

**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2025**

| No | Item | Summary of key Recommendations | Estimated Timescale for completion |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| 1. | Apologies | <i>Alderman Callan, McAuley, Councillors Anderson, Stirling</i> | <i>N/A</i> |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest | <i>Councillor Wisener</i> | <i>N/A</i> |
| 3. | Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 21 st January 2025 | <i>Confirmed as a correct record</i> | <i>N/A</i> |
| 4. | Deputation – Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework, The NI Executive Office | <i>Received</i> | <i>N/A</i> |
| 5. | Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan 2025 | <i>To recommend that Council sign-off on the draft Causeway Coast and Glens LMP 2025/26 & 2026/27 Action Plan and commence project delivery, at risk, from 1st April 2025 until the DfC LoO for project delivery costs is received (which will cover the entire period from 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026).</i> | <i>March 2027</i> |
| 6. | Limavady Scoping Exercise | <i>Noted</i> | |

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| 7. | Update Report on Masterplans Review | Noted | Long-term |
| 8. | LMP Additional Funding | Noted | March 2025 |
| 9. | Minutes of LMP Meetings | Noted | June 2025 |
| 10. | Correspondence | None | |
| 11. | Matters Reporting to the Partnership Panel | None | N/A |
| 12. | Consultations | Nil | N/A |
| 13. | Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Kyle, seconded by Councillor Jonathan McAuley (abbrev leisure concession for senior citizens) | <i>To recommend that officers bring a report to Committee with details on the current leisure concessions offered and the relevant costs.</i> | |
| 14. | Notice of Motion proposed by Alderman S McKillop, seconded by Alderman Fielding (abbrev impact of changes to employers' National Insurance contributions) | <i>To recommend that Council supports the Notice of Motion.</i> | |
| 15. | Capital Grants | <i>To recommend that Council approve for the award of Capital Grants 2024/25 Option 2 (reduce the funding request by 20% for all 7 applications which met the threshold) at a total cost of £599,860.</i> | |
| | Confidential Consideration (Items 16 – 18 inclusive) | | |

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| 16. | Garvagh Phase 2 Clyde Park Tender | To recommend that Council approve Option 2; accepts this tender report and instructs staff to appoint MP Coleman Ltd to deliver this project for the tender price of £76,392.11. | 31 May 2025 |
| 17. | Coleraine Leisure Centre Air Con Tender | To recommend that Council note the tender process in Annex A, Proposed Chiller Replacement at Coleraine Leisure Centre and recommend to Full Council the award of the tender to Valside TA Aircon Sales & Service at a cost of £89,753.98. | |
| 18. | Integrated Advice Partnership Funding | To recommend to Council to award the tender for the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund (Debt Advice) Project, to Community Advice Causeway at a maximum total cost of £79,321, exclusive of VAT for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026. | 31st March 2026 |
| 19. | Any Other Relevant Business Notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o) | | |
| 19.1 | Strategy for Motorhome Provision (Alderman Stewart) | Information | |
| 19.2 | Damage to Garvagh Forest (Councillor Holmes) | Information | |

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER ON
TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.04PM**

In the Chair: Councillor McGurk (C)

Members Present: Alderman Knight-McQuillan (C), S McKillop (C), Stewart (C);
Councillors N Archibald (C), Bateson (R), Holmes (R/C),
Kennedy (C), Kyle (R), McCully (C), McShane (C),
Schenning (R), Storey (C), Watson (C), Wilson (C),
Wisener (C)

Non-Committee

Members Present: Alderman Boyle (R)

Officers Present: P Mulvenna, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
J Welsh, Head of Community and Culture (C)
W McCullough, Head of Sport and Wellbeing (C)
N McGurk, Head of Prosperity and Place (C)
P O'Brien, Funding Unit Manager (C)
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)
M McGerty, Labour Market Partnership Manager (R)
L Harris, Community Development Officer (R)
L Hinphey, Capital Projects Officer (R)
U Harper Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: C Archbold, Director of the Ending Violence Against
Women and Girls Directorate, The NI Executive Office (C)
F French, Head of Grants Delivery, Ending Violence
Against Women and Girls Directorate, The NI Executive
Office (C)

A Lennox, ICT Operations Officer (C)

Substitutions: Alderman Knight-McQuillan substituted for Councillor Anderson
Alderman S McKillop substituted for Councillor Stirling
Councillor Storey substituted for Alderman Callan
Councillor Wilson substituted for Alderman John McAuley

Press 3 no. (R)

Public 1 no (R)

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

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

The Director of Leisure and Development undertook a roll call.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Callan, Alderman McAuley, Councillor Anderson, and Councillor Stirling.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

During discussion of Item 18 - Integrated Advice Partnership Funding, Councillor Wisener declared an interest as a member of the board. Having declared an interest, Councillor Wisener left the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2025

Summary previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Archibald
Seconded by Alderman Stewart and

AGREED – the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 21 January 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. DEPUTATION – ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK, THE NI EXECUTIVE OFFICE.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Claire Archbold, Director of the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Directorate, NI Executive Office, and Fionnuala French, Head of Grants Delivery.

The Director of the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Directorate, NI Executive Office delivered a presentation, the key points of which were:

- Vision - A changed society where women and girls are free from all forms of gender-based violence, abuse and harm including the attitudes, systems and structural inequalities that cause them
- Gender Based Violence Pyramid
- The problem statement: Societal culture and systemic attitudes and beliefs enable violence against women and girls
- Four Themes:
 - Prevention
 - Protection & Provision
 - Justice System
 - Working better together

- Six Outcomes:
 - Changed Attitudes, Behaviour, and Culture
 - Healthy, Respectful Relationships
 - Women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere
 - Quality frontline services, protection, and provision for survivors of VAWG
 - A justice system which has the confidence of victims, survivors, and the public in its ability to address VAWG
 - All of government and society working better together to end VAWG
- Key elements - First Delivery Plan
 - Focus on Prevention and Early Intervention
 - Community Investment
 - Collaboration – bringing different sectors together via forums to identify key actions that can make a difference.
 - Communications and Campaigns – Power to Change campaign, aimed at men and boys to reflect on their behaviour and how they can act as allies.
- Community Investment EAWG Change Fund
 - Local Grant Scheme – delivered through grassroots community groups
 - Regional Grant Scheme - supports the EAWG expert organisations to deliver prevention-based activities
- EAWG & PfG
 - Priority & Visibility
 - Leadership – opportunity for Councillors to talk about the issue and support the strategy
 - Accountability
 - Focus on EAWG throughout government
- Local government supporting EAWG
 - Outcome 6: All of government and society working better together to end violence against women and girls

The Director of the EAWG Directorate emphasised the importance of prevention by changing attitudes, behaviour and culture. She asked for Council's help with developing early intervention schemes via the Momentum Fund, which Councils are delivering, and the local grant scheme, delivered through grassroots community groups. She advised that the scheme is not prescriptive in how it is applied and that different ideas are welcome. She stated that collaboration across the Borough is important and they want to hear about the work that is happening here that they can support.

* **Councillor Holmes joined the meeting in the Chamber at 7.23pm.**

In response to Councillor Storey, the Director of the EAWG Directorate advised that while the core funding sits with the Department of Health, the Executive is

aware of the importance of collaborative working. She advised that the Oversight Board is chaired by the First Minister and deputy First Minister and attended by Permanent Secretaries. She paid tribute to the good work of the voluntary sector.

In response to Councillor N Archibald, the Director of the EAWG Directorate advised that the schemes for young people will be run on social media. She further advised that a series of short videos and a board game have been designed with the help of the Youth Forum.

In response to Councillor McCully, the Head of Grants Delivery acknowledged that the turnaround times for the grant funding schemes is tight but noted that Councils have been able to turn around applications remarkably well.

Councillor Schenning stated that the funding is welcome in the community and voluntary sector and noted that the structured funding works well for smaller organisations. The Director of the EAWG Directorate advised that they were trying to join up government in respect of strategy and governance to ensure that the strategy is delivered in the best way possible. The Head of Grants Delivery stated that they are trying to ensure that there is a focus on prevention in order to make a long-term difference.

* **Alderman Boyle joined the meeting remotely at 7.28pm.**

Alderman Knight-McQuillan welcomed the strategy but expressed concern that the funding could stop after some programmes have begun. She noted that it may be a generation before tangible change is seen and asked how progress is measured. The Director of the EAWG Directorate paid tribute to Alderman Knight-McQuillan for bringing the matter to Council. She explained that prevalence is measured using criminal offences and the Crime Survey as proxies, and that modules have been put into the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey and the Young Life and Times Survey to measure attitudes. She further advised that measures had been designed to ensure that everyone is measuring the same thing. She emphasised the importance of embedding the strategy into any strategies being developed. She advised that it is a seven-year strategy, reporting to the Executive every six months and with an Oversight Board that is chaired at Ministerial level.

In response to Alderman S McKillop, the Director of the EAWG Directorate advised that a lot of the grant funding is aimed at boys and young men. She cited a Barnardos intensive programme of support for unaccompanied minor migrants and the Youth Action programme. She stated that men acting as allies are an important part of the solution. The Head of Grants Delivery referred to the Power to Change programme, which gives people the tools to address different situations.

Councillor McShane thanked the representatives for their presentation and stated that it was great to have this discussion and raise awareness. She suggested that

the Women's Group in Council, which is open to all Elected Members, could be used to raise awareness of the issue.

As there were no further questions, the Chair thanked the EVAWG representatives for attending the meeting.

* **The representatives of the EVAWG Directorate left the meeting at 7.52pm.**

5. LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP (LMP) ACTION PLAN 2025

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

Purpose of Report

Since 2021-22 the Department for Communities (DfC) have supported the development and delivery of 11 Labour Market Partnerships (LMPs) in Northern Ireland.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Request approval for the attached draft Causeway LMP 2025/26 and 2026/27 Action Plan (Annex A, previously circulated).
- Seek approval to work at risk in the event of any potential delay in receiving the DfC Letter of Offer.

The report included further information under the headings:

- Background
- Proposal

Options

Council are asked to review the Action Plan in Annex A (previously circulated) and to consider the options below:

- **Option 1** – do nothing. Do not enter into agreement with DfC for the roll-out of a LMP for the Causeway Coast and Glens area.
- **Option 2** – Sign-off on the draft Causeway Coast and Glens LMP 2025/26 & 2026/27 Action Plan but do not commence project delivery until the DfC LoO for project delivery costs is received.
- **Option 3** - Sign-off on the draft Causeway Coast and Glens LMP 2025/26 & 2026/27 Action Plan and commence project delivery, at risk, from 1st April 2025 until the DfC LoO for project delivery costs is received (which will cover the entire period from 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026).

Recommendation

Members of the Leisure and Development Committee are asked to consider the three options outlined above and advise officers accordingly, as to how they would like to proceed.

Councillor McCully proposed Option 3 and asked that Councillors talk to their party colleagues who are Executive Ministers to encourage this along.

Councillor Storey expressed concern regarding social and economic inactivity and requested data on the outcomes of the job fairs that have been held. The Head of Prosperity and Place advised that the LMP annual report will be brought to next month's Committee meeting and that relevant information would be included in that.

Proposed by Councillor McCully
Seconded by Councillor McShane and

AGREED – to recommend that Council sign-off on the draft Causeway Coast and Glens LMP 2025/26 & 2026/27 Action Plan and commence project delivery, at risk, from 1st April 2025 until the DfC LoO for project delivery costs is received (which will cover the entire period from 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026).

6. LIMAVADY SCOPING EXERCISE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chair as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of a planned scoping exercise on the current level of provision of outdoor sports pitches, recreational activity and community space in the town of Limavady.

The report included background information.

Next steps

Officers intend to carry out a desktop review of current provision for sports pitches, recreational opportunities and community provision and some initial stakeholder consultation. The outcome of that review will dictate what, if any, further action is required based on the aforementioned strategy, masterplan opportunities and community provision request.

A further report will be brought back to Council with recommendations on how best to proceed.

The Committee NOTED the report.

7. UPDATE REPORT ON MASTERPLANS REVIEW

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chair as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of DfC's Coleraine, Ballymoney and Ballycastle Town Centre Masterplans, which were reviewed in 2020, 2020 and 2021 respectively.

The report provided an overview of the progress in respect of the various Town Centre Masterplan reviews.

Councillor Storey praised the public realm scheme in Ballymoney but expressed concern regarding the plans for Ballymoney detailed in the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) Active Travel consultation, which does not seem to link to the Ballymoney Town Centre Masterplan. He expressed concern about the proposed new cycle route, as did Councillor Kennedy. Councillor Storey also raised issues regarding the bottom of Ballymoney High Street, and the derelict Northern Regional College site.

Councillor McShane expressed concerns regarding the DfI Active Travel proposal in respect of Ballycastle.

Councillor Holmes noted that footpaths are not well maintained by DfI and suggested that maintenance could be an issue for the new cycle paths.

Members were advised that Council's Coast and Countryside Team is currently drafting a response to the Active Travel consultation and were encouraged to submit their comments for inclusion in the Council response, and to submit their own responses as Councillors.

The Committee NOTED the report.

8. LMP ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the Labour Market Partnership securing of additional funding for their 2024-25 Action Plan from:

- The Department for the Economy; and
- The UK Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Shared Prosperity Fund.

The report included further information under the following headings:

- Funding The Department for the Economy
- Funding from the UK Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Shared Prosperity Fund

The Committee NOTED the report.

9. MINUTES OF LMP MEETINGS

Report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chair.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the minutes of Labour Market Partnership Members Meetings on 17th April 2024, 19th June 2024, and 18th September 2024.

The report included further information under the following headings:

- Background
- Annex A – Minutes of LMP Meetings

The Committee NOTED the report.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of Correspondence.

11. MATTERS REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

12. CONSULTATIONS

There were no consultations.

13. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR KYLE, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MCAULEY

This council reiterates its support towards our senior citizens and their health and wellbeing, and in doing so we instruct our officers to prepare a membership concession proposal for use of our leisure facilities by senior citizens, noting that other councils already offer the facility.

Councillor Kyle introduced the motion, stating:

“Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council currently offer no concession with regards to its senior citizens monthly membership, yet other councils offer this. There is only a reduced option for ‘daily tickets’ or ‘pay as you go’ admissions.

According to NISRA Causeway Coast and Glens has the eldest population in NI. There is a high preponderance of senior citizens across the Borough and many proven advantages associated with physical exercise, which include: mental health benefits; encouraging social interaction; prevents social isolation; recovery from illness; provision of a warm/ safe environment. This is a concession we should seriously consider.

Leisure centres in neighbouring areas including Londonderry, Ballymena & Antrim all offer concessions, along with reduced membership, as far as I am aware. In fact, Londonderry offers free swimming to its senior citizens.

Surely a reduction in membership fees for seniors would actually increase senior membership and not only bring more members but offer more substantial revenue to the council coffers, as there is likely to be an increase in uptake.

We do not want to be viewed as the council who ignores and is discriminative towards their elderly, by not providing provisions which cares for their mental wellbeing, not providing support for those in isolation, and not aiding an improvement in overall fitness, which this proposal for senior membership leisure concessions could readily facilitate.”

Councillor Wilson commended the spirit of the motion but stated that a detailed cost-benefit analysis would be required. He stated that it is preferable to offer the best value for money for everyone rather than selecting particular groups for concessions.

Councillor Holmes also commended the spirit of the motion but noted that leisure centres lose money each year, so he could not support it given that financial situation.

Following discussion, it was agreed that officers would bring back a report to Committee with details on the current concessions offered and the relevant costs.

AGREED – to recommend that officers bring a report to Committee with details on the current leisure concessions offered and the relevant costs.

14. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY ALDERMAN S MCKILLOP, SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FIELDING

That this Council recognises the need to protect businesses and charities that provide vital frontline services from the destructive impact of the Government's changes to employers' National Insurance contributions; notes concerns voiced by general practitioners, dentists, care homes and a range of other independent providers that this added cost could jeopardise the future of some services and create additional hardship for the most vulnerable in society; further notes the rising challenges facing Executive departments, local councils and the Northern Ireland Civil Service as a result of the hike in employers' National Insurance; believes this deeply flawed policy will make it more expensive for businesses and employers of all sizes to retain and recruit staff, forcing many to choose between cutting jobs or raising prices for already-struggling consumers; urges the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reverse changes to employers' National Insurance in order to protect businesses, farms and vital frontline services; and calls on the Minister of Finance to work with Executive colleagues to ascertain the total additional cost of increased employer national insurance contributions for the public sector, including independent providers; and further calls on the Minister of Finance to lobby the Chancellor of Exchequer for the funding required to meet this shortfall in full, protect jobs and incomes and place the delivery of frontline public services on a stable footing.

Alderman S McKillop introduced the motion and made the following key points:

- There will be an immense financial impact from the rise in employer National Insurance Contributions, including an estimated additional cost of £12 million for Councils.
- The Office for Budget Responsibility has warned that employers are likely to pass on the higher tax to employees.
- There will be indirect effects on labour supply.
- There will be a significant impact on the voluntary sector, the hospitality sector, the public sector and the agriculture sector.
- GPs, dentists, pharmacies and other services, such as care homes, are contracted to provide NHS services, and are in a unique position when it comes to the ability to absorb any extra cost. A failure to support NHS Practices runs the risk of dissuading skilled staff from choosing this sector. The implications for these sectors will be significant and will likely impact on service provision to the public.
- Small businesses are the lifeblood of the Northern Ireland economy - we want to see them grow. Instead, they are facing an uncertain future.
- It was agreed in January to set up a Local Economic Partnership (LEP), aimed at growing the economy and improving the survival rate of businesses. The LEP will be on the back foot because public and business confidence is at an all-time low.
- Council must get the evidence and data that it requires to protect businesses here. This data should include the financial impact of the increase in Employers National Insurance contributions, and the impact on health and wellbeing.

Councillor N Archibald stated that both the outgoing and incoming Finance Ministers have made representations to Treasury on this matter and will continue to do so.

Councillor Holmes stated that he agreed with the sentiment of the motion. He stated that he hoped that the Department would already know the additional cost involved, and that NI is effectively asking for an increase in the subvention. He stated that it is businesses in the private sector getting hurt.

Alderman S McKillop stated that she does not believe that the additional costs arising from the policy are fully known, and that it is not enough to provide additional funding; the policy must be reversed.

The Chair stated that she understood that the impact had been calculated as a £100 million shortfall, and stated that there would be an impact on many sectors.

Alderman S McKillop emphasised the need to ensure that the impact of the changes to employers' National Insurance contributions is known, in order to support the work of the LEP.

Proposed by Alderman S McKillop
Seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

AGREED – to recommend that Council supports the Notice of Motion.

CHANGE TO ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised that Item 16 – Capital Grants would be heard next, as previous grant programme reports had been heard *in public*.

15. CAPITAL GRANTS

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Funding Unit Manager.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend grant decisions for the Capital Grants Programme 2024-25.

The report contained further information under the following headings:

- Background
- Purpose of Capital Grants Programme
- Levels of Grant Award
- The Process
- Capital Grant Assessments
- Options
- Timeframe

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee approve one of the 3 options below for the award of Capital Grants 2024/25:

- a) Option 1 (approve the 5 highest scoring applications) at a total cost of £598,800
- b) Option 2 (reduce the funding request by 20% for all 7 applications which met the threshold) at a total cost of £599,860
- c) Option 3 (increase the budget to meet full funding request from the 7 applications which met the threshold) at a total cost of £745,200

Councillor Watson welcomed the report and thanked officers for their work on the capital grants funding. Councillor Watson proposed Option 3.

Councillor Bateson seconded Option 3. He stated that it was great to see the grant back in Council and so many different sports availing of it.

Councillor Schenning stated that she wished to support Option 3 and that it was fantastic to see sports across all sectors successful in their applications.

Councillor Storey raised a concern regarding spending exceeding the budget that was set with the Rates strike. He requested more information on the scoring matrix and noted the wide disparity in the scores obtained by different groups. He queried whether there is an appeals process and emphasised the need to ensure that the process is robust and able to sustain scrutiny.

The Director of Leisure and Development stated that she is very confident in the robustness of the process and scoring mechanism. She advised that all information was provided in advance, and that the variation in the scoring is a reflection of the quality of the applications received.

The Funding Unit Manager stated that the criteria were applied consistently and robustly against all grant assessments. She stated that Members had agreed to the criteria through Council. She noted that some applicants had provided very scant detail against the questions asked. She advised that there is an appeals process: appeals can be made on the basis that either the outcome was unreasonable or due process was not followed, and these are reviewed by an independent panel. She stated that unsuccessful applicants are offered detailed feedback including an offer of one-to-one feedback. She stated that the scoring matrix, which was supported by Councillors in the Chamber, can withstand independent assessment and follows a business case model. She advised that the process was simplified to be more applicant-friendly and less administrative. She advised that Council now has a Capital Grants Officer in post who will run workshops and speak to groups individually.

Councillor Wilson stated that the scrutiny is of elected representatives rather than Council staff and that Council remains under the spotlight. He queried how it can be ensured that the processes being agreed to are scrutinised and requested a greater insight into the scoring process. He queried whether the assistance being given to groups is discoverable.

The Director of Leisure and Development reiterated that she is content that the process was open, transparent and robust. She stated that everyone was offered the same level of support and clarified the scoring process.

The Funding Unit Manager emphasised the expertise of the staff in the Funding Unit and stated that reports brought to Council had been written to ensure that Members were fully informed. She advised that the Funding Unit is very heavily audited both externally and internally and that the Auditor would often refer to the exemplary work of the Funding Unit. She stated that records could be kept on who

was spoken to and for how long, and reiterated that everyone gets offered the same opportunities throughout the process. She noted that some of the projects that were submitted did not align with either of the strategic objectives for the programme.

Councillor Kyle expressed concern that Option 3 could set a precedent of the scheme going over budget in future years.

Councillor McCully stated that Council needed to follow the budget that was set two weeks ago and all the parameters of the scheme. He agreed that overspending could run the risk of creating a precedent, with the scheme ending up massively oversubscribed.

Councillor McCully proposed Option 2, and this was seconded by Councillor Kyle.

Councillor McShane stated that the scheme was a very welcome capital infrastructure fund, and that the huge number of applicants was inevitable given that it was not in place in the previous Council term. She stated that the scheme empowered communities and filled gaps in provision, and that Council should meet sporting needs irrespective of the sporting code. She stated her support for Option 3.

Councillor McCully suggested that the budget for the scheme could be reviewed in future years, in light of the Council's improving financial position.

In response to Councillor Bateson, the Funding Unit Manager clarified that the budget for the capital grants programme is not part of the rates setting process and is not a year-on-year budget. She advised that it is a more flexible system whereby capital grants are drawn down as a loan on completion of a project, meaning that it could be years before a loan is drawn down for some projects.

Councillor Holmes stated that the additional money will still be an overspend at some point, and that Option 3 is not feasible due to the budget.

Councillor Storey made a proposal stating that whatever decision is reached by Council, this should be subject to an independent validation of the process. This was seconded by Councillor Wilson.

The Director of Leisure and Development clarified that the appeals process for the scheme involves a review by an independent panel of Council staff who had not been involved in the original process. Councillor Storey stated that the independent review that he was proposing should not be conducted by Council staff but rather by an independent panel from an external body.

Councillor McShane stated that the proposal was unnecessary as any decision by Council could be audited.

* **Alderman Boyle left the meeting remotely at 9.44pm.**

Proposed by Councillor Watson

Seconded by Councillor Bateson

- to recommend that Council approve for the award of Capital Grants 2024/25 Option 3 (increase the budget to meet full funding request from the 7 applications which met the threshold) at a total cost of £745,200

Councillor McShane requested a Recorded Vote.

The Chair put the Proposal to the Committee to Vote.

6 Members voted For; 10 Members voted Against.

The Chair declared the Proposal lost.

Recorded Vote Table

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|---------------------|--|
| For (6) | Councillor N Archibald, Bateson, McGurk, McShane, Schenning, Watson. |
| Against (10) | Alderman Knight-McQuillan, S McKillop, Stewart |
| | Councillors Holmes, Kennedy, Kyle, McCully, Storey, Wilson, Wisener |

Proposed by Councillor McCully

Seconded by Councillor Kyle

- to recommend that Council approve for the award of Capital Grants 2024/25 Option 2 (reduce the funding request by 20% for all 7 applications which met the threshold) at a total cost of £599,860

Councillor McShane requested a Recorded Vote.

The Chair put the Proposal to the Committee to Vote.

10 Members voted For; 6 Members voted Against.

The Chair declared the Proposal passed.

Recorded Vote Table

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|--------------------|--|
| For (10) | Alderman Knight-McQuillan, S McKillop, Stewart |
| | Councillors Holmes, Kennedy, Kyle, McCully, Storey, Wilson, Wisener |
| Against (6) | Councillor N Archibald, Bateson, McGurk, McShane, Schenning, Watson. |

Proposed by Councillor Storey

Seconded by Councillor Wilson

- to recommend to Council that the decision reached by Council should be subject to an independent validation of the process.

Councillor McShane requested a Recorded Vote.

The Chair put the Proposal to the Committee to Vote.
5 Members voted For; 11 Members voted Against.
The Chair declared the Proposal lost.

Recorded Vote Table

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|--------------|--|
| For (5) | Alderman Knight-McQuillan, S McKillop |
| | Councillors Kennedy, Storey, Wilson |
| Against (11) | Alderman Stewart |
| | Councillor N Archibald, Bateson, Holmes, Kyle, McCully, McGurk, McShane, Schenning, Watson, Wisener. |

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Alderman Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

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

* **Public and Press were disconnected from the meeting at 9.58pm.**

The Chair declared a recess.

The meeting resumed at 10.05pm.

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.

16. GARVAGH PHASE 2 CLYDE PARK TENDER

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, 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 contractors to undertake Phase 2 of the All-ability path project at Clyde Park in Garvagh as part of the Covid Recovery Small Settlement Regeneration Programme (CRSSRP).

Members are asked to consider the Capital Officer's report attached and to agree with the recommendation to proceed to appoint the contractor with the lowest acceptable tender price.

The report contained further background information.

Options

- **Option 1** – Do Nothing: Reject the tender report and carry out no further work at this location.
- **Option 2** – Accept the tender report and agree to appoint MP Coleman Ltd. for a cost of ****£76,392.11**.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council accepts this tender report and instructs staff to appoint MP Coleman Ltd to deliver this project for the tender price of £76,392.11.

Councillor Holmes proposed Option 2.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Councillor Wisener and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve Option 2 - accepts this tender report and instructs staff to appoint MP Coleman Ltd to deliver this project for the tender price of £76,392.11.

17. COLERAINE LEISURE CENTRE AIR CON TENDER

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress to date on the replacement of the air conditioning units at Coleraine Leisure Centre and to request approval to award the contract for the works to Valside TA Aircon Sales & Service at a cost of £89,753.98.

The report contained further information under the following headings:

- Background
- Tender Results

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the tender process in Annex A (previously circulated), Proposed Chiller Replacement at Coleraine Leisure Centre and recommend to Full Council the award of the tender to Valside TA Aircon Sales & Service at a cost of £89,753.98.

Proposed by Councillor Wisener
Seconded by Councillor N Archibald and

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the tender process in Annex A, Proposed Chiller Replacement at Coleraine Leisure Centre and recommend to Full Council the award of the tender to Valside TA Aircon Sales & Service at a cost of £89,753.98.

18. INTEGRATED ADVICE PARTNERSHIP FUNDING

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of the public procurement exercise for the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund (Debt Advice) project, funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) for 2025-26 and to seek Council approval to appoint the successful bidder.

The report contained further information under the following headings:

- Background
- Project details
- Tender process

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee recommends to Council to award the tender for the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund (Debt Advice) Project, to Community Advice Causeway at a maximum total cost of £79,321, exclusive of VAT for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

Councillor Wisener stated that he had a conflict of interest, as a member of the board.

* **Councillor Wisener left the Chamber at 10.10pm.**

Proposed by Councillor McCully
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

AGREED – to recommend to Council to award the tender for the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund (Debt Advice) Project, to Community Advice Causeway at a maximum total cost of £79,321, exclusive of VAT for delivery from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

* **Councillor Wisener returned to the Chamber at 10.11pm.**

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Alderman Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

AGREED - to recommend that Council move '*In Public*'.

19. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12. (O)

19.1 Strategy for Motorhome Provision (Alderman Stewart)

To ask for an update on the development of a strategy for motorhome provision, further to discussion at Item 21 of the Environmental Services committee meeting on 12th December 2023, to manage motorhome parking during the tourist season.

The Director of Leisure and Development stated that Council currently has a number of options for motorhomes, including the touring spaces that are available on Council sites at Carrick Dhu and Juniper Hill and the Aire de Service. In addition, a seasonal planning application has been submitted for both the Ballyreagh Field site between Portrush and Portstewart and The Bowl, on Causeway Street Portrush. Unfortunately, this has been a protracted process, with the original application being returned, a new one submitted and the following requirements having been requested by the Planning Department: a biodiversity checklist; full topography survey; tree survey; planning statement; elevations and block plan. These are currently being worked on for return to the Planning Department. She advised that she could not confirm if this process will be completed and approval given prior to June 2025. If seasonal planning permission were approved, this would allow Council to use the Ballyreagh Field and The Bowl area for periods of high demand such as July and August, Bank Holiday weekends and during major events.

19.2 Damage to Garvagh Forest (Councillor Holmes)

Could officers provide an update on the damage to Garvagh Forest in the aftermath of Storm Eowyn and the implications for the reopening of the bike trails.

The Director of Leisure and Development stated that officers were out on site yesterday and reported that all the forest roads have been cleared of fallen trees and all walking routes are now reopened. However, all mountain bike trails remain closed due to extensive storm damage. Roe Valley Tree Services have been out and will continue clearing trees from certain sections of the mountain bike trails, but contractors will need to be appointed to repair damage to the trail surface caused by uprooted root plates before these trails can be reopened for public use.

In response to a query from Councillor Holmes, the Director of Leisure and Development advised that the timescale for repairs would depend on the scale of the work and whether quotations can be sought now or whether it must go out to tender.

Councillor Holmes suggested that the trails could be reopened on a phased basis, to allow for some provision of cycling tracks in the park and keep people off unofficial tracks. Alderman Knight-McQuillan supported this suggestion, asking that the reopening be expedited. The Director of Leisure and Development advised that she would try to expedite the work as much as possible.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 10.18pm.

Chair

UNCONFIRMED