

February 14th, 2025

To Each Member of Council

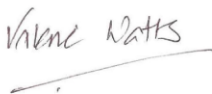
NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

to be held on Monday, 17th February 2025 at 6:30 pm in Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29
Bridge Street, Ballymena and via remote access.

Yours sincerely



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Agenda

1 FORMALITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 Notice of Meeting

1.2 Apologies

1.3 Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers are invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality, they may have in respect of items on this Agenda.

1.4 Minutes of Council Meeting - circulated

1.4.1 Council Meeting held on 06 January 2025 - circulated

[01-25 Full Council Mins \(6.1.25\).pdf](#)

Page 1

1.4.2 Deferred Council Meeting held on 16 January 2025 - circulated

[01-25 Full Council Mins \(deferred to 16 Jan\).pdf](#)

Page 3

1.4.3 Special Council Meeting (Rates) held on 10 February 2025 - circulated (13.2.25)

[Sp Council \(Rates\) Mins - 10 Feb 2025 - FINAL.pdf](#)

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1.5 Mayor's Announcements

2 QUESTIONS

2.1 Members

2.2 Public

No Public Questions received.

3 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

3.1 Planning Committee held on 9 January 2025 - circulated

[01-25 Planning Minutes.pdf](#)

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3.2 Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee held on 13 January 2025 - circulated

📄 [01-25 CRPG Mins.pdf](#)

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Closed Council - In accordance with Council policy, members of the press will not be in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

3.3 Personnel Committee held on 14 January 2025 - circulated

📄 [Personnel Committee 14.2.24.pdf](#)

Not included

Open Council

3.4 Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee held on 14 January 2025 - circulated

📄 [01-25 NC Mins.pdf](#)

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3.5 Environment and Economy Committee held on 20 January 2025 - circulated

📄 [01-25 Mins - Environment Economy.pdf](#)

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4 POLICY FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET

5 STRATEGIC ISSUES

6 ITEMS FOR DECISION - OPEN COUNCIL

6.1 Schedule of Meetings June 2025 - June 2026 & Draft Schedule June 2026 - June 2027 - circulated

📄 [FINAL - Full Council - Meeting Schedule 25-26 and 26-27.pdf](#)

Page 47

📄 [Appendix 1 Schedule of Meetings Jun25-Jun26 V0.2.pdf](#)

Page 49

📄 [Appendix 2 - Schedule of Meetings Jun26-Jun27 V0.4.pdf](#)

Page 52

6.2 Renewal of the Armed Forces Covenant - circulated (13.02.25)

📄 [Full Council 17 February 2025 - Armed Forces Covenant.pdf](#)

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📄 [Appendix 1 - 2016 Armed Forces Community Covenant.pdf](#)

Page 58

📄 [Appendix 2 - Draft Pledges 10.2.25.pdf](#)

Page 63

6.3 Revision of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Scheme of Allowances Payable to Councillors - circulated

- ▢ *Revision of MEA Scheme of Councillors Allowances.pdf* *Page 66*
- ▢ *Appendix 1 MEA Scheme of Allowances payable to Cllrs.pdf* *Page 68*
- ▢ *Appendix 2 - Circular LG 15 2024 - Consolidated Councillor Allowances 2024-25 (003).pdf* *Page 78*

7 MOTIONS

7.1 Notice of Motion proposed by Cllr L Gray, seconded by Cllr A Skinner (Deferred from January 2025)

“Mid and East Antrim Borough Council recognises the additional difficulties faced by parents and guardians of young children when trying to park in standard sized parking spaces.

Council recognises the benefits that ‘Parent and Toddler’ parking spaces can have in helping to facilitate easier access at high footfall locations and notes the implementation of such spaces at a number of private car parks locally.

I therefore propose that Council reviews the existing Car Parking Strategy for the borough and considers implementing an appropriate number of ‘Parent and Toddler’ parking spaces at all Council maintained car parks.”

8 SEALING

Closed Council - In accordance with Council policy, members of the press will not be in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

7 MOTIONS - CLOSED COUNCIL

7.2 Notice of Motion proposed by Cllr M Armstrong, seconded by Cllr L Philpott - circulated (Deferred from January 2025)

- ▢ *Notice of Motion Cllr Armstong & Cllr Philpott.pdf* *Not included*

9 STRATEGIC ISSUES - CLOSED

9.1 NI Football Fund - circulated

- ▢ *The NI Football Fund Performance Programme Update.pdf* *Not included*
- ▢ *Appendix 1 Guidance Document.pdf* *Not included*
- ▢ *Appendix 2 Scoring Matrix.pdf* *Not included*

▢ *Appendix 3 Application Form.pdf* *Not included*

▢ *Appendix 4 Literature Review and Horizon Scan.pdf* *Not included*

10 ITEMS FOR DECISION - CLOSED

10.1 Contract Awards - Operations - circulated

▢ *Contract Awards - Operations.pdf* *Not included*

10.2 Proposed Disposal of Various Areas of Land at Tobergel Lane, Larne - circulated

▢ *Proposed Disposal of Areas of Land at Tobergel Lane, Larne.pdf* *Not included*

▢ *Appendix 1 OS Map of Tobergel Lane, (showing plots).pdf* *Not included*

▢ *Appendix 2 Aerial Picture of Tobergel Lane, Larne.pdf* *Not included*

10.3 Proposed Disposal of Land adjacent to 66 Brustin Brae Road, Larne - circulated

▢ *Proposed Disposal of Land adjacent to 66 Brustin Brae Road, Larne.pdf* *Not included*

▢ *Appendix 1 - Encroachment on land adjacent to 66 Brustin Brae Road, Larne.pdf* *Not included*

▢ *Appendix 2 - Map showing Council owned land at Brustin Brae Road, Larne_.pdf* *Not included*

Open Council

MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 6 January 2025 at 6.30pm
in the Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena
and via remote access**

In the Chair: Ald Mrs B Adger, MBE, Mayor

Vice Chair: Cllr B Lyness, Deputy Mayor

Present: Ald B Ashe, MBE
Ald T Gordon
Ald R Logan
Ald S McDonald
Cllr M Armstrong
Cllr A Barr
Cllr R Beggs
Cllr M Donnelly
Cllr B Ferris
Cllr J Gibson
Cllr R Glover
Cllr L Gray
Cllr C Harwood
Cllr T Hoey
Cllr J Minford
Cllr L Philpott
Cllr A Rae
Cllr A Skinner
Cllr B Thompson
Cllr M Warwick

Present remotely: Ald P Reid
Cllr A Clarke
Cllr D Clarke
Cllr M Collins
Cllr A Henry
Cllr R Quigley
Cllr Mrs A Smyth
Cllr R Stewart

Attendance: Mrs V Watts, Interim Chief Executive
Mrs L Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Mr J McGrandle, Acting Director of Development
Mr S Morley, Interim Director of Operations
Mr P Thompson, Director of Community
Mrs S Williams, Assistant Director - Business Support
Mr J McVeigh, Head of Capital Works
Ms C Grant, Acting Corporate Solicitor
Mrs L Graham-Metz, Committee Administrator

Mrs N Waring, Committee Administrator

Attendance remotely: Ms P Blair, Committee Administrator

Public: There were no members of the public present.

Press: There were no members of the press present.

On the proposal of Ald Mrs B Adger, seconded by Ald Ashe it was agreed

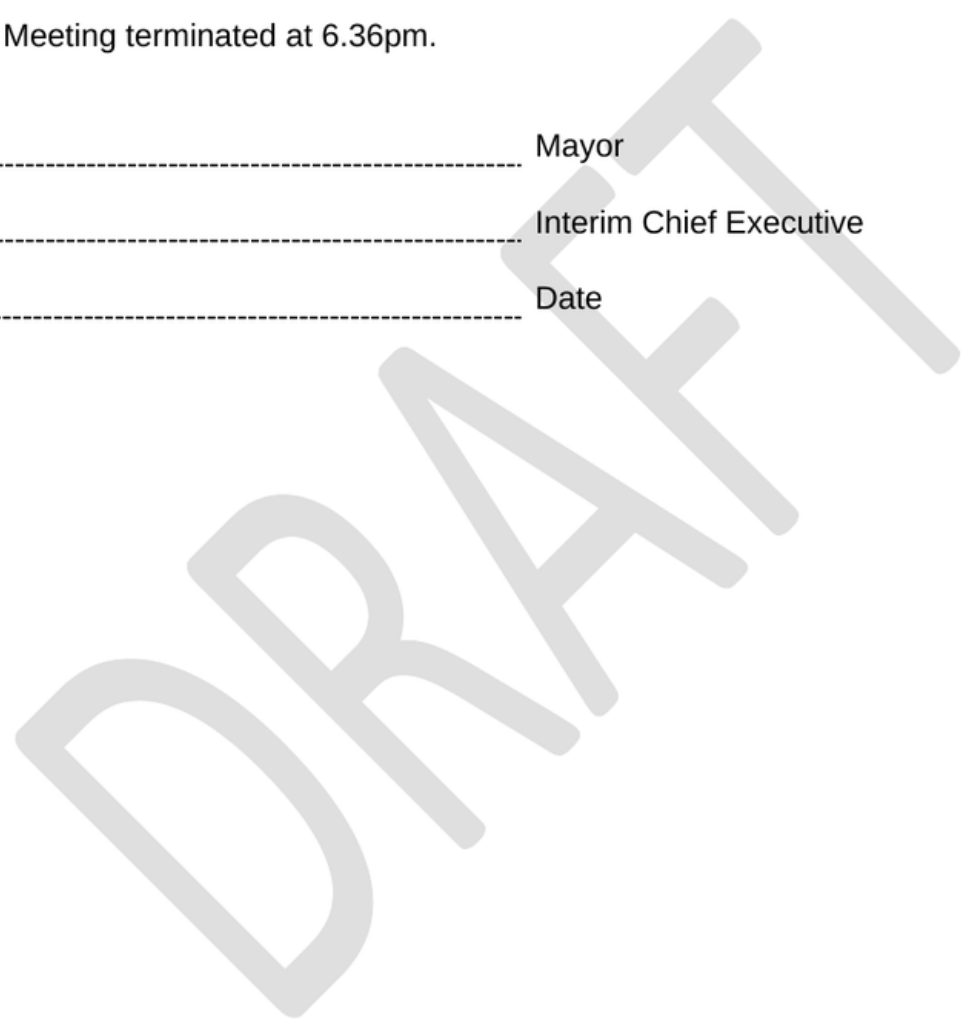
that given the inclement weather and hazardous driving conditions that the meeting be deferred to a suitable alternative date.

The Meeting terminated at 6.36pm.

----- Mayor

----- Interim Chief Executive

----- Date



MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 16 January 2025 at 6.30pm
in the Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena
and via remote access

In the Chair: Ald Mrs B Adger, MBE, Mayor

Present: Ald T Gordon
Cllr A Barr
Cllr D Clarke
Cllr J Gibson
Cllr R Glover
Cllr A Henry
Cllr T Hoey
Cllr C Jamieson
Cllr G McKeen
Cllr J Minford
Cllr L Philpott
Cllr A Rae
Cllr B Thompson
Cllr M Warwick

Present remotely: Ald B Ashe, MBE (from 6.38pm)
Ald R Logan
Ald S McDonald
Ald Mrs M Morrow
Ald P Reid
Ald A Wilson
Cllr R Beggs (to 7.04pm)
Cllr A Clarke
Cllr B Ferris
Cllr C Harwood (to 6.45pm)
Cllr R Quigley
Cllr Mrs A Smyth
Cllr R Stewart

Attendance: Mrs V Watts, Interim Chief Executive
Mrs L Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Mr J McGrandle, Acting Director of Development
Mr P Thompson, Director of Community
Mr J McVeigh, Head of Capital Works
Ms C Grant, Acting Corporate Solicitor
Mrs N Waring, Committee Administrator
Mrs L Graham-Metz, Committee Administrator

Attendance remotely: Mr S Morley, Interim Director of Operations

Public: There were no members of the public present.

Press: There were no members of the press present.

Item Minute

1. FORMALITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 Notice of Meeting

The Interim Chief Executive read the Notice of Meeting.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Ald W McCaughey
Ald Ms G Mulvenna
Cllr M Armstrong
Cllr M Collins
Cllr M Donnelly
Cllr I Friary
Cllr L Gray
Cllr B Hadden
Cllr P Johnston
Cllr B Lyness
Cllr J McKeown

1.3 Declaration of Interest

Members and Officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality they might have in respect of items on this Agenda.

No declarations were received.

1.4 Minutes of Council Meetings

1.4.1 Council Meeting held on 25 November 2024

On the proposal of Cllr McKeen, seconded by Cllr Rae, it was

Resolved: That the Minutes be approved and adopted.

1.5 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor extended sympathies to the family and friends of:

- Alan Barkley, former Director of Environmental Services of legacy Carrickfergus Borough Council

- Trevor Kyle, former Assistant Chief Building Control Officer, with legacy Ballymena Borough Council and latterly Head of Assets, Capital and Facilities from 2015 until 2019 in MEA
- John Cameron, the founder and owner of Cameron's department Store in Ballymena
- Bill Guiller, photographer from Larne
- Bradley Gracey, son of Victoria Gracey who works in Larne Leisure Centre
- Lilian McKeen, mother of Cllr McKeen

The Mayor extended congratulations to those included in HM King's New Year's Honours List

Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE):

- Fiona Mary Patricia Kane for public service in Northern Ireland (from Larne)
- Prof Francis Paul Keenan for services to higher education (from Carrickfergus)
- Patrick McLaughlin for voluntary services to maritime safety (from Ballymena)
- Claire Taggart for services to Boccia (from Larne)

Medallists of the Order of the British Empire (BEM)

- Samuel David Ferguson for services to the community of Newtownabbey, County Antrim (from Carrickfergus)
- Eileen Lorraine Gibson for services to older people with dementia and adults with learning disabilities in County Antrim (from Carrickfergus)

High Sheriff for County Antrim

- Mrs Jenny Lendrum who has been appointed as the new High Sheriff for County Antrim.

The Mayor also extended congratulations to:

- Larne FC on their run in the UEFA Conference League finishing with a 1-0 win against Gent and becoming the first Irish League side to pick up points and wished them well for the final of the upcoming County Antrim Shield.

2 QUESTIONS

2.1 Members

2.1.1 Tabled Question in the name of Cllr P Johnston

Question:

“Article 66 of the Pollution Control and Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 is legislation that deals with dilapidated or ruinous buildings and structures that are considered a serious detriment to the local community. Can council officers advise what recent assessment has been made of Prospect House with regards to Councils powers under this order and what action has been taken since the recent damage which has now left the building and roof in a very dangerous condition for the local residents and general public”.

A response to the question had been uploaded to Decision Time.

Cllr Johnston had advised that he was content with the response.

2.1.2 Tabled Question in the name of Cllr A Barr

Question

"Does this Council intend to commemorate the following anniversaries: 80th anniversary to mark VE and VJ Days; and 75th anniversary to mark the start of the Korean War? If so, how can these momentous anniversaries be commemorated?"

A response to the question had been uploaded to Decision Time.

Cllr Barr was content with the response.

2.2 Public

No Public questions were received.

3 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

3.1 Planning Committee held on 28 November 2024

On the proposal of Ald Reid, seconded by Cllr Barr it was:

Resolved: the approved the adoption of the minutes and the noting of decisions taken under delegated authority and ratified recommendations as decisions of Council.

3.2 Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee held on 2 December 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Ferris, seconded by Cllr Gibson it was:

Resolved: the approval and adoption of the minutes and the noting of decisions taken under delegated authority.

3.3 Neighbourhoods and Communities held on 3 December 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Philpott, seconded by Cllr Glover it was:

Resolved: the approval and adoption of the minutes and the noting of decisions taken under delegated authority.

3.4 Minutes of Environment and Economics Committee held on 9 December 2024

On the proposal of Cllr McKeen, seconded by Ald Mrs Morrow it was:

Resolved: the approval and adoption of the minutes and the noting of decisions taken under delegated authority.

3.5 Minutes of Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 10 December 2024

On the proposal of Ald Gordon, seconded by Cllr Reid it was

Resolved: the approval and adoption of the minutes and the noting of decisions taken under delegated authority.

4 POLICY FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET

4.1 Corporate Plan Update April - September 2024

Report circulated seeking approval of the Corporate Plan Update April-September 2024 report, prior to publication on the Council website.

The report detailed the progress made under each of the four pillars and their underlying objectives, highlighted key achievements and a new 'In the Spotlight' section showcased the establishment and delivery of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Network.

The Recommendation to approve the Corporate Plan Update April-September 2024 for publication on the Council website

was proposed by Cllr Barr and seconded by Cllr Minford and agreed.

4.2 Performance Improvement Plan 2025/26 Consultation

Report circulated seeking Members' review and approval of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26 Consultation document and to agree to commence public consultation.

The Recommendation to

- (i) approve the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26 Consultation document
- (ii) agree to commence public consultation.

was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Warwick and agreed.

5 STRATEGIC ISSUES

There were no Strategic Issues.

6 ITEMS FOR DECISION – OPEN COUNCIL

There were no Items for Decision in Open Council.

7 MOTIONS

7.1 Notice of Motion proposed by Cllr L Gray, seconded by Cllr A Skinner

Item withdrawn prior to the meeting.

The Chair advised that due to Cllr Gray's absence from the meeting, the Notice of Motion had been withdrawn and would be deferred to a future Full Council meeting.

8 SEALING

The Recommendation to approve the sealing of the following documents:

- (i) Mid and East Antrim Borough Council - and - Hood McGowan Kirk LLP: Professional Services Contract Invitation to Tender, Tender for Appointment of a Project Manager Led ICT for BRCD - The Gobbins (Phase 2) - Form of Deed

was proposed by Cllr Warwick and seconded by Cllr Jamieson and agreed.

On the proposal of Cllr Glover, seconded by Cllr Henry, it was

Agreed: That the Meeting goes into Closed Council.

In accordance with Council policy, members of the Press and the public were not in attendance for this section of the Meeting. The Mayor reminded Members that business discussed in Closed Council should remain confidential.

MOTIONS - CLOSED COUNCIL

7.2 Notice of Motion proposed by Cllr M Armstrong, seconded by Cllr L Philpott

Item withdrawn prior to the meeting.

The Chair advised that the Notice of Motion had been withdrawn and would be deferred to the next Full Council meeting.

9 STRATEGIC ISSUES – CLOSED

9.1 Capital Plan for 2025/26

Report circulated updating on the latest position on the draft Four Year Capital Plan FY 2025/26 and seeking approval for the Capital Plan circulated at Appendix 1.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – Commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until sometime in the future.

The Acting Director of Development responded to queries on the affordability of the Leisure, Health and Well Being Centre Project and advised that a planning application had been submitted.

In response to Members' questions, the Interim Chief Executive advised that the building referenced as the Civic Headquarters was 'below the line' in the Capital Plan.

The Acting Director of Development undertook to amend the requested wording in the plan to "additional Business Space".

The Recommendation to approve the proposed Capital Plan as circulated including the changes detailed in the circulated report

was proposed by Cllr McKeen and seconded by Cllr Glover and agreed.

10 ITEMS FOR DECISION – CLOSED

10.1 Capital Contract Award – Pre-Approval for Gracehill UNESCO Project

Report circulated seeking approval to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in order to pre-approve and to enter a contract for the Gracehill UNESCO Project - if the successful tender return is within the Capital Plan FY24/25 borrowing limits as approved at February 2024 Full Council.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until some point in the future.

The Recommendation to

- (i) give delegated authority and pre-approval to enter into a contract provided Tender Returns received do not exceed the approved Capital Plan budget and the anticipated remaining construction budget of as detailed in the report to deliver the Gracehill UNESCO Project

- (ii) approve that the Interim Chief Executive and Mayor execute and seal the contracts on behalf of Council.

was proposed by Cllr Minford and seconded by Cllr Gibson and agreed.

10.2 Contract Awards Facilities and Maintenance

Report circulated seeking approval for the award of two contracts.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – personal data, commercially sensitive information and legal Professional Privilege applies. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

The Recommendation to

- (i) Approve the issue of an award letter to enter into a contract with DWS Controls for Supply Electrical maintenance and repairs of all power and lighting circuitry, light testing, fixed installation and portable appliance for the sum outlined in the report (Tender 630)
- (ii) Approve the issue of an award letter to enter into contract with Galaxy Facilities for Building Management Systems (BMS) and Heating Panel control, servicing, maintenance and repair for the sum outlined in the report (Tender 631)
- (iii) authorise the Mayor and Interim Chief Executive to execute and seal the relevant contractual and legal documents on behalf of Council.

was proposed by Cllr Barr and seconded by Cllr Warwick and agreed.

10.3 Response to Notice of Motion re DFI Depot at Kilwaughter

Report circulated updating on a Notice of Motion presented on 10 June 2024.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – personal data, commercially sensitive information and legal Professional Privilege applies. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

The Member who raised the original Notice of Motion requested that the initial concerns and the issue of Council working with Dfi be investigated. Several Members expressed their concerns regarding the service provided given the inclement weather in the previous week which had highlighted the issue once again.

The issues raised by Members were noted by Officers.

Resolved: to note the report.

OPEN COUNCIL

On the proposal of Cllr R Glover, seconded by Ald T Gordon it was:

Agreed: That the meeting returns to Open Council.

The Meeting terminated at 7.08pm.

..... Mayor

..... Interim Chief Executive

..... Date

DRAFT

MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of Special Council Meeting (Striking the Rate)
held on Monday 10 February 2025 at 6.40pm, in the Council Chamber,
The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena and via remote access**

In the Chair: Ald Mrs B Adger, MBE, Mayor

Vice Chair: Cllr B Lyness, Deputy Mayor

Present: Ald B Ashe, MBE
Ald T Gordon
Ald R Logan
Ald S McDonald
Ald Mrs M Morrow
Ald Ms G Mulvenna
Cllr M Armstrong
Cllr R Beggs
Cllr D Clarke
Cllr M Donnelly
Cllr B Ferris
Cllr I Friary
Cllr J Gibson
Cllr R Glover
Cllr B Hadden
Cllr C Harwood
Cllr A Henry
Cllr T Hoey
Cllr C Jamieson
Cllr P Johnston
Cllr J McKeown
Cllr J Minford
Cllr L Philpott
Cllr R Quigley
Cllr A Skinner
Cllr B Thompson
Cllr M Warwick

Present remotely: Ald W McCaughey
Ald A Wilson
Cllr A Barr
Cllr A Clarke
Cllr M Collins
Cllr L Gray
Cllr G McKeen
Cllr Mrs A Smyth

Attendance: Mrs V Watts, Interim Chief Executive
Mrs L Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services

Mr P Thompson, Director of Community
 Mr J McGrandle, Acting Director of Development
 Mr S Morley, Interim Director of Operations
 Ms M Hegarty, Assistant Director – Finance
 Mrs L Graham-Metz, Committee Administrator
 Mrs N Waring, Committee Administrator

Attendance remotely: Ms R Hosseini, Committee Administrator

Public: There were no members of the public present.

Press: There were no members of the press present.

Item Minute

1 FORMALITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 Notice of Meeting

The Interim Chief Executive read the Notice of Meeting.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Cllr A Rae
 Cllr R Stewart.

1.3 Declaration of Interest

Members and Officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality they might have in respect of items on this Agenda.

No declarations were received.

On the proposal of Cllr Donnelly, seconded by Cllr Harwood, it was

Agreed: That the Meeting goes into Closed Council.

In accordance with Council policy, members of the Press and the public were not in attendance for this section of the Meeting. The Mayor reminded Members that business discussed in Closed Council should remain confidential.

As Acting Chief Financial Officer, the Interim Chief Executive provided a high-level statement in relation to the Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves. She expressed her appreciation to those who attended the workshops and Party meetings, highlighted the detailed scrutiny and challenge by Officers and Members during the process and outlined the key areas and risks that were considered.

In summary, the Interim Chief Executive was satisfied with the Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves and that all risk had been adequately assessed and she commended the reports for Members' consideration.

2 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY & STRATEGY

Report circulated seeking approval of the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy, which is an essential part of the 2025/26 Rate Setting process.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: - Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information and legal Professional Privilege applies. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

A Member outlined his concerns in relation to the impact of increased capital investment in the forthcoming years and the impact it would have on the rates and suggested that in future, when capital expenditure was approved, the impact on the rates be included.

The Recommendation to approve:

- (i) the Treasury Management Strategy and policy for 2025/26 including the prudential indicators (Appendix 1 as circulated)
- (ii) the Authorised Borrowing Limit for 2025/26 of £71.8m (on page 16, Appendix 1 as circulated)

was proposed by Cllr Harwood, seconded by Cllr Donnelly and agreed.

3 MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY REPORT 2025/2026

Report circulated seeking approval for the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Report as part of the 2025/26 Rate Setting process.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: - Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information and legal Professional Privilege applies. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

The Recommendation to approve the MRP Policy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2025/26

was proposed by Ald Logan, seconded by Ald Ashe and agreed.

4 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025-2029

Report circulated seeking approval for the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2025-2029 which has been developed to guide the Council's financial

strategy and ensure the effective allocation of resources over the coming years.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information and legal Professional Privilege applies. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

The Recommendation to

- (i) approve the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025-2029
- (ii) authorise the Interim Chief Executive to undertake strategic transformation programmes aimed at achieving the required savings over the medium term

was proposed by Ald Ms Mulvenna, seconded by Cllr Hadden and agreed.

5 CAPITAL ASSET STRATEGY 2025/26

Report circulated outlining Council's approach to capital investment ensuring proper management of Capital Expenditure, Capital Financing, and Treasury Management and seeking approval for the Capital Asset Strategy for 2025/26.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information and legal Professional Privilege applies. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

In proposing the Officers' recommendation, Cllr Beggs stated his view that should there be delays in projects, savings be considered rather than redirection of spend.

The Recommendation to approve The Capital Asset Strategy for 2025/26

was proposed by Cllr Beggs, seconded by Ald Mrs Morrow and agreed.

6 DISTRICT RATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26

Report circulated providing information to support Elected Members to make decisions on: the level of the district rate to be set for 2025-26; the adequacy of General Reserves; and the updated Medium Term Financial Plan, which provides Members with a longer-term financial overview.

The item was determined to fall within Closed business as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 - commercially sensitive information and legal Professional Privilege applies. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

The Recommendation to approve:

- (i) the budget for Financial Year 2025/26
- (ii) the increase in fees and charges of 5% (Appendix 1 as circulated)
- (iii) the proposed rate increase for FY 2025/26 as outlined in paragraph 3.21 of the report
- (iv) Department for Communities – General Estimates of Rates (Appendix 2 as circulated)
- (v) a minimum General Reserve balance of £4,445,594 (Appendix 3 as circulated)
- (vi) Statement by Chief Financial Officer on Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves (Appendix 3 as circulated)

was proposed by Ald Ashe, seconded by Cllr Beggs and agreed.

On behalf of the TUV, a Member outlined their view that they hoped that further savings could have been made in relation to delaying the recruitment of staff and commented on the need to demonstrate value for money for ratepayers.

OPEN COUNCIL

On the proposal of Cllr Donnelly, seconded by Ald Gordon, it was:

Agreed: That the meeting returns to Open Council.

6 cont'd DISTRICT RATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26 – to make and strike the District Rate for the Financial Year 2025/26

The Mayor sought a proposer and seconder to strike the District Rate for the Financial Year 2025/26 as follows:

- Non Domestic Rate increase of 3.99%
- Domestic Rate increase of 3.99%

Ald Ashe, in proposing the Officers' recommendations, thanked the Interim Chief Executive and Senior Management for the work undertaken, acknowledging several factors outside of Council's control including: the increase in National Insurance contributions; the reduction in the rates support grant; increases in insurance charges; and reduction in rate revenue from Kilroot and Ballylumford Power stations. These had required consideration and had a detrimental impact on budgets for front line services. The proposal protected front-line services and enabled a reduction in reliance on agency staff.

Cllr Beggs, in seconding the proposal, thanked the Interim Chief Executive and Senior Management Team for the work undertaken. He recognised the financial pressures faced by Council and he commended the management controls which had restricted the rate increase. Cllr Beggs highlighted the annual reduction of the Rates Support Grant since 2021/22, the National Insurance contribution increase, the National Pay Award, increasing waste service costs and significant rate revenue reduction from Kilroot and Ballylumford Power Stations. Cllr Beggs commended the work

of Council in managing the rate increase, highlighting Council's restructuring and expenditure controls.

The Mayor thanked Members for their contributions at the Budget Workshops, the Interim Chief Executive in the role of Chief Financial Officer, SMT and all their teams, especially the Assistant Director - Finance for the work done in bringing forward the information to allow Members to make an informed decision.

The Recommendation to approve:

- (i) the district domestic rate be made and struck at 0.5506p in the pound for the year 2025/26, an increase of 3.99% from the year 2024/25
- (ii) the district non-domestic rate be made and struck at 39.7448p in the pound for the year 2025/26, an increase of 3.99% from the year 2024/25

was proposed by Ald Ashe, seconded by Cllr Beggs and agreed.

Ald McDonald and Cllrs Armstrong, D Clarke, Henry, Jamieson and Warwick recorded their opposition to the decision.

The Meeting terminated at 7.16pm.

----- Mayor
----- Interim Chief Executive
----- Date

**MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 9 January 2025 at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena and via remote access

- In the Chair:** Ald P Reid
- Present:** Ald T Gordon
Ald R Logan
Ald S McDonald (Teams)
Cllr A Barr (Vice-Chair)
Cllr R Glover
Cllr T Hoey (from 10.04am)
Cllr J Minford
Cllr Mrs A Smyth (Teams)
- Attendance:** Mr J McGrandle, Acting Director of Development
Mr K Patterson, Acting Head of Planning and Building Control
Ms S Adams, Principal Planning Officer
Mr G McGuinness, Principal Planning Officer
Mr H McAlister, Senior Planning Officer
Mr S Shiels, Solicitor
Mr D Adamson, Byrne Ó Cléirigh Consulting (to 10.10am)
Ms C Bradley, Heron Storage Ltd (to 10.10am)
Ms G Jobling, JPE Planning (via Teams to 10.15am)
Mr D O'Callaghan, Heron Storage Ltd (to 10.10am)
Mr T Stokes, TSA Planning (to 10.10am)
Ms R Hosseini, Committee Administrator
Ms N Waring, Committee Administrator
- Public:** Two members of the public were present to 10.10am.
- Press:** No members of the press were present.

ITEM MINUTE

1 Notice of Meeting

Members were advised that the meeting would be audio recorded and broadcast live on Council's website.

Those who had registered speaking rights would be given an opportunity to address the Committee in person or remotely. Each member and Officer introduced themselves.

The Acting Director of Development read the Notice of Meeting.

2 Apologies

An apology was received from Cllr A Skinner.

3 Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality they might have in respect of items on this Agenda.

No declarations were received.

4 Schedule of Planning Applications

4.1 Planning Application No. LA02/2023/1577/F - Lands approx. 950m SE of Ballylumford Power Station and approx.40m south of No's 87 & 89 Ballylumford Road, Islandmagee

Mr McGuinness reminded Members that this application had been deferred at the November Planning Committee in order that a site visit be facilitated; this had been held on 12 December 2024. With the aid of visual display, Mr McGuinness detailed the site location plan, surrounding context, proposal layout, existing views on to the site and proposed landscaping. Members were advised that DfI Roads had no objections subject to conditions, DfI Rivers were satisfied following the submission of an updated flood risk and drainage assessment, Mutal Energy were satisfied, Historic Monuments required further information and were content and changes had been made to address recommendations made by NI Water and NIFRS.

Cllr Hoey entered the meeting at this stage.

Mr McGuinness advised that the application met the criteria of Planning Policies TE1 and GP1. One objection had recently been withdrawn therefore a total of 26 objections had been received. These objections related to concerns in respect of road safety, fire and health, water run-off, impact on archaeological remains and lack of consultation with residents. The Planning department was of the opinion that these matters had been resolved and was therefore recommending approval.

Mr Stokes endorsed the Officer's recommendation of approval and he confirmed that the battery packs were white in colour; this specification was for fire safety reasons and he reminded Members that the site sat

well below the road and the landscaping plan would also assist with integration.

Resolved: the recommendation that Planning Application No. LA02/2023/1577/F be approved, subject to the conditions outlined in the report

was proposed by Ald Logan and seconded by Cllr Minford and agreed by the Committee.

Mr McGuinness confirmed that the landscaping plan was part of the conditions attached to the approval recommendation.

Voting on the proposal was as follows –

For	Against	Abstain
9	-	-

Mr Stokes, Mr Adamson, Ms Bradley, Mr O’Callaghan and two members of the public left the meeting at 10.10am.

4.2 Planning Application No. LA02/2024/0768/F - Larne Football Club, Inver Park, Inver Road, Larne

With the aid of visual display, Mr McAlister detailed the planning application, which was a proposed amendment to a previously approved application for the replacement of the main stand and upgrading of existing facilities. This application included a reduction in scale, compared to the previous approval, with one storey removed.

Mr McAlister detailed the site location, proposed site plan including car parking, elevations (which were typical in nature of such a facility), sections and an image of the final proposal. No objections and one letter of support had been received. Mr McAlister noted that the application complied with all relevant Planning Policy and the Planning department was therefore recommending approval, subject to the attached conditions.

Ms Jobling, speaking in support of the application, emphasised the importance of the proposals to Larne Football Club, describing it as a crucial final element in their refurbishment project. She encouraged Members’ endorsement of the application.

Resolved: the recommendation that Planning Application No. LA02/2024/0768/F be approved, subject to the conditions outlined in the report

was proposed by Ald Logan and seconded by Cllr Glover and agreed by the Committee.

Voting on the proposal was as follows –

For	Against	Abstain
9	-	-

Ms Jobling left the meeting at 10.15am.

5 Planning Appeals Update

5.1 New Appeals

One new planning appeal was noted:

- LA02/2023/1346/F - 80m west of 45 Carnearney Road, Ballylummin, Ahoghill - Proposed extension to existing farm holding to provide modern facilities to include silage pits, general purpose shed, slurry processing machinery shed, ration mixing area, meal bins and office/toilets

5.2 Appeal Decisions

Six appeals were noted:

- LA02/2022/0630/O - 20m South of 113 Loughbeg Road Toomebridge - Dwelling and domestic Garage

Appeal Dismissed.

- LA02/2022/0623/O - 70m approx. SE of 109a Kilgad Road, Moorfields - Site for dwelling and garage

Appeal Dismissed.

- LA02/2024/0092/LBC - 76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Extension to car park (serving Fullan's supermarket and other premises on Main Street), including demolition of short section of wall to enable vehicular access to the extended car park (retrospective application)

Appeal Dismissed.

- LA02/2024/0090/F - 76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Extension to car park (serving Fullan's supermarket and other premises on Main Street), including demolition of short section of wall to enable vehicular access to the extended car park (retrospective application)

Appeal Dismissed.

- LA02/2023/0419/CA/2 - 2024/E0003 -76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Alleged unauthorised car park

Enforcement notice upheld.

- LA02/2023/0419/CA/1 - 2024/E0004 -76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Alleged unauthorised car park

Enforcement notice upheld.

Mr Patterson noted that all six appeals in the last six weeks had been dismissed; he remarked that this highlighted that Planning refusal decisions were not taken lightly and the PAC verdicts had confirmed the sound planning reasons behind the decisions taken. Mr Patterson noted the excellent work of Officers behind the scenes.

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to Officers and he commended the good practice and decision making.

The meeting ended at 10.17am.

----- Chair

----- Interim Chief Executive

----- Date

MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

**Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 13 January 2025 at 6.30pm
in the Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena
and via remote access**

- Chair:** Cllr M Armstrong (Chair)
- Present:** Ald W McCaughey
Ald Mrs M Morrow
Cllr B Ferris (Vice Chair)
Cllr R Glover
Cllr L Gray
Cllr A Henry
Cllr T Hoey
Cllr B Lyness
Cllr G McKeen
Cllr B Thompson
- Present remotely:** Cllr R Beggs
Cllr A Clarke
Cllr M Collins
Cllr R Quigley
- Attendance:** Mrs L Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Ms M Hegarty, Assistant Director - Finance
Ms L-J McCloy, Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager
(to 6.48pm)
Miss P Blair, Committee Administrator
- Attendance remotely:** Mr P Gallagher, Events Manager (to 6.41pm)
- Press:** No members of the Press were in attendance.
- Public:** No members of the public were in attendance.

ITEM MINUTE

1 Notice of Meeting

The Interim Director of Corporate Services read the Notice of Meeting.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Ald Ms G Mulvenna
Cllr M Donnelly

Cllr J Gibson
Cllr J McKeown

3 Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality, they may have in respect of items on this Agenda.

No declarations were received.

4 Items for Consideration / Decision

4.1 Policy Briefing

Report circulated providing an update in respect of matters that fall within the remit of the Policy Team. Also to review and approve the proposed consultation response to the Information Commissioner's Office consultation on the revised approach to public sector regulation.

Resolved: the recommendation to

- (i) note the Public Consultation summary report at Appendix 1 of the report
- (ii) approve the proposed consultation response to ICO's consultation on the revised approach to public sector regulation

was proposed by Ald McCaughey and seconded by Cllr Henry and agreed.

4.2 Events Update and Review of Autumn Events

Report circulated to provide Members with a review of autumn events including Halloween and Christmas activity and to outline the planned event on St Patrick's Day 2025. Approval was also sought to amend the Events Sub-Committee and sponsor Committee Terms of Reference to take account of the recent Corporate Services Directorate restructure.

The Events Manager responded to a query in relation to engagement via social media and undertook to provide the data requested. He advised that Council had relied heavily on social media and sharing of posts from other partners to advertise the events.

Members commented on the success of the Halloween event at People's Park and how ticketing had worked well to address previous complaints around overcrowding. Feedback on the sensory experience and quiet hour had been very good and Officers were commended for their hard work.

Further to a suggestion for a similar event around Christmas markets at People's Park, another Member cautioned that Christmas markets were intended to increase footfall in the town centre for the benefit of local businesses.

Resolved: the recommendation to

- (i) approve to amend the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Policy and Resource Committee in order that Events reports going forward will be taken to Neighbourhood and Communities Committee
- (ii) note the review of the 2024 autumn events and the benefit this brings to the residents and businesses across the Borough
- (iii) note the planning so far for the St Patrick's Day event at Slemish

was proposed by Cllr Lyness and seconded by Ald McCaughey and agreed.

4.3 NIAO Performance Audit and Assessment 2024-25

Members noted the circulated report detailing the findings of the Northern Ireland Audit Office Audit and Assessment Report 2024-25.

No issues were identified requiring a formal recommendation under the Act.

In response to a query on a prior year proposal for improvement, the Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager advised that Council continued to participate in meetings of the Local Government Performance Improvement Working Group, which included the DfC, the NIAO, and each of Northern Ireland's 11 Councils, to try to agree a set of benchmarks.

The Senior Management and Finance teams were commended for the positive report.

4.4 Approved Notices of Motion January – December 2024

Members noted the circulated report which provided an update on the progress of Council approved Notices of Motion from January to December 2024.

In response to queries, the Interim Director of Corporate Services undertook to pass to Organisational Development, details of a conference on a trauma-informed approach and have this circulated to Members; would check the position in respect of training for Members and advised that Officers planned to give an annual update on Notices of Motion. She would arrange for the appropriate Officer to contact Ald Mrs Morrow reference progress with an outstanding motion in relation to Sandy Bay Centenary Pavilion and check if there were any other outstanding motions from 2023.

Reference comments on a trauma informed approach, Officers would take forward a suggestion to contact the Safeguarding Board for NI, which provided workshops and free toolkits to organisations.

4.5 Sickness Absence Scrutiny Review

Report circulated to present Members with the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review into sickness absence, which were brought to Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 10 December 2024.

Members welcomed the recommendations as a positive step to help address sickness absence.

The Interim Director of Corporate Services advised that learnings had been made during the first scrutiny review and this would inform future scrutiny reviews.

Resolved: the recommendation to accept the recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel as outlined in Appendix 2 of the report

was proposed by Cllr McKeen and seconded by Cllr Beggs and agreed.

4.6 Diversity Ambassador Network

Members noted the circulated report providing an update on the establishment of the Local Government Diversity Ambassador Network.

5 Items for Recommendation to Council

No items to consider.

6 Tabled Questions

No questions had been submitted.

On the proposal of Cllr Glover, seconded by Cllr Hoey, it was:

Agreed: That the Meeting goes into Closed Committee.

In accordance with Council policy, members of the press and the public were not in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

The Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager left the meeting.

7 Items for Consideration / Decision – Closed Committee

7.1 Procurement Update

Members noted the appointments made in the circulated report detailing the outcomes of Tenders and Direct Award Contracts (DACs) for the period from 14 November 2024 to 20 December 2024.

The item was determined to fall within Closed Committee as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted to sometime in the future.

The Interim Director of Corporate Services responded to a query regarding tender ref.T634 and undertook to report back on whether delivery cost and lead times were included as part of the tender process.

In relation to a further query, she advised that the tender process considered the most cost-effective means of procurement, i.e. purchase, lease etc. and that this would be kept under review.

7.2 Quarterly Budget Monitoring – Q2

Members noted the circulated report which provided an update on the financial performance of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council at the end of Quarter 2 (September 2024).

The item was determined to fall within Closed Committee as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 (3) Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including Council. Publication is restricted until sometime in the future.

Members welcomed the report, noting that there had been a rates workshop in the interim which covered some of the figures presented in this report.

In response to a query, the Assistant Director – Finance advised on her current complement of staff and explained the reasons for the later than normal presentation of management accounts.

Members commended the work of the Finance team.

8 Items for Recommendation to Council – Closed Committee

No items to consider.

OPEN COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Cllr Glover, seconded by Cllr Henry, it was

Recommended: That the Meeting returns to Open Committee.

9 Forward Plan for Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee

A copy of the Forward Plan and Agenda for the next meeting was circulated.

Resolved: the recommendation to approve the forward plan for the Committee, and the Agenda for the next meeting with an amendment - the Dunfane Playing Fields report to be presented to Neighbourhoods & Communities Committee

was agreed.

The Meeting ended at 6.59pm.

----- Mayor
----- Interim Chief Executive
----- Date

MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 14 January 2025 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena and via remote access

In the Chair: Cllr M Donnelly (Chair)

Present: Ald Mrs B Adger, MBE
Ald S McDonald
Ald A Wilson
Cllr M Armstrong (from 6.40pm)
Cllr B Ferris
Cllr R Glover
Cllr L Gray
Cllr T Hoey
Cllr B Lyness
Cllr J Minford
Cllr L Philpott (Vice Chair)
Cllr A Rae
Cllr B Thompson

Present Remotely: Ald B Ashe, MBE
Cllr M Collins
Cllr I Friary (from 6.37pm)
Cllr C Jamieson
Cllr Mrs A Smyth

Attendance: Mr P Thompson, Director of Community
Mr J McGrandle, Acting Director of Development
Ms P Allen, Head of Public Protection, Health and Wellbeing
Ms C Black, Acting Head of Community Planning and Development (to 7.28pm)
Ms K Steele, Tourism and Product Development Manager
Ms L Kirkwood, Outdoor Recreation Officer
Mrs L Graham-Metz, Committee Administrator

Also in attendance: Ms L Farrell, Department of Education (to 7.20pm)
Ms S Doherty, Department of Education (to 7.20pm)
Ms F Nelson, Department of Education (to 7.20pm)

Press: There were no members of the press present.

Public: No members of the public were in attendance.

ITEM MINUTE**1 Notice of Meeting**

The Director of Community read the Notice of Meeting.

2 Apologies

An apology was received from Ald Ms G Mulvenna.

3 Declaration of Interest

Members and Officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality they might have in respect of items on this Agenda.

No declarations were received.

4 Items for Consideration/Decision – Open**4.1 Presentation from Department of Education; RAISE Programme**

The Chair welcomed Ms Farrell from the Department of Education to present to the Committee.

Ms Farrell, by means of visual aid, guided Members through the presentation which covered:

- The Department's Vision
- The "A Fair Start" report
- An overview of the RAISE approach which was a different way of working, with children and young people at the centre and looking at collective impact, connections and collaboration
- Principles of Practice for collective impact
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- Place based approach
- Selection methodology
- Indicators used
- Delivery based on need
- Indicative number of pupils supported
- Local Strategic Plan including funding sources
- Supportive Programmes – T-REX and Creative Connections

The Chair thanked her for her presentation and invited questions from Members.

In response to Members' queries, Ms Farrell advised:

- that the T-REX programme was available to all schools, including SEN
- of the need to join up with SEN and that this would be built into the design of the Programme
- that due to a limited funding pot, a geographic spread which did not dilute the funding had been chosen and Larne had not been selected. However, the approach could be used to continuously review the data and use the methodology in the future
- that underperformance data was constantly reviewed
- that the Programme widened out actions into communities and would develop measures to show impact e.g. changes in attendance, changes in literacy and numeracy, readiness to learn etc.
- that discussion would continue at a local level
- that an evaluation report would be produced.

Ms Doherty and Ms Nelson provided overviews of the areas for which they were RAISE locality leads, Carrickfergus and Ballymena. Further to Members' requests, they undertook to send the detailed information to officers for distribution to all Elected Members.

Members commented on the success of the AEL Programme in Larne and asked if a similar programme could be made available in Ballymena. Ms Doherty and Ms Farrell advised on AEL's involvement in the Programme and that the comments would be shared with the SEN Team at the Department.

In response to a comment in relation to the importance of the home environment, Ms Farrell explained that this was why the RAISE Programme was taking a different approach and would not just be delivered in schools. It would be much wider and would involve family support programmes as a way to break the cycle. Ms Nelson stressed the importance of the early identification of key influencers, highlighting the work of both Greenisland FC and Larne FC.

Members commented on the role of Classroom Assistants, and in response Ms Farrell remarked on the need to deploy them effectively and noted the recruitment and retention issues of the role. She stated that the Department was open to programmes to attract support staff for schools, bringing in other skills such as therapists.

The Director of Community highlighted Council's Community Planning process and noted the link to one of the thematic groups, 'Progress in Education & Employment.'

The Chair thanked Ms Farrell, Ms Doherty and Ms Nelson and they left the meeting at this point.

Cllr Armstrong joined the meeting during the above item.

4.2 Health Sub Committee Minutes, Presentation and TOR

Report circulated updating on the recently held Health Sub-Committee, to share the key presentations concerning health inequalities within the borough and seeking input and approval of the draft terms of reference.

The Director of Community provided a brief overview and drew Members' attention to the reported health inequalities within the Borough.

Resolved: the recommendation to

- (i) note the first Health Sub Committee action notes and presentations given by Hugh Nelson and Maurice Meehan
- (ii) note the significant health-related issues within our Borough at Ballymena and Carrick Castle
- (iii) approve the draft terms of reference for the operation of this Sub-Committee

was proposed by Ald Mrs Adger and seconded by Ald Wilson and agreed.

4.3 Registration of Skin Piercing Businesses

Report circulated seeking approval for the registration of two businesses under the Council's Skin Piercing Bye Laws.

The recommendation to grant approval to register the following businesses under the Council's Skin Piercing Byelaws:

- (i) Zoe Henderson, Pierced by Zoe, 58 Albert Road, Carrickfergus, BT38 8AE - for the business of cosmetic piercing
- (ii) Colin Robinson, Body Piercing by Catboy, 58a Main Street, Larne, BT40 1SP - for the business of cosmetic piercing

was proposed by Cllr Armstrong and seconded by Cllr Philpott and agreed.

4.4 Consultation on Repeal of the Vagrancy Acts

Report circulated seeking approval for the submission of a consultation response on behalf of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council to the consultation on the repeal of The Vagrancy Act 1824 and The Vagrancy (Ireland) Act 1847 as issued by the Department of Justice on 20 November 2024.

The Head of Public Protection, Health and Wellbeing outlined key points from the report and sought Members' approval for the recommendation within.

Resolved: the recommendation to approve the submission of the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council consultation response as circulated on the repeal of The Vagrancy Act 1824 and The Vagrancy (Ireland) Act 1847 as issued by the Department of Justice on 20 November 2024

was proposed by Cllr Lyness and seconded by Cllr Ferris and agreed.

The Acting Head of Community Planning and Development left the meeting during the above item.

4.5 MEAqua Academy Development Plan 2024-2027

Members noted the circulated report which provided the details of the first MEAqua Academy Development Plan for the period 2024 to 2027.

The Head of Public Protection, Health and Wellbeing provided an overview of the circulated report and highlighted that, due to the age of the three Leisure Centres, there would be a number of infrastructure issues which would need to be addressed to enable expansion of programmes and increased participation to proceed. This would require major investment in facilities over the lifetime of the plan.

She advised that 6-monthly updates on the Plan would be provided to the Committee.

Further to Members' comments, the Head of Public Protection, Health and Wellbeing advised that Officers were working on the stakeholder survey design and could include the points made in that process. The survey would be disseminated to those enrolled or with children enrolled on current programmes, stakeholders and the general public. In response to a question, the Head of Public Protection, Health and Wellbeing advised that opening hours were not part of this plan, but they could be considered within other elements of the transformation process. She reminded Members of the cost-cutting measures undertaken the previous year.

4.6 Temporary Closure Order for Herdman's Lane PRoW

Members noted the circulated report which updated on the temporary closure of Public Right of Way (PRoW) known as Herdman's Lane. The PROW runs from Farm Lodge Park to Upper Road, Greenisland.

In response to a Member's comments and concerns in relation to the lack of neighbourhood notification and consultation, the Outdoor Recreation Officer recapped the series of events and informed that the closure had occurred on the grounds of health & safety. She advised that legislation stated that the 3-months closure could be on a rolling basis.

Ald Wilson requested that his opposition to the closure be recorded, stating that he considered this an abuse of the Order.

The Outdoor Recreation Officer informed of work being undertaken on a diversion route and ongoing discussions. She undertook to follow the issues up with the Member after the meeting, including whether Council owned the area at the bottom of the site where the gate had been locked.

4.7 Donations to Museums

Report circulated seeking Members' consideration of offers of items by donation to Larne, Carrickfergus and Mid-Antrim Museums.

Resolved: the recommendation to

- (i) accept offers 1 – 9 and offers 11 – 14 in full
- (ii) decline offers 10 and 15

was proposed by Cllr Armstrong and seconded by Cllr Hoey and agreed.

5 Items for Recommendation to Council

No items to consider.

6 Tabled Questions

There were no tabled questions.

On the proposal of Cllr Glover, seconded by Cllr Lyness, it was:

Agreed: That the Meeting goes into Closed Committee.

In accordance with Council policy, members of the press and the public were not in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

7 Items for Consideration/Decision – Closed Committee

7.1 Business Case Spa at Amphitheatre

Report circulated seeking approval for the attached Business Case and Recruitment of a Consultancy Team for the Spa Refurbishment in Amphitheatre.

The item was determined to fall within Closed Committee as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: - Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until sometime in the future.

Resolved: the recommendation to approve the circulated Business Case and procurement of a Consultancy Team to coordinate with the Capital Projects team for the design, tender specification and delivery of this project

was proposed by Cllr Lyness and seconded by Cllr Minford and agreed.

7.2 Proposed Outsourcing of Bentra Golf Facility

Report circulated providing an update on Bentra Golf Course and the possible future letting of the property.

The item was determined to fall within Closed Committee as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until sometime in the future.

In response to Members' comments, the Director of Community undertook to include the suggestion in relation to rent reduction in the first two years in the discussions.

Resolved: the recommendation to

- (i) note the one expression of interest received in relation to the operation and maintenance of Bentra Golf Club
- (ii) note the restrictions in place from Fields in Trust
- (iii) agree that Officers continue to bottom out the opportunity with the interested party and Fields in Trust, to enable a lease agreement to be presented to Council for future approval

was proposed by Cllr Minford and seconded by Cllr Lyness and agreed.

7.3 Strategic Tourism Product Development Activity Update

Members noted the circulated report which provided Elected Members with an overview of Tourism Development activity from August to December 2024, highlighting the works undertaken in delivering a wide and varied programme of tourism development activity and the benefit this brings to the Borough.

The item was determined to fall within Closed Committee as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until - never.

Further to Members' comments, the Tourism and Product Development Manager undertook to raise the issue of additional brown signage for Slemish on a number of routes.

7.4 Dunfane Playing Field, Ballymena – Asset Review and Options for Development (additional item)

Report circulated seeking input into the preferred option for the development of Dunfane playing fields, Ballymena.

The item was determined to fall within Closed Committee as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until sometime in the future.

The Director of Community highlighted the key points of the report, detailed the three Options contained within, indicated that SMT's preference was for Option 1 and outlined the reasons.

The Chair advised Members that she was aware that not all Ballymena Members were on this Committee and suggested that the item go to Full Council for decision.

Extensive discussion ensued and Members requested additional information in light of same. The Director of Community confirmed that the costs for Option 3 had been sourced by the Capital Plan Team and suggested that, in light of Members' comments, that the item be considered by the Ballymena DEA Group prior to going to Full Council.

The Director of Community, in response to a question, confirmed that all proceeds of land sales went into Capital Receipts and reminded that the land sale referred to was subject to Planning Permission.

Resolved: the recommendation to defer the item to the Ballymena DEA Group for further discussion before moving forward to Full Council for consideration and decision

was proposed by Cllr Philpott and seconded by Ald McDonald and agreed.

8 ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – CLOSED

No items to consider.

On the proposal of Cllr Glover, seconded by Cllr Rae, it was

Agreed: That the Meeting returns to Open Committee.

9 Forward Plan for Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee

Members noted the circulated Forward Plan for Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee.

The meeting ended at 8.16pm.

----- Chair
----- Interim Chief Executive
----- Date

DRAFT

MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 20 January 2025 at 6.30pm
in the Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena
and via remote access**

In the Chair: Cllr G McKeen (Chair)

Present: Ald R Logan
Ald W McCaughey
Ald Mrs M Morrow (Vice-Chair)
Ald A Wilson
Cllr J Gibson
Cllr B Hadden
Cllr L Philpott
Cllr M Warwick

Present remotely: Ald B Ashe, MBE
Cllr R Beggs
Cllr A Clarke
Cllr C Harwood (from 6.37pm)
Cllr A Skinner

Attendance: Mr S Morley, Interim Director of Operations
Mr J McGrandle, Acting Director of Development
Mr J McVeigh, Head of Capital Works
Mrs N Waring, Committee Administrator

Attendance remotely: Mrs C Hunter, Environmental Education Officer (to 6.38pm)

Press: There were no members of the press in attendance.

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

ITEM MINUTE

1 Notice of Meeting

The Interim Director of Operations read the Notice of Meeting.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Cllr A Henry
Cllr P Johnston
Cllr R Stewart

3 Declaration of Interest

Members and Officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality they might have in respect of items on this Agenda.

No declarations of interest were received.

4 Items for Consideration / Decision

4.1 Christmas Toy Scheme 2024 – Results

Report circulated providing an update on the results of the Christmas Toy Scheme project in 2024.

The Environmental Education Officer, in responding to queries, outlined the press and social media coverage for the scheme, including pre-launch, during and post publicity of the success of the scheme. She undertook to investigate and report back on the revenue that would have been raised by the charities involved with the scheme (where possible). In response to a further query, the Environmental Education Officer outlined how the delivery partners had been selected from the inception/commencement of the scheme. She advised that a 'call out' for other charities to be involved would be circulated prior to the commencement of the scheme for 2025.

Officers were congratulated on the initiative.

Resolved: to note the report.

4.2 Amateur and Grassroots Sporting Organisations Improvement Funding – Update

Report circulated providing an update regarding progress in delivering the Amateur and Grassroots Sporting Club Improvement Programme (FY 2024/25), the carry forward of projects to FY2025/26 and seek approval to seek fresh expressions of interest for 25/26.

The Head of Capital Works responded to a query on the conversion of the former Greenisland bowling green into a mini football space including fencing. He outlined the projected timelines for the work once the final design is provided by the club.

In responding to further queries, he advised that Castle Rowing Club would be required to make an expression of interest and a new application for funding in FY 2025/26. He also advised that money attributed to a scheme in the current financial year could not be carried forward nor allocated to another application.

As a point of accuracy, it was noted that 'Greenisland Football Team' should read 'Greenisland Football Club'.

The Head of Capital Works outlined that Officers would work towards delivering the grants programme as agreed in FY 2025/26 and seek Expressions of Interest and applications from local sporting organisations.

Resolved: the recommendation to

- (i) note the progress update
- (ii) approve the seeking of Expressions of Interest from local sporting organisations based on the terms and conditions of the original programme

was proposed by Ald McCaughey and seconded by Cllr Philpott and agreed.

4.3 Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Update

Report circulated providing an update on the progress towards conclusion of the Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Programme, supporting the restoration of identified historical buildings in Carrickfergus.

Resolved: to note the report.

4.4 Economic Development Activity Report

Report circulated providing an update on current Economic Development activity.

The Acting Director of Development drew Members' attention to the Digital Flexible Fund which would close on 12 March and requested that Members promote, where relevant, to constituent business owners.

He also advised that the Larne Business Awards were scheduled to take place on 27 March. Those wishing to attend should advise Member Services.

Resolved: to note the report.

4.5 PEACEPLUS Update

Report circulated providing an update on the Mid and East Antrim PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan including other measures of the PEACEPLUS Programme where opportunities existed for Mid and East Antrim.

The Acting Director of Development responded to queries on 'lessons learned' on Council's unsuccessful funding bid for St Patrick's Barracks project including civic events space, bridge to Ecos with brickwork clocktower in addition to a dedicated cross-community programme of workshops and events. He undertook to provide an overview of all projects planned and funding available for St Patrick's Barracks. In response to a query, he advised that due to cost implications, there was no reserve application which could have been used in place of the unsuccessful funding application.

Resolved: to note the report.

4.6 NI Apprenticeship Week 2025

Report circulated providing an update on activities being delivered by Council during NI Apprenticeship Week 2025.

In response to a query, the Acting Director of Development undertook to investigate whether schools other than those listed in the report had been offered the opportunity to engage in the scheme.

Resolved: to note the report.

4.7 Invest NI's 'Our Future in Focus' Strategy Consultation

Report circulated providing an update on a response to Invest NI's recent consultation around its 2024-2027 'Our Future in Focus' strategy document.

In response to a query, the Acting Director of Development undertook to action the request to draft a letter to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC), regarding the outstanding case of Carnalbanagh Wind Farm, whose case had been with PAC for three years, given that it 'tied in' with 'Strategic Priority 4 - Developing and Achieving Sustainability' of the circulated report.

He also undertook to invite Officers from Invest NI to brief the Committee of the future priorities for Invest NI.

Resolved: to note the report.

4.8 Naming of Residential Development at Frys Road, Ballymena

Report circulated seeking Members' decision on the naming of a new residential development at Frys Road, Ballymena.

The recommendation to approve the proposed development name of Braidside Meadows

was proposed by Cllr Philpott and seconded by Cllr Gibson and agreed.

4.9 Naming of Residential Development at Carncome Road/Craigstown Road, Connor

Report circulated seeking Members' decision on the naming of a new residential development at Carncome Road / Craigstown Road, Connor.

The recommendation to approve the proposed development name of Tawnybrack Gate

was proposed by Cllr Warwick and seconded by Ald McCaughey and agreed.

4.10 Street Naming New Development, Upper Road, Greenisland

Report circulated seeking Members' decision on the naming of a proposed new housing development on a site off Upper Road, Greenisland.

The recommendation to approve the preferred street name of Ardkeen Manor

was proposed by Ald Wilson and seconded by Cllr Skinner and agreed.

4.11 NI Science Summer School 2025

Report circulated providing an update on the Science Summer School NI including the key event which would be taking place in The Braid Arts and Civic Centre on Tuesday 21 January 2025 and to seek approval to host the event in January 2026.

Officers were complimented on the engagement both with the companies and schools.

The recommendation to

- (i) note the planned activity for the Science Summer School NI initiative including the upcoming key event and supplementary schools/company engagement and recognise the joint efforts of teams across Council in their collaboration to deliver the Science Summer School NI programme
- (ii) recognise the commitment and contribution of the external companies and educational organisations involved and the relationships developed with the Council in delivering a successful event of this scale
- (iii) approve to host NI Science Summer School and all supporting activities in 2025-26 subject to securing private sponsorship and DfC funding including the costs contributed to the partnership with 360 Degree Society

was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Ald McCaughey and agreed.

5 Items for Recommendation to Council

No items for recommendation to Council were received.

6 Tabled Questions

No tabled questions were received.

On the proposal of Cllr Warwick, seconded by Cllr Philpott, it was

Agreed: That the Meeting goes into Closed Committee.

In accordance with Council policy, members of the press and the public were not in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

7 Items for Consideration/Decision – Closed Committee

7.1 Joint Procurement of Utility Supply

Report circulated providing background to the utility supply contracts (Electricity & Gas) business case, as outlined.

The item is restricted as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

In response to a query, the Interim Director of Operations advised that the joint procurement group to purchase electricity and gas as the preferred wholesale purchasing model, had been successful.

The recommendation to

- (i) approve continued participation in the joint procurement of electricity & natural gas
- (ii) continue to purchase through a wholesale tracking product as agreed by the members of the cross-council energy purchasing group

was proposed by Cllr Skinner and seconded by Cllr Beggs and agreed.

7.2 DfC COVID Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme Update

Report circulated providing an update on the delivery of the DfC COVID Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme within the Borough.

The item is restricted as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until sometime in the future.

Resolved: to note the report.

7.3 Revitalising Town Centres Programme Update

Report circulated providing an update on the Department for Communities (DfC) Funded Revitalising Town Centres Programme.

The item is restricted as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication is restricted until sometime in the future

The Head of Capital Works responded to queries on the duration and cost to Council of the 'Pop-up Shops', advising that the scheme was not a long-term resolution, rather it addressed a gap in dereliction.

Members placed on record their thanks to the Officers for the recent artwork and Christmas trees.

Resolved: to note the report.

7.4 Business Case for Enhanced Seasonal Lighting - WITHDRAWN

This item was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

The Head of Capital Works advised why the item had been withdrawn.

7.5 Manufacturing Task Force (MTF) – Future Direction

Report circulated providing an update on activities relating to the Manufacturing Task Force (MTF) over the last year and seeking approval to proceed with the appointment of a new Chair for the period April 2025 to March 2026.

The item is restricted as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

If restricted from publication, when will the report become unrestricted:
After committee decision.

The Acting Head of Development undertook to write to the outgoing Chair thanking him and expressing gratitude for his vision and enthusiasm while in post and to wish him well for the future.

Recommendation to:

- (i) note the achievements and strategic importance of the Manufacturing Task Force
- (ii) approve the commencement of the procurement process to appoint a new independent, industry Chair for the MTF at an annual cost to Council as outlined in the report
- (iii) endorse ongoing efforts to secure alternative funding to ensure the MTF's long-term sustainability

was proposed by Ald McCaughey and seconded by Cllr Gibson and agreed.

7.6 Business Case for the Appointment of a Contractor for the Gracehill UNESCO Pathway Works

Report circulated seeking approval for the Business Case to appoint Construction services for the Gracehill Moravian Settlement UNESCO World Heritage Site pathway works.

The item is restricted as information falls under the prescribed exemptions: Part 1, Schedule 6 Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – commercially sensitive information. Publication of the report will become unrestricted: never.

The Head of Capital Works responded to queries on consultancy costs and outlined the projected delivery timeline.

Recommendation to approve the Business case for the appointment of Construction Services for Gracehill UNESCO pathway works

was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Ald McCaughey and agreed.

OPEN COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Ald Logan, seconded by Cllr Philpott it was

Agreed: That the meeting returns to Open Committee.

8 Forward Plan for Environment & Economy Committee

Members noted the circulated forward plan and agenda for the next Environment & Economy Committee scheduled for 3 March 2025.

The meeting ended at 7.32pm.

----- Chair

----- Interim Chief Executive

----- Date

DRAFT

Council/Committee:	Full Council
Date:	17 February 2025
Report Title:	Meeting Schedule 25-26 and 26-27
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director - Business Support
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report sets out the committee and council meeting schedule for 25-26 and 26-27.

2. Background

- 2.1. At the Annual General Meeting in June 2024, members agreed the schedule of meetings for 24-25 and were circulated with a draft schedule for 25-26. It is proposed that the schedule of meetings for both 25-26 and 26-27 are now agreed. Meeting requests can be issued to Members and senior officers following the relevant AGMs.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. The updated schedule has incorporated Christmas, Easter and the July holidays.
- 3.2. Special council meetings have been included for agreeing the rates and insurance. The rate-setting workshops are also included.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications: there are no direct financial implications.
- 4.2. Human Resources: this work will be carried out by Committee Admin.
- 4.3. Equality Screening: Any equality, good relations or rural needs implications will be identified using the council's usual screening process.
- 4.4. Assets: N/A
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: this enables work to be taken forward to support corporate priorities.
- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: N/A

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. Following approval by SMT, these dates are being brought to Full Council for approval.

6. Recommendation or Decision

It is recommended that Council:

- 6.1. Approve the meeting scheduled dates as set out in Appendix 1 (2025-2026) and Appendix 2 (2026-2027).

7. Appendices / Links

Appendix 1 – Meeting schedule 25-26
Appendix 2 - Meeting Schedule 26-27

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS JUNE 2025 - JUNE 2026

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09 June - 20 Jul 2025	09-Jun FC 6.30pm	10-Jun	11-Jun	12-Jun Planning 10am	13-Jun Recv Planning 10am
	16-Jun Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	17-Jun Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	18-Jun	19-Jun	20-Jun
	23-Jun Env & Economy 6.30pm	24-Jun	25-Jun	26-Jun A&S Comm 6.30pm	27-Jun
	30-Jun	01-Jul Personnel Comm 6.30pm	02-Jul	03-Jul	04-Jul
	07-Jul	08-Jul	09-Jul	10-Jul	11-Jul
	14-Jul Bank hol	15-Jul Bank hol	16-Jul	17-Jul	18-Jul
21 Jul - 31 Aug 2025	21-Jul FC 6.30pm	22-Jul	23-Jul	24-Jul Planning 10am	25-Jul Recv Planning 10am
	28-Jul Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	29-Jul Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	30-Jul	31-Jul	01-Aug
	04-Aug Env & Economy 6.30pm	05-Aug A&S Committee 6.30pm	06-Aug	07-Aug	08-Aug
	11-Aug	12-Aug	13-Aug	14-Aug	15-Aug
	18-Aug	19-Aug	20-Aug	21-Aug	22-Aug
	25-Aug Bank hol	26-Aug Personnel Comm 6.30pm	27-Aug	28-Aug	29-Aug
1 Sept - 12 Oct 2025	01-Sep FC 6.30pm	02-Sep	03-Sep	04-Sep Planning 10am	05-Sep Reconv Planning 10am
	08-Sep Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	09-Sep Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	10-Sep	11-Sep	12-Sep
	15-Sep Env & Economy 6.30pm	16-Sep	17-Sep	18-Sep	19-Sep
	22-Sep	23-Sep	24-Sep	25-Sep 6.30pm	26-Sep
	29-Sep	30-Sep	01-Oct	02-Oct	03-Oct
	06-Oct Rates Workshop (1) Capital	07-Oct	08-Oct	09-Oct	10-Oct
13 Oct - 23 Nov	13-Oct FC 6.30pm	14-Oct	15-Oct	16-Oct Planning 10am	17-Oct Reconv Planning 10am
	20-Oct Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	21-Oct Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	22-Oct	23-Oct	24-Oct
	27-Oct Env & Economy 6.30pm	28-Oct A&S Committee 6.30pm	29-Oct	30-Oct	31-Oct
	03-Nov Rates Workshop (2) Capital	04-Nov Personnel Comm 6.30pm	05-Nov	06-Nov	07-Nov
	10-Nov	11-Nov	12-Nov	13-Nov	14-Nov
	17-Nov	18-Nov	19-Nov	20-Nov	21-Nov
24 Nov 2025 - 4 Jan 2026	24-Nov FC 6.30pm	25-Nov Rates Workshop (3) Costs & Income	26-Nov	27-Nov Planning 10am	28-Nov Reconv Planning 10am
	01-Dec Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	02-Dec Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	03-Dec	04-Dec	05-Dec

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS JUNE 2025 - JUNE 2026

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	08-Dec Env & Economy 6.30pm	09-Dec A&S Committee 6.30pm	10-Dec	11-Dec	12-Dec
	15-Dec Rates Workshop (4) Addressing the gap	16-Dec	17-Dec	18-Dec	19-Dec
	22-Dec	Personnel Comm 6.30pm	24-Dec Stat hol	25-Dec Bank hol	26-Dec Bank hol
	29-Dec	30-Dec	31-Dec	01-Jan Bank hol	02-Jan

5 Jan - 15 Feb 2026	05-Jan	06-Jan	07-Jan	08-Jan	09-Jan
				Rates Workshop (5) Final Review	
Meetings moved forward one week	12-Jan FC 6.30pm	13-Jan	14-Jan	15-Jan Planning 10am	16-Jan Reconv Planning 10am
	19-Jan Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	20-Jan Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	21-Jan	22-Jan	23-Jan
	26-Jan Env & Economy 6.30pm	27-Jan A&S Committee 6.30pm	28-Jan	29-Jan	30-Jan
	02-Feb	03-Feb	04-Feb	05-Feb	06-Feb
	09-Feb Special Council (Rates)	10-Feb Personnel Comm 6.30pm	11-Feb	12-Feb	13-Feb

16 Feb - 29 Mar 2026	16-Feb	17-Feb	18-Feb	19-Feb	20-Feb
	FC 6.30pm			Planning 10am	Reconv Planning 10am
	23-Feb Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	24-Feb Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	25-Feb	26-Feb	27-Feb
	02-Mar Env & Economy 6.30pm	03-Mar A&S Committee 6.30pm	04-Mar	05-Mar	06-Mar
	09-Mar	10-Mar	11-Mar	12-Mar	13-Mar
	16-Mar Special Council (Insurance)	17-Mar Bank hol	18-Mar	19-Mar	20-Mar
	23-Mar	24-Mar	25-Mar	26-Mar	27-Mar

30 Mar - 10 May 2026	30-Mar	31-Mar	01-Apr	02-Apr	03-Apr
	FC 6.30pm			Planning 10am	Reconv Planning 10am
	06-Apr Easter Mon	07-Apr Easter bank hol	08-Apr	09-Apr	10-Apr
	13-Apr Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	14-Apr Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	15-Apr	16-Apr	17-Apr
	20-Apr Env & Economy 6.30pm	21-Apr A&S Committee 6.30pm	22-Apr	23-Apr	24-Apr
	27-Apr	28-Apr Personnel Comm 6.30pm	29-Apr	30-Apr	01-May
	04-May Bank holiday	05-May	06-May	07-May	08-May

11 May - 21 Jun 2026	11-May	12-May	13-May	14-May	15-May
	FC 6.30pm			Planning 10am	Reconv Planning 10am
	18-May Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	19-May Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	20-May	21-May	22-May
	25-May Bank hol	26-May Env & Economy 6.30pm	27-May A&S Committee 6.30pm	28-May	29-May
	01-Jun	02-Jun	03-Jun	04-Jun	05-Jun

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS JUNE 2025 - JUNE 2026

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Note: <i>2026/27 starts on 8/6/26</i>	AGM 6.30pm				
	08-Jun	09-Jun	10-Jun	11-Jun	12-Jun
	15-Jun	16-Jun	17-Jun	18-Jun	19-Jun

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS JUNE 2026 - JUNE 2027

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8 June - 17 Jul 2026	08-Jun FC 6.30pm	09-Jun	10-Jun	11-Jun Planning 10am	12-Jun Recv Planning 10am
	15-Jun Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	16-Jun Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	17-Jun	18-Jun	19-Jun
	22-Jun Env & Economy 6.30pm	23-Jun	24-Jun	25-Jun A&S Comm 6.30pm	26-Jun
	29-Jun	30-Jun Personnel Comm 6.30pm	01-Jul	02-Jul	03-Jul
	06-Jul	07-Jul	08-Jul	09-Jul	10-Jul
	13-Jul	14-Jul	15-Jul	16-Jul	17-Jul
	Bank hol	Bank hol			
20 Jul - 28 Aug 2026	20-Jul	21-Jul	22-Jul	23-Jul	24-Jul
	27-Jul FC 6.30pm	28-Jul	29-Jul	30-Jul Planning 10am	31-Jul Recv Planning 10am
	03-Aug Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	04-Aug Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	05-Aug	06-Aug	07-Aug
	10-Aug Env & Economy 6.30pm	11-Aug A&S Committee 6.30pm	12-Aug	13-Aug	14-Aug
	17-Aug	18-Aug	19-Aug	20-Aug	21-Aug
	24-Aug	25-Aug Personnel Comm 6.30pm	26-Aug	27-Aug	28-Aug
31 Aug - 9 Oct 2026	31-Aug Bank Holiday	01-Sep	02-Sep	03-Sep	04-Sep
	07-Sep FC 6.30pm	08-Sep	09-Sep	10-Sep Planning 10am	11-Sep Reconv Planning 10am
	14-Sep Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	15-Sep Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	16-Sep	17-Sep	18-Sep
	21-Sep Env & Economy 6.30pm	22-Sep	23-Sep	24-Sep A&S Committee 6.30pm	25-Sep
	28-Sep	29-Sep	30-Sep	01-Oct	02-Oct
	05-Oct	06-Oct	07-Oct	08-Oct	09-Oct
	Rates Workshop (1) Capital				
12 Oct - 20 Nov 2026	12-Oct FC 6.30pm	13-Oct	14-Oct	15-Oct Planning 10am	16-Oct Reconv Planning 10am
	19-Oct Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	20-Oct Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	21-Oct	22-Oct	23-Oct
	26-Oct Env & Economy 6.30pm	27-Oct A&S Committee 6.30pm	28-Oct	29-Oct	30-Oct
	02-Nov Rates Workshop (2) Capital	03-Nov Personnel Comm 6.30pm	04-Nov	05-Nov	06-Nov
	09-Nov	10-Nov	11-Nov	12-Nov	13-Nov
	16-Nov	17-Nov	18-Nov	19-Nov	20-Nov
23 Nov 2026 - 1 Jan 2027	23-Nov	24-Nov Rates Workshop (3) Costs & Income	25-Nov	26-Nov Planning 10am	27-Nov Reconv Planning 10am
	30-Nov Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	01-Dec Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm	02-Dec	03-Dec	04-Dec
	07-Dec Env & Economy 6.30pm	08-Dec A&S Committee 6.30pm	09-Dec	10-Dec	11-Dec
	14-Dec	15-Dec	16-Dec	17-Dec	18-Dec

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS JUNE 2026 - JUNE 2027

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		Rates Workshop (4) Address the Gap			
	21-Dec	22-Dec	23-Dec	24-Dec	25-Dec
				Stat hol	Bank hol
	28-Dec	29-Dec	30-Dec	31-Dec	01-Jan
	Bank hol				Bank hol
4 Jan - 12 Feb 2027	04-Jan	05-Jan	06-Jan	07-Jan	08-Jan
	11-Jan	12-Jan	13-Jan	14-Jan	15-Jan
	FC 6.30pm	Rates Workshop (5) Final Review	Personnel Comm 6.30pm	Planning 10am	Reconv Planning 10am
	18-Jan	19-Jan	20-Jan	21-Jan	22-Jan
	Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm			
	25-Jan	26-Jan	27-Jan	28-Jan	29-Jan
	Env & Economy 6.30pm	A&S Committee 6.30pm			
	01-Feb	02-Feb	03-Feb	04-Feb	05-Feb
	08-Feb	09-Feb	10-Feb	11-Feb	12-Feb
	Special Council (Rates)				
15 Feb - 26 Mar 2027	15-Feb	16-Feb	17-Feb	18-Feb	19-Feb
	FC 6.30pm			Planning 10am	Reconv Planning 10am
	22-Feb	23-Feb	24-Feb	25-Feb	26-Feb
	Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm			
	01-Mar	02-Mar	03-Mar	04-Mar	05-Mar
	Env & Economy 6.30pm	A&S Committee 6.30pm			
	08-Mar	09-Mar	10-Mar	11-Mar	12-Mar
	15-Mar	16-Mar	17-Mar	18-Mar	19-Mar
		Special Council (Insurance)	Bank hol		
	22-Mar	23-Mar	24-Mar	25-Mar	26-Mar
		Personnel Comm 6.30pm			
29 Mar - 7 May 2027	29-Mar	30-Mar	31-Mar	01-Apr	02-Apr
	Easter Mon	Easter bank hol			
	05-Apr	06-Apr	07-Apr	08-Apr	09-Apr
	FC 6.30pm			Planning 10am	Reconv Planning 10am
	12-Apr	13-Apr	14-Apr	15-Apr	16-Apr
	Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm			
	19-Apr	20-Apr	21-Apr	22-Apr	23-Apr
	Env & Economy 6.30pm	A&S Committee 6.30pm			
	26-Apr	27-Apr	28-Apr	29-Apr	30-Apr
	03-May	04-May	05-May	06-May	07-May
	Bank holiday				
10 May - 18 Jun 2027	10-May	11-May	12-May	13-May	14-May
	FC 6.30pm	Personnel Comm 6.30pm		Planning 10am	Reconv Planning 10am
	17-May	18-May	19-May	20-May	21-May
	Corp Res, Policy & Gov Committee 6.30pm	Neighbourhoods & Communities 6.30pm			
	24-May	25-May	26-May	27-May	28-May
	Env & Economy 6.30pm	A&S Committee 6.30pm			
	31-May	01-Jun	02-Jun	03-Jun	04-Jun
	Bank hol				
	07-Jun	08-Jun	09-Jun	10-Jun	11-Jun
	AGM 6.30pm				
Note: 2027/28 starts 14/6/27	14-Jun	15-Jun	16-Jun	17-Jun	18-Jun

Council/Committee:	Council
Date:	17 February 2025
Report Title:	Renewal of the Armed Forces Covenant
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director - Business Support
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate & Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report sets out information in relation to the renewal of the Armed Forces Covenant.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation that the Armed Forces Community should be treated fairly and face no disadvantage when accessing public and commercial services, with special provision made in appropriate cases for those who have sacrificed the most.
- 2.2. Its two principles are that, recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by the Armed Forces:
 - Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services.
 - Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.
- 2.3. The Covenant applies to not just veterans but also cadets, cadet force adult volunteers, regular service people, families of service people, wounded injured and sick, Reservists and service leavers/veterans.
- 2.4. The Armed Forces Act 2021 amended the Armed Forces Act 2006 to create a legal obligation on specified bodies in the UK primarily in the areas of health, education and housing. This is called the Armed Forces Covenant Duty and imposes a statutory duty to have due regard to the principles of the Covenant. This legal obligation applies to specified bodies whether or not they have signed the Covenant pledge.
- 2.5. From a Council perspective, signing the Covenant is voluntary. Local Government in NI does not provide health, education or housing as their counterparts do in the rest of the UK. This means the extent of support offered is determined by each Council in NI and the focus may vary.

Councils may choose to sign up in order to demonstrate their support for the Armed Forces Community and to the principles of the Covenant. All organisations – public, private or voluntary and small, medium or large – are welcome to sign the Covenant.

- 2.6. The Covenant is a flexible tool. While all signatories pledge to uphold and act in accordance with the basic principles of the Covenant, organisations are free to tailor their specific pledges to suit their circumstances. They are free to specify the detailed support they may offer throughout the life of the covenant.
- 2.7. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council formally signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant in 2016, and, following recent contact with the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Northern Ireland, the Council has been advised that it is due for renewal.
- 2.8. A copy of the Community Covenant that was signed by the Council and the Armed Forces Community is included as an **Appendix 1** to this document.
- 2.9. At that time the Council undertook to address the following.
 - to continue to recognize and remember the sacrifices made by the armed forces community
 - to promote public understanding and awareness of issues that affect the armed forces community
 - to encourage activities that help to integrate the armed forces community into local life
 - to promote more awareness of the needs of families of the armed services
- 2.10. In response to that the Council has undertaken the following work to meet these commitments.
 - The Council continues to recognize and remember the sacrifices made by the armed forces Community through annual Remembrance ceremonies in November but also a range of anniversaries, significant events and commemorations that are relevant to armed forces.
 - The Council appointed a Veterans Champion who promotes understanding and awareness of the needs of the armed forces community as well as ensuring signposting and support for veterans and their families.
 - Through the Veterans Champion, and in consultation with the Veterans Commission the council established a programme to engage with veterans and their families. The Veterans Support Programme has an allocated annual budget which enables a variety of activities to be enjoyed, including bus trips, guided walks for all

levels of fitness, talks and health awareness events, and arts and craft workshops.

- The Council, signposts individuals and families to other facilities and support, working in partnership with the Veterans Commissioner's Office where relevant.
- The Council has also facilitated veterans' roadshows in the Borough, which enables veterans and their families to learn more about the support and opportunities that is available.

2.11. The work of the MEA Veterans Champion and the Veterans Support Programme operated by the Council is well received by veterans and their families. This has been important as Mid and East Antrim recognises that there is a large ex-service population of both men and women, many having served in the RUC/PSNI, UDR, Military or other services.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

3.1. The Council is now being asked to renew its Covenant. In doing so the Council needs to consider the commitments it will make to continue the work that is well established.

3.2. A draft version of the new Armed Forces Covenant is set out at **Appendix 2**. It includes the Council's draft responses to commitments that the Armed Forces organisations ask councils to consider.

3.3. It should also be noted that for 2025/26 there are several specific events/commemorations that support our Armed Forces community. Plans are underway to arrange events that commemorate the North Irish Horse Battle for the Hitler Line commemoration, 80th anniversary, VE 80 and the Battle of the Somme anniversary.

4. General Considerations / Implications

4.1. Financial implications: the Veterans Programme has current budget of £6,000

4.2. Human Resources: the officer lead for this work is the Civic Events Co-Ordinator

4.3. Equality Screening: Any equality, good relations or rural needs implications will be identified using the council's usual screening process.

4.4. Assets: N/A

4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: This aligns with the People objective of the Corporate Plan.

4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: N/A

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. Members are asked to consider and confirm their commitment to renewing the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant. In addition, Members are requested to agree the range of activity suggested in **Appendix 2**.

6. Recommendation or Decision

6.1. It is recommended that Members:

- Agree to the resigning of the Armed Forces Covenant
- Agree to the commitments made in **Appendix 2** as an indication of our support for Armed Forces Community.

7. Appendices / Links

Appendix 1 – Armed Forces Covenant signed in 2016

Appendix 2 – Draft new Covenant



Community Covenant

An Armed Forces Community Covenant

between

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and
Representatives of the Charitable and Voluntary sectors,
the Civilian Community of the Borough

and

The Armed Forces Community in Mid and East Antrim

We, the undersigned, agree to work and act together to honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

Signatories

Cllr Audrey Wales MBE
Mayor of Mid and East Antrim

Audrey Wales

Signed on behalf of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council



Lieutenant Colonel Steve Thomas
38 (Irish) Brigade

Steve Thomas

Signed on behalf of the Armed Forces Community



Mr Davy Davison
Ballymena Branch Chairman,
The Royal British Legion

Davy Davison

Signed on behalf of The Royal British Legion



Johnny Rollins

Colonel (Retired) Johnny Rollins
Chief Executive Reserve Forces and Cadet Association NI



Signed on behalf of the Reserve Forces and Cadets in the Borough

Signed on 22 November 2016



SECTION 1: PARTICIPANTS

This Armed Forces Community Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families working and residing in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

and

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

and

The Charitable and Voluntary Sector

and

Other members of the civilian community

SECTION 2: PRINCIPLES OF THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

- 2.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level.
- 2.2 The purpose of this Community Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel their families and widowers in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.
- 2.3 For Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and partner organisations, the Community Covenant presents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community. It also presents an opportunity to build upon existing good work on other initiatives such as the Welfare Pathway.
- 2.4 For the Armed Forces community, the Community Covenant encourages the integration of Service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces community to help their local community.

SECTION 3: OBJECTIVES AND GENERAL INTENTIONS

Aims of the Community Covenant

- 3.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant complements the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant (see Appendix 1), which defines the enduring, general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces community.

- 3.2 It aims to encourage all parties within a community to offer support to the local Armed Forces community and make it easier for Service personnel, families and veterans to access the help and support available from the MOD, from statutory providers and from the Charitable and Voluntary Sector. These organisations already work together in partnership at local level.
- 3.3 The scheme is intended to be a two-way arrangement and the Armed Forces community are encouraged to do as much as they can to support their community and promote activity which integrates the Service community into civilian life.

SECTION 4: Measures

4.1 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council will endeavour to:

- Continue to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by the armed forces community
- Promotes public understanding and awareness of issues that affect the armed forces community
- Encourage activities that help to integrate the armed forces community into local life
- Promote more awareness of the needs of families of the armed services.

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

An enduring Covenant between

the People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

and -

all those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of
the Crown

and their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

APPENDIX 2: SUGGESTED WORDING**Company Name**

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

Company Name

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Add company logo here

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
His Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

- 1.1 We Mid and East Antrim Council will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- *no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen*
- *in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

The following are suggested draft pledges covering the range of Defence personnel for whom support may be given. Delete, add or change any of the pledges to show how you can pledge support for Defence personnel in ways best suited to you. Pledges may be changed at any time in the future to reflect your changing circumstances.

- 2.1 We recognise the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business and to our country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:
- **Promoting the Armed Forces:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation, to our staff, customers, suppliers, contractors and wider public. The Council will create a new webpage promoting the Armed Forces Covenant, the Council's Veteran Support Programme and the work of the Council's Veteran Champion.
 - **National Events:** supporting Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal Day and Remembrance activities, promoting these through our usual channels, and organising a range of Remembrance and ceremonial activities including commemorations throughout the year.
 - **Wellbeing support:** Through our website, signposting health and wellbeing support available for Armed Forces families and communities. In addition, it offers meeting facilities for use by counselling services to veterans
 - **Veteran support:** continuing to support and resource our veterans support programme, in conjunction with the direction of our Veterans Champion, engaging in wide ranging communication, engagement and outreach.
 - **Employment:** our employment policies support those employed as reservists, with relevant time off for action and training.
 - **Civic responsibilities:** The Council will continue to maintain and care for war memorials and war graves across the Borough

Council/Committee:	Full Council
Date:	17 February 2025
Report Title:	Revision of Mid and East Antrim Scheme of Allowances Payable to Councillors
Author:	Michelle Hegarty, Assistant Director - Finance
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Director of Corporate Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members on the latest guidance received from DfC on the Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors and to seeks approval to implement the proposed increases.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Scheme is made under the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 and has been prepared in accordance with the Department for Communities Local Government Circular LG 15/24 Councillor Allowances Circular – Updated December 2024”, issued on 9 December 2024.
- 2.2 This circular is required to determine and reflect an increase in the maximum rates for Basic Special Responsibility Allowance from 1 April 2024 and an increase in Dependants Carers Allowance from 1 April 2025.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 The scheme has been updated to reflect the provisions of the above circular, and authorisation is requested from Elected Members to implement the new scheme of allowances and to publish it on the Council website.
- 3.2 The two major changes from the previous circular are:
 - Increase of 1.025% on Councillors Allowances from £17,030 to £17,456 per annum which is valid from 1 April 2024.
 - Increase on Dependants Carers’ Allowance from £11.44 to £12.21 per hour which is valid from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1 Financial implications – The financial impact of implementing the revised scheme is an additional £17k for the 2024/25 financial year, which has already been accounted for in the budget.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 If the scheme is approved, back pay will be calculated from 1 April 2024 and paid to Councillors.
- 5.2 The 2025/26 Scheme of Allowances Payable to Councillors will be published on Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's website.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1 Elected Members are asked to;
- Approve the above increases to the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Scheme of Allowances Payable to Councillors.
 - Authorise publication of the updated Scheme on the Council website.

7. Appendices / Links

- Appendix 1 - Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Scheme of Allowances 2025/26
- Appendix 2 - LG Circular 15/24 "Consolidated Councillor Allowances Circular – Updated December 2024"

MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES PAYABLE TO COUNCILLORS

This Scheme is made under the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019. The scheme has been prepared in accordance with Department for Communities Local Government Circular LG 15/24 “Consolidated Councillor Allowances Circular - Updated December 2024”, issued in December 2024.

1. Definitions

In this scheme

- ‘Approved duty’ and ‘committee member’ are as defined in the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.
- ‘Department’ means the Department for Communities;
- ‘Guidance’ means the Department for Communities Councillors’ Allowances Guidance for District Councils in Northern Ireland, issued in September 2019; and
- ‘Regulations’ means the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.

2. Commencement Date

This scheme of allowances shall be operational from 1 April 2025 however application of the updated Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances effective from 1 April 2024 will be applied and be back paid before 31 March 2025.

3. Basic Allowance

- 3.1 An annual basic allowance of £17,456 shall be paid to each councillor. Where applicable this will be paid pro-rata.
- 3.2 No council may pay more than one basic allowance to a councillor.
- 3.3 Basic allowance is intended to recognise the full time commitment of councillors, including such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and constituents.
- 3.4 The basic allowance is intended to cover incidental costs incurred by councillors in their official capacity, such as the use of their homes, office consumables and cost of mobile phone calls.
- 3.5 In circumstances where a councillor is suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 59(5) or section 60(1) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the part of the basic allowance payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended should be withheld.

4. Special Responsibility Allowance

- 4.1 A special responsibility allowance shall be paid to those councillors who hold the special responsibilities specified in Schedule 1.
- 4.2 The amount of allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in the Schedule. The allowance is only payable whilst the councillor is carrying out that duty.
- 4.3 At any time, only one special responsibility allowance will be paid to a councillor.
- 4.4 In circumstances where a councillor is suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 59(5) or section 60(1) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, any SRA payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended should be withheld.

5. Mayor/Deputy Mayor Allowance

- 5.1 An allowance of £1,000 per month will be payable to the Mayor of the council.
- 5.2 An allowance of £650 per month will be payable to the Deputy Mayor of the council.
- 5.3 The Department advises that any Mayor/Deputy Mayor Allowance should be considered totally separate from SRA arrangements.

6. Dependants' Carers' Allowance

- 6.1 Councillors are entitled to claim a dependants' carers' allowance towards reimbursement of actual reasonable costs necessarily incurred in providing care for an eligible dependant, while carrying out an approved duty.
- 6.2 The allowance may be paid for a dependant who requires full-time care and who resides with the councillor as part of that household.
- 6.3 A dependant is defined as:
 - a child under 16 years old;
 - a child 16 years old or more, where there is medical or social work evidence that full-time care is required;
 - an adult with a recognised physical or mental disability where there is medical or social work evidence that full-time care is required; or
 - an elderly relative requiring full-time care.
- 6.4 For the purposes of this allowance, a carer is defined as a responsible person over 16 years' old who does not normally live with the councillor as part of that household; and is not a parent/guardian of the dependent child.

- 6.5** A specialist carer is defined as a qualified person who is needed where it is essential to have professional assistance. In these circumstances a receipt must be attached to the claim.
- 6.6** A dependants' carers' allowance shall be payable based upon actual receipted costs or at the appropriate hourly rate, whichever is the lower; up to the monthly maximum. You can backdate your claim by up to 3 months.
- 6.7(a)** The effective hourly rate valid from the 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 for dependants' carers' allowance for standard care shall be £12.21, and for specialised care £24.42. The monthly maximum for standard care payable is £635, and the monthly maximum for specialised care is £1,270.
- 6.7(b)** The amounts stated above will be subject to any increase to the minimum wage for 21+.
- 6.7(c)** Councillors may claim only one dependants' carers' allowance in respect of each occurrence of approved duty. Only one dependants' carers' allowance rate is payable even if there are 2 or more children/dependants being cared for.

7. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

- 7.1** A councillor or committee member shall be entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowances where expenditure on travelling, or subsistence has been necessarily incurred in connection with an approved duty as specified in Schedule 2. The amount claimed should not exceed the expense incurred.
- 7.2** The maximum rates of travel and subsistence are determined by the Department following consultation with the Northern Ireland Joint Council for Local Government Services.

7.3 The rates of travel allowance for travel by private vehicle shall be as shown in the table below.

Type of Vehicle	Rate per Mile
A pedal cycle	20.0p
A motorcycle (all engine capacities)	24.0p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 450cc but not exceeding 999cc	46.9p *13.7p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 999cc but not exceeding 1,199cc	52.2p *14.4p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 1,199cc	65.0p *16.4p
An electric car	45.0p **25.0p
Passenger rate	5.0p

*For mileage above 8,500 miles

**For mileage above 10,000 miles

7.4 The rates of subsistence shall be as shown in the table below.

PERIOD/MEAL	RATES	
	British Isles £	London £
Overnight allowance - An absence involving an overnight stay, away from the normal place of residence. This rate does not include any meal allowance.	100.70	122.45
Breakfast allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period before 11 am)	11.50	
Lunch allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 12 noon and 2pm)	13.50	
Tea allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 3pm and 6pm)	4.70	
Evening meal allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period ending after 7pm)	20.95	

8. General

8.1 This scheme may be revoked or amended at any time.

9. Claims and Payment

9.1 Payments regarding basic allowance and special responsibility allowance shall be made monthly three clear banking days before month end.

9.2 Claims for dependants' carers' allowance, travelling allowance or subsistence allowance should be made in writing within three months, and should be accompanied by receipts, where appropriate.

9.3 This Scheme of Allowances should be read in conjunction with Local Government Circular **LG 15/24** Councillors' Allowance Guidance which contains details on the applicable criteria for awarding each allowance.

10. Renunciations

10.1 Councillors may, if they wish, renounce all or part of their entitlement to basic, chairperson, vice chairperson or special responsibility allowances. They can do this in writing to the Chief Executive. A Councillor can subsequently withdraw the renunciation. They can also amend a renunciation (for example, to limit it to one kind of allowance only). The withdrawal or amendment cannot have retrospective effect.

It is recommended that this should be an administrative arrangement for the council with political party arrangement.

11. Review

11.1 The Scheme of Allowances Payable to Councillors will be subject to revision and review in accordance with any Departmental Circulars issued throughout the year.

SCHEDULE 1 to the Scheme of Allowances

The following table provides details of the council's duties which attract a Special Responsibility Allowance and the associated allowance amount.

Special Responsibility	Special Responsibility Allowance Rate (£)
Chair of Corporate Resources, Policy, and Governance Committee	£500 per month
Vice-Chair of Corporate Resources, Policy, and Governance Committee	£300 per month
Chair of Audit and Scrutiny Committee	£500 per month
Vice-Chair of Audit and Scrutiny Committee	£300 per month
Chair of Planning Committee	£500 per month
Vice-Chair of Planning Committee	£300 per month
Chair of Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee	£500 per month
Vice-Chair of Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee	£300 per month
Chair of Environment & Economy Committee	£500 per month
Vice-Chair of Environment & Economy Committee	£300 per month
Chair of Personnel Committee	£500 per month
Vice-Chair of Personnel Committee	£300 per month
Partnership Panel Representative	£357 per meeting
Group Party Leader	£40 per month

SCHEDULE 2

In accordance with Regulations, only the following are specified as the duties in respect of which basic allowance, dependants' carers' allowances, and travel and subsistence allowances are available.

1. attendance at a meeting of the council;
2. attendance at a meeting of a committee of the council;
3. attendance at a meeting of a sub-committee of the council;
4. attendance at a meeting of a joint committee;
5. attendance at a meeting of a sub-committee of a joint committee;
6. the doing of anything approved by a council or anything of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the council, or any of its committees or sub-committees, or as the case may be, of the joint committee or any of its sub-committees.

Regarding point 7, specific duties approved by the Council are:

Type of Activity regarding Point Number 7
Working Groups of Council
Courses / Conferences / Seminars / Training approved by Council
Pre-Council Committee meetings with Council Officers
Meetings with Chief Executive / Council Officers
Meetings of Outside Boards/Committees/Partnerships/Groups:
• Policing and Community Safety Partnership
• Northern Ireland Housing Council
• Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Northern Ireland
• Arc21
• All Party Group on Climate Action
• Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)
• Ballygally Community Development Association Board Ltd
• Ballymena Academy Board of Governors
• Ballymena BID Board
• Ballymena North Partnership Board
• Carrickfergus Enterprise Agency
• Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Board
• City Deal Elected Member Joint Council Forum
• Dementia Friendly Communities Steering Group - Northern Area
• Doury Road Forum (Building Successful Communities)
• Greenisland Regeneration Steering Group
• iESE (Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise)
• Knockagh Monument Joint Committee
• Lough Neagh Partnership
• Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership
• Mid & East Antrim Community Advice Services
• Mid & East Antrim 'In Bloom' Partnership
• National Association of Councillors

Type of Activity regarding Point Number 7
• North Channel Partnership
• Northern Ireland Local Government Association
• NILGA Elected Member Development, Policy & Learning Network
• NILGA Strategic Policy Framework
• Northern Ireland Local Government Partnership on Travellers' Issues
• Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership (NISMP)/NILGA Sustainable Communities and Demographics Working Partnership
• Peaceplus Partnership
• Somme Association
• St Patrick's Barracks Programme Board
• Town Centre Revitalise Steering Group
** Working Groups / Sub-Groups of the above**
Other duties in connection with the discharge of the functions of Council approved by the Chief Executive
This list may be added to, amended, or reduced during the year in line with Council approval.

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Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
Pobal

Department fur
Commonities

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Local Government and Housing
Regulation Division
Finance Branch
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
BELFAST
BT2 7EG
Phone: 028 9082 9307
email: Gerard.murray@communities-
ni.gov.uk

Chief Executive of each District Council
Finance Officer of each District Council
Other Interested Parties

Our ref:CO1-24-496
09 December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**CIRCULAR LG 15/24 - CONSOLIDATED COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES CIRCULAR
(Updated December 2024)**

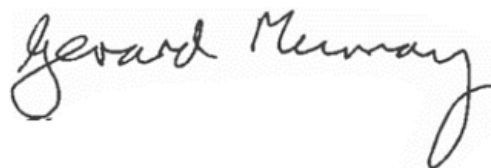
This Local Government Circular provides a consolidated record of all councillor allowances and supersedes Local Government Circular LG 23/23.

This consolidated circular is required to determine and reflect an increase in maximum rates for Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance from 1 April 2024 and an increase in Dependants' Carers' Allowance from 1 April 2025.

All determinations are made by the Department under section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.

If you have any queries on the content of this circular please contact Jeff Glass on 028 9082 3375 or Ian Lewis on 028 9082 3506 or by email jeff.glass@communities-ni.gov.uk or ian.lewis@communities-ni.gov.uk .

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerard Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'G' and 'M'.

GERARD MURRAY
Director
Local Government and Housing Regulation

1. Basic Allowance

- valid from 1 April 2024

Basic Allowance
Maximum £17,456 per annum ≠

≠ (The basic allowance includes an element for incidental and consumable costs incurred by councillors in their official capacity. In 2015/16 this element was £1,000 and each year this amount is uplifted in line with the increase applied to the basic allowance, therefore this element within the basic allowance is £1,229 from 1 April 2024.)

2. Dependants' Carers' Allowance

- valid from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

The following table states the maximum rates for dependants' carers' allowance.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance	Hourly Rate	Maximum Monthly Amount
	£	£
Standard	11.44 [^]	595
Specialist	22.88	1,190

[^](Based on national living wage)

- valid from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

The following table states the maximum rates for dependants' carers' allowance.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance	Hourly Rate	Maximum Monthly Amount
	£	£
Standard	12.21 [^]	635
Specialist	24.42	1,270

[^](Based on national living wage)

– valid from 1 April 2017

The following table states the maximum rates for travel allowances.

Type of Vehicle	Rate per Mile Pence	Rate per Mile Above 8,500 miles Pence	Rate per Mile Above 10,000 miles Pence
A pedal cycle	20.0p	20.0p	20.0p
A motor cycle (all engine capacities)	24.0p	24.0p	24.0p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 450cc but not exceeding 999cc	46.9p	13.7p	13.7p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 999cc but not exceeding 1,199cc	52.2p	14.4p	14.4p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 1,199cc	65.0p	16.4p	16.4p
An electric car	45.0p	45.0p	25.0p
Passenger rate (per passenger)	5.0p	5.0p	5.0p

4. Special Responsibility Allowance

– valid from 1 April 2024

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The following table states the maximum rate of Special Responsibility Allowance that a council may pay. The maximum rate is based on the size of the council population. Each council's population figures are updated each year by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and it is the duty of each council to operate within the total maximum rate appropriate to its population band. For ease the maximum any councillor can receive, within each band, is also provided.

Population of council	Maximum Special Responsibility Allowance £	Maximum (1/5th) for individual councillor £
Less than 120,000	61,459	12,292
120,000 to 199,000	86,043	17,209
200,000 +	132,751	26,550

5. Subsistence Allowances

– valid from 1 April 2015

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The following table states the maximum rates for subsistence; however, where councils believe it is necessary there is flexibility for councils to increase these rates by applying a suitable measure of price inflation.

PERIOD/MEAL	British Isles Rates £	London Rates £
Accommodation allowance - An absence involving an overnight stay, away from the normal place of residence. This rate does not include any meal allowance.	100.70	122.45
Breakfast allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period before 11 am)	11.50	11.50
Lunch allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 12 noon and 2pm)	13.50	13.50
Tea allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 3pm and 6pm)	4.70	4.70
Evening meal allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period ending after 7pm)	20.95	20.95