

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2024**

Table of Recommendations

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
1.	Apologies	<i>Alderman John McAuley, Councillor Callaghan</i>	<i>N/A</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>None</i>	<i>N/A</i>
3.	Minutes of previous meeting held Tuesday 8 October 2024	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>	<i>N/A</i>
4.	Entertainments Licensing Report	<i>To recommend that Council grant an Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence subject to compliance with any recommendations of the Council's Licensing Department.</i>	<i>N/A</i>
5.	Proposal for Partnering with DFI Roads Service to Remove Snow from Town Centre Footpaths and Agreement for Car Park Gritting	<i>To recommend that Council renew the partnering arrangement for the clearance of snow and ice from paths and pedestrian areas using the attached MOU (Appendix A) as a template for the next 3 year period.</i>	<i>N/A</i>
6.	Construction of Replacement Waste Transfer Station at Letterloan Composting Facility	<i>To recommend that Council grants permission to progress to Stage 1 of the</i>	

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
		<i>procurement gateway to enable a feasibility and scoping study to be undertaken in respect of a replacement waste transfer station at Letterloan.</i>	
7.	Entertainment Licence Renewals	Noted	N/A
8.	Licences & Registrations Issued Under Delegated Authority	Noted	N/A
9.	Petroleum Spirit Licence Renewals	Noted	N/A
10.	Underage Sales Test Purchase Exercises – Sunbeds	To recommend that Council note the paper.	N/A
11.	Underage Sales Test Purchase Exercises - Tobacco and Nicotine Inhaling Products	To recommend that Council note the paper.	N/A
12.	Dangerous Structure Update 'In Public'		N/A
13.	Synopsis of Estates Maintenance workload	Noted	Perpetual
14.	ES Business Plan 6 Month Update	Noted	N/A
15.	Period 6 ES Management Accounts and Financial Positions 2024/25	Noted	
16.	Matters for Reporting to Partnership Panel	Nil	N/A

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
17.	Consultations	<i>Nil</i>	<i>N/A</i>
18.	Correspondence	<i>Nil</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	'IN COMMITTEE' (Item 19-24 inclusive)		
19.	Dangerous Structure Update continued 'In Committee'	To recommend that Council note the paper.	<i>N/A</i>
20.	Tender for the Purchase of Air Quality Monitoring Equipment	To recommend to Council that the bid received from Environmental Monitoring Systems Ltd be accepted for the provision and installation of a new air quality monitoring station at Dungiven, Main Street at a cost of £42,735.	31st March 2025
21.	Fuel Stamp Saving Scheme Administrator Costs	To recommend to Council approval of the requested 5% annual uplift to the annual contract cost for LCDI to administer the Fuel Stamp Saving Scheme.	<i>N/A</i>
22.	Proposed Replacement of Fire Alarm System to Council Civic Building Offices and Library, Connell Street, Limavady	To recommend that Council authorise the Estates Department to procure and spend on the basis of Option 4.3, that is, the proposal to progress with the installation of a replacement fire alarm system covering Limavady Civic Building Offices and Library accommodation at Connell Street, Limavady the at a total cost of £76,017.00+VAT.	31st March 2025

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
23.	Castlerock Footbridge Update	To recommend that Council approve the most economically advantageous tender and therefore grant permission to engage in a contract with Adman at a tendered figure of £678,995.74 to progress the repair, repainting and re-erection of Castlerock Footbridge (Stage 3 of the Capital Procurement Gateway).	30 weeks from contractor appointment
24.	Street Trading Licence Renewals	Noted	N/A
25.	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12 (0))	Nil	

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF
THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS
AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE
ON TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7.01 PM**

In the Chair: Councillor Mairs (C)

Members Present: Alderman Fielding (C), S McKillop (C); Councillors C Archibald (C), Bateson (C), Chivers (R), Huggins (C), Hunter (R), Kane (C), Jonathan McAuley (C), MA McKillop (R), McQuillan (R), Stirling (C), Wilson (R)

Non-Committee

Members Present: Alderman Stewart (R)

Officers Present: A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services (C)
M McCook, Interim Head of Estates (C)
S McAfee, Head of Health and Built Environment (R)
U Harper, Committee and Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: A Lennox, ICT Operations Officer (C)
M Kennedy, ICT Officer (C)

Press (4 no.) (R), Public (1 no.) (R)

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

Substitutions: Councillor Huggins substituted for Alderman John McAuley

The Chair advised Committee of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded.

The Director of Environmental Services undertook a roll call.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman John McAuley and Councillor Callaghan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024

Summary, previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins

Seconded by Councillor Jonathan McAuley and

AGREED – The Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 8 October 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. ENTERTAINMENTS LICENSING REPORT

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

GRANT OF OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCE

Licence No: EL435

Premises: The Clyde Tavern, 40 Railway Road, Coleraine BT51 1PF

Application: Grant of an Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence
Days and times on which it is applied to provide
entertainment:

Monday to Saturday: 17:00 – 21:00

Sunday: 17:00 – 20:00

Representations: Closing date was 9th October 2024. No representations received.

PSNI: No objections

NIFRS: No objections but total occupancy for premises: (EL429)
Indoor licence for Bar area and Beer Garden to be limited to a
total of 80 persons over the two areas in agreement with fire
risk assessment.

Recommendation

It is recommended to grant an Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence subject to compliance with any recommendations of the Council's Licensing Department.

Proposed by Councillor C Archibald
Seconded by Councillor Stirling and

AGREED - to recommend that Council grant an Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence subject to compliance with any recommendations of the Council's Licensing Department.

5. PROPOSAL FOR PARTNERING WITH DFI ROADS SERVICE TO REMOVE SNOW FROM TOWN CENTRE FOOTPATHS AND AGREEMENT FOR CAR PARK GRITTING

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

Purpose of Report

To consider the review, potential revision and renewal of the existing Memorandum of Understanding between Council and DFI Roads Service to assist in emergency clearance of snow from town centre footpaths/pedestrian areas (Appendix A, previously circulated).

Background

Council has had a 3 year Memorandum of Understanding with DFI Roads Service requiring Council to provide resources to keep specified DFI owned areas of town centre footpaths and pedestrian areas clear of snow and ice during prolonged severe weather. This MOU has now expired. DFI Roads Service have proposed that the MOU be renewed for another 3 seasons (2024/25, 2025/26, 2026/27).

The MOU is based on agreed principles previously supported by SOLACE, NILGA and Roads Service. This allows Council to enter into local agreement to support Roads Service in the clearance of snow from town centres subject to available resources. The agreement is limited to the areas noted in the appendix (previously circulated) to the MOU (locations to be confirmed).

DFI Roads Service have paid Council an administration fee of £2,358 per annum during the most recent period of the MoU with Council providing the resource at Council cost as the need arose.

Council Officers have been in discussion and negotiation with colleagues in DFI Roads over recent months. Particular consideration has been given to the increasing costs associated with delivering services. The following options have been drafted for decision.

Proposals

Council officers have discussed and considered a number of proposals with DFI Roads colleagues. Both organisations are struggling to deliver services with ever more stretched resources.

DFI Roads have agreed to a Council proposal for an uplift to the existing payment of £2358 to £2837 per season for support given by Council to DFI Roads for clearance of ice and snow from town centres subject to available resources. This increase amounts to 20% on top of the fee agreed in 2021 and is in line with inflation between 2021 and 2024.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Environmental Services Committee recommends to Council renew the partnering arrangement for the clearance of snow and ice from paths and pedestrian areas using the attached MOU (Appendix A, previously circulated) as a template for the next 3 year period.

In response to queries from Councillor Huggins and Councillor Kane, the Director of Environmental Services advised that Council would only provide this support if it has the resources available, dealing with Priority 1 cases first and Priority 2 cases if resources are available. He advised that the arrangement has worked in the past and that he is content that Council can support it.

In response to a query from Councillor MA McKillop, the Director of Environmental Services advised that he would check why Cushendall was not on the list and get back to her.

Proposed by Councillor Bateson
Seconded by Councillor Huggins and

AGREED - to recommend that Council renew the partnering arrangement for the clearance of snow and ice from paths and pedestrian areas using the attached MOU (Appendix A) as a template for the next 3 year period.

6. CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT WASTE TRANSFER STATION AT LETTERLOAN COMPOSTING FACILITY

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Members to grant permission to advance to Stage 1 of the procurement gateway to carry out a scoping and

feasibility study for the construction of a replacement waste transfer station at Letterloan Composting Facility.

Background

Council currently operates four waste transfer stations.

Waste transfer stations are located at Aghanloo (Limavady), Craigahulliar (Portrush), Crosstagherty (Ballymoney) and Letterloan (Macosquin).

Proposals

It is proposed that this capital works scheme progress to Stage 1 of the capital programme with a feasibility and scoping study conducted and produced with supporting estimated costs.

Should permission be granted for the construction of a replacement waste transfer station at Letterloan, it is envisaged that the waste transfer station at Craigahulliar will be surplus to requirements allowing full closure of the site.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Committee grants permission to progress to Stage 1 of the procurement gateway to enable a feasibility and scoping study to be undertaken in respect of a replacement waste transfer station at Letterloan.

Councillor Huggins proposed the recommendation and stated that this first stage is needed to allow this to move forward.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins

Seconded by Councillor C Archibald and

AGREED - to recommend that Council grants permission to progress to Stage 1 of the procurement gateway to enable a feasibility and scoping study to be undertaken in respect of a replacement waste transfer station at Letterloan.

7. ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE RENEWALS

For Information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) (NI) ORDER 1985

ENTERTAINMENT LICENCES

The undernoted applications for an entertainments licence have been received, acknowledged and processed during the report period.

<u>Unique Reference Number</u>	<u>Name of Premises</u>
EL113	Village Tavern
EL083	Portstewart Royal British Legion
EL216	Finvoy Presbyterian Church Hall
EL257	St Patrick's Parochial Hall
EL023	Coleraine FC Social Club (Variation)
EL378	Bushmills Community Centre
EL044	Garvagh Community Building
EL174	Mary Mcbrides Ltd
EL073	Portballintrae Boat Club
EL015	Aghadowey Hospitality Ltd T/A Brown Trout Golf and Country Club
EL221	Ballymacconnelly Hall
EL188	McBride's Bar
EL243	The Glen Bar
EL105	St. Patrick's Hall
EL297	Hilltop Holiday Park - The Hub
EL064	Mary Craig's Bar
EL406	Murphy's Bar
EL430	The Safehouse Cafe

Committee NOTED the report.

8. LICENCES & REGISTRATIONS ISSUED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

The below licences were issued under Delegated Authority during the last report period:

The Petroleum (Consolidation) Act (Northern Ireland) 1929

Reference No	Premises:	Licence
PL030	Skydive Ireland	Grant of a petroleum licence

The Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

Reference No	Premises:	Licence
PC38	The Milk Parlour 72 The Promenade Portstewart	Grant of a pavement café licence Days and times applied for to operate a pavement café: Monday to Sunday 12:00hrs to 23:00hrs
PC39	Roughans 11 Kingsgate Street Coleraine	Grant of a pavement café licence Days and times applied for to operate a pavement café: Monday to Friday 09:00hrs to 17:30hrs Saturday 09:00hrs to 18:00hrs Sunday 12:00hrs to 18:00hrs

Committee NOTED the report.

9. PETROLEUM SPIRIT LICENCE RENEWALS

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

PETROLEUM (REGULATION) ACTS 1929 AND 1937

PETROLEUM SPIRIT LICENCES

The undernoted applications for renewal of petroleum spirit licence have been received, acknowledged and processed during the report period.

<u>Licence No:</u>	<u>Name of Premises</u>
PL069	Kennys Spar Coleraine

Committee NOTED the report.

10. UNDERAGE SALES TEST PURCHASE EXERCISES – SUNBEDS

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the outcome of underage sales test purchase exercises in relation to sunbeds during 2023-24.

Background

District Councils have a statutory duty to enforce the provisions of The Sunbeds Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 which came into effect in May 2012. The Act prohibits the use/sale and/or hire of sunbeds to persons under the age of 18. The aim of the legislation is to reduce the likelihood of the use/sale and/or hire of sunbeds being made to children.

Research on sun exposure has shown that sunburn in childhood can greatly increase the risk of developing skin cancer later in life. The Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (YPBAS), a school-based survey conducted among 11-16 year olds, revealed in 2022 that 3% of young people had used sunbeds despite being aware of the associated risks. Some of these young people reported using sunbeds in commercial premises.

To raise awareness of the above legislation and assess compliance among sunbed premises across the Borough, Council Environmental Health Officers conducted a test purchase exercise in August 2023.

Test Purchase Exercise Protocol

All test purchase exercises are carried out in accordance with best practice followed by other Local Authorities, in addition to the following guidance laid down by the Department for Business Innovation & Skills, Better Regulation Delivery Office Age Restricted Products and Services: A Code of Practice for Regulatory Delivery and Local Government Regulation (formerly LACORS) 'Code of Best Practice' on test purchasing as endorsed by the Home Office.

The test purchase involved sending a young person under 18 years of age into a sunbed premises to ask to buy a sunbed session.

Council's Environmental Health Officers have been working with sunbed premises in the Borough since the legislation was introduced to raise

awareness and highlight its implications for them. This has included visits to relevant premises and provision of written information.

All sunbed premises are written to once a year reminding them of their legal obligations with guidance on how to prevent a sale to an underage child prior to the test exercise taking place. The letter informs the sunbed premises owner that a test purchase exercise will be carried out but does not state the date when this will take place.

Outcome

A total of 11 premises were selected and 2 sales were made. Fixed Penalty Notices of £250 were issued in respect of both premises and payment was made in both cases.

Discussion

This activity is essential to protect young people from the known health risks associated with sunbed exposure and to ensure sunbed premises owners and their staff fulfil their legal obligations.

The overall compliance rate indicates that the majority of retail premises are diligent in applying the legislation, which reflects the ongoing commitment of the Council and staff of the Environmental Health Department staff to its education and enforcement programme. While failures are disappointing, they underscore the importance of undertaking this activity.

Council's test purchase programme for 2024-25 is ongoing.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the report is noted.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the paper.

11. UNDERAGE SALES TEST PURCHASE EXERCISES - TOBACCO AND NICOTINE INHALING PRODUCTS

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the outcome of underage sales test purchase exercises for tobacco and nicotine inhaling products undertaken during 2023-24.

Background

District Councils in Northern Ireland have a statutory duty to enforce the legislation relating to the sale of certain age-restricted products such as cigarettes, tobacco products, nicotine inhaling products (i.e. e-cigarettes/vapes) and cigarette lighter refill products.

The Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) (NI) Order 1991 and Children & Young Persons (Sale of Tobacco) Regulations (NI) 2008 make it an offence to supply any cigarettes or tobacco products to any person under the age of 18. Both the salesperson and the business owner can be liable for any illegal sales, even if they thought the purchase was being made on behalf of an adult, or if the person looked like they were over 18.

The Nicotine Inhaling Products (Age of Sale and Proxy Purchasing) Regulations (NI) 2021 contain provisions making it an offence to sell nicotine inhaling products to persons aged under 18 and for an adult to purchase nicotine inhaling products on behalf of a person aged under 18.

The Tobacco Advertising and Promotion (Display) Regulations (NI) 2012 make it an offence to display tobacco products on sale in public view in all tobacco retail premises. Where appropriate, age checks **must** be carried out before any tobacco product is shown to a customer who asks to buy or asks for information about a tobacco product. Temporary display is permitted following requests to purchase tobacco products by customers over 18; incidental displays while staff are actively assessing stock levels, restocking, undertaking staff training, cleaning, maintaining or refurbishing the storage unit or upon request by an enforcement officer.

To raise awareness of the above legislation and assess compliance by commercial premises test purchase exercises were conducted throughout the borough during 2023-24.

Test Purchase Exercise Protocol

All test purchase exercises are carried out in accordance with best practice followed by other Local Authorities in addition to following guidance laid down in the Department for Business Innovation & Skills, Better Regulation Delivery Office Age Restricted Products and Services: A Code of Practice for Regulatory Delivery and Local Government Regulation (formerly LACORS) 'Code of Best Practice' on test purchasing as endorsed by the Home Office.

The test purchase involved sending a young person under 18 years of age into retail premises to ask for cigarettes or nicotine inhaling products.

As per Council policy all retailers selling relevant products are written to once per year reminding them of their legal responsibilities with guidance on how to

prevent the underage display/sale of age restricted goods and advising they may be subject to a test purchase exercise.

Outcome

A total of 25 test purchase visits were carried out at premises for tobacco and 31 visits made for nicotine inhaling products throughout the Borough during 2023/2024.

No sales of cigarettes were made. However, cigarettes were displayed at one premises resulting in a written warning.

There were no sales of nicotine inhaling products to the young person. This represents a 100% compliance rate by the retailers tested in relation to tobacco and nicotine inhaling product sales to an underage person.

Discussion

The overall compliance rate indicates that the majority of retail premises are diligent in applying the legislation, which reflects the ongoing commitment of the Council and staff of the Environmental Health Department staff to its education and enforcement programme.

Councils test purchase programme for 2024/25 is ongoing.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the report is noted.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the paper.

12. DANGEROUS STRUCTURE UPDATE

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the ongoing investigation of a dangerous structure on Castle Street, Ballycastle.

Background

Further to a complaint to the Building Control department regarding the structural integrity of the former Antrim Arms building on Castle Street, Ballycastle, a structural engineer inspected the site on behalf of Council and recommended taking action to protect the public without delay.

In the interests of public safety, measures were taken to fence off the at risk area, necessitating a section of Fairhill Street to be closed to both traffic and pedestrians.

A Dangerous Structure notice has been issued to the owner of the property.

A specialist structural engineer has been engaged to evaluate options to make the building safe whilst seeking to preserve its status as a Grade B1 listed building.

Options for a pedestrian walkway to allow access to and from Fairhill Street are currently being assessed however, public safety remains the foremost priority.

The Building Control Department is liaising closely with Planning Service, the building owner and the Historic Environment Division to determine the most appropriate course of action. Investigations are ongoing.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the report is noted.

Councillor Kane expressed disappointment at the brevity of the report. He queried whether there was a danger of the building collapsing and stated that the diversion is very inconvenient for locals and for businesses using Fairhill carpark.

The Director of Environmental Services emphasised that the safety measures are in place to protect the public. He stated that the current arrangement presents no danger to the public as the measures in place have been assessed by a structural engineer. He advised that, as the Council is seeking legal advice on the matter, any further discussion would need to be held *In Committee*.

Councillor Kane clarified that he was not suggesting that safety measures had not been put in place, and he confirmed that he was happy to discuss the matter further when the meeting moved *In Committee*.

In response to a request from Alderman S McKillop for sight of the structure report, the Director of Environmental Services advised that he would need to check whether this is possible as it may be used in a legal case.

The Chair confirmed that the Item would be discussed when the meeting moved *In Committee*.

13. SYNOPSIS OF ESTATES MAINTENANCE WORKLOAD

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Director of Environmental Services.

Purpose of Report

To provide the ES Committee with a synopsis of the current maintenance workload of the Estates Department including outstanding jobs currently on the TABS FM software system and provide details of plans to alleviate any backlog of jobs awaiting action.

Background

A request was tabled a AORB at the October ES Committee Meeting for a paper to be brought forward to the ES Committee to provide details of outstanding jobs currently on the TABS FM software system. If the list showed a considerable backlog of jobs awaiting action, details should be provided as to what plans are being considered and in place to alleviate this issue and, if the back log is a concern, could this issue be addressed prior to the next rate setting process.

TABS FM software package is the software programme currently adopted by the Estates Department to administer reactive and planned maintenance across the estate.

On receipt of a report, each task is considered and allocated a priority as follows:

Priority category	Target time for action
Priority 1	24 hours (emergency repair)
Priority 2	3 days (urgent repair)
Priority 3	10 days
Priority 4	28 days (routine)
Priority 5	30 days (typical repeat issues that are programmed at intervals)
Desirable	No specified time target
Project	90 days
Events	30 days (A specific work sheet is provided by events team and these are logged)

The following is a summary of maintenance requests submitted through the Estates helpdesk between 1st April 2022 and 30th September 2024 in 6 month intervals:

Period	Number of requests logged
01 st April 2022 - 30 th September 2022	2,720
01 st October 2022 - 31 st March 2023	2,200
01 st April 2023 - 30 th September 2023	2,373
01 st October 2023 - 31 st March 2024	2,251
01 st April 2024 - 30 th September 2024	2,808
TOTAL	12,352

Of the above, a total of 2,352 tasks were externally procured and awarded to 73 different contractors. Of these, 2,000 were complete and 352 were incomplete.

With respect to issues relating to Helpdesk response maintenance only for the period, 9,793 tasks have been completed (79.2%).

According to the software, overall, as of 30th September 2024, there were a total of 6,907 incomplete tasks logged on the TABS system.

2,484 tasks are showing as exceeding the priority target date at this point in time. These can be summarised as follows:

Priority category	Number of incomplete tasks logged on TABS	Number of incomplete tasks exceeding priority target completion date
Priority 1	3	3
Priority 2	103	66
Priority 3	1,400	1,345
Priority 4	753	701
Priority 5	4,294	81
Desirable	6	6
Project	334	268
Events	14	14
TOTALS	6,907	2,484

In critiquing the above, due consideration should be given to the fact that all the above are perpetual and a number of tasks will be complete but not closed off and a significant number are commenced but not complete.

Factors

This data illustrates that in particular the Estates Department is currently struggling to deliver an ever increasing volume of reactive maintenance in accordance with current performance target expectations. This is having a detrimental effect on the ability of Estates Department to proactively deliver a true managed Planned Maintenance strategy across the Estate.

There are a number of issues that have had an impact on the Estates Departments ability to deliver this function efficiently. These include but are not limited to the following:

There has been a reduction in staff since 2019 in order to save money. As a result, only H&S and essential maintenance was completed during this time. This has had a detrimental impact on the condition of Council properties;

The number of reactive maintenance tasks logged has increased from 2,251 in the 6 months to 31st March 2024 to 2,808 for the 6 months to 30th September 2024 (a 25% increase for the period);

The Estates Department has been delivering an increasing number of “small” projects over the period. The number, value and complexity of these has increased significantly recently due to a number of factors. A schedule of current projects was attached at Appendix-A (previously circulated);

The Estates Department provides significant support to an increasing number of Council run events throughout the year;

The Estates Department has and continues to go through a significant period of transitional change particularly with respect to staffing as positions continue to be filled within the current structure and new staff settle into post;

There has been significant difficulty in recruiting seasonal staff over the period with only 6 out of 18 being recruited for the 2024 season;

The Estates Department has an aging workforce with an average staff age of 55 and a modal age of 57. This is likely to result in transitional change being ongoing for some years to come;

The Technical Team within Estates have been working within strict conditions imposed by procurement and the introduction of a new corporate procurement policy over the past 12 months;

The Estate property portfolio has expanded significantly over the life of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council without adequate additional staff and funding resources being available to deliver the services across the Estate;

A number of properties within the Estate portfolio are close to or at the end of their life cycle and require disproportionate amount of maintenance;

A number of vacant properties within the Estate portfolio have to be maintained and have been subject to vandalism and antisocial behaviour. This is a waste of resources.

Measures incorporated during 2024/25:

The Estates Department has been allocated budget associated with maintenance across the Estate property portfolio for year 2024/25. This is a significant change and has created a greater workload for staff but also enabled more effective and efficient planning and allocation of work particularly with regard to Purchase Orders and Contractor appointments.

A contract is now in place for the delivery of condition surveys for 110 Council buildings. Some 20 of these have been completed to date. Each survey report contains a projected 5-year plan for necessary repair work and planned maintenance with estimated budget. Subject to Council approval of required finance it is anticipated that year 1 work will begin to be rolled out in the 2025/26 Financial year.

The Estates Technical Team is currently working with Councils Procurement Officer to ensure contractual arrangements are in place to enable the efficient delivery of planned and reactive maintenance where external resources are required.

Measures proposed for 2025/26

A review of the existing Estates Department structure is proposed immediately the existing arrangements are complete and have had a settling in period of 6 months.

Additional contracted work is being planned for playpark upgrades, pitch maintenance and other works which can be easily grouped and put out to tender.

Seasonal staff will initially be replaced by a smaller number of full-time posts.

Reinstate the full complement of Estates staff to the agreed structure.

Conclusions

Reactive maintenance cannot be considered in isolation. The Estates Department is required to carry out a number of equally essential services.

It is anticipated continual incremental improvements will be realised in performance of maintenance delivery over the next 3 years as the recommendations arising from sections 4 and 5 above are implemented and planned maintenance reduces the volume of reactive maintenance.

The Interim Head of Estates welcomes this opportunity to communicate issues impacting the Department and would welcome the opportunity to report back progress to the ES Committee on a 6 monthly basis going forward.

Councillor Huggins thanked the Director for bringing the report back to Committee. She asked about access to the TABS system and stated that there should be a dedicated TABS administrator. She stated that Councillors should be notified of delays with completing a task, with a traffic-light system to indicate progress. She expressed concern that everyday maintenance is not getting done because staff are getting pulled to do events. She asked how the decision is made regarding what tasks go to contractors, and asked who will carry out the condition survey. She asked whether the helpdesk has been a success. In relation to paragraph 5.1 of the report, she asked what the existing arrangements are. In relation to paragraph 5.4 of the report, she asked what the agreed structure is.

The Director of Environmental Services advised that there are two staff administering TABS on a part-time basis – a member of administration staff and an engineer.

The Interim Head of Estates advised that the report provides a general overview of the current situation, and information on the three-year plan to alleviate the backlog of jobs. He stated that six staff in Estates are administrators for TABS and that the Assets Officer will allocate a priority to each job. If the team does not have the resources to deliver the job within the priority period, the Assets Officer will put the job out to contract.

The Interim Head of Estates stated that the Estates helpdesk is still bedding in but that every task is logged and should be acknowledged by email. The

Director of Environmental Services stated that, in his view, the helpdesk has been a massive success. The Interim Head of Estates provided detail on the workflow and advised that a trial will be undertaken shortly using the communication function on TABS.

The Interim Head of Estates advised that priority has historically been given to reactive maintenance and health and safety, which has led to wear and tear on properties in the Council estate. He noted the pressure on staff to maintain the whole estate and discussed workforce planning and management. He stated that Council needs to address the backlog of reactive maintenance, develop a programme of planned maintenance, and get the balance between internally managed and contracted-out work.

* **Alderman Stewart left the meeting remotely at 7.24pm.**

In response to queries from Councillor MA McKillop, the Interim Head of Estates stated that there is a raft of criteria for establishing the priority of tasks. He advised that priority 1 items are those that cannot wait for 24 hours, whereas the majority of priority 2 – priority 4 items do not have to be repaired immediately, but that action can be taken to close-off an area to ensure public safety. He advised that further detail could be provided through the Assets Officer. In respect of Councillor MA McKillop's query regarding the sea defence wall in Cushendall, he advised that Estates is required to make the area safe, but a wider repair programme will require engagement with the Coast and Countryside Team and the Funding Department.

In response to Alderman S McKillop, the Interim Head of Estates advised that TABS is a dedicated facilities maintenance system that is fit for purpose. He advised that TABS has been updated this year, with relevant staff training undertaken in July, and that work is being done to integrate it with GIS mapping.

In response to Alderman Fielding, the Interim Head of Estates advised that Members should use the helpdesk email to report all issues, and the Director of Environmental Services stated that he would send a reminder to Elected Members to advise them of this.

14. ES BUSINESS PLAN 6 MONTH UPDATE

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Members the 2024/2025 Environmental Services (ES) Business Plans 6 month review for information.

Introduction

Council approved the ES Business Plans in May 2024. Progress on achieving the objectives can be viewed in each of the service area reports below. The business plans represented a continuation of work from the 23/24 period, as well as, new targets for 24/25 for each of the service areas:

- Estates
- Health & Built Environment
- Infrastructure
- Operations

The plans for each of the aforementioned service area were developed based upon:

- The emerging actions from the Community Planning Process.
- The Council's exiting Corporate Plan.
- Endorsed service area strategies.
- Relevant Central government strategies and policies.
- Council decisions and direction from the 2023 / 24 period.

The Purpose of the Plans

The purpose of the annual business plans is to:

- Give a clear sense of what the service is for and the challenges it faces.
- Show how it is supporting Council's priorities.
- Show how it is contributing to the efficiency drive and transformation of service delivery.
- Show how it is aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Help us to hold ourselves to account and ensure we deliver for Council and its residents.
- Bring key information together in one place about the service, which Members, staff and stakeholders can understand.

Financial Position at Period 6

Council has approved the annual budget for Environmental Service and delegated authority to officers to utilise this budget in the provision of services to the rate payers. ES budget for 2024/25 is £ 30,851,687.59. This is based on expenditure budget of £36,559,317.45 and income budget of £5,707,629.86

The Environmental Services position at Period 6 shows a £170,045.38 (P5 - £59,333.19) adverse variance. This includes predicted increases in employee costs based on the proposed National Pay Award.

The main costs and income attributing to the ES P6 position are summarised as follows as variances against budget.

- Employee costs are £305k positive
- Premises costs are £236k adverse
- Transport Costs are £147k adverse – Fuel (-22k), Mileage Claims (-22k), Repairs, Service and maintenance – (-82k)
- Supplies and Services are £96k adverse
- Contract Payments are £290k positive – Landfill Tax (£360k)
- Income is £265k adverse – Car Parks (-£189k), Landfill (-£395k), Building Control (£218k)

Risk Matrix – August 2024

The ES Risk Matrix (previously circulated) was used to establish the Corporate Risk Register.

Recommendation

The ES Committee is asked to note the ES business plans 6 month review for the 2024 / 25 period.

Committee NOTED the report.

15. PERIOD 6 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL POSITIONS 2024/25

For information report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report to provide Members with information on the current financial position of Environmental Services Directorate at the end of Period 6.

Background

Council has approved the annual budget for Environmental Service and delegated authority to officers to utilise this budget in the provision of services to the rate payers. ES budget for 2024/25 is **£ 30,851,687.59**. This is based on expenditure budget of **£36,559,317.45** and income budget of **£5,707,629.86**

The Environmental Services position at Period 6 shows a **£170,045.38 (P5 - £59,333.19) adverse variance**. This includes predicted increases in employee costs based on the proposed National Pay Award.

The main costs and income attributing to the ES P6 position are summarised as follows as variances against budget.

- Employee costs are £305k positive
- Premises costs are £236k adverse
- Transport Costs are £147k adverse – Fuel (-22k), Mileage Claims (-22k), Repairs, Service and maintenance – (-82k)
- Supplies and Services are £96k adverse
- Contract Payments are £290k positive – Landfill Tax (£360k)
- Income is £265k adverse – Car Parks (-£189k), Landfill (-£395k), Building Control (£218k)

Estates

£288k adverse mainly due to increased material costs. Employee costs is positive by £246k and Income is adverse by £37k.

Health and Built Environment

£312k positive. Employee costs are £128k positive. Fee Income is favourable by £290k including £218k from Building Control.

Infrastructure

£51k adverse. Car park income £189k adverse. Employee costs are £109k favourable.

Operations

£171k adverse variance in Period 6. Employee costs are £181k adverse. A breakdown of the Variances are as follows

ES Business Support

£25k positive - on target

ES Centrally Managed

£3k positive variance – on target

In-year Savings

Officers have and will continue to manage and scrutinise the budget to identify opportunities for reducing expenditure and increasing income in order to get back on budget. However at Period 6, due to loss of income from car parks and 3rd party waste, but offset by increased income from Building Control, ES financial position has an adverse variance of **£170,045.38**.

Summary of Capital Expenditure – P6 (April – Sept 2024)

Month/Year	Agenda Item No.	Fleet/Project	Amount
April 2024	6	Operations Fleet, Plant and Equipment Renewal 2024-25	c.£1,555,750
April 2024	17	Harbours & Marinas Capital Infrastructure works to “Old Slipway, Portrush Harbour” Consideration to Progression to Stage 3 – Construction Phase	Option 1, “the required works”:- <i>Most Economically advageous tenderer:- £68,700.00 + VAT</i> <i>Contingency Sum of 15%,</i> <i>(£10,305.00) being applied, with a resultant capital project delivery sum of £79,005.00</i>
April 2024	19	(To note) Cost of Purchasing Pay & Display Machines	£79,500.00
May 2024	7	Purchase of Operations Replacement Vehicle	£19,275
June 2024	21	Estates Fleet Renewal 2024/2025	£ 447,300
September 2024	23	Festive Lights Upgrades & Repairs	£60,081.20
Total			£2,240,911.20

Recommendation

Members are requested to note the paper.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the paper.

16. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

17. CONSULTATIONS

There were no consultations.

18. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of Correspondence.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Councillor McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor Huggins and

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

* **Press and Public left the meeting at 7.55pm**

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.

19. DANGEROUS STRUCTURE UPDATE Continued 'In Committee'

The Director of Environmental Services advised that Council is acutely aware of the issues for pedestrians and is working to identify a solution to address pedestrian access. He advised that allowing vehicular access may take significantly longer. The Director of Environmental Services confirmed that the Christmas tree will be in the same location as usual. There was discussion around the impact on the Public Realm works at The Diamond.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the paper.

20. TENDER FOR THE PURCHASE OF AIR QUALITY MONITORING EQUIPMENT

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

Confidential by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the appointment of a contractor to supply and install a new air quality monitoring station, to replace the existing station on Main Street, Dungiven.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Committee recommend to Council that the bid received from Environmental Monitoring Systems Ltd be accepted for the provision and installation of a new air quality monitoring station at Dungiven, Main Street at a cost of £42,735.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins
Seconded by Councillor Kane and

AGREED – to recommend to Council that the bid received from Environmental Monitoring Systems Ltd be accepted for the provision and installation of a new air quality monitoring station at Dungiven, Main Street at a cost of £42,735.

21. FUEL STAMP SAVING SCHEME ADMINISTRATOR COSTS

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

Confidential by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to seek approval for an annual uplift to the contract costs for the administrator of the Fuel Stamp Saving Scheme.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Committee recommend to Council approval of the requested 5% annual uplift to the annual contract cost for LCDI to administer the Fuel Stamp Saving Scheme.

Proposed by Alderman S McKillop
Seconded by Councillor C Archibald and

AGREED – to recommend to Council approval of the requested 5% annual uplift to the annual contract cost for LCDI to administer the Fuel Stamp Saving Scheme.

22. PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF FIRE ALARM SYSTEM TO COUNCIL CIVIC BUILDING OFFICES AND LIBRARY, CONNELL STREET, LIMAVADY

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

Confidential by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

To request permission to procure and approve spend necessary to progress the installation of a replacement fire alarm system within Council Civic Building Offices and Library, Connell Street, Limavady.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Committee authorises the Estates Department to procure and spend on the basis of Option 4.3, that is, the proposal to progress with the installation of a replacement fire alarm system covering Limavady Civic Building Offices and Library accommodation at Connell Street, Limavady the at a total cost of £76,017.00+VAT.

Councillor Kane noted that one of the tenders had scored zero. He queried whether that would constitute a tender and if not, whether Council was allowed to award the contract based on one tender.

The Director of Environmental Services stated that the zero bid is null, but because the Council had gone through the tender process, it is allowed to approve the tender.

In response to a query from Councillor Stirling, the Director of Environmental Services advised that the fire alarm system has always been compliant.

Proposed by Councillor Stirling
Seconded by Councillor Jonathan McAuley and

AGREED – to recommend that Council authorise the Estates Department to procure and spend on the basis of Option 4.3, that is, the proposal to progress with the installation of a replacement fire alarm system covering Limavady Civic Building Offices and Library accommodation at Connell Street, Limavady the at a total cost of £76,017.00+VAT.

23. CASTLEROCK FOOTBRIDGE UPDATE

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

Confidential by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

To request Members consideration of the tender received for the Castlerock footbridge and to request permission to proceed with the most advantageous tender.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members recommend to Council that they approve the most economically advantageous tender and therefore grant permission to engage in a contract with Adman at a tendered figure of £678,995.74 to progress the repair, repainting and re-erection of Castlerock Footbridge (Stage 3 of the Capital Procurement Gateway).

Councillor Huggins stated that this project is very close to her heart and that she is glad to get it to this stage. Alderman Fielding stated that the bridge is a landmark feature. Councillor Bateson expressed his support for the reinstatement of the bridge.

In response to Councillor Huggins, the Director of Environmental Services advised that the removal of the bridge was allowed by the Historic Environment Division on the condition that it be reinstated.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins
Seconded by Councillor Fielding and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the most economically advantageous tender and therefore grant permission to engage in a contract with Adman at a tendered figure of £678,995.74 to progress the repair, repainting and re-erection of Castlerock Footbridge (Stage 3 of the Capital Procurement Gateway).

24. STREET TRADING LICENCE RENEWALS

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

Confidential by virtue of paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

STREET TRADING (NI) ACT 2001

The undernoted application for a street trading licence has been received, acknowledged and processed during the report period.

<u>Unique Reference Number</u>	<u>Type of Licence</u>	<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Location</u>
MST 002	Mobile	Hot Food and Drinks	Borough of Causeway Coast and Glens

Committee NOTED the report.

25. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS (NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12 (0))

There were no items of AORB.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’

Proposed by Councillor Kane

Seconded by Councillor Bateson and

AGREED – to recommend that Committee move ‘*In Public*’.

This being all the business, the Chair thanked Elected Members for their attendance. The meeting closed at 8.28pm.

Chair