

**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2026**

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
1.	Apologies	<i>Councillor N Archibald, Elder, Wisener</i>	<i>N/A</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>None</i>	<i>N/A</i>
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 th February 2026		
3.1	Town of Culture Application (Item 6)	<i>Information</i>	
3.2	Adoption of the Minutes	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>	<i>N/A</i>
4.	PEACEPLUS Layde Path & Cottage Wood	<i>To recommend to Council:</i> <i>1.Approval to proceed to Stage 2 for full design and build of the Layde Path and Cottage Wood project with £1,185,113 funding through the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.</i> <i>2.That the PEACEPLUS Partnership continues to progress this project under delegated authority from Council, proceeding to complete all Capital Project Stages</i>	

		<i>through to completion (Stage 3 & 4). Should the funding situation change or if the project costs exceed the costs noted in this report Officers will bring a report back into Committee requesting any necessary approvals.</i> <i>3.Details of Tender Assessment and Report to be taken to Capital Projects Working Group (CPWG) for review and approval prior to proceeding to each Stage.</i> <i>4.Officers will provide update reports to members after each stage, to update the members on progress and costs.</i>	
5.	PEACEPLUS Girona Coastal Path	<i>To recommend to Council:</i> <i>1.Approval to proceed to Stage 2 for full design and build of the Girona Coastal Path Project with £1,291,386 funding through the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.</i> <i>2.That the PEACEPLUS Partnership continues to progress this project under delegated authority from Council, proceeding to complete all Capital Project Stages through to</i>	

		completion (Stages 3 & 4). Should the funding situation change or if the project costs exceed the costs noted in this report Officers will bring a report back into Committee requesting any necessary approvals. 3.Details of Tender Assessment and Report to be taken to Capital Projects Working Group (CPWG) for review and approval prior to proceeding to each Stage. 4.Officers will provide update reports to members after each stage, to update the members on progress and costs.	
6.	IFA Grassroots Fund 2026	To recommend to Council approval to submit an application to the IFA Grassroots Community Facilities Fund to replace the grass pitch at Parker Avenue, Portrush with a new accessible artificial grass pitch.	31 March 2027
7.	Ballycastle Sea Wall	Noted	May 2026
8.	Tourism Large Events and Growth Fund	Noted	March 2027
9.	Community Festivals Fund	Noted	31 March 2027

10.	Leisure and Development Financial Update	Noted	
11.	USA 250 Economic Interventions	Noted	31 March 2028
12.	20 years of Causeway Speciality Market	Noted	
13.	Labour Market Partnership Annual Reports	Noted	March 2026
14.	Correspondence		
14.1	Correspondence from the Harry Gregg Foundation	To recommend that Council engages with the Executive Office to explore the potential for the Urban Villages Programme to be extended to include Coleraine.	
	In Committee (Items 15 – 20.1 inclusive)		
15.	Armed Forces Update	Noted	June 2026
16.	SSRP Garvagh Path Tender Report	To recommend that Council approves this Tender Report and instructs officers to appoint Northstone Materials Limited for the tender price of £52,795.41.	30 June 2026
17.	Growth Deal – Financial Deal Document	To recommend that Council approves the Growth Deal – Financial Deal Document and current budget allocation to secure the achievement of this	

		major milestone and formal Growth Deal signing event with the Northern Ireland Executive and UK Government on 29th April 2026.	
18.	Appointment of Economic Growth Advisor	To recommend to Council that the Economic Growth Adviser is appointed via the framework with the Strategic Investment Board.	
19.	Ballycastle Leisure Centre Organisational Design	To recommend that Council approves the Staffing Structure for Ballycastle Leisure Centre.	March 2027
20.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)		
20.1	Cloughmills play park (Councillor Kane)	Information	

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
AND VIA MS TEAMS ON
WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2026 AT 7.00PM**

In the Chair: Councillor Anderson (C)

Members Present: Alderman Brown Stewart (C), Callan (C), Fielding (C), McAuley (R);
Councillors Bateson (R), Holmes (C), Kennedy (C), Kyle (C), McCully (C), McGurk (R), McShane (R), Schenning (R), Watson (R)

Officers Present: D Jackson, Chief Executive (C)
W McCullough, Head of Sport and Wellbeing (C)
N McGurk, Head of Prosperity and Place (C)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism and Recreation (C)
P O'Brien, Funding Unit Manager (R)
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)
J Beggs, SIB Project Manager (R)
U Harper, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: A Lennox, ICT Operations Manager (C)
L Boyd, ICT Operations Officer (C)

Press 2 no. (R)

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

Substitutions: Alderman Fielding substituted for Councillor Elder.

The Chief Executive undertook a roll call.

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

The Chair expressed condolences to the Head of Sport and Wellbeing on the recent loss of her mother, and to Councillor Wisener on the loss of his mother-in-law.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor N Archibald, Councillor Elder, and Councillor Wisener.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17th FEBRUARY 2026

Summary, previously circulated.

3.1 Town of Culture Application (Item 6)

Alderman Callan requested an update on the progress of the UK Town of Culture application. The Chief Executive stated that the Head of Community and Culture would provide an update to the Limavady DEA Councillors. Alderman Callan stated that the minutes should refer to the “UK Town of Culture”.

3.2 Adoption of the Minutes

AGREED – that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17th February 2026 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. PEACEPLUS LAYDE PATH & COTTAGE WOOD

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

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the implementation of the PEACEPLUS Capital Project ‘The Layde Path, Cottage Wood & Ronán’s Way Project’ and request the Leisure and Development Committee to approve the project to move to Stage 2 of the Council’s approval process for the development of capital projects.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

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

1. Approval to proceed to Stage 2 for full design and build of the Layde Path and Cottage Wood project with £1,185,113 funding through the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.
2. That the PEACEPLUS Partnership continues to progress this project under delegated authority from Council, proceeding to complete all Capital Project Stages through to completion (Stage 3 & 4). Should the funding situation

- change or if the project costs exceed the costs noted in this report Officers will bring a report back into Committee requesting any necessary approvals.
3. Details of Tender Assessment and Report to be taken to Capital Projects Working Group (CPWG) for review and approval prior to proceeding to each Stage.
 4. Officers will provide update reports to members after each stage, to update the members on progress and costs.

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Alderman Fielding and

AGREED – To recommend to Council:

1. Approval to proceed to Stage 2 for full design and build of the Layde Path and Cottage Wood project with £1,185,113 funding through the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.
2. That the PEACEPLUS Partnership continues to progress this project under delegated authority from Council, proceeding to complete all Capital Project Stages through to completion (Stage 3 & 4). Should the funding situation change or if the project costs exceed the costs noted in this report Officers will bring a report back into Committee requesting any necessary approvals.
3. Details of Tender Assessment and Report to be taken to Capital Projects Working Group (CPWG) for review and approval prior to proceeding to each Stage.
4. Officers will provide update reports to members after each stage, to update the members on progress and costs.

5. PEACEPLUS GIRONA COASTAL PATH

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the implementation of the PEACEPLUS Capital Project 'Upgrade of Girona Coastal Path' and request the Leisure and Development Committee to approve the project to move to Stage 2 of the Council's approval process for the development of capital projects.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

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

1. Approval to proceed to Stage 2 for full design and build of the Girona Coastal Path Project with £1,291,386 funding through the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.

2. That the PEACEPLUS Partnership continues to progress this project under delegated authority from Council, proceeding to complete all Capital Project Stages through to completion (Stages 3 & 4). Should the funding situation change or if the project costs exceed the costs noted in this report Officers will bring a report back into Committee requesting any necessary approvals.
3. Details of Tender Assessment and Report to be taken to Capital Projects Working Group (CPWG) for review and approval prior to proceeding to each Stage.
4. Officers will provide update reports to members after each stage, to update the members on progress and costs.

Alderman Fielding welcomed the project. He stated that it is good for the village of Portballintrae and it highlights the heritage of this coastal area. He noted that the project will address much needed repairs to the path and the bridge.

Councillor McShane thanked the Funding Unit Manager for securing the additional funding. The Chair commended the work of the PEACEPLUS team.

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Alderman Fielding and

AGREED – To recommend to Council:

1. Approval to proceed to Stage 2 for full design and build of the Girona Coastal Path Project with £1,291,386 funding through the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.
2. That the PEACEPLUS Partnership continues to progress this project under delegated authority from Council, proceeding to complete all Capital Project Stages through to completion (Stages 3 & 4). Should the funding situation change or if the project costs exceed the costs noted in this report Officers will bring a report back into Committee requesting any necessary approvals.
3. Details of Tender Assessment and Report to be taken to Capital Projects Working Group (CPWG) for review and approval prior to proceeding to each Stage.
4. Officers will provide update reports to members after each stage, to update the members on progress and costs.

6. IFA GRASSROOTS FUND 2026

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide members with information on a funding opportunity from the Irish Football Association and to recommend applying to the fund to install a new, accessible artificial grass pitch at Parker Avenue, Portrush.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

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

- Approval to submit an application to the IFA Grassroots Community Facilities Fund to replace the grass pitch at Parker Avenue, Portrush with a new accessible artificial grass pitch.

Alderman McAuley thanked the Funding Unit for their work on this project. He noted that it highlighted the need to have as many shovel-ready projects as possible.

Councillor Kyle expressed his support for the project, stating that it will be a great addition for Portrush FC and a great opportunity for Portrush Youths.

Alderman Fielding commended the coaches for the sustained use of this pitch over the years and congratulated the Officers for getting the project to this stage.

Alderman Brown Stewart welcomed the investment in grassroots football and stated that a 3G pitch would bring many benefits, including a safer playing environment. He acknowledged the work of Officers on this project.

The Chief Executive provided Members with a brief update on the number of shovel-ready projects and noted Council's success in attracting funding.

Proposed by Alderman McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

AGREED – To recommend to Council approval to submit an application to the IFA Grassroots Community Facilities Fund to replace the grass pitch at Parker Avenue, Portrush with a new accessible artificial grass pitch.

7. BALLYCASTLE SEA WALL

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to update Members on the structural stability of the sea wall at the mouth of the River Margy, Ballycastle which has become compromised over a period of time, along with planned repair works.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

To protect the integrity of the seawall and promenade, these works are deemed essential. Elected Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

Committee NOTED the report.

* **Alderman Fielding left the Chamber at 7.18pm.**

8. TOURISM LARGE EVENTS AND GROWTH FUND

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the outcome of the Tourism Events Funding Programme 2026/27.

Further information is provided in the report.

Councillor Holmes stated that the more successful applications there are to this fund, the more the pot is split. He expressed concern that some bids may be inflated in anticipation of the full amount not being awarded. He asked that Council considers increasing the pot size and giving signature events a multi-year deal. The Chief Executive advised that Council could consider both options for future years.

Councillor Bateson requested that feedback be provided to groups that missed out on funding, and the Chief Executive advised that this would be facilitated.

Alderman Callan thanked the Funding Unit for their work. He noted that the Co. Londonderry Agricultural Show had been successful and he emphasised the need to support agricultural shows. He echoed the comments made by Councillor Holmes regarding the size of the funding pot and the provision of multi-year funding and suggested that, as a minimum, the funding pot be increased in line with inflation each year.

Alderman Callan advised that Alderman Fielding left the Chamber as he had to declare an interest in this Item.

Committee NOTED the report.

* **Alderman Fielding returned to the Chamber at 7.24pm.**

9. COMMUNITY FESTIVALS FUND

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the outcome of the Community Festivals Fund Grant Programme 2026/27.

Further information is provided in the report.

Councillor McShane acknowledged the help and support from this fund that allowed for the successful St Patrick's day festival to happen in Ballycastle. She stated that this fund acts as a stimulus to help groups attract other funding and she welcomed the benefits that it brings.

Committee NOTED the report.

10. LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL UPDATE

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the current financial position for the Leisure & Development directorate, as at Period 10.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

Councillor Holmes requested detail on the Sport and Wellbeing £292k negative variance in relation to employee costs. The Chief Executive advised that the Head of Sport and Wellbeing would contact him directly.

Committee NOTED the report.

11. USA 250 ECONOMIC INTERVENTIONS

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the development of the USA 250 Global Gateway Economic Programme, including an export-focused trade visit to the

United States, aimed at supporting local businesses to access new markets, increase export activity and generate measurable economic outcomes for the Borough.

Further information is provided in the report.

Alderman Callan advised that the LEP had agreed that this should be renamed as the “North America Economic Opportunity” as it is not just for this year. He stated that the NI Chamber has a Memorandum of Understanding with North Carolina and that it may be useful for the LEP to engage with this and develop a working relationship.

Committee NOTED the report.

12. 20 YEARS OF CAUSEWAY SPECIALITY MARKET

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the celebrations planned to mark 20 years of the Causeway Speciality Market (CSM) in Coleraine.

Further information is provided in the report.

Summary

Elected Members will receive regular updates as the 20th Anniversary CSM plans progress throughout 2026/27. An invitation will also be issued to all Members to attend the first themed market on Saturday, 11 April 2026.

Committee NOTED the report.

13. LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORTS

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the 2023-24 and the 2024-25 DfC Annual Report for the Labour Market Partnership.

The total budget for the 2023-24 Action Plan was £543,843.19 and the budget for the 2024-25 Action Plan was £485,391.01. LMP is 100% funded by the Department for Communities.

Further information is provided in the report.

Committee NOTED the report.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present Correspondence for Members' consideration.

14.1 Correspondence from the Harry Gregg Foundation via email (27 February 2026).

Following the presentation to the Leisure and Development Committee, The Harry Gregg Foundation is formally requesting that Council engages with the Executive Office to explore the potential for the Urban Villages Programme to be extended to include Coleraine.

Recommendation

The Leisure & Development Committee is asked to consider the request contained within the previously circulated correspondence.

Councillor Holmes stated that this would be a great asset to the town and proposed that Council engage with the Executive Office on this. Alderman Callan agreed that this was a good proposition.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Alderman Callan and

AGREED – To recommend that Council engages with the Executive Office to explore the potential for the Urban Villages Programme to be extended to include Coleraine.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

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

* **Press and Public left the meeting at 7.29pm.**

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. ARMED FORCES UPDATE

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) was previously circulated and presented as read by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an information update on the preparations for Armed Forces Day 2026.

Further information is provided in the report.

Elected Members are asked to note the contents of this monthly report for information.

Committee NOTED the report.

16. SSPP GARVAGH PATH TENDER REPORT

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 Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the outcome of the procurement process to appoint contractors to undertake the Clyde Park Garvagh lighting project as part of the Covid Recovery Small Settlement Regeneration Programme (CRSSRP).

Members are asked to consider the Capital Officers report attached and to approve the recommendation to proceed to appoint the contractor with the lowest acceptable tender price.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Leisure and Development Committee approves this Tender Report and instructs officers to appoint Northstone Materials Limited for the tender price of £52,795.41.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes

Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approves this Tender Report and instructs officers to appoint Northstone Materials Limited for the tender price of £52,795.41.

17. GROWTH DEAL – FINANCIAL DEAL DOCUMENT

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) was previously circulated and presented by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to request Members' approval of the Growth Deal – Financial Deal Document and current budget allocation to secure the achievement of this major milestone and the formal Growth Deal signing event with the Northern Ireland Executive and UK Government on 29th April 2026.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the Growth Deal – Financial Deal Document and current budget allocation to secure the achievement of this major milestone and formal Growth Deal signing event with the Northern Ireland Executive and UK Government on 29th April 2026.

Members are asked to note that an opportunity to revisit budget allocations and overall affordability will be brought back for decision later this year. As noted above, the final investment decision to progress all projects to Stage 3: Construction and appointment of contractor will be subject to final Council agreement and confirmation of capital affordability at that time.

Members are asked to note that the anticipated minimum 10% match funding contributions from Glenshane Community Development Limited, Enterprise Causeway and Grow the Glens have already been exceeded.

Alderman Callan welcomed this update and noted the work that has gone into getting to this stage. The Chair echoed these comments and commended the hard work by everyone involved.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the Growth Deal – Financial Deal Document and current budget allocation to secure the achievement of this major milestone and formal Growth Deal signing event with the Northern Ireland Executive and UK Government on 29th April 2026.

18. APPOINTMENT OF ECONOMIC GROWTH ADVISOR

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 Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the appointment of an Economic Growth Advisor as recommended by the Organisation Review Sub Committee.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the content of this report and recommend to Full Council that:

- The Economic Growth Adviser is appointed via the framework with the Strategic Investment Board.

Alderman Callan stated that this is a great initiative by the Council and stated that the external-facing aspect of the role is a key element. In response to his query regarding linking with Planning, the Chief Executive stated that a Planning representative is needed at the LEP.

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Alderman Brown Stewart and

AGREED – to recommend to Council that the Economic Growth Adviser is appointed via the framework with the Strategic Investment Board.

19. BALLYCASTLE LEISURE CENTRE ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

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 Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Member approval to adopt the proposed Staff Structure for Ballycastle Leisure Centre.

Further information is provided in the report.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve the Staffing Structure for Ballycastle Leisure Centre.

Councillor McShane proposed the recommendation, on the provision that there has been engagement with and support from the trade union. The Chief Executive advised that Council meets with the trade union on a monthly basis and they are content.

Proposed by Councillor McShane
Seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the Staffing Structure for Ballycastle Leisure Centre.

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

20.1 Cloughmills play park (Councillor Kane)

To ask for an update on progress of the delivery of a new play park in Cloughmills, following the public meeting in June 2025.

The Chief Executive advised that there has been an issue with identifying a suitable site. He stated that the next step is to get the key stakeholders together.

Councillor McShane thanked the Chief Executive for the update and noted that Councillor McQuillan and Councillor Peacock have been campaigning for this playpark.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’

Proposed by Councillor Kyle
Seconded by Alderman Callan and

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

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.45pm.

Chair