



**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 15 APRIL 2025**

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
1.	Apologies	Alderman McAuley, Councillors McCully, Wisener	N/A
2.	Declarations of Interest	None	N/A
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 18th March 2025	Confirmed as a correct record	N/A
4.	Grant Funding Policy Annual Review	To recommend to Council the approval of the following Grant Policy changes: 1. Section 5.4 be amended to include the wording UK Subsidy Control Act. 2. Section 5.7 added to include timeframes for the drawdown of grant-aid. 3. Section 5.8 added to include the process for assessment and award of grant aid. 4. Section 6 - embed a link to Council's Fraud and Corruption Policy. 5. Section 7 review of the policy to	

		<i>change from a 12 month to 24 month review.</i>	
5.	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls – Change Fund	<i>To recommend that Council provide approval to award funding to 9 organisations totalling £89,849.25 through the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Change Fund 2025-26 as noted in Annex A.</i>	31 March 2026
6.	Green Lane Museum	<i>To recommend that Council approve the voluntary operation of Green Lane Museum by Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers under the terms of the Key Holder Agreement for the 2025 and 2026 seasons.</i>	March 2027
7.	Cregagh Wood Local Nature Reserve	<i>To recommend that Council approves Option 2: Council renews the Management Agreement.</i>	N/A
8.	The 153 rd Open Championship Update	<i>To recommend that Council note the content of this update report.</i>	September 2025
9.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor N Archibald (abbrev solar lighting along Bannside)	<i>To recommend that Council support the Notice of Motion.</i>	
10.	Notice of Motion proposed by Alderman Stewart (abbrev re	<i>To recommend that Council support the Notice of Motion, as amended.</i>	

	development of The Warren, Portstewart)		
	Confidential Consideration (Items 11 – 14 inclusive)		
11.	Riverside Theatre – Notice of Motion and Correspondence	<i>To recommend that Council support the Notice of Motion, as amended.</i>	<i>N/A</i>
12.	Juniper Hill Electricity Failure	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
13.	Events External Services Procurement	<i>To recommend to Council the appointment of St John Ambulance to provide Medical / First Aid provision at Council Events at an annual cost of £26,885.00 + VAT for the duration of contract award of initially one year (2025/26), plus the possibility for two further extension years (2026/27 & 2027/28), subject to adequate company performance.</i>	
14.	Ballycastle Museum Property Acquisition	<i>To recommend to Council approval for the purchase of 57 Castle Street, Ballycastle for the purposes of both extension and renovation of the Ballycastle Museum project, and that subject to approval, that a report is taken to Land &</i>	<i>May 2025</i>

		<i>Property Sub Committee for consideration.</i>	
15.	Any Other Relevant Business Notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)		
15.1	Support for the Co Londonderry Agricultural Show committee (Alderman Callan)	<i>To recommend to Council that Limavady DEA Councillors are invited to the meeting with the Co Londonderry Agricultural Show committee.</i>	
15.2	Future external engagement strategy to promote the Borough (Alderman Callan)	<i>Information</i>	
15.3	Invest NI Engagement (Alderman Callan)	<i>Information</i>	
15.4	Plan for Coleraine Market Yard (Councillor Stirling)	<i>Information</i>	

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
VIA MS TEAMS ON
TUESDAY 15 APRIL 2025 AT 7.00PM**

In the Chair: Councillor McGurk (C)

Members Present: Alderman Callan (C), Fielding (C), Stewart (C);
Councillors Anderson (C), N Archibald (C), Bateson (R),
Holmes (R), Kane (C), Kennedy (C), Kyle (R), McShane (R),
Schenning (R), Stirling (C), Watson (C)

Non-Committee

Members Present: Alderman Boyle (C)

Officers Present: P Mulvenna, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
J Welsh, Head of Community and Culture (C)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism and Recreation (C)
P O'Brien, Funding Unit Manager (C)
J McCarron, Project Manager - The Open Championship (C)
S Calvin, Museum Services Development Manager (R)
L Harris, Community Development Officer (R)
U Harper, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

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

Press 3 no. (R)
Public 1 no (R)

Substitutions: Alderman Fielding substituted for Alderman McAuley
Councillor Kane substituted for Councillor McCully

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.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman McAuley, Councillor McCully and Councillor Wisener.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 18 MARCH 2025

Summary previously circulated.

Alderman Callan requested that, in future, the summary table at the front of the minutes should include detail of officer actions agreed in the meeting in respect of AORB's.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Alderman Stewart and

AGREED – the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 18 March 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. GRANT FUNDING POLICY ANNUAL REVIEW

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members that Council's Grant Funding Policy has been reviewed for the incoming year with recommendations to Council for changes. The full policy is attached as Annex A (previously circulated).

Further information was provided in the report under the following headings:

- Background
- Grant Funding Policy
- Grant Funding Policy Changes / Amendments

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommend to full Council the approval of the following Grant Policy changes:

1. Section 5.4 be amended to include the wording *UK Subsidy Control Act*.
2. Section 5.7 added to include timeframes for the drawdown of grant-aid.
3. Section 5.8 added to include the process for assessment and award of grant aid.
4. Section 6 - embed a link to Council's Fraud and Corruption Policy.
5. Section 7 review of the policy to change from a 12 month to 24 month review.

In response to Alderman Callan's query regarding the timeframes for the drawdown of grant-aid, the Funding Unit Manager advised that this came about in response to the addition of the GoSucceed programme, which is administered through Belfast City Council, who had stipulated that 100% of funding be provided in advance to the small businesses involved. She advised that six debt recovery processes have had to be implemented in the past week in relation to this programme due to failure to adhere to the conditions in the letter of offer, and Belfast City Council has since removed the requirement to pay 100% of funding upfront.

In response to Alderman Callan's query regarding the assessment of rewards and the potential for Committee to make alternative recommendations, the Funding Unit Manager advised that it is up to Committee to decide how this will operate, and that the intention of the recommendation to apply the same percentage reduction (if necessary to ensure affordability), is to apply consistency across the board.

Alderman Callan made a proposal that Council hold a workshop in the near future to discuss the Capital Grants Programme for sports, due to concerns raised about it. This was seconded by Councillor Anderson.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Anderson

- to recommend that Council hold a workshop in the near future to discuss the Capital Grants Programme.

The Chair put the proposal by Alderman Callan, seconded by Councillor Anderson to the Committee to Vote.

7 Members voted For; 8 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.
The Chair declared the proposal lost.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED – to recommend to Council the approval of the following Grant Policy changes:

1. Section 5.4 be amended to include the wording *UK Subsidy Control Act*.
2. Section 5.7 added to include timeframes for the drawdown of grant-aid.
3. Section 5.8 added to include the process for assessment and award of grant aid.
4. Section 6 - embed a link to Council's Fraud and Corruption Policy.
5. Section 7 review of the policy to change from a 12 month to 24 month review.

5. ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS – CHANGE FUND

Report, 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 assessment of applications received to the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Change Fund 2025-26 for approval.

Further information was provided in the report under the following headings:

- Background
- Applications Received

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council provide approval to award funding to 9 organisations totalling £89,849.25 through the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Change Fund 2025-26 as noted in **Annex A** (previously circulated).

Councillor Schenning proposed the recommendation.

Councillor N Archibald seconded the recommendation, welcoming the vital money going to these organisations, and queried whether Women's Aid was ineligible for the funding. The Head of Community and Culture advised that as Women's Aid was contracted to provide training, they understood they could not apply for this funding, in order to avoid a conflict of interest.

In response to a request from Councillor Anderson, the Head of Community and Culture agreed to provide a snapshot of the groups receiving the funding.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning

Seconded by Councillor N Archibald and

AGREED – to recommend that Council provide approval to award funding to 9 organisations totalling £89,849.25 through the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Change Fund 2025-26 as noted in **Annex A**.

6. GREEN LANE MUSEUM

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 the Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers to undertake the voluntary operation of Green Lane Museum with support from Museum Services.

Further background information was provided in the report.

Proposal

Museum Service propose to work with Legal Services to update the current Keyholder Agreement with Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers to voluntarily open Green Lane Museum for the 2025 and 2026 seasons.

Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers will be requested to develop a plan to demonstrate engagement, outreach and collaboration with local stakeholders to ensure sustainability and growth of the museum.

Due to other voluntary groups also showing interest, Museum Services propose to work with all interested community groups and our colleagues in community development to develop a model that will enable more volunteers to become actively involved with the Museum commencing in the 2027 season.

Recommendation

It is recommended that members approve the voluntary operation of Green Lane Museum by Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers under the terms of the Key Holder Agreement for the 2025 and 2026 seasons. Council will continue to pay for overheads and lease.

In response to a query from Alderman Callan, the Head of Community and Culture provided an overview of the operation of the museum and visitor numbers since 2015. In respect of volunteers, she advised that the engagement plan aims to get both applicant groups involved, and to increase the number of younger volunteers in order to ensure longevity. She advised that there are currently no plans for what will happen when the current lease expires in 2032.

Councillor Schenning stated that the museum should engage more with local schools.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the voluntary operation of Green Lane Museum by Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers under the terms of the Key Holder Agreement for the 2025 and 2026 seasons.

7. CREGAGH WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to consider the future management of Cregagh Wood as a Local Nature Reserve.

Further background information was provided in the report.

Proposals

As the current Management Plan expired on 31st March 2025, Council must now decide if it wishes to continue the management agreement with the landowner to manage the site for a further 10-year period.

Declaring a site as a LNR is a visible sign of a local authority's commitment to protecting biodiversity. Often designation is linked to actions and targets within a council's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP).

LNRs are important for many reasons:

- They help to protect valuable habitats and natural heritage, including geological features.
- They raise awareness of wildlife through publicity, events, site signage, etc.
- They provide opportunities for people to encounter and enjoy wildlife.
- They can be used for environmental education.
- They help to create a sense of ownership of the site by local people.
- They can provide a chance for local communities and volunteers to be involved in practical biodiversity projects and site management.

A copy of the new Management Plan is attached **Annex A** (previously circulated).

Options

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Option 1 | Council does not renew the Management Agreement with the landowner to manage Cregagh Wood LNR. |
| Option 2 | Council renews the Management Agreement. |

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee considers the detail presented in this report, with either Options 1 or 2 presented for recommendation.

Councillor McShane proposed Option 2, stating that it shows the Council's commitment to biodiversity.

Councillor Schenning seconded Option 2, stating that it is a vital part of the cultural heritage in the Glens.

Councillor Kane expressed his support for Option 2 and noted that this matter could have been dealt with by the Biodiversity Forum if it were operational. He stated that it would be good to get progress with getting the forum established.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation stated that the intention is to get the Biodiversity Forum established as soon as possible.

Proposed by Councillor McShane
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approves Option 2: Council renews the Management Agreement.

* **The Funding Unit Manager left the meeting at 7.44pm.**

8. THE 153RD OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP UPDATE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Project Manager of The Open Championship.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members on Council's role in the continuing planning in advance of the 153rd Open Championship in Portrush in July 2025.

Further information was provided in the report under the following headings:

- Background
- Headline Updates on Council Led Activity
 - Business and Community Engagement
 - Tourism and Promotion
 - Service Continuity and Town Presentation
 - Traffic and Transport
- Temporary Transfer of Council Owned Lands to R&A
- Other Key Areas of Work

Recommendation

Elected Members are asked to note the content of this update report.

The Project Manager of The Open Championship provided an overview of the value of golf tourism and the operations that are underway.

In response to a query from Alderman Callan, the Project Manager advised that Translink has announced that the 11.05pm train from Portrush will run during championship week, and that there would be an enhanced local service, including park and ride links. In response to a query from Alderman Stewart, the Project Manager stated a shuttle bus had been discussed but transport colleagues had advised of issues relating to restricted access at some parts of the town. In response to a query from Councillor Anderson about providing a service running later than 11.05pm, the Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that there are issues around staff working time limits but that they would ask about the possibility of having a train running from Portrush to Coleraine an hour later.

The Project Manager provided a breakdown of the Council's £365,000 budget allocation and committed to providing a further update on that.

Alderman Callan stated that it would be useful to have a more joined-up approach to golf tourism through the establishment of a working group involving local golf clubs and led by Council, which could look into attracting other major tournaments to the area.

The Project Manager advised that engagement is ongoing, with the next engagement session scheduled for May 28th and plans in place to continue to run sessions until after The Open. He advised that Tourism NI is running sessions on getting prepared for The Open, and that their toolkit can help businesses to plan how to maximise the opportunity.

The Project Manager advised that a "Our Town is Open" campaign is being developed to promote awareness that towns in the area are open for business. He advised that it is planned to have a satellite visitor information office at Portrush train station to signpost visitors to local services, and that itineraries are being developed suggesting activities in the different local towns. He encouraged businesses to engage with that by linking to the PR. Councillor Stirling and Alderman Stewart emphasised the need to get the message out that the towns are still open to tourists.

In response to a query from Alderman Stewart regarding the band parade on the Saturday night, the Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that The Open animation activities will focus on the Friday night.

The Director of Leisure and Development emphasised the importance of the legacy from such events on visitor numbers and hospitality in the Borough.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the content of this update report.

**9. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR N ARCHIBALD,
SECONDED BY ALDERMAN BOYLE REFERRED FROM COUNCIL HELD 01
APRIL 2025**

To ask the council to create a feasibility study and option proposals such as solar lighting in trees to light the Bannside, from Christie Park along the River to Castleroe, as this area is used by residents of all ages to exercise in a free and safe environment, indeed the pathway from Christie Park along the river was promoted as the Heart Walk and part of the Highway to Health.

Councillor Archibald stated:

“As a councillor for Coleraine, I have consistently heard concerns from residents about the lack of lighting along the path from Christie Park, following the river toward Castleroe. This riverside route is a valued and well-used community asset, providing residents of all ages with a free and accessible space to walk, run, and connect with nature. However, many have raised concerns that the absence of adequate lighting, particularly during the darker winter months, significantly limits their ability to use this path safely and confidently.

Several residents have pointed out that the path becomes virtually unusable outside of daylight hours in winter. One person told me, “It’s especially bad in winter, because you can’t run there before 8am or after 4pm – it’s just too dark.” Concerns around personal safety have also been repeatedly raised. In particular, the junction where the bridge meets the underpass has been identified as a location where many people feel unsafe during evening hours or when walking alone.

The Parkrun coming to Christie Park could also increase usage of this already popular path. Parkruns have been widely successful in encouraging healthy lifestyles and helping people of all ages and abilities take up running in a welcoming, community-driven environment. With more participants and possible spectators expected along the path, especially early in the morning, it becomes even more important to ensure that the route is safe and accessible throughout the year.

I believe we can look to the successful example of the canal towpath in Coalisland; a similar community pathway that saw a marked increase in usage following the installation of lighting. That project demonstrates how improved lighting can

encourage greater and more diverse use of shared spaces, while also enhancing safety and visibility for everyone.

Of course, any lighting solution should also be carefully designed to respect and protect local wildlife. Options such as solar-powered, low-level, or motion-activated lights could help improve safety while minimising disruption to the natural environment. Other solutions could include integrating lighting into existing infrastructure.

I ask members to support the call for Council to commission a feasibility study and develop proposals for sustainable lighting improvements along this route.

Improving visibility along this path is essential to ensuring that this much-loved community space remains safe, accessible, and inclusive, regardless of the time of day or time of year.”

Alderman Boyle stated:

“I am pleased to second this motion by Cllr Niamh Archibald.

I often walk on the pathway at Christie Park along the river. I was a Coleraine Councillor at the time the pathway in Christie Park was designated as the Heart Walk, part of the Highway to Health.

While potential solar lighting along with the pathway would benefit all users, especially at night and in winter, I want to say a few words about its benefits for women. I attended the recent public meeting about women’s safety in Coleraine on 27 February organised by Causeway Coast Women at West Bann Development. Like many women, when I walk on my own Coleraine or on the river or in Somerset Forest Park, I always need to be aware of my personal safety. I have personal experience of being mugged when I lived in London. I learnt then that self-defence for women was very important. We need to be ready within a few seconds to react to unexpected activity near us or invasion of our personal space.

I welcome the projects that have been agreed this evening through the End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Change Fund. Naomi Long, Justice Minister, supported the Programme for Government EVAWG Delivery Plan. We need to work together to end the epidemic of violence, abuse and harm against women and girls. Women need to be safe and feel safe.

The recent public meeting about women’s safety in Coleraine sought to raise awareness, increase community communication and provide practical solutions. This scheme is one step in providing a solution.”

Councillor Stirling spoke in support of the Notice of Motion, as a user of the walkway, and expressed her support for a feasibility study.

Proposed by Councillor N Archibald
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and

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

10. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY ALDERMAN STEWART, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR MCCULLY REFERRED FROM COUNCIL HELD 01 APRIL 2025

This Council notes the recent sale of Portstewart Town Hall, and the resultant loss of community meeting space in the town; recognises the need to meet community need through engagement and co-design; and agrees to carry out a public consultation on the potential redevelopment of The Warren as a multi-purpose public space that can support a variety of functions, including recreational and cultural use.

Alderman Stewart stated:

“This motion seeks to address the current lack of a central public space in Portstewart, especially following the sale of the town hall into private hands. Given The Warren's potential as an accessible and central location, I propose that Council officers examine redevelopment options that incorporate a comprehensive public consultation. This consultation would allow the community to express their views on how they envision the space being utilized to best serve local needs and interests.

The lack of a public meeting place in Portstewart has left a gap in the town's ability to host events, gatherings, and community activities. The Warren, as a prominent area within the town, provides an opportunity to develop a multi-purpose public space that can foster community spirit and support a variety of functions, from recreational use to cultural events, as well as bringing a potential additional income stream for the council.

Engaging the community through a consultation will ensure that any redevelopment of The Warren reflects the needs, aspirations, and priorities of local residents, businesses, and visitors. It is essential that the voice of the community is central to this process, so that we can ensure the space is used in a way that truly benefits all.

In the interim I would ask that work is carried out on the site to tidy it up, repairs are needed to the tennis courts to bring them back to life and some painting is needed, I've already requested new signage that will benefit the building and grounds.”

Alderman Fielding stated:

"I support the Motion. Town Hall has been closed since 2019 and it is two years since the sale of the Town Hall from the Montague Estate to new owners.

While it is acknowledged that Council carried out an audit of facilities used by organisations within the community in Portstewart around the time of the closure, the opinion is that there a need for a shared space community hub close to the centre of Portstewart. It was on this basis that it was agreed at the May 2021 Leisure and Development Committee to form the Portstewart Town Team, to address the potential gap created by the closure of the Town Hall by consulting with the community in Portstewart.

The Warren is a public green space which was left for the people of Portstewart. We were able to save the wall that borders the warren pitch which could have been lost at the time of the sale of the private caravan park in 2016.

Many people have expressed the view that this community hub should be at the Warren. The Director has acknowledged to me that we need wider conversations about the Warren. The site has four parts: football pitch, bowling green and pavilion, tennis courts and an unofficial BMX track. It is also acknowledged that Warren play park is tired looking. It's nearly 20 years since money was spent on the Warren.

In November last year, one of the local primary schools undertook an exercise to develop plans to create a new play park, and asked for my input. Any consultation in Portstewart should include the three schools - two primary and one post-primary - in the town.

One of the outworkings of the Portstewart Town Team is that a consultation on a Town Plan will be launched in the next couple of months. A public consultation on the potential redevelopment of the Warren should be incorporated into the Portstewart Town Plan. I would ask, if the proposers agree, for the following addition at the end of their Motion: 'and this is included in Portstewart Town Plan.'"

Alderman Stewart agreed to the inclusion of Alderman Fielding's proposed amendment to the Notice of Motion, to read:

*This Council notes the recent sale of Portstewart Town Hall, and the resultant loss of community meeting space in the town; recognises the need to meet community need through engagement and co-design; and agrees to carry out a public consultation on the potential redevelopment of The Warren as a multi-purpose public space that can support a variety of functions, including recreational and cultural use, **and this is included in Portstewart Town Plan.***

Proposed by Alderman Stewart

Seconded by Councillor Kane and

AGREED – to recommend that Council support the Notice of Motion, as amended.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN COMMITTEE’

Proposed by Councillor Anderson

Seconded by Councillor N Archibald and

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

* **Public and Press were disconnected from the meeting at 8.36pm**

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.

11. RIVERSIDE THEATRE – NOTICE OF MOTION AND CORRESPONDENCE

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 Director of Leisure and Development.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present Correspondence from the Ulster University regarding the future operation of the Riverside Theatre for Members consideration, following the Notice of Motion referred from Council on 4th February 2025.

The report contained further information under the following headings:

- Background
- Riverside Theatre Correspondence
- Arts and Theatre Funding

Recommendation

The Leisure & Development Committee are asked to note the contents of the correspondence and consider the request from the University contained within to enable a response to be provided.

The Director of Leisure and Development provided an update to Members.

Alderman Boyle stated that, under Standing Order 18.2, she wished to amend her Notice of Motion. Alderman Callan raised a Point of Order regarding the process. The Chair advised that there would be a short recess.

- * **The Chair declared a recess at 8.41pm.**
- * **The meeting resumed at 8.44pm**

The amended Notice of Motion was proposed by Alderman Stewart and seconded by Councillor Kane, to read:

This Council recognises the importance of the Riverside Theatre as vital for the local arts and community sector; reaffirms its position that the theatre should remain in operation as a valuable cultural asset in the Borough;-

agrees to set up a working group of Councillors to explore options in liaison with Ulster University management, and bring proposals back to this Committee in due course; and to write to the Minister for the Economy to request a meeting to emphasise the importance of the theatre.

The Committee discussed the Riverside Theatre and the detail of the Notice of Motion. Alderman Boyle emphasised the importance of the venue for the arts and noted the 25th January Assembly debate on the matter, in which Minister Lyons stated that he would make a request to UK Treasury about possible financial support. Alderman Callan advised that a Notice of Motion was passed by Council some years ago asking to set up a working group but the university declined, and stated that his party would be voting against the amended Notice of Motion. Alderman Callan queried the composition of the proposed working group and suggested instead that the Leisure and Development Committee Sub Committee that had previously been set up would be a more suitable forum. Alderman Boyle stated that she was content that the Sub Committee be used to discuss the matter, but this must be done in liaison with Ulster University, as their engagement is essential. Alderman Callan stated that the meeting should be held as soon as possible and that Council's position should be established prior to any meeting with the Minister for the Economy. Alderman Boyle stated that Executive Ministers have a responsibility to pursue the issue and it is important to keep the pressure on the Department for the Economy.

Proposed by Alderman Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Kane

- This Council recognises the importance of the Riverside Theatre as vital for the local arts and community sector; reaffirms its position that the theatre should remain in operation as a valuable cultural asset in the Borough; agrees to
convene the Leisure and Development Sub Committee *to explore options in liaison with Ulster University management, and bring proposals back to this Committee in due course; and to write to the Minister for the Economy to request a meeting to emphasise the importance of the theatre.*

The Chair put the proposal, as amended, by Alderman Stewart, seconded by Councillor Kane to the Committee to Vote.

10 Members voted For; 5 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.
The Chair declared the proposal, as amended, passed.

AGREED – to recommend that Council support the Notice of Motion, as amended.

12. JUNIPER HILL ELECTRICITY FAILURE

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 Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an information update to Elected Members following the power outage at Juniper Hill Holiday and Leisure Park (HALP).

Further information was provided in the report under the following headings:

- Background
- Remedial actions
- Initial findings
- Next steps

*** Councillor Schenning left the meeting remotely at 9.18pm.**

Alderman Callan suggested a site visit for Members to see the infrastructure at Juniper Hill and Carrick Dhu. The Head of Tourism and Recreation stated that he would welcome a site visit.

Committee NOTED the report.

13. EVENTS EXTERNAL SERVICES PROCUREMENT

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 Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Elected Members approval for the appointment of Medical / First Aid provider at Council Tourism Events 2025.

Further information was provided in the report under the following headings:

- Background

- Procurement process

Recommendation

The Leisure and Development Committee are asked to recommend the appointment of the following to allow the Tourism and Recreation Department to deliver on the approved schedule of Council managed events:

St John Ambulance to provide Medical / First Aid provision at Council Events at an annual cost of £26,885.00 + VAT for the duration of contract award of initially one year (2025/26), plus the possibility for two further extension years (2026/27 & 2027/28), subject to adequate company performance.

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Councillor N Archibald and

AGREED – to recommend to Council the appointment of the following to allow the Tourism and Recreation Department to deliver on the approved schedule of Council managed events:

St John Ambulance to provide Medical / First Aid provision at Council Events at an annual cost of £26,885.00 + VAT for the duration of contract award of initially one year (2025/26), plus the possibility for two further extension years (2026/27 & 2027/28), subject to adequate company performance.

* **Councillor Anderson left the meeting at 9.27pm.**

14. BALLYCASTLE MUSEUM PROPERTY ACQUISITION

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

To request that council proceed with the acquisition of 57 Castle Street, Ballycastle for the purposes of extending Ballycastle Museum consequently forming part of the stage 3 application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund Capital Fund.

Further information was provided in the report under the following headings:

- Background
- Due Diligence
- Engagement and Reporting
- Costs

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee recommends approval for the purchase of 57 Castle Street, Ballycastle [REDACTED] for the purposes of both extension and renovation of the Ballycastle Museum project, and that subject to approval, that a report is taken to Land & Property Sub Committee for consideration.

Alderman Callan stated that he looked forward to the future development of the facility. Councillor McShane acknowledged the huge part played by the Friends of Ballycastle Museum in keeping the facility going.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor McShane and

AGREED – to recommend to Council approval for the purchase of 57 Castle Street, Ballycastle [REDACTED] for the purposes of both extension and renovation of the Ballycastle Museum project, and that subject to approval, that a report is taken to Land & Property Sub Committee for consideration.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’

Proposed by Councillor N Archibald
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

AGREED - to recommend that Council move ‘*In Public*’.

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

15.1 Support for the Co Londonderry Agricultural Show committee (Alderman Callan)

Can the Director provide an update on the operational support that is being offered to the Co Londonderry Agricultural Show committee?

The Director of Leisure and Development advised that the Co Londonderry Agricultural Show committee application to the Tourism Event Funding Process for 2025 was unsuccessful. She stated that the Tourism Events Team will be happy to provide further support for a 2026 application. For the 2025 event, officers have offered to meet with the applicant to assess whether any support can be provided within the parameters of Council policy.

Alderman Callan stated that he is keen that Council explores what operational support it can provide and asked that Limavady DEA Councillors attend the

meeting with the Agricultural Show committee. The Committee indicated that they were content with this proposal.

AGREED – to recommend to Council that Limavady DEA Councillors are invited to the meeting with the Co Londonderry Agricultural Show committee.

15.2 Future external engagement strategy to promote the Borough (Alderman Callan)

Can the Director provide an update on developing a future external engagement strategy to promote our Borough - given the recent success with the Westminster visit to campaign for our Growth Deal.

The Director of Leisure and Development referred Alderman Callan to the ExportExplore: Selling Causeway Coast & Glens report brought to Leisure and Development in December 2024. She outlined various actions that have been undertaken in the past three months and some future medium- to long-term actions that will be undertaken.

Alderman Callan emphasised the need for proactive, ongoing engagement at Westminster. The Director of Leisure and Development advised that this can be taken forward through the Local Economic Partnership, and advised that CC&GBC had just been offered a place at a Trade NI event at Westminster.

15.3 Invest NI Engagement (Alderman Callan)

Can the Director provide an update on Invest NI client visits to our Borough over the last year and what investment has been attracted to our Borough through engagements with Invest NI?

The Director of Leisure and Development advised that there had been a total of six Invest NI visits to the Borough in the past two years. She advised that Invest NI did not provide information on investment.

Alderman Callan stated that a clear message needs to be sent to Invest NI that we need to see more from them, and a strategic discussion is needed. The Director of Leisure and Development stated that the Invest NI subregional strategy is an attempt to improve this situation and that the Local Economic Partnership is the best avenue to push this agenda.

15.4 Plan for Coleraine Market Yard (Councillor Stirling)

Can the director outline if the Dept have put forward a plan for the Coleraine Market Yard for the Coleraine Future Town Fund?

The Director of Leisure and Development advised that a huge consultation process is required for the Coleraine Future Town Fund, with the consultation framework currently being developed, and that it is not Council's role to put forward proposals. Councillor Stirling stated that developing the Market Yard would be a significant economic boost for Coleraine.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 9.46pm.

Chair