Annex A, previously circulated.

Two tenders were submitted. A panel assessed tenders on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The Tangible Consulting tender was the preferred bidder with a score of 90.19%.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council that the contract is awarded to Tangible Consulting Ltd for the contract sum of £28,000 (excl. VAT), delivery concluding on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

At the request of Councillor Schenning, the Head of Prosperity and Place confirmed the geographical location of the winning tender.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Councillor Wisener and

**AGREED** – to recommend to Council that the contract is awarded to Tangible Consulting Ltd for the contract sum of £28,000 (excl. VAT), delivery concluding on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

## 26. WORK READY EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the outcome of the procurement process to appoint a delivery agent for the Work Ready Employability Programme.

### **Background**

The 2023/24 Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan was developed to address the employability needs of Causeway Coast and Glens (CC&G) Borough Council area, also building the achievements of the previous year's action plan.

The following three strategic priorities and programmes have been identified within the LMP Action Plan and are consistent with the labour market activation proposals in the Borough's economic development strategy.

- **Strategic Priority 1:** To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area;
- **Strategic Priority 2:** To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally;
- *SP2.1 Work Ready: Develop and provide a support programme for the LTU and EI.*
- **Strategic Priority 3:** To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision available either regionally or locally.

The 2023/24 LMP Action Plan was approved by Council on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023. Strategic Priority 2.1 in the LMP Action Plan is the Work Ready Employability Programme. This programme aims to develop and provide a support programme for 60 people who are long-term unemployed or economically inactive who are not participating on other similar programmes, including Shared Prosperity Funding or Jobs and Benefits Programmes.

A budget of £18,500 was approved by DfC for programme marketing and for a 3<sup>rd</sup> party delivery contractor. The Work Ready Employability Programme is 100% funded by DfC.

## **Procurement Process**

In August 2023, a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Work Ready Employability Programme delivery contractor was sent to 18 training companies and consultants along with a Tender Return Form. Key programme components are included in Annex A, previously circulated.

Two tenders were submitted. A panel assessed tenders on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The North West Regional College tender was the preferred bidder with a score of 72.67%. The NWRC tender value is £18,000.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council that the contract is awarded to North West Regional College for the contract sum of £18,000 (excl. VAT), delivery concluding on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Councillor Stirling and

**AGREED** - to recommend to Council that the contract is awarded to North West Regional College for the contract sum of £18,000 (excl. VAT), delivery concluding on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

At this point in the meeting the Director of Leisure and Development stated that the Chief Executive had asked him to clarify that Council had no statutory provision in respect of providing services to Asylum Seekers and that the responsibility was that of the UK Home Office and executed by the Executive Office. At a local level this was being facilitated and administered by the Community and Culture Service area.

The Head of Community and Culture said she wished to thank staff who undertook extra workload for projects that were funded 100%, with the exception of administrative costs.

## **27. CONTRACT FOR PROVISION OF ESOL CLASSES**

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to seek approval to appoint Acacia Path the contract to deliver the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programme as part of the Asylum Dispersal Action plan.

### **Background /Context**

Council has been provided with a number of reports in relation to the Asylum Seeker Programme and funding provided to council. In June 2023, a report was approved by council in relation to the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Plan funded at 100% for £162,095 from The Executive Office and sponsored by The Home Office. This funding was allocated to Council for; Research and development of

local action plan, Staff resource costs for the co-ordination and overseeing the delivery of the action plan and programme costs for the development and provision of resources to support activities and services to aid integration.

The funding allocated to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is for activity until the end of March 2024.

During research and consultation carried out as part of the recent needs assessment of those who have been placed in the CCGBC council area whilst seeking Asylum, access to English classes and the provision of ESOL was identified as one of the main key priority needs of newcomers and as such was included as a funded action within the plan.

Initially the main priority for the provision of ESOL is targeting pre-beginner and beginner level meaning that classes should be provided at both levels in each of the three locations which those seeking asylum are currently placed within the Borough.

Access to ESOL appropriate level classes twice a week aims to equip participants with the level of English language skills they need to thrive in the place they currently call home, matched to their current proficiency and learning needs.

Tender Process was circulated within the confidential report.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Acacia Path be awarded the contract as per the tender submission for the provision of a 12 week ESOL programme in 3 areas to the value of £16,043.55.

Alderman McAuley spoke of local individuals who would welcome this type of assistance and questioned this coming at a cost to Council.

The Head of Community and Culture advised this was fully funded through the Executive Office, as the report, but the deliverability of this was being administered by Good Relations staff.

Alderman Stewart raised the issue of communication barriers which caused problems for teachers.

At the request of Elected Members, The Head of Community and Culture provided clarity that language classes would be conducted in Portrush, Portstewart and Coleraine.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
Seconded by Alderman Stewart and

**AGREED** - to recommend to Council that Acacia Path be awarded the contract as per the tender submission for the provision of a 12 week ESOL programme in 3 areas to the value of £16,043.55.

## **28. CONTRACT VARIANCE FOR GYM EQUIPMENT**

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Sport and Well Being.



## **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress to date on the upgrade of the gym and equipment offering at Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Sheskburn Recreation Centre and Roe Valley Leisure Centre and request approval of a variation to the previously awarded contract to Pulse Fitness as per the associated Tender Report at an addition cost of £58,394 plus VAT.

## **Background**

In November 2020, the 'In House Team' presented the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) to Council, supported by an initial recommendation as follows:

*Option 4 – Pilot project at Roe Valley Leisure Centre at a cost of £50k is the preferred option. This option represents the most prudent course of action under market conditions and also allows continued in-house transformation and 'proof of concept' to be tested before competing an OBC for investment of £1m in gyms and equipment across the six leisure facilities.*

In January 2022, the IHT presented the OBC for investment in Gym and Equipment offering at Coleraine Leisure Centre, supported by the phase 2 recommendation as follows'

*'It is recommended that Members approve the Outline Business Case for investment of £150k, in the gym and equipment offering at Coleraine Leisure Centre.'*

In February 2023, the IHT presented the OBC for investment in Gym and Equipment offering at JDLC Gym & Equipment, Sheskburn Gym & Equipment and Roe Valley Leisure Centre Cardio Equipment, supported by the recommendation

*'It is recommended that Council approve the Outline Business Case and preferred option:*

*Option 3 – JDLC Gym & Equipment, Sheskburn Gym & Equipment and RVLC Cardio Equipment, circa £400k'.*

In June 2023, following the procurement exercise, Pulse Fitness were awarded the contract by Council after a competitive tender submission'

*'It is recommended that Council note the tender process previously circulated 'JDLC, RVLC & Sheskburn Fitness Equipment Tender' and approve the award of the contract to Pulse Fitness at a cost of £273,662.32'*

Council have completed two tender processes for the procurement of Gym Equipment for the projects listed in points 2.2 and 2.3 above. On both occasion Pulse Fitness have returned the most competitive tender and have been awarded both contracts.

The equipment included in the OBC and subsequent tender exercise in 2.3 and 2.4, did not include replacement of the existing resistance machines at Roe Valley Leisure Centre or the Spin Cycles at Coleraine Leisure Centre.

## Proposals

The opportunity exists within the timeframe for the current contract with Pulse Fitness listed in 2.4, to make a variation to said contract to supply the additional identified required equipment at RVLC and CLC, thus completing the Gym Upgrade programme identified in the OBC listed in 2.1.

As mentioned previously Pulse Fitness have successfully tendered on two occasions and the completion of the remaining installation by Pulse Fitness will allow consistency for service users across Council facilities as well as easing the process of continued maintenance and upkeep of the new equipment which has been purchased.

The competitiveness of the tender submitted by Pulse in June 2023, gives Officers confidence that the projects listed in 2.3, plus the proposed additional equipment will not greatly increase the overall project costs of £400k approved by Council in February 2023 (projected total costs circa £420k).

Sport & Wellbeing Officers have discussed the proposal with Council's Procurement department, and they are content with the variation to Contract.

It is anticipated that all projects inclusive or otherwise of the additional requested equipment will be completed in Autumn 2023.

Sport & Wellbeing Officers will complete and return to the Leisure & Development Committee Post Project Evaluations on the Key Performance Indicators set out in the original OBC's for the projects.

## Options

1. Instruct Officers to made contract variation to the previously awarded contract to Pulse Fitness.
2. Allow the existing contract with Pulse Fitness to complete and enter into a potential third procurement exercise at the risk of additional costs to Council.

## Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee notes the progress to date in terms of the Gym Upgrade Projects and recommends to Council to issue a variation to the awarded Contract to Pulse Fitness for additional equipment at a cost of £58,394.

Alderman McAuley said he had received positive feedback on the work undertaken at gyms and welcomed this proposal.

Proposed by Alderman McAuley  
Seconded by Councillor Stirling and

**AGREED** - to recommend that Council notes the progress to date in terms of the Gym Upgrade Projects and recommends to Council to issue a variation to the awarded Contract to Pulse Fitness for additional equipment at a cost of £58,394.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 9.05 pm.