

**THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2026**

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<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1.	The Mayor's Business	<b>Received</b>
2.	Apologies	<b>Alderman Hunter, McAuley Councillor Kennedy, McGlinchey, McQuillan, Nicholl</b>
3.	Declaration of Members' Interests	<b>None</b>
4.	Deputation: Utilities Regulator	<b>Received</b>
5.	Minutes of The Council Meeting held Tuesday 3 February 2026	<b>Confirmed as a correct record</b>
6.	Minutes of the Special Council Meeting (Rates Strike) held Tuesday 12 February 2026	<b>Confirmed as a correct record</b>
7.	Minutes of Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 10 February 2026	<b>Adopted and Recommendations therein approved</b>
8.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 February 2026	
	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
8.1	Sport and Wellbeing Centre Opening Hours (Item 14)	<b>To be discussed 'In Committee'</b>
8.2	Adoption of the Minutes	<b>Adopted and Recommendations therein approved</b>

<b>9.</b>	Minutes of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held Tuesday 24 February 2026	<b><i>Adopted and Recommendations therein approved</i></b>
<b>10.</b>	Matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel	<b><i>None</i></b>
<b>11.</b>	Conferences	<b><i>None</i></b>
<b>12.</b>	Correspondence	<b><i>Noted</i></b>
<b>13.</b>	Consultation Schedule	<b><i>Noted</i></b>
<b>14.</b>	Seal Documents	<b><i>Seal Affixed (Items i-v)</i></b>
	In Committee (Item 15)	
<b>15.</b>	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 February 2026 <i>'In Committee'</i>	
	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
<b>15.1</b>	Sport and Wellbeing Centre Opening Hours (Item 14)	<b><i>To agree Option 4 - to Extend both Monday-Thursday by 1hrs &amp; Saturday &amp; Sunday by 1.5hrs, and to agree Option 1 – Membership Products &amp; Pricing to remain unchanged for a period of 12 months initially.</i></b>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER ON  
TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2026 AT 7.00 PM**

- In the Chair : The Mayor, Councillor McMullan
- Members Present : Alderman Boyle, Brown Stewart, Callan, Coyle,  
Fielding, Knight-McQuillan, S McKillop, Scott
- Councillors Anderson, C Archibald, N Archibald,  
Bateson, Callaghan, Chivers, Elder, Holmes,  
Huggins, Kane, Kyle, Mairs, McAuley, McCully,  
McGurk, McShane, Nicholl, Peacock, Schenning,  
Storey, Watson, Watton, Wilson, Wisener
- Officers Present : D Jackson, Chief Executive  
A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services  
M Jones, Council Solicitor (R)  
W McCullough, Head of Sport and Wellbeing (R)  
A Hamilton, Democratic and Central Services Manager (R)  
U Harper, Committee & Member Services Officer
- In Attendance: J French, Chief Executive, Utilities Regulator  
B Cantlay, Consumer Protection and Enforcement Director,  
Utilities Regulator  
B Mulhern, Networks and Energy Futures Director, Utilities  
Regulator
- C McTaggart, ICT Officer  
L Boyd, ICT Officer
- Press: (3 No) (R)  
Public (5 No) (R)

**Key** – R = Attended Remotely

The Mayor advised Council of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded.

**1. THE MAYOR'S BUSINESS**

The Mayor stated that, as part of International Women's Day 2026, two pupils from Ballycastle High School and two pupils from Cross and Passion College Ballycastle shadowed him as "Mayor for the day". He stated that they had a great day, attending five functions across the Borough, in Limavady, Cloonavin and

finishing up at the library in Ballycastle. He stated that the four pupils really enjoyed the day and were a credit to their schools and their families.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were recorded for Alderman Hunter, Alderman McAuley, Councillor Kennedy, Councillor McGlinchey, Councillor McQuillan, and Councillor Nicholl.

## **3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Wisener declared an Interest on Agenda Item No.12, Correspondence. Having declared an interest, Alderman Wisener did not leave the Chamber during consideration of this Item.

## **4. DEPUTATION: UTILITIES REGULATOR**

The Mayor welcomed the representatives from the Utilities Regulator: John French, Chief Executive, Brian Cantlay, Consumer Protection and Enforcement Director, and Barbara Mulhern, Networks and Energy Futures Director.

The Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator delivered a presentation, the key points of which were:

- The Utilities Regulator is an economic regulator and an independent non-ministerial government department.
- It is governed by a publicly appointed Board and is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through financial and annual reporting obligations
- It is responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries, to promote the short and long-term interests of consumers.
- It is not a policy-making department of government, but it makes sure that the energy and water utility industries in Northern Ireland are regulated and developed within ministerial policy as set out in its statutory duties.
- Its objective is to protect the short and long-term interests of electricity, gas, water and sewerage consumers with regard to price and quality of service.
- Regulation is performed via price controls, markets, Networks and Energy Futures, consumer protection and enforcement.

### **\* Councillor Kane joined the meeting during consideration of this Item at 7:13pm.**

Councillor Peacock stated that constituents are worried about the recent increase in oil and gas prices and asked what the Utilities Regulator is doing with the Consumer Council and the NI Executive to ensure that prices are fair and that there is no profiteering.

The Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator stated that they have no statutory powers in respect of heating oil. He stated that while oil and gas both fluctuate on the market, gas is bought over an 18 or 24 month period and so consumers get a blended price rather than the spikes that can be seen with oil prices. He advised that the Utilities Regulator monitors the market to allow the two main gas companies a regulated profit that cannot be more than 2%.

In response to Councillor Peacock's question about what is being done to harmonise prices geographically, the Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator explained that the reason for regional differences across NI is due to the different network cost for laying the pipe in different regions.

Councillor Peacock asked what capital investment the Utilities Regulator has approved for this area to address the issue of waste water infrastructure. The Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator stated that NI Water should engage with all stakeholders in developing its business plan. The business plan is submitted to the Utilities Regulator, which ensures that the costs detailed in it are the best price available. The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Director stated that even if sufficient funding were provided to NI Water, it would still take time for the infrastructure issues to be fixed.

Councillor Holmes stated that there are serious issues with power coming up to this area. He stated that another cable to the north coast is needed to allow for investment in the area. He raised the issue with the lack of waste water infrastructure. He queried the NIE dividend going to the Department for Infrastructure.

The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Director stated that large parts of the electricity network are now saturated. He stated that there are bottlenecks in the system and that while there are projects looking at how to address that, it is a slow process to develop the infrastructure. He stated that he would be happy to reach out to Councillor Holmes in respect of localised problems with electricity supply.

The Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator stated that funding is a major issue for NI Water and that while it is important to ensure that money is being spent efficiently, NI Water does not have enough money to invest in waste water infrastructure. He referred to the situation in England, but Councillor Holmes stated that the privatised system in England is not a good benchmark for NI Water. The Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator advised that the benchmarking is done to compare the cost of equipment, and that the problem in Northern Ireland is in respect of funding rather than profiteering. The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Director stated that Northern Ireland does not have the treatment capacity to link new developments to the works.

Councillor Wilson asked whether Net Zero and the climate targets are likely to have an impact on prices going forward. The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Director stated that different circumstances affect the value of different forms of energy infrastructure, and that the Utilities Regulator tries to be independent and consumer-focused.

Councillor Storey expressed concern regarding the costs charged by NIE for connection to the grid and asked how this price can be made more realistic. He also asked what legislation would be required to allow the Utilities Regulator to intervene in respect of oil prices.

The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Director described the process of contestability, whereby a consumer can go to the market to see if they can get elements of their connection work carried out for a lower price than that quoted by NIE. He advised that the Utilities Regulator is also looking at contestability of transmission in respect of larger projects. He advised that in late 2025, the Department for the Economy announced a decision to socialise distribution connection costs, so the connection cost will be socialised across the whole consumer base rather than falling to an individual. He advised that licence modifications in respect of this decision are currently being undertaken and it is hoped that the policy will be in place by summer 2026.

The Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator stated that the NI Executive would be required to introduce legislation to allow the Utilities Regulator to regulate in respect of home heating oil costs. If this were to happen, the Utilities Regulator could work to ensure that prices are fair for consumers and introduce codes of practice in respect of consumer protection. In response to a question from Councillor Holmes, the Chief Executive of the Utilities Regulator confirmed that the NI Executive could legislate that some of the strategic heating oil reserve is held for Northern Ireland.

There being no other questions, the Mayor thanked the representatives from the Utilities Regulator for attending the meeting.

\* **The representatives from the Utilities Regulator left the meeting at 8pm.**

## **5. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2026**

Copy previously circulated, presented as read by the Mayor.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes

Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held Tuesday 3 February 2026 are confirmed as a correct record.

**6. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING (RATES STRIKE) HELD TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2026**

Copy previously circulated, presented as read by the Mayor.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins  
Seconded by Alderman Scott and

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting (Rates Strike) held Tuesday 12 February 2026 are confirmed as a correct record.

**7. MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2026**

Copy, previously circulated, presented as read by the Chair of the Environmental Services Committee, Alderman S McKillop.

Proposed by Alderman S McKillop  
Seconded by Councillor Huggins and

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 10 February 2026 are confirmed as a correct record.

**8. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2026**

Copy, previously circulated, presented as read by the Chair of the Leisure and Development Committee, Councillor Anderson.

**Matters Arising**

**8.1 Sport and Wellbeing Centre Opening Hours (Item 14)**

The Mayor advised Members that this Item was deferred until full Council and would be heard at the end of the meeting, In Committee.

**8.2 Adoption of the Minutes**

Proposed by Councillor Anderson  
Seconded by Alderman Scott and

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 February 2026 are confirmed as a correct record.

**9. MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2026**

Copy, previously circulated, presented as read by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee Chair, Councillor McShane.

Proposed by Councillor McShane  
Seconded by Councillor C Archibald and

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held Tuesday 24 February 2026 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

#### 10. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

#### 11. CONFERENCES

There were no Conferences.

#### 12. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chief Executive.

##### **Purpose of Report**

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

The following correspondence has been received:

**Gail Downey, Riding for the Disabled Association** (email dated 17 February 2026, copy previously circulated)

Re: Gala Ball

##### **Extract**

*On behalf of RDA Causeway Coast & Glens, I am writing to invite Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council to support our Biennial RDA Ball, taking place on Saturday 14 November in the Bushtown Hotel, Coleraine. This event is our largest and most vital fundraiser, and we would very much welcome the Council's support through the purchase of tickets (£75 each) or a table. Our RDA group is entirely volunteer-led and receives no government or statutory funding, yet we deliver a vital, cross-community service to the people of this council area. Through the power of horses and high-quality equestrian facilities, we support multiple statutory priorities, including health, education, justice, inclusion, and community wellbeing. Our service users include, but are not limited to:-*

- *Children and young people across the full and complex spectrum covered by the term disabled – working with local schools and colleges as well as individuals referred to us through Social Services*
- *Young people experiencing disadvantage, trauma, or significant personal challenges – working with our Local Health Board Multi-Disciplinary Team and Women’s Aid*
- *Those excluded from mainstream education, delivering curriculum linked equine assisted programmes*
- *Probationers, individuals on community service, and prisoners from Magilligan as they approach the end of their sentences — providing structured placements, helping them rebuild the confidence & responsibility to reintegrate into society*
- *Our elderly community, offering connection, purpose, and joy through meaningful engagement with our herd*

*We believe this breadth of work makes our RDA group a significant asset to the local council area. We own and operate our own 22-acre premises, which includes, what we are proud to say, are the best equestrian facilities in Northern Ireland. In addition to our therapeutic and community programmes, we also provide BHS-approved riding lessons to able-bodied local residents in the evenings, ensuring our centre is active, inclusive, and rooted in the wider community.*

*As already mentioned, despite this scale and impact, we receive no public funding. Our work is sustained through fundraising, donations, and a modest income from arena hire — income which falls far short of covering the true costs of running and maintaining our centre and caring for our horses year-round. The Ball is therefore essential to ensuring that we can continue delivering these services safely, professionally, and sustainably. Support from the Council would not only help secure our future but would also publicly recognise the value of a service that proactively supports health, education, justice, and community wellbeing within your area.*

*We would be delighted to welcome representatives from the Council to attend the Ball as an acknowledgement of the Council’s support.*

*Thank you for your time and for the work you do on behalf of our community. We would be very happy to provide further information or discuss our work in more detail if that might be helpful.*

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that Council considers the correspondence and contact RDA directly if they wish to purchase a ticket.

Council NOTED the correspondence.

### 13. CONSULTATION SCHEDULE

The following Consultation Documents were listed:

- Northern Ireland Policing Board, Policing Board; Communications and Engagement Audit, submission by 2 March 2026
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Draft Heritage Strategy, submission by 16 March 2026
- Department of Education, Consultation on the draft Executive ELC Strategy, submission by 24 March 2026
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Proposed Performance Improvement Objectives 2026 to 2027, submission by 2 April 2026
- Department of Education, Consultation on the Five-Year Education Budget Strategy: Delivering a Stable, Sustainable and High-Quality Education System submission by 3 April 2026

Council NOTED the Consultation Schedule.

### 14. SEAL DOCUMENTS

Members were advised of the undernoted items for signing and sealing by Council, approval having been previously granted and all necessary legislative requirements being met.

Seal Documents

- (i) Grave Registry Certificates, No's 6143 to 6162;
- (ii) Lease relating to a Substation Site at Lands at rear of Coleraine Leisure Centre, Railway Street, Coleraine, BT52 1PB – Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Limited (L&PSASC – 260107, CPR – 260127, CM – 260203)
- (iii) Licence Agreement – Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Frazer Foyle Holdings Limited for the use of the premises at Magilligan Point for the purposes of the Ferry Service from 1st April 2026 – 30th September 2026 (Approved under the Scheme of Delegation in February 2026 by the Director of Corporate Services under Section 4, Paragraph 4.6)
- (iv) Lease, NIE Substation Site at Castle Walk, Castlerock – CC&GBC and Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Limited (LPSASC – 260204, CPR – 260224, CM – 260303)
- (v) Planning Agreement for LA01/2024/0814/F Unit 2, Riverside Regional Centre, Coleraine.

Proposed by Alderman S McKillop  
Seconded by Alderman Callan and

**RESOLVED** – That the sealing of documents, as listed, are approved (Items i-v).

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

Proposed by Alderman Scott  
Seconded by Councillor Kane and

**RESOLVED** – that Council move 'In Committee'.

- \* **Press and Public were disconnected from the meeting at 8.08pm**

*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.*

### **15. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2026**

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) was previously circulated.

#### **Matters Arising**

#### **15.1 Sport and Wellbeing Centre Opening Hours (Item 14)**

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

#### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the work to date on the review of the operational opening hours of Council's Major Leisure Facilities and to seek Members approval on the preferred option.

Further information is provided in the report.

#### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and make a recommendation on which option they wish to adopt;

- Option 1 - Do Nothing.
- Option 2 - Extend Monday to Thursday evening opening by 1 hour.
- Option 3 - Extend Saturday & Sunday opening by 1.5 hours.
- Option 4 - Extend both Monday-Thursday by 1hrs & Saturday & Sunday by 1.5hrs.

Additionally, Members are asked to make a recommendation as to how they wish to recover the costs associated with the adoption of the chosen option;

- Option 1 – Membership Products & Pricing to remain unchanged for a period of 12 months initially.

- Option 2 – Increase Centre Membership Rates by 10%.

Both recommendations to be reviewed in 12 months.

Councillor Wilson proposed Option 4 - to Extend both Monday-Thursday by 1hrs and Saturday and Sunday by 1.5hrs, and Option 1 – Membership Products and Pricing to remain unchanged for a period of 12 months initially. This was seconded by Councillor Anderson. Councillor Peacock spoke in support of this proposal.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson

Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

**RESOLVED** – to agree Option 4 - to Extend both Monday-Thursday by 1hrs & Saturday & Sunday by 1.5hrs, and to agree Option 1 – Membership Products & Pricing to remain unchanged for a period of 12 months initially.

**MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’**

Proposed by Councillor N Archibald

Seconded by Councillor Kane and

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

This being all the business, the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 8.10pm.

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Mayor