



**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2023**

Table of Recommendations

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations
1.	Apologies	Councillor Watton
2.	Declarations of Interest	Councillors MA McKillop, McMullan, Schenning
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 20 December 2022 (adjourned)	Confirmed as a correct record
4.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 January 2023 (to include Business reconvened from Tuesday 20 December 2022)	Confirmed as a correct record
5.	Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust	to recommend that Council approve the funding to CCGHT for services being undertaken within the work plan at Annex A (22/23 Financial Year) (circulated) which will be subject to a staged approval and satisfactory delivery of the outputs detailed and that Council looks at increasing funding in line with inflation in the next financial year (24/25).
6.	Town Perception Surveys Tender Report	to recommend that Council does not award the contract to CARD Group for the contract sum of £18,365 +VAT; complete the

		surveys every other year and look at again in 2024.
7.	Peace Plus Consultancy Tender	to recommend that Council approves the appointment of Third Sector Connect to develop, in association with the Peace Plus Partnership, a local co-designed Peace Plus Action Plan for the Borough for the sum of £12,250 exclusive of vat.
8.	Portrush to Bushmills Greenway	to recommend that Council include Portrush to Bushmills Greenway within the Growth Deal and commission an SOC for March 2023 completion via a SIB Associate appointment (to avoid procurement delays)
9.	LUF Coleraine Leisure Centre Update	to recommend that Council proceed with Option 2 - Proceed with the appointment of an ICT via the Council's existing framework and a planning application at a cost of up to £1m, funded by a programme of asset disposals, in preparation for the inclusion of the project in future grant funding applications
10.	Ballycastle Leisure Centre	to recommend that Council notes the outcome of two Levelling Up Fund (LUF) applications submitted last year for the development of a new Coleraine Leisure Centre and Ballycastle Leisure Centre; and reconfirm Stage 1 approval for Ballycastle Leisure Centre and accept the LUF

		<i>funding to allow progression to Stage 2 detailed design, planning and procurement at an estimated cost of £600k.</i>
11.	Ballycastle Shared Campus	<i>to recommend that Council defers a decision and give a commitment to DE/EA that the Council will make an application to Peace Plus for the project.</i>
12.	Ballycastle Tennis Courts Tender Report	<i>to recommend that Council</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>notes the tender process and approve the award of the contract for Part A to Sports Grounds Specialists at a cost of £39,500.</i> - <i>approves Part B of tender process of replacement polymeric court surface at a cost of £48,500.</i>
13.	RVLC Tender Report	<i>to recommend that Council notes the tender process in Annex A (circulated), Roe Valley Leisure Centre Refurbishment of Learner Pool, Main Pool & Spa Filter Vessels including Associated Works and awards the tender to Complete Water Treatment at a cost of £88,089.22</i>
14.	Gym Investment – JDLC/RVLC/Shekburn	<i>to recommend that Council approves the Outline Business Case and preferred option</i>
15.	Tourism Events Schedule 23/24	- <i>to recommend that Council approves the proposals detailed with Table 1.</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to look at making Halloween events more economically viable to the town centres if they are not already. - In relation to Christmas events; keep the 4 main towns as they are but relook at the format of the smaller events, reducing the target costs from the £5.5/6k to £3.5k which would allow Council to increase the number of towns that host an event and the cost remains the same. - Officers to provide a report to the Leisure and Development Committee considering the criteria for towns holding events to find out where could hold a Christmas event.
16.	Tourism Events Funding	to recommend that Council approves the allocation of the Tourism Event Funding Programme to successful Large Events Fund applicants as detailed in Table 1 (subject to approval of the Budget setting process for 2023/24).
17.	Sperrins Partnership Extension of Funding	to recommend that Council provides financial support for the continuation of the Sperrins Partnership Project at a cost of £22,000 annually subject to confirmation of the reciprocal financial contribution of all partner Councils. Funding for 2023/24 is subject to the rates setting process and if

		agreed Officers would recommend a 3-year term.
18.	Community Development Grants	to recommend that Council approves additional awards for funding through the Community Development Support Grant as detailed in Annex B (circulated) for 2 years for the sum of £24,803 per annum, subject to funding and satisfactorily achievement of outcomes.
19.	Social Supermarkets	to recommend that Council provides funding of £25,973 from the DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund to Vineyard Compassion, as the DfC recognised provider. To work with the other Social Supermarket provider, LCDI as outlined within the report to both help sustain, develop and extend the reach of the Social Supermarket services within the Borough.
20.	Ulster History Circle Partnership	to recommend that Council engages in a partnership arrangement with the Ulster History Circle at a cost of circa £1,500 per annum and subsequent installation of one blue plaque per year for an initial term of three years, subject to review, with the caveat that the first blue plaque is for Mr Sayers.
21.	Entrepreneurship Support Services	to recommend that Council participates in the future NI

		<i>Council Entrepreneurship Support Service funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund over 2 years, 2023 to 2025, to meet statutory obligations in relation to supporting businesses to start and grow.</i>
22.	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	<i>Note</i>
23.	Social Connections	<i>Note</i>
24.	Asylum Seekers	<i>Note</i>
25.	Coleraine Revitalise	<i>Note</i>
26.	Event Space Equipment Supply	<i>Note</i>
27.	Growth Deal Executive Programme Board Minutes November 22	<i>to recommend that Council does not proceed with the scheme between Ballycastle and Ballymoney</i>
28.	Growth Deal Executive Programme Board Draft Minutes February 23	<i>Note</i>
29.	Leisure Facilities Project Board Draft Minutes Jan 23	<i>Note</i>
30.	Correspondence	<i>Nil</i>
31.	Matters Reporting to the Partnership Panel	<i>Nil</i>
32.	Consultations	<i>Nil</i>
33.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)	
(i)	Millburn Community Association (Alderman Duddy)	<i>To recommend that Council enters into a Shared Management Agreement with Millburn Community Association and provide a subsidy towards the cost of energy and fuel subject to</i>

		<i>the approval of the Minister for Communities and the 5 other Community Associations that have a Shared Management Agreement also receive a subsidy dependent on funding in place from the Community Support Grant</i>
(ii)	Harry Gregg Foundation (Alderman Duddy)	<i>Information</i>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND VIA VIDEO
CONFERENCE ON TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 7.00 PM**

In the Chair: Councillor McCaw (C)

Members Present: Alderman Baird (C), Duddy (C), Hillis (C),
Knight McQuillan (R)

Councillors Anderson (C), Callan (R), Holmes (R/C),
McAuley (C), McGurk (R), MA McKillop (R), McMullan (R),
Peacock (R), Schenning (R), Wallace (R)

**Non Committee
Members present:** Councillor C McShane (R), Councillor Wilson (R)

Officers Present: R Baker, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
N McGurk, Head of Prosperity and Place (R)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism and Recreation (R)
W McCullough, Head of Sport and Wellbeing (R)
N Harkness, SIB Project Officer (R)
G Fall, Events Officer (R)
R Gillen, Coast and Countryside Manager (R)
J Welsh, Head of Community and Culture (R)
P O'Brien, Funding Unit Manager (R)
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)
J Beggs, SIB Project Officer (R)
J Keen, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer (C)
A Lennox, Mobile Operation Officer (C)

Public 5 no. (R)

Press 3 no. (R)

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

SUBSTITUTIONS

The Director of Leisure and Development advised that Councillor Wallace was in attendance as a substitute for current DUP vacant position.

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

The Director of Leisure and Development undertook a roll call of committee members present.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Councillor Watton

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were declared by Councillor MA McKillop in Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, as a Director of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust. Councillor MA McKillop did not participate in the Item, nor vote.

Declarations of Interest were declared by Councillor McMullan in Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust as, a Director of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust. Councillor McMullan did not participate in the Item, nor vote.

Declarations of Interest were declared by Councillor Schenning in Community Development Grants, Social Supermarkets and Social Connections. Councillor Schenning did not participate in the Items, nor vote.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER 2022 (adjourned)

Summary previously circulated.

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 20 December 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17 JANUARY 2023 (TO INCLUDE BUSINESS RECONVENED FROM TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER 2022)

Summary, previously circulated.

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 January 2023 (to include Business reconvened from Tuesday 20 December 2022) were confirmed as a correct record.

* **Having declared an Interest Councillors MA McKillop and McMullan did not participate nor vote on Item 5 Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust.**

5. CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS HERITAGE TRUST – MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE A PRESENTATION BY THE CCGHT

PowerPoint presentation, presented by G Thompson, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust.

* **Alderman Knight McQuillan joined the meeting remotely at 7:12pm**

During the presentation Mr Thompson summarised the activities of Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, highlighted the importance of their work and the plans for the future and showed how some Elected Members have been involved.

* **Alderman Baird joined the meeting in the Chamber at 7:20pm**

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an update on the work of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) that has taken place for the financial period 2021-2022 and seek approval for the support of the ongoing work of CCGHT during the current financial year 2022-2023.

Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council funded Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) for the period of 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022. The total amount of funding awarded was £35,000. This was awarded subject to the delivery of four key activity areas:

- Delivering opportunities to experience the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area's unique outdoor and heritage through public events.
- Administration of AONB Management Plans for the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB, Binevenagh AONB and Causeway Coast AONB.
- Administration of the Giant's Causeway & Causeway Coast World Heritage Site Steering Group and Action Plan and assessing the feasibility of the development of a Geopark.
- Support Council with the delivery and promotion of biodiversity and outdoor recreation related projects, engagement with landowners and establishing a volunteer programme.

The outputs from the 2021/22 work plan (contained in Annex B (circulated)) were reviewed by the Council's Funding Unit and the Coast and Countryside Team. It has been confirmed that these outputs were completed as agreed, except for one requested activity relating to a review of the Causeway Coast Way Walking Experience. This activity is currently being delivered upon. Council Officers are recommending that this should be approved into any further funding arrangement.

The focus of CCGHT continues to be based around the development and implementation of a number of environmental and landscape management plans including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); Binevenagh, the Causeway Coast and the Antrim Coast and Glens. CCGHT also has a role

working on a regional basis to develop awareness of environmental management and to promote sustainable tourism.

Council's Coast and Countryside remit continues to be complimented by the activities provided by CCGHT. In addition, any financial transaction will be based on a single tender action for services that only the CCGHT can provide as specialists in this area of work. These services include the following:

- Developing sustainable and effective partnerships such as the World Heritage Site Steering Group and implementation of the new World Heritage Site plan for Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS.
- Key partner in the £4.5 million EU LIFE Rathlin project which focuses on natural heritage and community.
- Delivering protected area management provision through action plans for Antrim Coast & Glens, Binevenagh and Causeway Coast AONBs.
- Ensuring best practice in sustainable development principles delivered through the AONB action plans and assessing the development potential of a Co. Antrim Geopark.
- Undertake accessibility audits at nine key outdoor sites to better facilitate a variety of mobility and access needs for residents and visitors.
- Deliver sustainable, efficient, and effective core activity/management for CCGHT.
- Facilitating the delivery of a range of projects through the Binevenagh & Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme £3.4 million investment in the project area.
- Development of a digital map to promote sustainable tourism on Rathlin Island.
- Undertaking community engagement as part of the Binevenagh & Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership, with respect to outdoor recreation and heritage.

Council's financial support continues to play a vital role in sustaining CCGHT. Council's commitment will be subject to funding made available from NIEA, Tourism NI and Mid and East Antrim, who have all made an allowance for financial contribution for agreed services as in previous years.

Update on proposals

CCGHT, in consultation with Council officers, have developed an activity plan with identified outputs for the current financial year 2022/2023 which is provided in Annex A. This builds on the existing work identified by Council and CCGHT, ongoing activity that is necessary with respect to AONB and World Heritage Site planning and reflects work identified within CCGHT's operational plan. In addition, the work plan reflects new activity which is considered appropriate to landscape management and the development of further outdoor recreation product, contributing to the visitor experience.

This activity plan continues to set the direction of travel by CCGHT that will deliver landscape management and further compliment the Coast & Countryside and wider Tourism & Recreation remit.

An additional action to undertake a review of the wider walking product with the Borough was identified in the 2020/2021 plan. This was response to the increased level of interest in outdoor recreation, especially walking. This piece of work is progressing with an extensive initial audit of signage and trailheads along the Causeway Coast Way/Causeway Coastal Route having been completed.

Options

As work progresses on the delivery of the 2022/23 work plan, staff from Coast & Countryside are discussing potential actions and programming for the 2023/2024 work plan. This allows for actions to be included in CCGHT's operational plan and to ensure continued complementarity of work which Council wishes to be undertaken.

This work plan will be brought to committee for members' consideration early in 2023 with a view to providing sustained financial support to CCGHT and the actions it delivers on behalf of Council for the period 2023/2024.

Officers would suggest that the CCGHT is invited to Council to present on ongoing and proposed work, that is being completed on behalf of, and in partnership with Council.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council approval of funding to CCGHT for services being undertaken within the work plan at Annex A (22/23 Financial Year)(circulated) which will be subject to a staged approval and satisfactory delivery of the outputs detailed.

In response to questions Mr Thompson, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, confirmed where funding came from and how much Council provide.

Committee Members thanked the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust for the work that they do.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the funding to CCGHT for services being undertaken within the work plan at Annex A (22/23 Financial Year) (circulated) which will be subject to a staged approval and satisfactory delivery of the outputs detailed and that Council looks at increasing funding in line with inflation in the next financial year (24/25).

CHANGE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised of a change of the Order of Business, stating important matters to be considered early in the meeting, and Items 24 – 32 would now be considered.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN COMMITTEE’

Proposed by Alderman Baird
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

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

- * **Public and Press were disconnected from the meeting at 7:30pm.**

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

6. TOWN PERCEPTION SURVEYS TENDER REPORT

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is for Members to confirm the appointment of an external contractor to undertake Perception and Opinion Surveys of the six urban towns as designated within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the contract is awarded to CARD Group for the contract sum of £18,365 +VAT.

In response to questions the Head of Prosperity and Place confirmed why the surveys were completed on an annual basis, how the information was used and shared. The Head of Prosperity and Place confirmed the surveys were completed online and in person.

- * **Councillor Holmes arrived in the Chamber, after attending remotely, at 7:39pm**

Alderman Duddy expressed concern regarding the cost of the surveys.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor Holmes and

AGREED – to recommend that Council does not award the contract to CARD Group for the contract sum of £18,365 +VAT; complete the surveys every other year and look at again in 2024.

7. PEACE PLUS CONSULTANCY TENDER

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the appointment of a third party supplier to develop, in association with the Peace Plus Partnership, a local co-designed Peace Plus Action Plan for the Borough.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approves the appointment of Third Sector Connect to develop, in association with the Peace Plus Partnership, a local co-designed Peace Plus Action Plan for the Borough for the sum of £12,250 exclusive of vat.

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approves the appointment of Third Sector Connect to develop, in association with the Peace Plus Partnership, a local co-designed Peace Plus Action Plan for the Borough for the sum of £12,250 exclusive of vat.

8. PORTRUSH TO BUSHMILLS GREENWAY

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Portrush to Bushmills Greenway project and consider the future of the project.

The future of a Portrush to Bushmills Greenway

Having considered the positive landowner engagements, Officers believe that this is a potential project within the Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal Programme:

1. Include Portrush to Bushmills Greenway within the Growth Deal and commission an SOC for March 2023 completion via a SIB Associate appointment (to avoid procurement delays); or
2. Note the landowner engagement report but don't include the project within the Growth Deal. Close the project for the foreseeable future.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members consider the identified options for the Portrush to Bushmills Greenway and instruct Officers accordingly.

In response to questions the Director of Leisure and Development confirmed there had been positive feedback from landowners; how the project would be funded and the position of the Strategic Outline Case.

Proposed by Alderman Hillis
Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

AGREED – to recommend that Council include Portrush to Bushmills Greenway within the Growth Deal and commission an SOC for March 2023 completion via a SIB Associate appointment (to avoid procurement delays)

9. LUF COLERAINE LEISURE CENTRE UPDATE

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to update Members on the outcome of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) applications submitted last year for the development of a new Coleraine Leisure Centre and Ballycastle Leisure Centre; and consider the options and next steps in relation progressing the development of a new Coleraine Leisure Centre.

Summary of the available options:

- **Option 1** - Suspend the development of the Coleraine Leisure Centre project until external capital funding is confirmed; or
- **Option 2** - Proceed with the appointment of an ICT via the Council's existing framework and a planning application at a cost of up to £1m, funded by a programme of asset disposals, in preparation for the inclusion of the project in future grant funding applications.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the outcome of two Levelling Up Fund (LUF) applications submitted last year for the development of a new Coleraine Leisure Centre and Ballycastle Leisure Centre; and instruct officers on the preferred next steps for Coleraine Leisure Centre.

In response to questions the Director of Leisure and Development confirmed he had requested feedback as to why Coleraine Leisure Centre did not receive the Levelling Up funding and stated he would provide this information to Committee members once received. The Director of Leisure and Development advised that options for future development of Coleraine Leisure Centre were currently being discussed with Officers and a report will be brought to Committee for consideration.

Committee Members spoke in support of having a leisure centre in Coleraine and the responsibility of Council to provide these facilities.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve Option 2 - proceed with the appointment of an ICT via the Council's existing framework and a planning

application at a cost of up to £1m, funded by a programme of asset disposals, in preparation for the inclusion of the project in future grant funding applications.

10. BALLYCASTLE LEISURE CENTRE

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to update Members on the outcome of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) applications submitted last year for the development of a new Coleraine Leisure Centre and Ballycastle Leisure Centre; and revisit the Stage 1 approval for Ballycastle Leisure Centre. The next steps in relation progressing the development of Coleraine Leisure Centre are contained within a separate report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the outcome of two Levelling Up Fund (LUF) applications submitted last year for the development of a new Coleraine Leisure Centre and Ballycastle Leisure Centre; and reconfirm Stage 1 approval for Ballycastle Leisure Centre and accept the LUF funding to allow progression to Stage 2 detailed design, planning and procurement at an estimated cost of £600k.

Proposed by Councillor MA McKillop
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

AGREED – to recommend that Council notes the outcome of two Levelling Up Fund (LUF) applications submitted last year for the development of a new Coleraine Leisure Centre and Ballycastle Leisure Centre; and reconfirm Stage 1 approval for Ballycastle Leisure Centre and accept the LUF funding to allow progression to Stage 2 detailed design, planning and procurement at an estimated cost of £600k.

Alderman Baird spoke in support of the development of a leisure centre in Ballycastle highlighting the importance of having such a facility in the area.

11. BALLYCASTLE SHARED CAMPUS

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the paper is to update Members on progress to date with the development of a new Shared Education Campus (SEC) and community sports facilities in Ballycastle.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members advise Officers of the preferred way ahead out of the three options identified summarised below or any other option that Members may identify:

1. **Commit to the capital investment** and the associated maintenance, renewal and operational costs as outlined in this report. Including:
 - A financial commitment of £3.8m as per the Cost Apportionment Schedule at Annex A; and
 - Officers to co-sign the construction contract.
2. **Defer a decision** and give a commitment to DE/EA that the Council will make an application to Peace Plus for the project.
3. **Withdraw from the project** on affordability grounds having considered the options, cost implications and affordability issues.

During discussion concerns were expressed regarding withdrawing at this stage, costs of proceeding, managing uncertainty and the relationship with external agencies.

In response to questions the Director of Leisure and Development confirmed details of funding to date, outlined the difficulties experienced and provided expectations of funding for the future.

Councillor McGurk expressed concern about Council withdrawing as this project has been ongoing for some time and Council have invested heavily.

Proposed by Councillor McGurk
Seconded by Alderman Baird and

AGREED – to recommend that Council defers a decision and give a commitment to DE/EA that the Council will make an application to Peace Plus for the project.

12. BALLYCASTLE TENNIS COURTS TENDER REPORT

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the paper is to update Members on progress to date in relation to the tender exercise for the repair and maintenance of 4 No polymeric tennis court surfaces in Mary Street Ballycastle, and to request approval to award contract as per associated tender report at a cost of £39,500.00.

In addition, to seek a decision from Members on Part B of tender works, namely the proposal to lay a new polymeric surface on 2No existing tennis courts at Mary Street Ballycastle, at a cost of £48,500.00.

Recommendation

- a. Members are asked to note the tender process and approve the award of the contract for Part A to Sports Grounds Specialists at a cost of £39,500.

- b. Members are asked to consider a decision on Part B of tender process of replacement polymeric court surface at a cost of £48,500.

In response to questions the Head of Sport and Wellbeing advised that the tennis tournaments being held in July and August would be prioritised and confirmed how the proposed works would be funded.

Proposed by Councillor MA McKillop
Seconded by Alderman Baird and

AGREED – to recommend that Council

- notes the tender process and approve the award of the contract for Part A to Sports Grounds Specialists at a cost of £39,500.
- approves Part B of tender process of replacement polymeric court surface at a cost of £48,500.

13. RVLC TENDER REPORT

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the paper is to update Members on progress with the refurbishment of Learner Pool, Main Pool & Spa Filter Vessels including the Associated Works in Roe Valley Leisure Centre and to request approval to award the contract as per the associated Tender Report at a cost of £88,089.22.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the tender process in Annex A (circulated), Roe Valley Leisure Centre Refurbishment of Learner Pool, Main Pool & Spa Filter Vessels including Associated Works and award the tender to Complete Water Treatment at a cost of £88,089.22.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED – to recommend that Council notes the tender process in Annex A (circulated), Roe Valley Leisure Centre Refurbishment of Learner Pool, Main Pool & Spa Filter Vessels including Associated Works and awards the tender to Complete Water Treatment at a cost of £88,089.22

14. GYM INVESTMENT – JDLC/RVLC/SHEKSBURN

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to request Members approval of the appended Outline Business Case (OBC) for investment in the gym and equipment offering

at Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Roe Valley Leisure Centre and Sheskburn Recreation Centre with associated investment of £400k.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members approve the Outline Business Case and preferred option:

- Option 3 – JDLC Gym & Equipment, Sheskburn Gym & Equipment and RVLC Cardio Equipment, circa £400k (See Appendix 4, Project Proposal Costings)

Subject to Council decision, the indicative delivery timeframe to progress Option 3 is summarised as follows:

March '23 Issue Equipment Tender.
April '23 Tender Receipt and Evaluation.
May '23 Tender Report to L&D Committee for approval & Contract Award
June '23 Equipment Delivery Lead in time.
July '23 Installation of new equipment

Due to the nature of some of the works, it is likely that a temporary closure will be required during installation.

The Director of Leisure and Development praised the work of staff within the Sport and Wellbeing Department and provided an update on the success they have had generating income through the investment made in Coleraine Leisure Centre.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Wallace and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approves the Outline Business Case and preferred option:

- Option 3 – JDLC Gym & Equipment, Sheskburn Gym & Equipment and RVLC Cardio Equipment, circa £400k (See Appendix 4, Project Proposal Costings)

Subject to Council decision, the indicative delivery timeframe to progress Option 3 is summarised as follows:

March '23 Issue Equipment Tender.
April '23 Tender Receipt and Evaluation.
May '23 Tender Report to L&D Committee for approval & Contract Award
June '23 Equipment Delivery Lead in time.
July '23 Installation of new equipment

Due to the nature of some of the works, it is likely that a temporary closure will be required during installation.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED - to recommend that Council move 'In Public'.

- * **The Press and Public were readmitted to the meeting at 8:54pm**
- * **The Chair declared a recess at 8:54pm**
- * **Alderman Baird left the meeting at 8:58pm**
- * **The meeting resumed at 9:00pm**
- * **Councillor Holmes left the Chamber at 9:02pm, remaining in attendance remotely**

15. TOURISM EVENTS SCHEDULE 23/24

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present updated proposals for a Council-led event programme for 2023/24, as a result of recommendations made by Elected Members at the Leisure and Development Committee Meeting on 17 January 2023.

Outline details of dates and budgetary requirements are provided for Elected Members consideration, in advance of budget finalisation.

Background

At the January Leisure and Development Committee Meeting, Elected Members were presented with proposals for the Council-led Tourism Event Programme for 2023-24, including consideration of a 2024 air show. After consideration it was recommended that an Options Report is brought to the February Leisure and Development Committee Meeting, that includes all tourism events listed in January, but makes specific additional reference to Halloween and Christmas events with alternative options for delivery. It was also recommended that the air show does proceed.

At the Full Council meeting on 8 February 2023, this Report was further discussed, and it was agreed to further consider at the February 2023 Leisure and Development Committee meeting.

The Council's 10-year strategic approach for the Tourism Event remit recommends that the Council need to provide a balanced approach to event development, facilitation, and delivery. With an increasing number of external event providers, the role of Council is more important than ever in terms of being supportive and allowing other event providers to develop the sector. The strategic approach recognises that Council will still be an event provider but recommends that to achieve a balance, Council delivered events should be fewer, better resourced and promoted more effectively.

In May 2021 Council approved a new Tourism Events Organisational design. Officers from Tourism and Recreation, in conjunction with HR colleagues, are working through completion of the structure. The Tourism Events Manager has been appointed and interviews/Matching are taking place in this year. The Tourism Events team will continue to work with key stakeholders, including Elected Members to assess the viability of Council's current portfolio of tourism events and agree opportunities for adjustment, growth and the introduction of new projects that fit with current market demand, whilst reflecting the key characteristics of our area. In advance of the rates setting process, the Council's Tourism Events budget has been calculated and this report details the events that are proposed to be delivered by Council in 2023/24.

During the 2022/23 year the Council's Tourism Events team has delivered on all the scheduled event programme and continue to support and liaise with other event providers, including the administration of the Tourism Event Funding Programme.

Air show 2024

In January 2021 Council approved a Notice of Motion to develop a new International Air show for 2022 (marking the Queen's Platinum Jubilee) and explore holding the event every 2 years thereafter:

'That this Council would develop a new International Airshow for 2022 to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and explore holding the event every 2 years from 2022. We should make this a key regional event not just for the Borough but for Northern Ireland and therefore explore working in partnership with key partners like the Northern Ireland Office, Ministry of Defence, Department for the Economy, Invest NI and Tourism NI. A project Board involving elected members of no more of 6 by d'hondt should be set up to shape and develop this event along with experts and other key stakeholders'

Council is requested to consider the above motion accordingly. For the September 2024 scheduled air show to occur, planning would need to start early in 2023, and in line with the existing model for planning and delivery, the Tourism Event team would require additional specialist resources. This includes the procurement of the Air Display Director and the employment of a Sponsorship / STEM / Industry liaison consultant. Without these event specific specialists, the Air Show is not viable. Subject to approval, this activity has been scheduled into the Tourism Events planning process for 2023/24. Table 1 includes a £50,000 expenditure allocation within the 2023/2024 financial year to allow for costs associated for the preparation of this event taking place in September 2024.

Annex A (circulated) details the projected income and expenditure summary for the 2022 Air Show which would be the basis for budget planning in 2024.

Consideration of cost reductions for air show 2024

Officers have assessed the budgeted income and expenditure for the 2022 air show event and are unable to find savings against a 2024 event proposal.

Delivery of Council Events in 2023/24

Table 1 Tourism Events schedule detailing summarised costs.

Events 2023	Date(s)	Budget Requirement 2023/2024
Ballymoney Spring Fair	Fri 7 th & Sat 8 th April	£24,000
NW200 Race Week Festival	Sun 7 th - Sat 13 th May TBC	£31,395
Rathlin Sound Maritime Festival	Fri 26 th May- Sun 4 th June	£41,500
Seasonal Summer Programme (Summer Theatre Programme)	Mon 10 th July - Fri 25 th August	£9,775
Summer Fireworks Evening Portstewart (Finale of Red Sails)	Sat 29 th July	£11,960
Summer Entertainment & Fireworks Evening Portrush	Sat 12 th August	£10,465
Ould Lammas Fair	Sat 26 th - Tues 29 th August	£144,000
Salmon and Whiskey Festival	Sat 7 th - Sun 8 th October or Sat 14 th – Sun 15 th October TBC	£52,800
Atlantic Sessions	Fri 17 th Nov – Sun 19 th November	£26,160
Seasonal Halloween Events x 4	Coleraine - Friday 27 th October Limavady - Saturday 28 th October Ballycastle - Monday 30 th October Ballymoney - Tuesday 31 st October	£75,840

Seasonal Christmas Light Switch On's	Ballymoney Thursday 16 th November Limavady Saturday 18 th November Ballycastle Thursday 23 rd November Coleraine Friday 24 th November Portstewart Saturday 25 th November Garvagh Monday 27 th November Dungiven Wednesday 29 th November Portrush Friday 1 st December Kilrea Saturday 2 nd December	£96,000
N.I. International Air Show	September 2024	£50,000
Total Request		£573,895

The above table does not include the additional cost of the partnership with the Coleraine and District Motor Club in which Council resources the NW200 Course Build and provides dedicated office accommodation (subject to conditions).

Further Options for Christmas and Halloween

Further to the Council's recommendation on the January Leisure and Development Report, Officers have presented below options to revise the format for delivery with cost savings.

Halloween

The January report proposed, as in previous years, 4 Halloween events in Coleraine, Limavady, Ballycastle and Ballymoney at a total cost of £75,840.

An option could be introduced whereby one centralised event venue could be agreed with a higher level of investment than previously allocated to individual towns, creating a greater spectacle and still offering overall cost savings of £26,000.

Officers are currently having initial discussions with the University of Ulster Coleraine, which could potentially accommodate a large event for Coleraine with between 15,000 – 20,000 attendees. To provide a high quality event and to accommodate larger attendees, enhanced provision would be required in terms of infrastructure, entertainment displays, traffic and transport provision

etc. The estimated budget for the scale of the event is £50,000 to allow a quality visitor experience.

Christmas

The January report proposed, as in previous years, 9 Christmas events in Ballymoney, Limavady, Ballycastle, Coleraine, Portstewart, Garvagh, Dungiven, Portrush and Kilrea at a total cost of £96,000.

The option to reduce from 9 to 4 towns could provide a cost saving of £30,000 initially (without adding to the quality for the 4 events remaining).

In 2022, none of the 5 smaller towns had an attendance greater than 500 attendees, with each of these events costing approx. £5,500 to deliver.

If Elected Members decide to reduce to 4 towns, Officers would recommend investing a further £10,000 into these towns to increase the quality of the events.

The reduction to 4 towns is likely to increase demand on the Council's Christmas Festive Community Fund, which is currently capped at £250 per successful applicant. Consideration may need to be given to increasing the budget for this in the 2023/24 financial year.

Implications for Planning Council-led Event Programme

Many of the Council's managed events require significant lead-in time and committed resources. Event management, planning, outsourced suppliers, professional services, marketing activities and traffic management consultants, mostly need to be procured and contracts agreed months in advance of the event taking place. Safety Advisory Group (SAG) consultation for events such as the Ould Lammass Fair starts 7-8 months in advance, with tender documentation and pyrotechnic licences applied for several months in advance. Over the last number of years, the Tourism and Recreation remit continues to experience an additional burden on resources coming from external influences. Greater scrutiny around Traffic Management and Health and Safety have impacted on the resources required to deliver events.

Consultation and Assessment of Event Delivery Options

Officers have continued to liaise and seek advice from various agencies in relation to the potential planning opportunities for Council Managed events in 2023. This includes the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), St John Ambulance and the Council led Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

For each event, Officers will continue to look at the type of delivery which is possible based on information, advice and timings, while considering both internal and external risks.

Budgetary Position

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to consider the budget allocation for the delivery of Council Managed events (as detailed in Table 1 at

a total budget requirement of £573,895). Elected Members are asked to consider further options for making savings at Christmas and Halloween which based on the detail provided in section 5.0, will make savings of £46,000, reducing the total budget to £527,895.

The 10 Year Strategic Approach – Possible Adjustment for Council-led Events

The 10 Year Strategic Approach to the Tourism and Event remit, recommends a more balanced approach to event development, delivery and facilitation. Officers from the Tourism and Recreation Team plan to carry out assessments of events within the Council portfolio and make recommendations for future adjustments within the terms set out for a strategic approach. Elected Members will be invited to participate as part of the consultation process.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee considers the following options for the delivery of Council-led tourism events:

Option 1

Recommend the approval of the proposals detailed with Table 1 of the Report.

Option 2

Recommend the delivery of proposals as detailed in Table 1, with an amendment for Halloween and / or Christmas events.

During discussion consideration was given to the options on how best to move forward with providing events at Halloween and Christmas, giving consideration to how the format of Halloween events could be more economically beneficial to businesses in the towns where events were being held.

In response to questions about the criteria for what towns hold Christmas and Halloween events, the Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that it was an exercise completed in 2016/17 based on settlement size, including population size and information from NISRA. In response to further questions the Head of Tourism and Recreation confirmed the format of events can be looked at to allow events to be more economically beneficial to businesses; what the costs currently were and could potentially be, with the suggested changes in the current format which includes hidden costs such as health and safety provisions. The Head of Tourism and Recreation confirmed the reasons for Council involvement in Bushmills Christmas events last year.

Councillor McAuley proposed, seconded by Alderman Duddy, to recommend that Council approve the proposals detailed with Table 1 with the inclusion of Bushmills. After further discussion Councillor McAuley, with the agreement of Alderman Duddy, amended his proposal to include any towns which meet the criteria for holding an event.

Proposed by Councillor Peacock

Seconded by Councillor McGurk

- To recommend that Council go with the 4 towns model but increase the fund to enable a capped grant of £750 for villages and £1500 for towns and the Halloween event in Ballycastle is the flagship event at Halloween and do away with events in other towns if Officers cannot find an alternative location in these towns to provide economic benefit

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor McAuley

Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

- to recommend that Council approves the proposals detailed with Table 1.
- to look at making Halloween events more economically viable to the town centres if they are not already.
- In relation to Christmas events; keep the 4 main towns as they are but relook at the format of the smaller events, reducing the target costs from the £5.5/6k to £3.5k which would allow Council to increase the number of towns that host an event and the cost remains the same.
- Officers to provide a report to the Leisure and Development Committee considering the criteria for towns holding events to find out where could hold a Christmas event.

The Chair put the Amendment to the vote.

14 Members voted For; 0 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

16. TOURISM EVENTS FUNDING

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the assessment process for the Tourism Event Funding Programme – Large Events Fund 2023-2024.

Background

The Tourism Event Fund is administered as a competitive process via the Council's online funding hub. The fund is established for the purpose of supporting new and existing event organisers, with outputs that align with the broad aims and objectives of the Council's Destination Management Strategy. Both funding programmes for 2023-2024 retain some of the relaxed parameters set out in the previous Tourism Event Fund Programme, to allow a phased return to the pre-COVID event criteria.

2023 - 2024 Application Process

This process is facilitated by the Funding Unit, utilising Council's online funding hub. Advertisements were placed in local newspapers, the Council's website

and social media channels. Mailshots were also distributed to Council's mailing lists.

The application process opened on 12th December 2022 with the following key dates and deadlines:

- Sessions with Council's Events Team were available to applicants between 10th – 12th January 2023 to outline the changes to the fund criteria and answer questions pertaining to the parameters.
- Applications closed on 25 January 2023.

Event Funding Eligibility Criteria 2023-2024

The Tourism Event Funding Programme provides two grant options, namely the Tourism Events Growth Fund and Tourism Large Events Fund. The outline criteria for both funds are listed below for information, with a relaxation of parameters around visitor numbers, return on investment and target market.

Tourism Events Growth Fund – Events with an overall budget of between £10,000 and £30,000 which attract more than 600 visitors to the Borough (previously 1,000), takes place over a minimum of 2 consecutive days (minimum of 5 hours on each day) and encourages overnight stays. Applicants must demonstrate how they will promote the Borough as a tourism destination through branding and marketing activities. In addition, they must demonstrate economic support / benefit from hosting the event (in previous years an economic return of 3:1 was expected), and how they will promote the area to the domestic market. The level of grant award available is up to 50% of total project costs, up to a maximum grant award of £15,000.

Tourism Large Events Fund – Events with an overall budget in excess of £30,000 which attract more than 3,000 visitors to the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough (previously 5,000), takes place over a minimum of 2 consecutive days (minimum of 5 hours on each day) and encourages overnight stays. Applicants must demonstrate how they will promote the Borough as a tourism destination through marketing activities. In addition, they must demonstrate economic support / benefit from hosting the event (in previous years an economic return of 5:1 was expected), and how they will promote the area to the domestic market and appeal to international visitors. The level of grant award available is up to 50% of total project costs, up to a maximum grant award of £100,000.

Assessment Process

The assessment panel made up of Officers from the Tourism Events Team and the Funding Unit met on 30 January and 2 February 2023 and applications were assessed on a number of criteria, including full event details and delivery (including event management plan), event sustainability and skills retention, economic support / benefit, media and marketing impact (including marketing plan), options for further event development and enhancing the visitor experience connected with the event.

Each criteria within the scoring matrix is weighted and minimum threshold pass rate is applied at 65% as per Council policy. Successful applicants must attend a project initiation meeting and are offered feedback on their application and areas that could be improved on in the future. Unsuccessful applicants are offered an opportunity for feedback on improvement if they wish to apply in the future.

Summary of Applications

A summary of the applications received with scoring achieved is detailed in Table 1 (circulated).

Please note no applications were made to the Tourism Events Growth Fund.

Application ID	Organisation / Project Title	Score	Total Cost	Amount Recommended
8943	Derry & District Youth Foyle Cup - O'Neill's Foyle Cup	65%	£180,000.00	£25,000.00
9817	Coleraine and District Motor Club Ltd – fonaCAB Nicholl Oils North West 200	67%	£1,041,500.00	£100,000.00
9834	Northern Ireland International Youth Football Tournament Ltd – Super Cup NI	67%	£845,000.00	£100,000.00
9998	North Antrim Agricultural Association - Ballymoney Show	65%	£63,990.00	£14,420.00
10040	Stendhal Festival Ltd	65%	£702,105.00	£99,800.00
10096	Armoy Motorcycle Road Races Club - The Race of Legends	66%	£203,900.00	£15,000.00
10185	Causeway Coast Truck Fest	47%	£58,800.00	£0.00
			Total	£354,220.00

Council received a total number of 7 applications. There were 6 successful applications (scoring 65% and above), therefore the amount of grants requested through eligible and qualifying applications for the Large Events Fund was £354,220.00

Recommendation

Elected Members are asked to approve the allocation of the Tourism Event Funding Programme to successful Large Events Fund applicants as detailed in Table 1 (subject to approval of the Budget setting process for 2023/24).

In response to questions about why an applicant did not receive grant funding the Director of Leisure and Development advised he would respond to the Committee Members directly rather in the open forum of the Committee meeting.

In response to further questions the Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that the applicants' applying for funding were given training and guidance on how to complete the application process and that feedback is provided to applicants on how to improve their applications in future. The Head of Tourism and Recreation stated the Grants Panel did identify that the quality of the applications had dropped.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approves the allocation of the Tourism Event Funding Programme to successful Large Events Fund applicants as detailed in Table 1 (subject to approval of the Budget setting process for 2023/24).

17. SPERRINS PARTNERSHIP EXTENSION OF FUNDING

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on progress of the Sperrins Partnership Project and request consideration for continued support of the project over the next 3 years.

Background

At the Leisure Development Committee Meeting in October 2021, it was recommended to approve the funding of Sperrins Partnership Project until March 2023.

The Sperrins Partnership Project is a collaboration between four Councils across the Sperrin area, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council. Each Council in 2018 committed to equal financial contribution towards the project delivery and have also funded the Sperrins Future Search initiative. The funding was originally intended to be for the financial year 2019/2020 but due to delays in recruiting staff this support was not apportioned until the financial year 2020/2021.

Progress to Date

A Sperrins Partnership Project Officer and part time Administrative Support have been appointed and took up their respective roles in October 2020.

Work completed or progressed since October 2020 includes:

- Approval and sign off of the Sperrins Partnership Agreement between partner Councils;
- Governance Structure agreed;
- Formation of a Sperrins Partnership Board;
- Development and launch of a new website dedicated to the project www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com;
- Development of a communication Newsletter;
- Official Launch of the Sperrins Future Search Report and Actions Plans;
- Formation of the Brand and Tourism Thematic Group;
- Review and update of the Brand and Tourism Action Plan;
- Completed audit of the Sperrins tourism product offering;
- Engagement and regular meetings with Statutory Agencies;
- Support, assistance and promotion of collaborative projects including, the Sperrins Sculpture Trail and IAT (International Appalachian Trail) projects;
- Review & Upgrade of Sperrins Scenic Driving Route Brochure and Signage;
- Review & Upgrade of Sperrins Cycle Route Signage;
- Input and support to the update exercise of the latest edition of the Rough Guides Accessible Britain;
- Familiarisation Trip of the Sperrins.

The Outdoor Partnership

The Sperrins Partnership was successful in its application to The Outdoor Partnership (TOP). The Outdoor Partnership is an organisation based in Wales which works to support people across the UK to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit. Their vision is: *“Enhancing people’s lives through outdoor activity.”* This means enhancing people’s physical and mental health and wellbeing while improving the economic return and the social value of outdoor activity such as walking, cycling and adventure sports. The funding equates to £120k guaranteed for the next 4 years through the National Lottery Fund (NLF). The funding will be used to appoint a project officer whose role in broad terms will be to build capacity, identify training and education needs within outdoor sports and recreation in Sperrin’s Communities.

Other aims include enabling communities through promoting sustainable use of the environment, enhancing partnership working through local delivery and improving coach and education and opportunities for volunteering. There is also scope to develop existing clubs and create new clubs identified through a needs analysis. The project is very much focused on grass roots and improving outdoor recreation from within communities.

Management of Sperrin Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Sperrin AONB is the only one of 8 AONB in Northern Ireland without a Management Plan. This is a long-standing matter which the Sperrins Partnership Board has prioritised as a key issue. The Partnership have been engaging with NIEA to assess the options available and understand the role/remit of the agency and explore funding opportunities available to write and deliver a management plan. In terms of next steps, the Sperrins Partnership will undertake internal consultation research amongst the 4 partner Councils to understand if there is an appetite, resource, and commitment to deliver an AONB Management Plan for the Sperrins.

Sperrins Walking Festival

The 4 partner Councils are working in collaboration to deliver a walking festival programme across the Sperrins. The events commenced in Autumn 2022. An activity provider has been appointed to oversee the events and Councils agreed for a single procurement exercise to be undertaken (Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to act as procuring authority) to plan and deliver a walking weekend in each of the four Council areas in the 2022/2023 financial year on behalf of the Sperrins Partnership. Further information can be found at [Sperrins Walking Festival - Sperrins Partnership Project](#)

Green Spaces Dark Skies

Landscape for Life are the representative association for AONB across the UK and are one of the main partners for an event called Green Spaces Dark Skies. Up to 20 events took place across the UK between April and September 2022 and Sperrin AONB was identified as a location. Sperrins Partnership Project collaborated with Walk the Plank to deliver the event at Gortin Glen Forest Park.

The theme for the event is to reconnect people with their landscapes and respecting the outdoors. Open to all, each mass gathering celebrates nature, the responsibility to protect it and everyone's right to explore the countryside. A short film was made of 'Luminators' holding small eco-friendly solar lights designed by Siemens on the Gortin Lakes at dusk with possibly a mountain bike element also featuring. The locations remained secret to protect the landscape and were only disclosed to those who signed up to take part. The footage will be circulated to a wide audience. Mournes, Giants Ring (Lagan Valley) and the Giants Causeway also took part in the initiative. More information can be found by visiting [Green Space Dark Skies | Events | Sperrin AONB - County Tyrone](#)

The partner Councils involved with the project have delivered several projects that are of significant benefit to the Sperrins. These projects will support the collaborative work of the partnership and enhance the product offering in the region.

The Sperrins Sculpture Trail project consists of 3 iconic pieces of artwork positioned in spectacular settings within the Sperrins. The sculpture trail is designed to promote the natural and built heritage of the region and encourage

rural tourism and out of state visitors whilst preserving the natural assets of the rural community. This project is a working partnership between Derry City and Strabane District, Mid Ulster District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. The Sperrins Giant Sculptures - The Storyteller, The Guardian and The Stargazer have been installed at their respective sites along with wider site works including enhanced car park provision for the Sperrin Heritage Centre site. The Project Board is currently looking at delivering potentially a soft community focused launch followed by a formal launch of the project in advance of the new visitor season in 2023.

The International Appalachian Trail (IAT) links the mountains in West Donegal through to Larne in Co. Antrim along the geological Appalachian trail. The route crosses 6 different Council areas which include the 4 Sperrins Partnership Councils with varying distances in each Council. The capital works and marketing programme for the International Appalachian Trail Ulster Ireland delivered through Rural Development Programme Co-Operation Scheme is now completed. The Sperrins Partnership Project's 4 Council partners all participated in the initiative which delivered significant enhancement to the overall walking experience within the Sperrins region. Key improvements within the Sperrins section of the IAT Ulster Ireland included improved waymarking, signage and interpretation along the entirety of the route as well as upgrades to the Barnes Amenity site, Goles Stone Row.

The OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory located in Gavagh Forest opened its doors in 2021 to visitors and is the only one of its kind in Northern Ireland. The park is an initiative by Mid Ulster District Council and sits within Sperrin AONB.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council secured external funding for enhancement works at Banagher Glen located in the Southwest of the Council area just outside Dungiven in the North Sperrins. Once complete, the project will improve and enhance the visitor experience at this stunning location. The project will create opportunities for the local community and visitors to enjoy the site on a year-round basis and also create opportunities for visitors to explore the High Sperrins on foot.

Garvagh mountain bike trail located on the Sperrins boundary within Causeway Coast and Glens continues to be a very popular attraction. The project has created a Community Health Hub in Garvagh Forest through the development of a multi-use walk and off-road family cycling trails. Garvagh Forest is also one of the locations for the Picture This Trail as part of Borough wide rural tourism driving trail.

In Fermanagh and Omagh District Council the redevelopment of Gortin Glen Forest Park has transformed it into a family friendly outdoor experience and includes a destination Play Park, trim trail, additional parking and the creation of mountain biking trails. Gortin Glen Forest Park was recently awarded the RTPI Northern Ireland Award for Planning Excellence for Health and Well Being.

Moving Forward

The Sperrins Partnership Project has several priorities over the coming months which include:

- Developing options to deliver a management plan for Sperrin AONB.
- Identifying funding opportunities and creating the respective business cases (HLF, RDP, Peace Plus etc).
- Forming strong cross boundary partnerships.
- Formation and development of the remaining Thematic Groups.

The Sperrins Partnership Project is presently funded by 4 Councils at a total annual cost of £88,000. Going forward it is anticipated that the annual operating cost will remain the same. Officers are currently looking at options to secure additional funding from external sources for relevant projects. This contribution includes salary and programming costs and concluded in October 2022. Each Council had committed circa £22,000 for the current financial year and committed to continue to fund each year thereafter annually is requested during the project lifetime, to extend the project to maintain momentum and build on early success and allow for effective forward planning and project management.

Recommendation

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

That consideration is given to provide financial support for the continuation of the Sperrins Partnership Project at a cost of £22,000 annually subject to confirmation of the reciprocal financial contribution of all partner Councils. Funding for 2023/24 is subject to the rates setting process and if agreed Officers would recommend a 3-year term.

Proposed by Councillor McGurk
Seconded by Councillor Peacock and

AGREED – to recommend that Council provides financial support for the continuation of the Sperrins Partnership Project at a cost of £22,000 annually subject to confirmation of the reciprocal financial contribution of all partner Councils. Funding for 2023/24 is subject to the rates setting process and if agreed Officers would recommend a 3-year term.

- * **Having declared an Interest Councillor Schenning did not participate nor vote on Item 18 Community Development Grants.**

18. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of the assessment of the applications received to the Community Development Support Grant 2023-24 for approval.

Background

The Department for Communities provides annual funding to Council through the Community Support Programme which contributes towards the Community Development Support Grant and the Social Connections Grant.

In November 2021, Council approved some changes to the Community Development Support Grant to reduce bureaucracy with the grant programme and allow applicants to apply for a 3 year term rather than an annual application, subject to availability of DfC funding and achievement of outcomes in year one. The levels of grant awarded were also increased. The maximum grant award of £2,000 was increased to £3,500.

Of the 55 successful applicants to the CDSG Programme in 2022-23, 52 applied for a 3 year term and the value of funding committed was £140,378.02 per year.

Those 52 successful applicants that were awarded a grant for the 3 year term were not required to submit a CDSG application for 2023-24. A Letter of offer will be issued in April 2023 for year two, subject to satisfactory submission of year one Monitoring and Evaluation Form and claim documentation.

In order to allow those groups that didn't apply for the 3 year term to submit an application and also to check if any other community groups missed applying last year, Council agreed in December 2022 to open the CDSG to allow groups to apply for a 2 year term.

Community Development Support Grant

Purpose of Grant Programme: To contribute to the running costs/overhead costs incurred by core community development organisations.

Levels of Grant available:

- I. Category 1: Community development groups directly providing a programme of activities. The group has its own premises including a hall/space adaptable for a range of activities with one or more meeting rooms, hired by at least two other groups on a regular (at least monthly) basis. £3,500.
- II. Category 2: Community development group directly providing a programme of activities with a premises for their own use, which isn't hired by two or more regular user groups. £2,500.
- III. Category 3: Community development group that provides a programme of activities without their own premises. £1,250.

Community Development groups can apply for grants of up to 75% of costs to the relevant category level.

An extract from the Guidance Notes for the grant programmes, detailing eligibility and assessment criteria, is attached at *Annex A* (circulated).

Applications Received (not including total grants awarded for 3 years in 22/23):

No. of applications received	16
No. of ineligible/unsuccessful applications	5
No. of successful applications	11
Total value of CDSG funding recommended	£24,803

A list of the applications received, and the funding amount recommended are listed in *Annex B* (circulated).

The unsuccessful applications were either ineligible, eg. sports club or arts organisation, or did not offer a sufficient range of regular activities and services for the whole community to meet the criteria for this particular grant programme. Officers from the Community Development team will provide detailed feedback to the unsuccessful applicant organisations and can offer support to develop projects and source other funding.

Overall Budgetary Commitment

Subject to the approval of the awards as contained within this report, the total budgetary allocation for the Community Development Support Grant for the 23/24 period would be £165,181 (£140,378 having already been agreed by Council in 2022 for a 3 year period).

Recommendation

That council approve additional awards for funding through the Community Development Support Grant as detailed in *Annex B* (circulated) for 2 years for the sum of £24,803 per annum, subject to funding and satisfactorily achievement of outcomes.

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Councillor Peacock and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approves additional awards for funding through the Community Development Support Grant as detailed in *Annex B* (circulated) for 2 years for the sum of £24,803 per annum, subject to funding and satisfactorily achievement of outcomes.

* **Having declared an Interest Councillor Schenning did not participate nor vote on Item 19 Social Supermarkets.**

19. SOCIAL SUPERMARKETS

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update for Elected Members on Social Supermarket Support Fund monies received from Department for Communities (DfC); to note a Scoping Study undertaken by Ulster University; and to approve spend of the remainder of the Social Supermarket Support Fund monies for 2022-23.

Background

In September 2022, the Committee received a report on Social Supermarket Support Fund monies received from the Department for Communities (DfC). DfC has operated a Social Supermarket (SSM) Pilot Programme since October 2017, where it has directly funded 5 pilot social supermarkets, one of which is in Causeway Coast and Glens, operated by Vineyard Compassion in Coleraine. The aim of the social supermarket model is to offer a longer term and sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to help address the root causes of poverty through wrap around support rather than the short term crisis food provision that foodbanks provide.

Social Supermarkets provide members, who are struggling financially and meet certain criteria, with the opportunity to shop in a reduced cost food shop for a set period of time (usually 3- 6 months) alongside engaging in wraparound support including advice on debt, benefits, budgeting, healthy eating, housing, physical and mental health referral, and education, training and volunteering opportunities to enhance employability skills. It is a membership programme where members pay a weekly membership subscription to shop for a variety of fresh, frozen & store cupboard food products.

Following positive evaluation of the Social Supermarket Pilot Programme the Minister approved an approach which would expand the concept to all Council areas using a co-design process to develop tailored models that best meets the needs of local communities and builds on the existing structures and partnerships. There is a second social supermarket operating in Causeway Coast and Glens, operated by Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI) which does not receive DfC funding.

Current Position

Funding from the Department's 2022/23 Welfare Reform budget was provided through a Social Supermarket Support Fund (SSMSF) to Councils to support the co-design of a social supermarket model in the Council area. The amount awarded to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council was £33,354.50. The Memorandum of Understanding for the 2022-23 SSMSF states that 'the objective of this funds is to support the co-design of a social supermarket model in the council area to completion and implementation. This can include support for the co-design process, capacity building for future implementation and testing/piloting where appropriate.'

Council has been working with partners in the Anti-poverty Stakeholder Steering Group and other stakeholders to develop a model for building on the existing pilot and expanding the provision in Causeway Coast and Glens. Using the DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund, Council procured the services of Ulster University to carry out a scoping exercise and facilitate a co-design process for extending the existing social supermarket provision in Causeway Coast and Glens.

The Scoping Study, undertaken by Ulster University is attached at Annex A (circulated).

Key Considerations

The key issues highlighted in the report can be summarised as follows:

- Many people in Causeway Coast and Glens who need help are not accessing support from food banks or SSMs;
- There needs to be a balance struck between taking away the stigma without institutionalising the need;
- No one organisation has the optimal location, premises or staffing capacity (support workers) to meet the current need;
- Operating costs are concerning, with energy prices cited most often as a pressing issue;
- Challenges of service provision in terms of accessibility and transport for an expansive geography that includes large rural areas;
- The location of any SSM/food bank is a key consideration; it needs to be accessible and served by public transport but discreet enough to afford privacy to clients;
- While the food aid is important, the wraparound advice offered is at least equally as important as the original food aid;
- Face to face support that can offer the services with the required intensity is not achievable via remote/online delivery;
- No one SSM/food bank can reasonably deliver food and wraparound support in a face-to-face way with the appropriate level of intensity without a dilution effect;
- Do we widen food support to provide food access to the greatest number of people possible or do we narrow capacity to offer more comprehensive wraparound support?

Recommendations from the Study

Recommendations from the Study are as follows:

- Advocate for a cash-first approach to bolstering people's incomes through income maximisation through work that pays alongside a fit for purpose welfare system;
- Investigate/pilot other models for low-cost food provision;
- Foodbanks/ SSMs ask for financial donations and not food donations to empower clients to afford and choose their own food with dignity;
- Both SSMs should be required to offer the accessibility to the prospective client base from both urban and rural environs. with sufficient flexibility to

- accommodate the individual needs of each client lighter/more in-depth tailored versions and the tapering or extension of programme support;
- Mobile food vans should be considered for particularly remote or difficult to access locations and locations poorly served by public transport routes;
 - Grant funding for community sector initiatives should be simplified, streamlined and standardised to avoid overly cumbersome administration;
 - Community initiatives' buildings to be zero rated for local rates in order to significantly reduce their operating costs through this cost-of-living crisis;
 - Awareness raising of fuel support initiatives should be undertaken;
 - Awareness raising of Government Help to Save initiatives should be undertaken;
 - Advocate for wider policy solutions that are not within their gift to deliver.
 - eg. a fit for purpose benefits system that maintains pace with inflation and retains the £20 uplift and other Welfare Mitigation, Right to Food legislation, cash-first approach, commitment to and promotion of the Real Living Wage, extension of eligibility and (universal) provision of free school meals, healthy start vouchers, breakfast clubs, school holiday food provision and exploration of Universal Basic Income.

The Committee is asked to note the report and its recommendations. Officers will now continue to work with providers to determine what is feasible for Council and the Social Supermarkets to deliver with the resources available, both in the short and medium term.

In the meantime, there is an amount of £25,973 remaining from the Social Supermarket Support Fund in the current year, to be expended by the end March 2023.

In light of the considerations raised in the Study, it is recommended that this funding is allocated to Vineyard Compassion, as the DfC recognised provider through its funded pilot scheme, to work in partnership with the other social Supermarket provider, LCDI, in order to:

- Extend the reach of the existing DfC pilot (Vineyard) to accommodate members from a wider geographical area.
- Extend the model provided by Limavady Social Supermarket by providing financial support for staff costs to lengthen the period of support provided to households and to increase the weekly offering of food, in particular fresh food, fruit and vegetables (36 households).
- Contribute towards the increased operating costs of providing the vital service, particularly utilities costs such as electricity and heat.
- Develop a partnership model between the 2 established social supermarkets to ensure a sustainable specialised service moving forward with a model for future service delivery that will maximise the reach across the Borough and address any barriers to accessing the service.

Recommendation

Provide funding of £25,973 from the DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund to Vineyard Compassion, as the DfC recognised provider.
To work with the other Social Supermarket provider, LCDI as outlined within the report to both help sustain, develop and extend the reach of the Social Supermarket services within the Borough.

In response to questions the Head of Community and Culture advised the language used in the report was within context and led by academic research. The Head of Community and Culture advised that providing social supermarkets were about finding a balance; to remove the stigma but not make it a norm. Council were working with key organisations to eradicate fuel and hunger poverty and how to ensure this work was completed right across the Borough. Funding was required from the Department for Communities so there were limitations on what could be achieved. The Head of Community and Culture advised that LCDI were working with the Vineyard to provide social supermarkets; Fair Share resources could be availed of from different organisations; Vineyard were working in a range of locations and community fridges are also available.

Proposed by Alderman Knight McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

AGREED – to recommend that Council

- provides funding of £25,973 from the DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund to Vineyard Compassion, as the DfC recognised provider.
- To work with the other Social Supermarket provider, LCDI as outlined within the report to both help sustain, develop and extend the reach of the Social Supermarket services within the Borough.

20. ULSTER HISTORY CIRCLE PARTNERSHIP

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a partnership agreement to be signed between the Ulster History Circle and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

Background

A Notice of Motion had been brought before the Committee in early 2020 proposing 'that a blue plaque, in recognition of Mr James Sayers, be erected at his former home in Loughguille and that Council make a subsequent application to the Ulster History Circle for this, and Council pay for the erection of the plaque.'

Council subsequently approved the Motion in June 2020.

The Ulster History Circle (UHC) is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for placing the iconic blue circular plaques in public spaces.

Being a voluntary/volunteer led organisation the UHC has confirmed that the erection of blue plaques is facilitated purely on the basis of partnerships with local government bodies and other local organisations.

The Ulster History Circle had, for a period, suspended its blue plaque programme and were not accepting any nominations for new plaques, citing the Covid-19 pandemic in creating a backlog in terms of planning and delivery of those agreed projects within the scheme.

Council's Museum Services have been engaging with the UHC from 2022 to discuss the process for nominations from within the borough which, if appropriate, would be recognised and awarded UHC blue plaques. UHC have confirmed that the group cannot accept nominations from Local Government bodies without a partnership arrangement in place. Partnerships can be time-limited or ongoing. The Local Government partner would be required to fund the installation of agreed blue plaques, estimated at a total of £1,500 per plaque including the unveiling reception.

UHC take responsibility for the research, design, production, installation and formal unveiling of the plaques, including the reception and liaising with media and the PSNI where necessary. It is usual for only a single blue plaque to be installed per year, per partnership.

If a partnership was agreed between the Council and UHC, the following processes would apply:

- Formal nominations, based on the criteria in place by the UHC scheme and proposed by Council would be collated and prepared by designated council officers (usually Museums or Heritage staff).
- Nominations would be proposed to UHC at a formal meeting where UHC would also put forward additional nomination relating to the Causeway Coast and Glens.
- By mutual agreement, one individual would be identified each year for an UHC blue plaque. All other nominees will be included in the Dictionary of Ulster Biography and may be identified for the receipt of blue plaques in later years of the partnership.

In order to be nominated for UHC blue plaques, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- Deceased at least 20 years, or be deceased but would have met their 100th birthday by the date of unveiling;
- Associated with one of the nine counties of Ulster by reason of birth, education, work, residence or vocation;

arena. There is a considerable case for change. Shortfalls in NI's business start-up performance relative to other UK regions create the need to review/ re-position the business support infrastructure, with the aim of a step change in performance. Furthermore, the current enterprise ecosystem is complex and difficult to navigate meaning that those seeking support often find it difficult to get the right help at the right time.

All 11 Councils across NI worked together to develop an Outline Business Case (OBC) to assess the financial and operational implications of moving forward with a new NI Council-led Entrepreneurship Support Service. In line with Council's statutory remit; and the Department for Economy 10x Economy Vision and Economic Recovery Action Plan; the OBC proposed a new delivery model for the entrepreneurship support service.

Future Delivery Model

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), under the auspices of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, has ring-fenced £17m for supporting NI businesses from 2023 to 2025, via a Council-led Entrepreneurship Support Service. UKSPF resources must be additional to statutory obligations or Council responsibilities for Local Economic Development, and the funding currently received by Councils to carry out this role (£241,116 annually from Central Government). The optimum delivery model specified is via one lead NI Council acting as a grant recipient on behalf of the 11 Councils, with associated Collaborative Agreements and governance arrangements in place.

DHLUC will support collaboration across all 11 Council areas on business support services for which they have policy responsibility. The UKSPF funding will augment Councils' core funding and start up offer, creating a simpler, joined up inter-face with businesses. Entrepreneurship support services will be flexible to meet the needs of each Council area, including demographics, urban/rural needs, sectoral priorities and local partnership arrangements. Across NI, the project is expected to utilise £12m for the main entrepreneurship support service, with a further £5m for grants to enterprises, across the 2 years 2023-2025. Outputs required include the number of:

- Jobs created and safeguarded;
- New enterprises created;
- Businesses entering new markets;
- Businesses adopting new technologies;
- Businesses demonstrating improved productivity; and
- Businesses accessing grants and other financial support.

The proposed service aims to see businesses of all sizes supported to embrace innovation and new green technologies. UKSPF can contribute to this by investing in R&D grants, concept testing and acceleration, and wider knowledge exchange activities to foster a more innovative culture, particularly within SMEs across the region.

As detailed in Table One below, the proposed delivery model for the new Entrepreneurship Support Service consists of four pillars i.e.:

1. Engage;
2. Foundation;
3. Enabling Growth; and
4. Accelerated Scaling.

The proposed new entrepreneurship support service represents a continuum of support from pre-start support, through start-up and the growth journey thereafter. This may lead to transition to Invest NI support and/or acceleration of high-growth potential at any point.

Table 1: Proposed Delivery Model for the new Entrepreneurship Support Service (circulated)

Pre-Market Engagement has taken place with economic development stakeholders from across NI, to collate their feedback on the proposed delivery model. The delivery model envisages contracts being allocated across five geographical areas based on the Invest NI Regional Office model. This will see Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council in a geographical lot with Derry City and Strabane District Council. Members should note that, while the contracting will happen at the sub-regional (five area) level, all councils will engage on an individual council level with the Preferred Supplier for their area, to develop an annual service plan that reflects their local needs and ambitions – and is in line with the overall regional targets as agreed with the funder.

Procurement will commence in April 2023 and mobilisation expected from September 2023 for period 23/24 and 24/25. DHLUC will also provide funding for the delivery of a grant scheme to businesses and the working assumption, at this point, is grant amounts of between £1,000- £3,000 would be available to those businesses identified through the foundation or growth stages of the support service.

Work continues around the identification of parameters in relation to budget, with the expectation that the indicative annual contribution by Council will be in the region of £123,755. Members should note that budgets are indicative due to multiple variables within the new service and that additional funding options will be scoped with partners e.g., Department for Economy, Invest Northern Ireland. In relation to programme costs in 2023/2024, Council has already approved a budget totalling £113,059 in October 2022 based on a 12-month extension of the 'Go for It' Business Start programme. The programme extension has now been reduced to six months with the expectation that the new service will be operational mid-year and will include support for business start. The surplus of the 'Go for It' budget in-year would transfer to the new service to cover the majority of anticipated year one costs with a shortfall of approximately £10,700. Members are reminded that budgets are indicative.

At present, the workplan for the new service covers a number of strands of activity including:

- Marketing;
- Supporting architecture (MIS; portal; call handling);
- Funder engagement;
- Stakeholder engagement; and
- Management and governance.

Members should be aware that delivery will continue under the “Go for It” banner up until September 2023. This represents a six-month extension on the initial contracting period which has now been agreed with Enterprise NI via CPD.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council participation in the future NI Council Entrepreneurship Support Service funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund over 2 years, 2023 to 2025, to meet statutory obligations in relation to supporting businesses to start and grow.

In response to questions the Head of Prosperity and Place confirmed who had been involved in consultations and explained how the NI Council Entrepreneurship Support Service would work confirming the feedback received from consultees to date was positive. In response to questions about the jobs created and sustained the Head of Prosperity and Place advised he would provide the statistics directly to Alderman Duddy who had requested the information. The Head of Prosperity and Place advised that the Support Service was in the early stages and that some aspects still need to be worked out including the use of green technologies. It was further confirmed that MLA’s and MP’s have been in touch regarding companies being interested in investing in the area; that expressions of interest have been received and this information can be fed back to Committee Members.

Proposed by Councillor McGurk
Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

AGREED – to recommend that Council participates in the future NI Council Entrepreneurship Support Service funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund over 2 years, 2023 to 2025, to meet statutory obligations in relation to supporting businesses to start and grow.

22. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members that Council's Grant Funding Unit has successfully submitted an application to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and to provide members with background on the fund and details of the application.

Background

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. By March 2025, Northern Ireland will benefit from an allocation of almost £127 million to help deliver important outcomes to improve pride in place and increase life chances for Northern Ireland's people, businesses and communities.

In Northern Ireland, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is managing the Fund. Building on the UKSPF Prospectus, DLUHC and local partners have worked together to design the Northern Ireland Investment Plan.

In January 2023 DLUHC wrote to Councils across Northern Ireland seeking proposals to deliver the Green Space Development support identified in the Plan, for the period 2022-23. The timeframe for this first Commission was extremely tight with the fund opening on 5th January 2023 and closing on 16th January 2023.

Context

DLUHC invited councils to submit one proposal per area which could be comprised of a single project/activity or package of projects/activities). The key aim of this Investment Priority is:

By 2025, we aim to improve people's pride and satisfaction with towns and villages through UKSPF support, ensuring these areas are attractive for new residents, potential investors and visitors

This is short-term funding and designed to be incurred during financial year 2022-23 (by 31 March 2023). The DLUHC plan to launch a commission for funding for 2023-24 and 2024-25 at a later date, possibly in the Spring of this year.

Project

Considering the tight parameters set for submission and a project completion date of 31 March 2023, Council's Funding Unit submitted an application based on the development of a Green Spaces Amenity Programme in 4 different locations. If successful 3 x derelict spaces will be developed, and 1 x play area will be refurbished for local community use:

Location 1 - Scally Park Amenity Project.

Location 2 - Ballylagan Road/Gateside Road Junction Amenity Project.

Location 3 - Dromore Ave/Barnalt Road Amenity Project.

Location 4 - Glenullin Playpark Project.

The programme is about communities and people and aims to improve local green spaces to make them more attractive for residents and visitors. In locations 1-3 the following works are proposed:

- Natural landscaping of the 3 areas.
- Resurfacing at each site.
- Perimeter fencing and gates.
- Installation of a basket swing on each site.
- Installation of 4 Summer seats on each site.
- Planters placed at each location.
- Litter bin at each site.

Picture 1: Sample Project (circulated)

At location 4 the following works will be undertaken:

- Natural landscaping of the area.
- Installation of Multi-unit (Junior).
- Installation of Swing set.
- Installation of Slide.
- Installation of Rocker.
- Installation of Seesaw.
- Installation of Seating.
- Installation of Polymeric Surfacing.
- Installation of a Planter.
- Installation of a Litter Bin.

The 4 x locations/sites are located in predominantly rural locations and are in very poor condition. Transformation of these sites for wider community use will restore pride and satisfaction as the locations are made attractive for residents and visitors to meet and enjoy outdoor space.

Location Maps

Scally Park – Loughgiel – BT44 9JU (circulated)

Islandmore - BT52 2PJ (circulated)

Dromore Avenue / Barnalt Road Amenity Project – BT49 9LX (circulated)

Glenullin Playpark Project – BT51 5DX (circulated)

Financial Information

Total projects costs are £98,600 and no match funding is required from Council.

Strategic Fit

The proposed project is a good strategic fit with the following NI strategies:

- Draft NI Programme for Government.
- NI Children and Young Peoples Strategy. (2017 to 2027)
- NI Regional Development Strategy. (2035)
- NI Executive Together Building a United Community Strategy.
- DHSSPS Fitter Future for All Framework. (2012 – 2022)
- The DfC Strategy “Building Inclusive Communities 2020-2025.”

- DfC's Access and Inclusion Programme.

And the following Council Strategies:

- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Strategy. (2021 to 2025)
- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Play Investment Strategy.
- Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan 2017-2030.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Strategy (2021 to 2025)

The mission statement of the strategy provides clarity on how Council as a corporate body along with its departments and units will strive to improve the quality of life for its citizens and visitors by:

- Providing effective, accessible and sustainable local public services.
- Improving economic prosperity.
- Ensuring local communities are at the heart of decision making.
- Protecting, promoting and enhancing our unique natural environment and assets.
- Ensure the facilities and services on offer meet the needs of the community and visitors to the area for the betterment of their health and wellbeing and provide the opportunity to increase participation levels.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Play Investment Strategy

Through this strategy the Council aim to ensure that children and young people who reside within or visit the area have access to high value play opportunities that support their growth and development whilst providing fun and enjoyment. Central to the strategy is a recognition that play is one of the most, if not the most, important activities that children and young people engage in as they grow and develop. This strategy seeks to support children's development in a number of key ways by:

- Providing fun and enjoyable means of developing physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Supporting the development of social connections and friendships through social play opportunities.
- Supporting intellectual growth and the development of practical skills through the provision of creative and more challenging play opportunities.
- Supporting children to develop their personal resilience through play, and
- Establishing a connection between children at play and the community in which they live.

Council's Community Plan 2017-2030

Council commissioned a research document prior to initiating the consultation process for the CC&G Community Plan to establish an Area Profile. The research and consultation highlighted several key actions within the CC&G Community Plan within the theme "A Healthy Safe Community".

- Action 1: "to increase opportunities for participation in Physical Activity and Wellbeing Initiatives of traditionally under-represented groupings".
- Action 2: "to develop initiatives which improve the range of Outdoor Activities, encourage physical participation and increase opportunities to

enjoy the natural environment of Causeway Coast and Glens. To develop facilities to support physical activity and play opportunities in the natural and green environment”.

Outcomes relevant to this project from the community Plan include:

- People will have increased opportunities to participate in sustained physical activity and social and creative activity.
- The historic and natural environment is fully understood, protected and well looked after.

Councillor MA McKillop commended the work of the Funding Unit Staff.

Committee NOTED the report.

- * **Having declared an Interest Councillor Schenning did not participate nor vote on Item 23 Social Connections Grants.**

23. SOCIAL CONNECTIONS GRANTS

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the outcome of the assessment of the first lot of applications received to the Social Connections Grant.

Background

In December 2022, Council approved a new Social Connections Grant as part of the annual Grant Funding Programmes. The Community Development team had reviewed the former Social Inclusion Grant with the aim of reinvigorating the grant programme considering a reducing number of applications but an evidenced need to support activities that addressed loneliness and isolation and created opportunities for social connections.

The name of the grant was changed from Social Inclusion Grant to Social Connections Grant and funding was secured through collaboration with the Northern Health & Social Care Trust through the Causeway Coast and Glens Loneliness Network as well as the Causeway GP Federation Multi-Disciplinary Team and Limavady GP Multi-Disciplinary Team. The grant was opened separately from the annual grant cycle in December and will operate on a rolling basis with several closing dates during the year, to allow for additional match funding that may become available in year.

For this first round of the Social Connections Grant the funding is solely that received from the Health Trusts, and this has allowed the programme to open for activities from February 2023 onwards.

Social Connections Grant

Purpose of Programme: To provide small grants to community and voluntary organisations to address loneliness and isolation and build social connections.
Levels of Grant: 100% of costs up to a maximum grant of £500.

A summary of the Guidance Notes for the grant programme, detailing eligibility and assessment criteria, is attached at Annex A (circulated).

Applications Received (table circulated)

When the Social Inclusion Grant opened last year there were only 12 applications received, 10 of which were successful. The new programme and approach have resulted in nearly triple the number of applications in the first round. A list of the applications received, and funding amount recommended are listed in Annex B (circulated).

Officers from the Community Development team will provide detailed feedback to the 3 unsuccessful applicants, and they can reapply to the programme or receive guidance to apply for other grants.

As it's a rolling programme, community organisations can still apply, and applications will be assessed after the next cut off point of 8 February.

Committee NOTED the report.

24. ASYLUM SEEKERS

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

To provide an update to Members on the NI Executive Office and Home Office sponsored programme with all 11 councils across Northern Ireland, including establishment of networks and initiatives which provide assistance and integration with local communities

Background /Context

Members will be aware from the report provided by officers in December 2022, that the NI Executive Office and the Home Office are engaging with a broad range of government departments, other statutory bodies, as well as national and regional charities in relation to asylum seekers placed across Northern Ireland.

The Home Office is the lead UK government department for nationality, immigration and asylum, and these matters were not transferred as part of devolution and remain Excepted Matters.

The Northern Ireland Executive do not have statutory powers in respect of immigration and asylum, however Executive Departments do have a role to

play in supporting refugees and asylum seekers here, for example in terms of access to health and education services.

Asylum accommodation and financial support is funded and provided by the Home Office *only for those asylum seekers who are deemed destitute whilst their claim is assessed*. It is provided under the Asylum Accommodation and Support Contract (AASC) and does not form part of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) remit for the provision of social housing.

The Home Office seek to select Asylum accommodation where there are sufficient support services in place. They may on occasion have to place asylum seekers in temporary accommodation such as hotels to meet their statutory accommodation duty but would then seek to transfer asylum seekers to dispersed accommodation as soon as practicable.

Since June 2019 the company contracted by the Home Office to provide asylum seekers accommodation and to maintain such accommodation in Northern Ireland is MEARS.

NI Executive Office /Council Engagement & Funding

The Executive Office have confirmed an indicative funding allocation to councils, and officers await the Memorandum of Understanding which is due mid-February, outlining specific contractual arrangements between TEO and Councils.

Council will be provided with a report with details of the Memorandum of Understanding and specific funding specifications on receipt of same. TEO have, in the meantime, confirmed that councils are able to commence activities, due to the time sensitivities associated.

Council had submitted, in this instance, for resources, (funded at 100%), to support activities and services to aid integration and support/signpost users to access key information and relevant services applicable to their asylum seeker status. The proposal also included support to establish and/or build upon the necessary networks and infrastructure for integrating asylum seekers following full dispersal.

TEO continue communicate with councils through the Council Engagement Group on a monthly basis. Council officers representing all 11 councils participate, alongside a range of statutory and regional community sector stakeholders in this forum.

Proposed/draft indicative actions for TEO Funding Bid

Actions have been prioritised according to urgency and in themselves, seek to embed and promote collaborative efforts at a local level while providing a range of activities which ensure appropriate support is available to asylum seekers located within the Borough. Activities as set out below are funded through the Executive Office scheme.

- a) **Establishing the as is position and development of a localised Asylum Support Plan** - there remains limited information/data available on existing infrastructure/networks both regionally and locally, coupled with the lack of understanding of needs specific to asylum seekers themselves, resources available from key service providers and identifiable gaps.
Officers are utilising a proportion of the funds available from TEO to carry out a scoping and needs analysis, engaging both providers and service users in a co-design process to develop a framework, delivery plan and associated governance structures compatible with need and demand. This work will commence in the forthcoming weeks and will involve relevant service providers, effectively taking a community planning approach. Council's role, in the main, will be to facilitate a joined up/wrap around service through the co-ordination of an interagency steering group and lead on the development of the local plan, as opposed to a lead role on delivery of services.
- b) **Providing interim activities to support wellbeing and build community connections** – these activities provide opportunities for initial engagement with asylum seekers, while building connections with local community support available. These activities operate concurrently to the scoping/planning project with a view to encourage confidence to participate in a co design process by creating connections, building relationships and enhancing skills/capacity to participate in community life. Some examples of activities undertaken to date include the compilation and publication of key information for service users, the delivery of an information and networking event, cultural competency training for service providers, cultural awareness raising workshops for service users, connecting local groups offering support to the service users themselves.

Committee NOTED the report.

25. COLERAINE REVITALISE

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the Coleraine Revitalise Scheme providing DfC funding for the 2021-2023 period to assist in creating quality environments for Coleraine Town Centre.

Background

Revitalise Schemes are funded by DfC and administered by Council's Physical Regeneration team. Revitalise Projects focus on offering grant-funded assistance to business/property owners to enhance and upgrade their building frontages to help improve appeal of their properties and the retail area to shoppers and visitors. The funding can also be utilised to improve the general visual quality and interest of the streetscape.

In 2021 DfC allocated funding for a Coleraine Revitalise Scheme to cover the 2021-2023 (2 year) financial period. This funding is specifically to address areas within the town centre that have not previously benefited from the Revitalise grant schemes. The list of designated streets for this project include:

- Church Street
- Church Lane
- Church Lane Mall
- Park Street
- The Diamond
- Diamond Arcade
- Bellhouse Lane
- Abbey Street
- Queen Street
- Society Street
- New Row
- Stone Row

The total level of funding is £294k, with a grant cap of £5k per application. A minimum 10% contribution is required from each applicant. There is no cost to Council as DfC are 100% funding the project.

Current Position

Since April 2021 there have been three calls issued for grant applications to business/property owners in the project area and it is anticipated that up to 65 qualifying properties will be offered funding. This will achieve an approximate grant spend of c£240k by the project end date in March 2023.

However, as there will be some underspend in the budget, the DfC and the Revitalise Steering Group (CTT) gave approval in November 2022 for officers to initiate a street art project within the revitalise area using up to £29,500 of the underspend.

In keeping with other street art initiatives in the Borough this project demands a number of art works to be delivered to a high standard within a tight deadline and tenders were sought from five experienced delivery agents specialising in such work.

The successful tenderer was the local artist and design consultant, Michelle McGarvey, who will project manage the Coleraine Revitalise Street Art project with a consortium of artists who specialise in installations of this nature.

The process of the street art installation commenced in early January 2023 and will continue to the end of March 2023.

In response to Councillor Anderson's questions the Director of Leisure and Development advised he would respond directly within 48 hours.

Committee NOTED the report.

26. EVENT SPACE EQUIPMENT SUPPLY

Report, previously circulated, presented as read.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the introduction of a booking procedure for events space equipment which was provided under the Covid Recovery Revitalisation Programme.

Background

The Covid Recovery Revitalisation Programme was conducted in response to funding received from Department for Communities, Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and Department for Infrastructure. The aim of the projects under this programme was to embrace the renewed interest in localism and create positive town centre experiences. This involved the provision of appropriate equipment to allow the adaptation of our outdoor town centre spaces across the six urban towns to allow for all weather activity outdoors, town centre animation and ultimately increase footfall and dwell time in the retail centres of our six urban towns, Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady, Portrush & Portstewart.

The introduction of the items purchased under the programme now requires a booking system to be initiated to monitor and regulate use. Items purchased under the projects include the following:

Mobile Accessible Changing Units (MACUs) [see annex A (circulated)]

The MACUs will provide people the opportunity to attend events that would not normally be accessible due to lack of appropriate facilities. One in five people within our borough are living with limiting long term illness, lack of appropriate facilities at events will impact on many families' ability to participate in activities. The MACUs will offer our community equal opportunities to participate fully in the life of the borough.

Animation Lightboxes [see annex B(circulated)]

The Lightboxes project was designed and built as a unique attraction for use in the towns across our borough. We hope that providing this illuminated art attraction will generate a positive and appealing display for locals/shoppers and visitors, making our town centre a more attractive place to visit, will increase footfall and boost spend.

Play Equipment – various items [see annex C (circulated)]

The play equipment will offer a great addition to our town centre activities. Town centres cannot solely rely on retail as the main sustainability driver for successful towns. For a sustainable town centre, it must be one where people can live, work and play. Examples of the usage of play equipment can be seen globally by making small interactions to encourage longer dwell time in our open spaces – using all the senses of sight, touch, hearing and taste.

Event Space Equipment – various items [see annex C (circulated)]

The events space equipment will provide opportunities for positive town centre experiences. The equipment includes marquees, free-standing fencing, seating, tables, artificial grass matting which allow the adaptation of our outdoor town centre spaces across the six towns.

The play and event space equipment is stored at four locations within the borough to reduce the transport time and cost. Sheskburn carpark, Ballycastle; Works Depot, Ballymoney, Newmills Road depot, Coleraine and Roe Valley Arts Centre car park, Limavady.

The MACUs will be managed by Accessoloo under a service level agreement which will cover all maintenance, transport and facilitation/staffing of the units on site. A cost of £130 per day for each MACU unit will be administered to cover the annual service level costs.

Booking Procedure

It is envisaged the equipment will be utilised by various departments within Council; [Events and Health & Wellbeing teams], Coleraine BID, Chambers of Commerce and town-centre based community groups/organisations.

To ensure the items are utilised for the purpose in which they were purchased, a booking system has been developed. The procedure will assist to indemnify Council by asking for evidence of insurances, event plan and risk assessment for each booking. This documentation will be retained by the Town & Village Management officers.

Booking forms [see Annex A-C (circulated)] have been designed and feedback was sought from internal departments. The booking forms are now ready to be implemented in time for the start of the event season. Each council department or organisation will be responsible for covering the cost of delivery of the equipment to the relevant town centre locations and indicative cost has been included in the booking forms.

Committee NOTED the report.

27. GROWTH DEAL EXECUTIVE PROGRAMME BOARD MINUTES NOVEMBER 2022

Notes of the Growth Deal Executive Programme Board meeting held Thursday 3 November 2022 were circulated.

Discussion occurred regarding the feasibility of the Greenway between Ballycastle and Ballymoney. Concerns were raised regarding the objections of the landowners and using Council resources if the project is not going to progress. It was also considered that due to the length of time that had passed since the railway existed that it was probably too late to try to trace it.

The Director of Leisure and Development advised Committee Members that the Strategic Outline Case will be presented to the Executive Project Board on 16 March which includes the objections raised subject to Council decisions. It was also advised by the Director of Leisure and Development that the Department of Infrastructure have requested a workshop with Elected Members. The Director of Leisure and Development advised this scheme is still at stage 1 and that it can be terminated at any time.

Councillor McAuley referred to the objections received from landowners and stated how that an integral part of delivery of the scheme needs agreement from at least the majority of landowners. He stated that Council need to take on board the concerns expressed and to make decisions so we can focus on projects that are feasible.

Councillor Peacock stated that Council have engaged in a consultation which is not completed and Council need to let things run their course.

Councillor McAuley requested a recorded vote.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Wallace and

- To recommend that Council does not proceed with the scheme between Ballycastle and Ballymoney.

The Chair put the motion to the vote.
8 Members voted For; 1 Member voted Against; 5 Members Abstained.
The Chair declared the motion carried.

Recorded Vote Table

For (8)	Alderman Duddy, Hillis, Knight McQuillan
	Councillors Anderson, Callan, Holmes, McAuley, Wallace
Against (1)	Councillor McCaw
Abstain (5)	Councillors McGurk, MA McKillop, McMullan, Peacock, Schenning

28. GROWTH DEAL EXECUTIVE PROGRAMME BOARD DRAFT MINUTES FEBRUARY 2023

Notes of the Growth Deal Executive Programme Board meeting held Thursday 3 November 2022 were circulated.

29. LEISURE FACILITIES PROJECT BOARD DRAFT MINUTES JANUARY 2023

Notes of the Leisure Facilities Board meeting held Monday 9 January 2023 were circulated.

30. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

31. MATTERS REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters to report to the Partnership Panel

32. CONSULTATIONS

There were no consultations.

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

(i) Millburn Community Association (Alderman Duddy)

1). In September 2022, Millburn Community Association had requested to undertake the management of Millburn Community Centre, however due to the rising utility bill costs, and inflation, it was decided at and ratified by full council to defer any decision until council explored solutions in regard to the installation of green energy alternatives for the group and other groups who currently manage council facilities. In January 2023, I had requested a response for the February Leisure and Development Committee meeting, but the item is not listed on the agenda. Could a written update be given as to why after 4 months, no progress has been made by the Head of Infrastructure on this issue? What communication has there been with the Millburn Community Association in respect of their application?

The Head of Community and Culture provided detail of Council decisions made to date, a timeline of work completed to date and what communication had been made with Millburn Community Association.

Alderman Duddy requested that it be recorded that he was disappointed that one department within the Council could not work with another and that this was no criticism on the Leisure and Development Directorate.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED - To recommend that Council enters into a Shared Management Agreement with Millburn Community Association and provide a subsidy towards the cost of energy and fuel subject to the approval of the Minister for Communities and the 5 other Community Associations that have a Shared

Management Agreement also receive a subsidy dependent on funding in place from the Community Support Grant

(ii) Harry Gregg Legacy Project (Alderman Duddy)

Have Council Officers had any communications with the Directors/Trustees of the Harry Gregg Legacy Project, since council awarded the project further monies to continue with their business case?

An update on the business case for the Harry Gregg Legacy Project

The Head of Sport and Wellbeing provided an update on the current position and progression with the Harry Gregg Legacy Project; that the Harry Gregg Legacy Project were required to provide further information to Council in order for the remainder of the funding to be released.

The Director of Leisure and Development advised that it would be appropriate to contact the Harry Gregg Legacy Project on the back of the AORB submitted and confirmed that a report could be brought back to Committee regarding updates.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 11.19pm.

Chair