



**CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 28 MAY 2024**

No	Item	Summary of Key Recommendations
1.	Apologies	<i>Alderman Boyle, Councillors Nicholl, Peacock</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>None</i>
3.	Minutes of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held Tuesday 23 April 2024	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>
4.	Minutes of the Implementation Oversight Panel meeting held Monday 13 May 2024	<i>To recommend that the Minutes of the Implementation Oversight Panel Meeting held 13 May 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved</i>
5.	2024/25 Improvement Objectives Consultation Update	<i>Noted</i>
6.	Improvement Objectives 2023-24 Update	<i>Noted</i>
7.	Council Provision of Defibrillators	<i>to recommend to Council that there is a stepped approach to enhancing the provision of defibrillators in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Area. As follows:</i> <i>Stage 1. Provide defibrillators at designated seaside beaches as requested by the Countryside Team.</i>

		<p>Stage 2. Ask Council Departments to review the provision of Defibrillators at facilities they operate and enhance provision where appropriate.</p> <p>Stage 3. Review expenditure in September with the view to potentially offering funding to the public for the part or full funding of defibrillators subject to budget restrictions.</p> <p>Stage 4. Review the provision of Defibrillators in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area prior to the 2025/26 budget setting process.</p> <p>To further recommend that a map of defibrillation locations is provided on the Council website in a prominent position;</p> <p>To further recommend that, as part of stage 2, Council works with BT to identify suitable old phone boxes that could be used to house defibrillators.</p>
8.	Town Hall Usage	Noted
9.	Third Quarterly Report on Planning Performance 23 -24	Noted
9.1	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12(o)) Prioritisation of outstanding planning applications (Alderman Fielding)	Information
10.	D-Day 80 Anniversary	to recommend that Council undertakes paid, targeted

		<p>advertising for the D Day 80 Anniversary event.</p> <p>to recommend that Council note the progress for the D Day 80 anniversary.</p>
11.	108th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme	<p>to recommend to Council that in the event that the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor is unable to represent Council at the Somme Association services, a replacement is chosen via a ballot of all Members wishing to attend.</p> <p>To further recommend that this process is applied annually for the four year term of this Council.</p>
12.	Conferences	None
13.	Consultation	None
14.	Correspondence	
(i)	National Association of Councillors (H Legge, NAC, correspondence dated 22 April 2024)	<p>to recommend to Council to approve the renewal of the subscription fee for 2024 to 2025 for £3,200, and to agree to the renewal of this fee for the remainder of the term of this Council.</p>
15.	Matters for Reporting to the Partnership Panel	Nil
16.	Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillor Watton, Seconded by Councillor Wilson, (abbrev NI Housing Executive temporary accommodation)	<p>to recommend that Council lobbies the N.I Housing Executive to increase the suitable temporary accommodation available in this Borough. Frequently over the last six months there has</p>

		<p>not been a single bed available for local people.</p> <p>To further recommend that the Minister for Communities, the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive and the Housing Executive Causeway Area Manager be invited to Council to discuss the issue of housing.</p>
	'In Committee' (Items 17-21 inclusive)	
17.	Cyber-Security Firewall Subscriptions Renewal	to recommend to Council the renewal of the firewall subscriptions for a period of 12 months through Crown Commercial Services.
18.	Populating the Organisation Structure	Noted
19.	D1 2208/24 - 86 Main Street, Limavady – Letter of Support	to recommend that Council lends its support to Roe Valley Enterprises Limited for its proposed acquisition of 86 Main Street, Limavady, BT49 0ET.
20.	Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 1 May 2024	to recommend that Council adopt the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 1 May 2024 and recommendations therein approved.
21.	Transformation Programme – Record Keeping and Information Management	Noted
22.	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12(o))	None

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE
CORPORATE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS,
ON TUESDAY 28 MAY 2024
AT 7.00 PM**

- In the Chair:** Councillor Storey (Vice Chair)
- Present:** Alderman Coyle, Fielding, Knight-McQuillan, S McKillop
Councillors C Archibald, Huggins, Mairs, Jonathan McAuley,
McCully, McShane, Watson, Watton, Wilson
- Officers Present:** M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services
D Jackson, Chief Executive
D Dickson, Head of Planning
J McCarron, Performance Officer
U Harper, Committee and Member Services Officer
- In Attendance:** C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer
- Substitution:** Councillor Mairs substituted for Alderman Boyle

Press 2 no. (R)

Key: (R) Attended Remotely

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Boyle, Councillor Nicholl and Councillor Peacock.

The Chair stated that Councillor Nicholl had asked him to express his appreciation and thanks to Members for their support during the year.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD TUESDAY 23 APRIL 2024**

AGREED – that the Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting held Tuesday 23 April 2024 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. **MINUTES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT PANEL MEETING HELD MONDAY 13 MAY 2024**

Proposed by Councillor Watton
Seconded by Councillor Knight-McQuillan and

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Implementation Oversight Panel Meeting held Monday 13 May 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

5. **2024/25 IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES CONSULTATION UPDATE**

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members an update on the ongoing consultation on the Performance Improvement Objectives for 2024/25.

Background

Under the Performance Duty, Council is committed each year to consult on its proposed Improvement Objectives for inclusion in the upcoming Performance Improvement Plan.

Content

Council opened its Improvement Objectives consultation on 12th March 2024, and currently has just under 100 responses. This survey will remain open until Friday 14th June 2024.

Please see below three of the key questions presented in the consultation along with their current top-rated responses:

Q. What are the 3 most important issues facing you or your family just now?

- A.** Cost of living
- A.** Availability of local facilities
- A.** Car parking prices

Q. What should be the top priority for the Council and its partners in 2024/25?

- A.** Addressing the impact of increased cost of living

Q. Please highlight which 3 of the areas outlined below you would like to see Causeway Coast and Glens Council make improvements to?

- A.** Leisure and Recreation
- A.** Parks and Open Spaces
- A.** Economic Development

When asked to rate, for potential inclusion in the 2024/25 Plan, a number of current and historic Improvement Objective Themes, the top two rated responses for improvement focused work where:

- A.** Economic Development
- A.** Engagement with Citizens

The outcomes of this survey will be used to help inform the development of the Performance Improvement Plan for 2024/25 which will be presented to Council in June 2024.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Elected Members note the updates as set out in this report.

Committee NOTED the report.

6. IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2023-24 UPDATE

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Members, for information, an update on the performance against the outcomes and outputs set within the 2023/24 Performance Improvement Objectives.

Background

The five Performance Improvement Objectives for 2023/24 were agreed by Council in June 2023 and form part of Council's Performance Improvement Plan for 2023/24.

Content

Council is committed to regular reporting on Objectives such as these, and furthermore a fuller year-end report will be provided for Council as part of the annual Self-Assessment of Performance Report in September 2024.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee notes the content of this update report attached at Appendix 1 (previously circulated).

Committee NOTED the report.

7. COUNCIL PROVISION OF DEFIBRILLATORS

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

Purpose of Report

This report is written to address the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Dermot Nicholl and seconded by Councillor Cara McShane on 27th February 2023 as follows:

I would like to put forward this motion for the next full council meeting as a follow up to my 2015/16 motion as mentioned below.

In 2015/16 I had a motion in relation to defibrillators, so this is an update to that motion that was passed then, with an added request to establish a fund for

community / sports organisations to apply to. The British Heart Foundation can part-fund equipment, so I believe it is worth us exploring if we could establish a fund that would support this. I think this might have been established at one time in other Councils too.

"That this Council agrees to: Review and where appropriate, remedy its provision of defibrillators across its entire public estate to ensure no gaps exist in adequate service provision. This needs to include our leisure facilities, Council offices, Community centres and areas of high public footfall; Undertake a programme of training for staff who have daily contact with the public in the use of Defibrillators and CPR; and to explore establishing a fund for groups to apply to from across Causeway Coast and Glens to support funding this equipment in their communities."

Background

Defibrillators are provided across the Borough through a number of mechanisms. Such as private groups, the RNLI, the British Heart Foundation and via the Council.

The defibrillators can be hard wired into buildings or mobile and require access to power to charge them. If mounted outside, a specialised box that controls the environmental temperature to protect the defibrillator is required along with a lock and access mechanism to enable access.

The location of registered defibrillators is on the British Heart Foundation website and relates only to those with an external mount. Defibrillators that are located within buildings are not available for general public use and are therefore not on the BHF website. The map, previously circulated, shows the defibrillators registered with the British Heart Foundation in Red and the defibrillators provided by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council in Blue.

The RNLI provide defibrillators at major beaches they are supervising but only when staff are on duty during summer months.

The Council has approved 30k in the 2024/25 estimates for providing additional defibrillators where the need arises. The costs per defibrillator is set out below and includes the various options that can be additionally purchased.

Heartstart Defibrillator	£999
Carrying case	£131
Child/infant key	£100
AED prep kit	£15
Cabinet	£695
Total per unit	£1940

Each defibrillator requires to be mounted in a cabinet and hard wired into a power supply and will need to be inspected each week to check it is operational. The cost of electricity per annum is estimated at £60 and all external defibrillators will be registered with the British Heart Foundation.

There is also an initial cost of connecting to the electrical supply in any particular building. This cost will vary.

As an initial step Six defibrillators have been ordered to ensure they are available as and where the need arises this summer.

Proposals

The notice of motion has a number of elements. Firstly:

"That this Council agrees to: Review and where appropriate, remedy its provision of defibrillators across its entire public estate to ensure no gaps exist in adequate service provision. This needs to include our leisure facilities, Council offices, Community centres and areas of high public footfall;

Current Council facility defibrillator provision

The table below sets out the current provision of defibrillators at Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council facilities. A number of these are registered on the British Heart Foundation website as they are externally mounted, those that are internal are not registered.

Location with Defib / AED	On the British Heart Foundation Circuit External Mounted	Outside/Inside building
Ballymoney Office	YES	Inside
Cloonavin	YES	Inside
Limavady Office	YES	Inside
Sheskburn	YES	Inside
Coleraine Depot	YES	Inside
Andersons Park Tennis Pavilion	YES	Outside
Peter Thompson Hall Castlerock	YES	Outside
Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre	YES	Inside
Stranocum Community Centre	YES	Outside
Quay Road Playing Fields, Ballycastle	YES	Outside
Portballintrae Village Hall	YES	Outside
Drumaheglis Caravan Park	YES	Outside
Coleraine West Community Centre	NO	Inside

Rugby Avenue Playing Fields	NO	Inside
Ballysally Community Centre	NO	Inside
Scroggy Road Playing Fields	NO	Inside
Kilrea Sports Centre	NO	Inside
Roe Valley Leisure Centre	NO	Inside
Coleraine Leisure Centre	NO	Inside
Dungiven Sports Centre	NO	Inside
Jim Watt Sports Centre	NO	Inside
Benone	NO	Inside
Cushendall	None	
Cushendun	NO	Inside
Juniper Hill – Residents assoc	NO	Outside
Carrick Dhu -Residents assoc	NO	Outside

The provision of defibrillators in and outside Council premises requires a member of staff to be given responsibility to carry out a weekly check to ensure the equipment is functioning by recording the light indicators. There is also a requirement to replace any consumables used if the equipment is called upon in an emergency. Facility Managers therefore must be satisfied that they can fulfil these obligations before installing a defibrillator. A maintenance log is also required to be kept and updated.

Initial feedback received from Countryside staff as part of this initial review has indicated a deficiency in provision in beach areas where there is high footfall throughout the summer and a reduced but significant use at other times of the year. The RNLI do provide a level of cover but only when lifeguards are actually on duty during summer months. This potentially needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Some Departments within the Council do provide defibrillators and this is detailed in the table above. There is no Corporate approach in relation to where defibrillators should be located and it is a matter for each Departmental Director to decide if such provision is appropriate. The provision of funding in this years budget will present the opportunity for each Director to review provision in their operational areas and decide if there are grounds to install additional defibrillators and identify suitable locations.

Generally according to the British Heart Foundation mapping, there appears to be fairly good provision across most of the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area but obviously there is now an opportunity to enhance this.

Another aspect of the Notice of Motion is as follows:

“Undertake a programme of training for staff who have daily contact with the public in the use of Defibrillators and CPR; and to explore establishing a fund

for groups to apply to from across Causeway Coast and Glens to support funding this equipment in their communities."

Defibrillators purchased by the Council are fully automatic and designed to systematically provide instruction in such a way that someone with no training can operate them. There are courses available on operating the devices mainly aimed at building confidence and awareness. Managers could avail of this training for their staff.

Options

"That this Council agrees to: Review and where appropriate, remedy its provision of defibrillators across its entire public estate to ensure no gaps exist in adequate service provision. This needs to include our leisure facilities, Council offices, Community centres and areas of high public footfall;

To address this aspect of the Notice of Motion it is suggested that Council departments are asked to review provision in their respective operational areas and put forward proposals regarding potential locations for defibrillators. Those submitting requests will be required to have in place a suitable location, an electricity supply and staff to inspect and update consumables as required. Initial consideration should perhaps be given to seaside areas within the Borough where there is a large footfall over the coming summer months.

Undertake a programme of training for staff who have daily contact with the public in the use of Defibrillators and CPR; and to explore establishing a fund for groups to apply to from across Causeway Coast and Glens to support funding this equipment in their communities."

To address this element of the Notice of Motion it is suggested that a report be brought back in September 2024 to update Elected Members on expenditure to date with regard to the purchase of new defibrillators and identify any funding that could be made available to the public within their communities to purchase or part purchase defibrillators.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council that there is a stepped approach to enhancing the provision of defibrillators in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Area. As follows:

Stage 1. Provide defibrillators at designated seaside beaches as requested by the Countryside Team.

Stage 2. Ask Council Departments to review the provision of Defibrillators at facilities they operate and enhance provision where appropriate.

Stage 3. Review expenditure in September with the view to potentially offering funding to the public for the part or full funding of defibrillators subject to budget restrictions.

Stage 4. Review the provision of Defibrillators in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area prior to the 2025/26 budget setting process.

Councillor Huggins expressed her thanks to the team who had put this report together and welcomed the Stage 1 plans. She asked that, when the provision for an area is being considered, the elected Members for each area be included in that process.

Councillor Wilson welcomed the report and its recommendations. He noted that there is a slight issue with the mapping and registration of defibrillators and suggested that the Council work with the British Heart Foundation to get an up-to-date map. He proposed the recommendations, with the addition of a recommendation that a map of defibrillators be provided on the Council website, with the link at the front and centre of the website.

The Chief Executive advised that The Circuit is the central database of validated and operational defibrillators. He advised that the Council is working towards maximising accessibility of defibrillators by, for example, trying to locate defibrillators externally where possible.

Councillor McShane welcomed the report and seconded the recommendations. She asked that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee receive regular updates on this matter. She noted that there is an issue with defibrillators not being registered on The Circuit.

Councillor McCully proposed that, as part of stage 2, Council could look into the possibility of using old phone boxes to house defibrillators, as part of the BT scheme to transfer ownership of them.

In response to a query from Councillor Watton, the Chief Executive advised that, provided it were confirmed to be in good working order, a second-hand defibrillator could potentially be reused.

Alderman Knight-McQuillan suggested that Council undertake PR to raise awareness of the problem of unregistered defibrillators, such as those housed in churches, to get as many as possible registered on The Circuit. In response to her query regarding maintenance checks, the Chief Executive advised that the inspection of defibrillators would be arranged on a case by case basis.

The Chair confirmed with the proposer and seconder of the recommendations that they were content to include Councillor McCully's proposal regarding phone boxes as part of the recommendations.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McShane and

AGREED – to recommend to Council that there is a stepped approach to enhancing the provision of defibrillators in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Area. As follows:

Stage 1. Provide defibrillators at designated seaside beaches as requested by the Countryside Team.

Stage 2. Ask Council Departments to review the provision of Defibrillators at facilities they operate and enhance provision where appropriate.

Stage 3. Review expenditure in September with the view to potentially offering funding to the public for the part or full funding of defibrillators subject to budget restrictions.

Stage 4. Review the provision of Defibrillators in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area prior to the 2025/26 budget setting process.

To further recommend that a map of defibrillation locations is provided on the Council website in a prominent position;

To further recommend that, as part of stage 2, Council works with BT to identify suitable old phone boxes that could be used to house defibrillators.

8. TOWN HALL USAGE

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

Purpose of Report

This report is written in response to Elected Member feedback at the April Corporate Policy and Resources meeting in relation to usage figures and marketing of the Town Hall.

Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough manages 4 Town Halls. They are Portrush Town Hall, Ballymoney Town Hall, Coleraine Town Hall and Kilrea Town Hall. The usage figures are detailed below (circulated).

Elected Members also referred to the opportunity to increase marketing of the Town Halls. Over the last two years the Town Halls have been staffed to reflect usage as opposed to full time posts and a substantial amount of staff costs are absorbed via cover by rotation of the caretakers in Cloonavin. While there is an opportunity to expand the marketing of the Town Halls and potentially increase usage, any substantial increase in bookings will require an extended staffing structure and this could result in additional annual operational cost. The Buildings Facility Manager has undertaken to look at this with a view to initially optimising bookings within current staffing arrangements.

In response to an Elected Member query, all bookings are charged on the basis of single hour usage up to 5.00pm daily.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council that the information in this report be noted.

In response to a query from Alderman Knight-McQuillan, the Chief Executive advised that bookings are coordinated centrally.

Committee NOTED the report.

- * **The Chief Executive left the Chamber at 7.22pm.**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised Members that Alderman Fielding's item of Any Other Reasonable Business would be considered as part of item 9.

9. THIRD QUARTERLY REPORT ON PLANNING PERFORMANCE 23 -24

The Chair clarified that Planning Committee members did not need to declare an interest in this item as it was a policy issue.

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Planning.

Background

Schedule 4 of The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out the statutory performance targets for the Planning Department for major development applications, local development applications and enforcement cases. The Planning Department Business Plan 2023-24 sets out the key performance indicators to progress towards improving Planning performance against these targets,

The statutory targets are:

- Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 30 weeks
- Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks
- 70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.

The Northern Ireland Planning Statistics is an official statistics publication issued by Analysis, Statistics & Research Team within Department for Infrastructure. It provides the official statistics for each Council on each of the statutory targets and is published quarterly and on an annual basis. The Third Quarter 2023/24 Statistical Bulletin was published on 28 March 2024 providing planning statistics for this period. It also provides a summary of Council progress across the three statutory targets.

Details

[Northern Ireland planning statistics October - December 2023 | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](#) provides the link to the published bulletin.

Development Management Planning Applications

Table 1 (previously circulated) provides a summary of performance in relation to the statutory targets for major development applications and local development applications for the third quarter of 2023-24 business year and provides a comparison of performance against all 11 Councils and against Business Plan KPIs.

In the Q3, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council issued 5 major planning applications, two of which were processed within the 30 week statutory target and three outside the target, resulting in an average processing time of 54.2 weeks for Q3 and 41.9 weeks year to date (10 applications decided/withdrawn). Unfortunately, this resulted in neither the Statutory or Business Plan targets being met for major planning applications. Nevertheless, this was the fourth fastest processing time out of all 11 councils year to date. During Q3, we received the highest number of major applications and 3rd highest received year to date.

Over the same period 284 local category applications were decided or withdrawn, exceeding the number of applications received and reducing the total number of live applications from end of Q2 by 5%. The focus over the quarter of reducing the number of older applications in the system had a negative impact on processing times with the average processing time increasing significantly over this period.

Over the Q3 period 112 local applications and 3 major applications in the system over 12 months were issued/withdrawn, twice as many when compared to Q2. Of note, this Council was one of only 5 councils that reduced the % of live applications in the system over 12 months over the quarter.

In addition, 128 local category of planning applications in the 6-12 month category were also issued/withdrawn, an increase of 91% when compared to Q2 and a total of 223 YTD. Focus on issuing older application in the system will continue into Q4 which will have a negative impact on the average processing times for local category of planning applications.

Enforcement

Table 2 (previously circulated) shows statistics in relation to enforcement for Q3 of the 2023/24 business year. The statutory target for bringing to a conclusion enforcement cases is not reported on at this time due to inability to extract the accurate information from the system; work to resolve this issue is nearing completion. Progress continues in terms of increasing the number of cases concluded. However, there was a significant increase in the number of cases opened in Q3 that impacted the ability to reduce live cases, an increase of 28% when compared to Q2 and a 77% increase when compared to the Q3 last year,

significantly higher than any other Council. At this time, at end of Q3, the Business Plan target to reduce live cases has not been met.

Of the cases closed in Q3, 24% were remedied/resolved, 20% retrospective planning permission; 19% were closed as not expedient; 30% had no breach identified; and 7% were immune from enforcement action.

Stable Staff Resource and Reduction in Staff Caseloads – Business Plan KPI - Not Met

Work continues to decrease case loads of staff to a manageable level. The high case loads of the Enforcement Team and the Single Rural Dwellings Team remain a concern and will continue to be monitored.

Reduction in vacant posts – Business Plan KPI – on target to be met

The vacant posts have been filled by agency staff. This Business Plan KPI has been met.

Training Plan - Business Plan KPI – Met

In addition to mandatory training for all staff, in Q3 the following training was attended by staff:

- Planning Portal training
- RTPI NI Annual Law Update 2023
- Cyber Security training
- Local Council Housing Information seminar
- Validation training

Draft Plan Strategy – Business Plan KPI - on target to be met

A full member workshop was held in Q3. Other KPIs in relation to the draft Plan Strategy will follow the completion of these workshops with Members.

Number of cases where Ombudsman determines maladministration is less than 0.4% of all decisions made - Business Plan KPI – on target to be met

There have been no cases in the Q3 period of cases where the NIPSO has determined maladministration on planning decisions made. There have been no decisions by NIPSO during this period.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Planning Committee consider the content of the Planning Departments Quarterly Report.

Committee NOTED the report.

9.1 Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12(o))

Prioritisation of outstanding planning applications (Alderman Fielding)

What efforts are being made to prioritise outstanding planning applications over 24 months?

The Head of Planning advised that the number of planning applications at over 24 months was 111 at the end of Quarter 3, down to 99 at the end of Quarter 4, and stood at approximately 94 as of today, indicating that Council is moving in the right direction with these.

Alderman Fielding thanked the Head of Planning for providing the information on applications over 24 months in the quarterly reports, and asked what effort is being made to prioritise these outstanding applications.

The Head of Planning advised that there is a variety of issues affecting the outstanding applications. She advised that Senior Planning Officers have monthly caseload meetings in which they are monitored, and that work is continuing to reduce the older applications in the system.

In response to a query from Alderman S McKillop, the Head of Planning advised that the quarterly reports published by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) include detail on the number of applications that were determined and the number that were withdrawn. She advised that, for the year to date, of the 10 major applications received, 9 were determined and 1 was withdrawn. She advised that of the local applications, 686 were decided in the year to date, and 63 were withdrawn. Alderman S McKillop stated that it would be useful to have that information clearly reported rather than having to search for it.

The Chair noted that 54 major applications were awaiting a decision after a year and asked why they were so problematic. He further noted an issue of delays caused by statutory consultees not responding, and asked at what stage Planning will decide to make a determination without a response from a consultee who has missed the deadline.

The Head of Planning noted that the statutory target for major applications is 30 weeks, and that the target in the Business Plan is 40 weeks. She advised that for major applications, the statutory target was met in the first two quarters of the year, however towards the end of the year the focus shifted to processing some of the older applications. She advised that of the 5 major applications that were determined, two were processed within the 30 week target and the other three were outside it, which was due to negotiations required to get the application across the line for approval. She noted that reporting can be affected by the fact that the average processing time is taken as the median.

In respect of delays created by awaiting responses from statutory consultees, the Head of Planning advised that a decision to proceed would be decided on a

case-by-case basis. In some cases, a similar previous application can be referred to in order to inform a determination, whereas in respect of environmental impact, for example, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is clear that the needs to be appropriate expertise involved in a determination. She further advised that Planning now has standing advice agreed with DfI Roads, which will help to reduce times for some minor applications. Planning is also working on developing standing advice with NI Water and the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division (DfC HED) to try to reduce the times for those consultations, because these are the two key consultees that are delaying the processing of applications. She advised that Planning also works with DfC HED to try to get them to prioritise applications for which they are the only outstanding respondent.

Committee NOTED the report.

- * **The Head of Planning and the Performance Officer left the meeting at 7.36pm.**

10. D-DAY 80 ANNIVERSARY

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on plans to mark the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings in Normandy on 6th June 2024.

Background

D Day 80 is being organised throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, UK Overseas Territories and on Gold Beach, Normandy to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings, which ultimately led to the end of WWII. It will also act as a collective tribute to those who took part in the landings to ensure the freedom that we enjoy today.

Council has received the official 'Guide to Taking Part in D Day 80 on 6th June 2024' from pageantmaster Bruno Peek which outlines the various activities and the reasons for them. The guide can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.d-day80beacons.co.uk/>

On 5th December, Council agreed to:

- Register its involvement in D Day 80 by lighting a beacon at East/West Strand, Portrush
- HMLL, accompanied by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, is invited to light the beacon
- Invitation be extended to Royal British Legion Group 10 members
- Purchase one additional Beacon

Progress and Outline of the Event

The beacon has been delivered and will be lit on the beach at East Strand at

9.15 pm.

The 152 (North Irish) Regiment RLC stall and two military vehicles will be in place at the front left, far corner of East Strand Car Park from 8 pm (parking charges do not apply after 6.30pm). It is also hoped that two Wallace jeeps will be on display on the beach.

A platform will be located on the beach and the platform party will be as follows:

- Mayor/Deputy Mayor
- Rev Dr JI Thompson, MBE, TD, DL, President Group 10 RBL (who will read the International Tribute)
- Col Dr Stephen Bailie, TD, DL (who will light the beacon)
- Chair and Vice Chair of Group 10 RBL
- Council's Veterans' Champion

The Pipes and Drums of 152 (North Irish) Regiment RLC will form up behind the platform and perform from 8.45 pm in the lead up to the beacon lighting.

Group 10 RBLs will be represented by their Standard Bearers, as will the REME Association and a number of other location Associations. Army cadets from detachments in Coleraine and Ballymoney will attend along with a number of Portrush Sea Cadets as suggested at the Sub Committee meeting in April.

The paved area at the top of the main steps will be used as the viewing area for Elected Members, RBL Standard Bearers and members, cadets and members of the public. Wheelchair access and seating for individuals with restricted mobility will be available and the public toilets will remain open for the event.

The flyer (previously circulated) has been designed and the event will be promoted via the local media and on Council's social media channels.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Sub Committee note the progress for the D Day 80 anniversary.

It is suggested that in the event of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor being unable to attend that the Chair of the Coronation Sub Committee deputise at the event. It is suggested that Elected Members are robed for the event.

In response to a query from Councillor Wilson, the Director of Corporate Services advised that some promotion of the event had already been undertaken and that there is a programme for further advertising in the lead-up to the event.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson

Seconded by Councillor Watton and

AGREED – to recommend that Council undertakes paid, targeted advertising for the D Day 80 Anniversary event.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins
Seconded by Alderman McKillop and

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the progress for the D Day 80 anniversary.

Alderman Coyle stated that his views on military matters are well known and that he wished to abstain.

11. 108TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to consider representation at The Somme Association services in France to commemorate the 108th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme on 1st July 2024.

Background

Correspondence has been received from The Somme Association inviting Council representatives to attend its services to commemorate the 108th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme on 1st July 2024 as follows:

14:30 Ulster Memorial Tower, Thiepval
16:30 16th (Irish) Division Memorial, Guillemont

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor (or their nominee) have represented Council in the past.

The Somme Association is no longer licenced to organise trips to the Somme therefore Council has to make its own arrangements and travel independently.

Suggested travel details and indicative costs are outlined below:

Date	Sun 30th June - Tues 2nd July	Cost pp
Flights	Belfast – Paris (Easyjet)	£332
Accommodation	The Holiday Inn, Arras	£275
Rail Travel	Paris - Arras	£75
Taxi/Rail Travel	Arras - Thiepval	£80
Cost		£762 (approx.)

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor represent Council at The Somme Association services and that, in the event of either being unable to attend a replacement is selected via D'Hondt.

It is further recommended that this process is applied annually for the four year term of this Council.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Watton and

AGREED – to recommend to Council that in the event that the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor is unable to represent Council at the Somme Association services, a replacement is chosen via a ballot of all Members wishing to attend. To further recommend that this process is applied annually for the four year term of this Council.

Alderman Coyle stated that he wished to abstain.

12. CONFERENCES

There were no conferences.

13. CONSULTATION

There were no consultations.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

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

Purpose of Report

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

The following correspondence has been received:

(i) National Association of Councillors (H Legge, NAC, correspondence dated 22 April 2024)

Elected Members are advised that annual membership for the National Association of Councillors NI Region, is due for renewal. The subscriptions fee for 2024 to 2025 is £3,200, which has remained unchanged since 2015.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Corporate Policy and Resources Committee consider the renewal of the subscriptions fee for 2024 to 2025 for £3,200.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the Committee may wish to recommend that Council agree to the renewal of this fee for the remainder of the term of this Council, rather than having to agree it annually.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Alderman Coyle and

AGREED – to recommend to Council to approve the renewal of the subscriptions fee for 2024 to 2025 for £3,200, and to agree to the renewal of this fee for the remainder of the term of this Council.

15. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters to report to the Partnership Panel.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that, due to the upcoming election, the June meeting of the Partnership Panel had been postponed and that consideration was now being given to a date in September.

16. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR WATTON, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR WILSON, REFERRED FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD 7 MAY 2024

That this Council lobbies the N.I Housing Executive to increase the temporary accommodation available in this Borough. Frequently over the last six months there has not been a single bed available for local people.

Councillor Watton stated that it is a disgrace and a scandal that there are times when there is not a single bed available in temporary accommodation. He referred to an article in Monday's 'Belfast Telegraph' and stated that the problem is likely to worsen, with 47,000 people on the housing waiting list. He stated that the social housing budget for this Borough, which has been slashed by 38.2%, is a scandal. He described the problem of men sleeping in a tent on the Millburn Road, and a 77 year old man lying on the street in Portrush, and his efforts to find accommodation for them. He emphasised that his concern was not related to immigration but rather issues such as high rental rates, Airbnb's and the fact that parts of the Borough are a holiday area. He stated that he gets contacted about this issue on a daily basis, and that it is not reasonable for a working person to be expected to travel from, for example, Carrick to work in Coleraine every day. He stated that the situation is dire and worsening every year.

Councillor Wilson echoed Councillor Watton's comments, and stated that this is a local issue that has nothing to do with immigration and emphasised that the UK plays its part in supporting those in need in a controlled way. He stated that there is a dire lack of social housing and that the investment in building social housing over previous decades has been dire. He stated that it is disappointing that the June meeting of the Partnership Panel will not occur due to the election, as this matter should be brought to Stormont. He stated that people have a right to a second home in a democratic society but that should not prevent the provision of social housing. He suggested that Council should identify spaces of land suitable for social housing and that he hopes for additional social housing to be provided in the Borough.

The Chair stated that everyone should collectively hang their heads in shame regarding this issue, and he was speaking as a former Minister with responsibility for housing. He proposed that the motion be amended to include “suitable” before temporary accommodation, as people should not be sent far away from the Borough to get housed, and Councillor Watton agreed to this. He proposed that Grainia Long, the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive, should be invited to present to Council.

Alderman Coyle stated that he agreed with the motion and that the problem is experienced in both urban and rural areas, and that homelessness includes those who are moving between friends and family rather than just those sleeping on the streets. He suggested that Mark Alexander, the Causeway Area Manager for the Housing Executive, should also be invited to answer questions at Council.

Alderman Knight-McQuillan stated that she supports the motion and that a lot of the problem stems from the antiquated points system. She stated that the Housing Executive does not take a local approach to allocating housing and that people in housing crisis may not be in a position to travel.

Alderman S McKillop stated that the issue of homelessness can arise from a family crisis, and that children should not have to suffer further stress from housing issues.

Councillor Watton proposed that Gordon Lyons, the Minister for Communities, also be invited to speak to Council on the matter.

Alderman Fielding stated that he agreed with the motion and with the addition of “suitable”, as while the Housing Executive was able to find accommodation for people during covid, some of the accommodation was not suitable for those placed in it.

Councillor Watson stated that she supported the motion as she deals with this issue on a daily basis. She expressed frustration that planned development in Armoy cannot proceed due to an historical issue with NI Water regarding sewerage, as Armoy is one of the areas in greatest housing stress.

The Chair confirmed that the proposer and seconder of the motion were content to add a further recommendation that Grainia Long, the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive; Mark Alexander, the Housing Executive Causeway Area Manager; and Gordon Lyons, the Minister for Communities be invited to Council to discuss the issue of housing.

Proposed by Councillor Watton
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

AGREED – to recommend that Council lobbies the N.I Housing Executive to increase the suitable temporary accommodation available in this Borough. Frequently over the last six months there has not been a single bed available for local people.

To further recommend that the Minister for Communities, the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive and the Housing Executive Causeway Area Manager be invited to Council to discuss the issue of housing.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Alderman Knight-McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor McShane and

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

* **Press were disconnected from the meeting at 8.10pm.**

The information contained in the following items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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

17. CYBER-SECURITY FIREWALL SUBSCRIPTIONS RENEWAL

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

Confidential by virtue of paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

Inform members of the committee of the need to renew subscriptions on Council's firewalls to ensure continuity of cyber-security protection.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council the renewal of the firewall subscriptions for a period of 12 months through Crown Commercial Services.

Proposed by Alderman Knight-McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

AGREED – to recommend to Council the renewal of the firewall subscriptions for a period of 12 months through Crown Commercial Services.

18. POPULATING THE ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

Confidential by virtue of paragraphs 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a progress report on the population of the Organisation Structures within the Leisure and Development and Environmental Services Directorates.

The report also details the use of agency workers in each Department within Council.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee note this report.

In response to a query from Councillor Watton, the Director of Corporate Services advised that she would obtain a history of the agreement on the general operative job description.

Committee NOTED the report.

19. D1 2208/24 - 86 MAIN STREET, LIMAVADY – LETTER OF SUPPORT

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

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

Purpose of Report

The Purpose of the report is to update Members that Council will be providing Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd with a Letter of Support to assist their proposed expression of interest to purchase a new site in Limavady.

This Report is being brought to the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee as the closing date for receipt of Expressions of Interest is Wednesday 05 June 2024. As this is the same as date of the next Land & Property Sub-Committee Meeting, any ratification of decisions made at that Meeting would be too late and may prove detrimental to this project.

Background

Roe Valley Enterprises is one of two enterprise agencies in the Borough. The company is a not-for-profit organisation with charitable status, which works for the benefit of the local community by supporting small business and community enterprise and playing an active part in business development at local, regional and national levels.

In December 2018, Council agreed to act as a sponsor for Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd as they sought to acquire the former DARD buildings on Killane Road, Limavady. Following the successful acquisition of the DARD building, Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd officially opened the site in 2019.

As of March 2024, the two sites operated by Roe Valley Enterprises (Aghanloo Industrial Estate and Killane Road), provide accommodation for 38 tenant businesses employing 1,146 full and part-time staff.

Proposal

Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd is now exploring an opportunity to expand their offering by purchasing the vacant property located at 86 Main Street, Limavady, BT49 0ET (Appendix A, previously circulated). The property was an asset of the Department of Finance but has since been declared surplus to requirements.

The site is being disposed of via the D1 process, therefore as Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd is not a public sector body, they require a letter of support from Council in order to formally submit their expression of interest. No funding has been requested from Council.

Council has drafted a Letter of Support (Appendix B, previously circulated) to assist Roe Valley Enterprises with their expression of interest.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council that it lends its support to Roe Valley Enterprises Limited for its proposed acquisition of 86 Main Street, Limavady, BT49 0ET.

Alderman Coyle stated that he wished to propose the recommendation but expressed disappointment that the facility is not being centralised at Aghanloo.

Proposed by Alderman Coyle
Seconded by Councillor Mairs and

AGREED – to recommend that Council lends its support to Roe Valley Enterprises Limited for its proposed acquisition of 86 Main Street, Limavady, BT49 0ET.

20. MINUTES OF THE LAND AND PROPERTY SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 1 MAY 2024

Copy minutes previously circulated, presented as read by the Chair.

Proposed by Councillor McCully
Seconded by Councillor Huggins and

AGREED – to recommend that Council adopt the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 1 May 2024 and recommendations therein approved.

21. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

Confidential by virtue of paragraphs 3 & 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present an update on the Transformation Action Plan - Records Management and Information Management Procedures.

Background

At its meeting in January 2024 the Corporate Policy and Resources (CPR) Committee recommended approval of the Transformation Programme (TP) Record Keeping and Information Management and was ratified by full Council on Tuesday 6th February.

Members were informed that monthly updates would be provided on progress to ensure the CPR Committee can oversee and monitor the progress of the work to complete the recommendations for which it is responsible.

Action Plan Progress - Record Keeping and Information Management

The Action Plan has been updated to reflect the current status of each of the recommendations and is attached at Appendix A (previously circulated).

In total there are 7 actions listed within the Action Plan.

Actions RK2 and RK 3 were completed in March, with RK4 and RK7 completed in May. RK1, RK5 and RK6 are currently progressing well.

Members are asked to note the update provided.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Action Plan Update is considered and noted.

Committee NOTED the report.

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

There were no further items of Any Other Relevant Business.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Councillor Huggins

Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

RESOLVED – that Council move *'In Public'*

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting concluded at 8.21pm.

Chair