

**CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2023**

No	Item	Summary of Key Recommendations
1.	Apologies	<i>Councillor Archibald & McShane</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>None</i>
3.	Minutes of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 24 October 2023	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>
4.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Stirling, seconded by Councillor Huggins, referred from Council Meeting 7 November 2023 (abbrev) (Armed forces Day 2026)	<i>Support the Notice of Motion</i>
5.	D Day 80 Anniversary	<i>To recommend that Council: Register its involvement in D Day 80 by lighting a beacon at East or West Strand, Portrush; His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant, accompanied by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, is invited to light the beacon; Invitation be extended to Royal British Legion Group 10 members which includes all groups in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough area; Purchase one additional Beacon.</i>
6.	Contributions to Other Bodies	<i>To recommend that Council approve Contributions to other bodies/subscriptions as presented in the Table 1 for 2023/24 year and consideration of the estimated budget for</i>

		2024/25 as part of the Rates Setting process.
7.	Request to host NAC	To recommend that Council host the National Association of Councillors Members' meeting on Wednesday 18 September 2024 in The Council Chamber or The Large Committee Room, Civic Headquarters as outlined.
8.	Community Planning Update	Noted
9.	Performance Section Business Plan 2023/24 Update	Noted
10.	Performance Improvement Objectives 2023/24 Update	Noted
11.	Corporate Services Business Plan 2023/24 Update	Noted
12.	Planning Applications over 12 months and First Quarterly Report on Planning Performance	Noted
13.	Conferences	None
14.	Correspondence	None
15.	Consultations	
15(i)	Local Government Staff Commissions Equality Policy	To recommend to Council that the Director of Corporate Services request an extension to the deadline of 19th January 2024 in order to allow the Committee to fully consider the consultation.
16.	Matters for Reporting to Partnership Panel	None
17.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Watton, seconded by Councillor Kyle referred from Council Meeting held 7 November 2023 (abbrev) (Group Leaders meetings)	Support the Notice of Motion, as amended: To recommend that Council reinstate the previous policy

		of full cross party attendance at Group Leaders meetings
	'In Committee' (Items 18-20 inclusive)	
18.	Tender Report Citizens Newsletter	To recommend to Council the contract award to Platform Media Ltd
19.	Corporate Services Management Accounts Month 6	Noted
20.	Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 1 November 2023	To recommend that Council adopt the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 1 November 2023 and recommendations therein approved
21.	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12(o))	None

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE
CORPORATE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS,
AND VIA VIDEO-CONFERENCE ON TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2023
AT 7.10 PM**

- In the Chair:** Councillor Nicholl (C)
- Present:** Alderman Boyle (C), Coyle (C), Fielding (C),
Knight-McQuillan (C)
Councillors Huggins (C), Councillors McAuley (C), McCully
(C), McQuillan (R), Storey (C), Wallace (R), Watson (C),
Watton (R), Wilson (R)
- Non-Committee
Members in
Attendance:** Alderman McKillop (R)
Councillor Stirling (C)
- Officers Present:** D Jackson, Chief Executive (R)
M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services (C)
A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services (R)
D Dickson, Head of Planning (R)
J McCarron, Performance Manager (R)
I Owens, Committee and Member Services Officer (C)
- In Attendance:** A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer (C)
C Thompson, ICT Officer (C)
- Press 1 no. (R) Public 1 no. (R)
- Key:** (C) Attended in the Chamber
(R) Attended Remotely
- Substitutions:** Councillor McQuillan substituted for Councillor Peacock

The Director of Corporate Services advised that due to technical difficulties there would be a short delay to the meeting start.

The Director of Corporate Services undertook a roll call.

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

The Chair advised of a change to the order of business with Agenda Item 17 being considered at Item 4. The Chair also advised that Agenda Item 12 – Zomba Expenses, had been withdrawn from the Agenda.

1. APOLOGIES

Apology was recorded for Councillor Archibald and Councillor McShane.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 24 OCTOBER 2023

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting held Tuesday 24 October 2023 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR STIRLING, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR HUGGINS, REFERRED FROM COUNCIL MEETING 7 NOVEMBER 2023

'I call upon this Council to submit an application to host Armed Forces Day 2026. This significant event is a great opportunity to show our support and give thanks to our military personnel and families both past and present including our veterans and cadets. This event will attract thousands of visitors to our Beautiful Borough, supporting our local traders and tourism providers.'

The Chair invited Councillor Stirling to speak on the Notice of Motion as follows:-

'Now, more than ever Armed Forces Day is an opportunity for us all to come together in recognition and celebration of the service provided by our regular and reservist soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines past and present, and the families that have supported them in turn.

Rarely in our recent history has the public owed so much to those in uniform. Our forces at the forefront assisting with Covid testing stations, setting up Nightingale hospitals and assisting with implementing Covid safety measures.

The UK Armed forces defend the UK and its interests. They are relentlessly working around the world promoting peace, delivering aid, providing security and fighting terrorism.

Veterans continue to play their role within the military and their local community.

Reservists who give up their spare time to serve, balancing their civilian life with a military career ensuring that should their country require them, they would be ready to serve.

The Cadet Forces currently support over 130,000 young people in more than 3,000 locations across the UK. Cadets learn life and career building skills as well as gaining vocational qualifications.

Our armed forces could not do their job without the incredible support of their families, friends and communities.

This is an event that will attract thousands of visitors to our beautiful borough, supporting our local traders and tourism providers.

Therefore, I call upon this Council to submit an application to host Armed Forces Day 2026. This significant event is a great opportunity to show our support and give thanks to our support and give thanks to our military personnel and families both past and present including our veterans and cadets’.

The Chair invited Councillor Huggins to speak on the Notice of Motion as follows:-

Councillor Huggins said she wished to endorse the remarks made by Councillor Stirling saying she was a proud Veteran who had 28 years of service. She spoke of MACC (Military Aid to Civilian Community) organisation who provide ongoing assistance to those who served in wars and Veteran clubs who look after fitness and mental health and should be recognised as part of this Motion. Councillor Huggins said she wished to give her full support to Councillor Stirling’s proposal.

Alderman Knight-McQuillan said she wished to put her weight behind this Notice of Motion and support it in any way she could, referring to her own family close links with the forces.

Alderman Boyle said that the Alliance Party were in support of the Notice of Motion and would welcome an Equality Screening with regard to budgets and programmes.

Councillor McAuley said that the Traditional Unionist Party were in support of the Notice of Motion.

Councillor Wilson said that requests for equality screening of implementation of the Notice of Motion could be insulting to staff. Councillor Wilson said that the Ulster Unionist Party were proud to support the Notice of Motion and had strong links with the Armed Forces with many members having served and paid the ultimate price for their service.

Alderman Coyle said that he had no association with the Armed Forces but understood that some living in the borough and in the North of Ireland would support the Notice of Motion. Alderman Coyle said he would give his support to the Notice of Motion, saying he was against all forms of violence.

The Chair put the Motion to the Committee to vote.
10 Members voted For; 3 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.
The Chair declared the Motion Carried.

* **Councillor Stirling left the meeting in the Chamber at 7.25 pm**

5. D DAY 80 ANNIVERSARY

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to consider how Council wishes to mark the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings in Normandy on 6th June 2024.

Background

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

Council has received the official 'Guide to Taking Part in D Day 80 on 6th June 2024' from pageantmaster Bruno Peek which outlines the various activities and the reasons for them. The full 69 page guide can be viewed via the following link: <https://www.d-day80beacons.co.uk/>

Proposal

Council is asked to consider lighting a beacon at 9.15 pm on Thursday 6th June 2024 and to recite the International Tribute (see Appendix 1, previously circulated) to give thanks for 80 years of peace and freedom.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council consider registering its involvement in D Day 80 by lighting a beacon at the War Memorial, Coleraine and that His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant, accompanied by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, is invited to light the beacon. It is further recommended that officers consult with the Royal British Legion regarding its role and representation at the event.

Elected Members will be invited to the event which will be promoted via Council's media channels for members of the public to attend also.

Democratic Services will be the lead for the event and will liaise with colleagues in the Estates and Events team to comply with any health and safety and PSNI requirements associated with a public event.

Alderman Knight-McQuillan advised she would like to see East or West Strand be the location and that Group 10 RBL groups be included as this included all groups in our borough.

Proposed by Alderman Knight-McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor McCully

- To recommend that Council:
- Register its involvement in D Day 80 by lighting a beacon at East or West Strand, Portrush;
- His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant, accompanied by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, is invited to light the beacon;

- Invitation be extended to Royal British Legion Group 10 members which includes all groups in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough area;
- Purchase one additional Beacon.

The Chair put the Motion to the Committee to vote.

10 Members voted for; 3 Members voted Against; 1 Member Abstained.

The Chair declared the Motion Carried.

6. CONTRIBUTIONS TO OTHER BODIES

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

Purpose of Report

Provide details of payments to other bodies/subscriptions and seek approval from Council to progress with payments in relation to 2023/24, and consideration of the budget for 2024/25.

Background

The table below provides details of payments to other bodies in 2022/23, along with estimates for 2023/24. Some payments have been made year to date, whilst others are due to be paid between Months 6-12. Based on current information, estimates are also included for 2024/25.

Payee	2022/23 (£)	2023/24 (£)Actual	2023/24 (£) Estimate	2024/25 (£) Estimate
(3)				
NAC – National Association of Councillors	3,264.00	3,200	3,264.00	3,200
NILGA – Core Subscription	45,705.18	49,936	46,844.00	51,000
LGSC	21,855.54	22,610	27,704.00	23,500
CLA The Copyright Licensing Association	1,367.69	1,598.36	1,367.69	1,800
NIPSO	58,879.34	60,499.64	61,013.31	62,000
Somme Pilgrimage	1,020.00	1,000	1,000.00	1,000
NILGPT (NI Local Government Partnership On Traveller Issues)	510.00	500	510.00	500
MID & EAST ANTRIM BC (KNOCKAGH) *	2,000.00	2000	2,000.00	4,700
Dissolution of LGSC	6,000.00	-	6,000.00	6000
SOLACE**		5680		6000
Inflationary increase	1,590.25			
Total	142,192.00	147,024	149,703	159,500

*SOLACE figure of £5,680 is made up as flows:

Executive Leader	£1,080
Sector Policy Resource	£4,600

**Knockagh Monument.

Costs are to increase to £2,200 per annum and there is also remedial work taking place so we will be charged an additional £2,500 pa as well.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council

- approval of Contributions to other bodies/subscriptions as presented in the Table 1 for 2023/24 year and
- consideration of the estimated budget for 2024/25 as part of the Rates Setting process.

Proposed by Alderman Coyle
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the Contributions to other bodies/subscriptions as presented in the Table 1 for 2023/24 year and consideration of the estimated budget for 2024/25 as part of the Rates Setting process.

7. REQUEST TO HOST NAC

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

Purpose of Report

The Purpose of the report is to present a request from the National Association of Councillors (NAC) to host their meeting on Wednesday 18 September 2024 in a Council facility.

Background

Correspondence has been received from Linda Williamson, Administrator, National Association of Councillors NI to request Council host a meeting for the National Association of Councillors (NAC), which is scheduled to take place on 18th September 2024.

NAC Requirements

The stated requirements are set out below:

- Meeting room for up to 35 in-person attendees with disabled access and available from 9.30am for set-up
- Support and capability for audio/visual set-up to enable remote access for virtual attendees via Teams
- Refreshments of tea/coffee/biscuits for Attendees arriving from 10.30am
- A suggested caterer for the provision of a buffet lunch with selection of hot items and sandwiches with tea/coffee following the meeting to be available between 12 noon

- On-site car parking

Cost to host NAC

Due to the request for a hybrid meeting set-up, Officers would recommend the use of The Council Chamber or The Large Committee Room for this meeting (depending on room availability, as Council has yet to consider its Timetable of Meetings for this period).

Civic Facilities have advised there is no room charge for the use of the room and supply of tea/coffee/biscuits. IT staffing assistance will be required for the meeting setup from 9.00am-1.00pm and one Democratic Services staff member in attendance to oversee arrangements.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Corporate Policy and Resources Committee consider the request for Council to host the National Association of Councillors Members' meeting on Wednesday 18 September 2024 in The Council Chamber or The Large Committee Room, Civic Headquarters as outlined.

Proposed by Councillor Cully
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and

AGREED – to recommend that Council host the National Association of Councillors Members' meeting on Wednesday 18 September 2024 in The Council Chamber or The Large Committee Room, Civic Headquarters as outlined.

8. COMMUNITY PLANNING UPDATE

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

Introduction

The Community Plan is a long-term plan (from 2017 to 2030) based on sound, robust evidence with a focus on improving social, economic and environmental well-being and contributing to sustainable development.

The Community Plan is a strategic planning tool for the Causeway Coast and Glens area and it is the key over-arching framework for partnerships and initiatives in the Council area. It is not seen as an additional or parallel process to structures already in place.

Phase 1 of the community planning process was the development of a Strategic Framework for the Community Plan. This document was finalised in April 2017 and officially launched in June 2017. It outlines the high-level outcomes identified for the Causeway Coast and Glens area based on an extensive public consultation process and a statistical analysis of the area.

Phase 2 of the community planning process was the development of a

comprehensive Delivery Plan in 2018 which put in place 44 practical actions and activities to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic Framework. This Delivery Plan was reviewed in 2022 and now contains 34 actions covering four thematic areas:

- 1) Health and Wellbeing
- 2) Community/Community Safety
- 3) Infrastructure/Environment
- 4) Economy/Education/Tourism.

Phase 3 of the community planning process put in place mechanisms to monitor and report on performance against the Community Plan objectives/outcomes. An Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) process is utilised to monitor and report on performance with Action Leads using report cards to provide information on the following areas in relation to each of the actions within the Delivery Plan:

- What did we say we would do?
- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Who is better off?

Reports on progress against the actions in the Delivery Plan are provided to the Community Planning Partnership using this process on a quarterly basis.

The Chair spoke in his capacity as Chair of Community Planning Strategic Partnership of the good work undertaken and groups involved.

Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

9. PERFORMANCE SECTION BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24 UPDATE

For information report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Council an update on the Performance Section Business Plan for 2023/2024

Background

Each Council Section is required annually to provide Council with a Business Plan for approval and a subsequent 6 month update on progress.

The Performance Section Business Plan update is attached as Appendix 1, previously circulated.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee note the progress of the Performance Section Business Plan as detailed in Appendix 1, previously circulated.

Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

10. PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2023/24 UPDATE

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

Purpose of Report

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

Background

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

Council is committed to regular reporting on Objectives such as these, and furthermore a year-end report will be provided for Council in June 2024.

Recommendation

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

Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

11. CORPORATE SERVICES BUSINESS PLANS UPDATE 2023/24

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

Introduction

Council approved the CS Business Plans in June 2023. Progress on achieving the objectives can be viewed in each of the service area reports below. The business plans represented a continuation of work from the 22/23 period, as well as, new targets for 23/24 for each of the service areas:

- ODHR (Appendix 1, previously circulated)
- Policy & Community Planning (Appendix 2, previously circulated)
- Democratic and Central Services (Appendix 3, previously circulated)

The plans for each of the aforementioned service area were developed based upon:

- The emerging actions from the Community Planning Process.
- The Council's exiting Corporate Plan and Performance Improvement Plan
- Endorsed service area strategies.
- Relevant Central government strategies and policies.
- Council decisions and direction from the 2022 / 23 period.

The Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the annual business plans is to:

- Outline the Strategic context and strategic objectives of each of the service areas
- Demonstrate alignment to the Council's Strategic Aims and Objectives
 - Cohesive Leadership
 - Local Economy
 - Improvement and Innovation
 - Healthy, Active and Engaged Communities
 - Climate Change and Our Environment
- Provide context in terms of legislative, resource, internal and external
- Give details in terms of issues and impact the service area/s face in terms of challenges (SWOT/PESTLE)

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Members the 2023/2024 Corporate Services (CS) Business Plans 6 month review for information.

- Consider pre-requisites and external dependencies, assumptions and Business Plan risks
- Demonstrate how each of the service areas are
 - supporting Council's priorities, and contributing to the efficiency drive and transformation of service delivery
 - aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Ensure accountability via Actions, Outcomes, Budget, Timescale and KPI's
- Bring key information together in one place about the service, which Members, staff and stakeholders can understand.

Financial Position at Period 6

Council has approved the annual budget for Corporate Services and delegated authority to officers to utilise this budget in the provision of services to the rate payers. Corporate Services budget for 2023/24 is £ 5,869,506.

The Corporate Services position at Month 6 shows a £211,227 positive variance, as a result of £196K under budget in expenditure and £15K over budget in income.

Table 1 Analysis of Expenditure – Corporate Services Months 1-6 was previously circulated.

Recommendation

The Corporate Policy and Resources Committee is asked to consider the Corporate Services business plans 6-month review for the 2023 / 24 period.

Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS OVER 12 MONTHS AND FIRST QUARTERLY REPORT ON PLANNING PERFORMANCE

For information report, previously circulated, was presented by the Head of Planning.

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an overview of the planning applications in the system over 12 months.

To provide Members with First Quarterly Report on Planning Performance 2023/24 (Appendix 1, previously circulated)

Background

At the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 24 October 2023, the Director of Corporate Services agreed to bring a short report back to the Committee with the details on the number of applications that are taking longer than 12 months to be processed and specifying how many of these are for single dwellings, the reasons behind the longer processing time and the steps that the Planning Department is taking to address it.

At the end October 2023, there were some 300 planning applications in the system over 12 months. The type of applications and reasons for the prolonged processing times varies with each application and over the time of processing the application. Table 1 below provides a breakdown on the application classification and types and reasons for delay in determining application at this time.

Table 1: breakdown of the category and development type of applications in the system over 12 months.

Team	Consultee - No prior PDE carried out	Agent	Planning Committee	Other – including high case loads, staffing shortages, objections/representations and awaiting PAC	TOTAL at 31.10.23	No. Issued 1.11.23- 16.11.23
Causeway Coleraine	28	20	2	17	67	9
Bann The Glens Ballymoney	15	23	3	10	51	5
Limavady Benbradagh	16	20	0	18	54	0
Minors	8	21	0	29	58	7
Single Rural Dwellings	6	7	20 (to go on contentious list / on list)	15 (+ 6 to issue)	54	2
Major	3	3	1	2	10	1
Total	73	91	25	95	284	24
Team	Consultee - No prior PDE carried out	Agent	Planning Committee	Other – including high case loads, staffing shortages, objections/representations and awaiting PAC	TOTAL at 31.10.23	No. Issued 1.11.23- 16.11.23
Causeway Coleraine	28	20	2	17	67	9
Bann The Glens Ballymoney	15	23	3	10	51	5
Limavady Benbradagh	16	20	0	18	54	0
Minors	8	21	0	29	58	7
Single Rural Dwellings	6	7	20 (to go on contentious list / on list)	15 (+ 6 to issue)	54	2
Major	3	3	1	2	10	1
Total	73	91	25	95	284	24

**PDE – Pre-Development Enquiry*

***PAC Eg – where Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out and Environmental Impact Statement is required*

Staff have been recruited to fill the two vacant Planning Officer posts that were vacant for upwards of one year due to difficulty in recruiting Agency staff. This resulted in increased caseloads, delays to processing of applications as a result and reduction in number of decisions issued. This has been resolved at the beginning of Q2 of this business year and following staff training, increase in decisions issuing should be evident.

Staff are also developing an over 12-month action plan with focus on bringing the assessment of these applications to a conclusion. Staff time

needs to be balanced against the need to focus on processing new applications that are submitted with all of the relevant information included and are acceptable against the additional time taken to monitor and progress those applications where the relevant information necessary to assess the application has not been submitted or where continuous amendments are required to address identified issues.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council the noting of this overview paper.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the Head of Planning was in attendance remotely.

Alderman Fielding said he would welcome seeing the outstanding 12 months plus figure appearing on every annual review.

The Head of Planning advised that she was aware of the backlog and that staff were tasked with processing 50/60 older cases each month. Focus of staff over the next number of weeks to end of Q3 is on issuing older applications and reminded the Committee that this would impact on performance outcomes for local applications for Q3.

At the request of Alderman Fielding, the Head of Planning confirmed that in order to attract staff to alleviate staffing issues consideration would be given to making posts permanent.

The Head of Planning also referred to delays caused by the consultation process and confirmed that she had spoken with the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division, highlighting that targets were being missed; the Assistant Director, HED has agreed to focus on Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council consultations in a bid to address black log of consultations.

With regard to Northern Ireland Water and Department for Communities provision of standing advice is being finalised with aim of this being rolled out to all 11 Councils in early 2024 to help alleviate the consultation processes.

Councillor Storey asked for further clarification on the headings within Table 1, previously circulated, which was provided as follows by the Head of Planning:-

Consultee – Awaiting on consultation outcome or in the absence of a pre-development enquiry and Waste Water Impact Assessment with Northern Ireland Water – which could lead to a delay of a few months.

Agent – Awaiting on additional information which could relate to flooding, biodiversity or other factors.

Planning Committee – Awaiting on the application to be tabled at Planning Committee because it is a Major Application, has multiple objectors or has been referred by an Elected Member.

Other – Reasons include large caseloads for Senior Planning Officers and case officers and shortage of staff, a high number of objections requiring redressing and elongated Appeals process.

The Head of Planning explained that the reason for delay could move from one column to another over time and that the table was a picture at a point of time.

At the request of Councillor Storey, the Head of Planning advised that discussions were ongoing with Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Department for Communities regarding delays beyond the 21/28 day cut off for consultation responses which is often replicated for a second 21/28 day period. The Head of Planning advised that if a consultation response has not been received by the end of the 21/28 day period Council would be proceeding at risk, saying there should be a cut-off point beyond which an assumption could be made that there was no issues forthcoming from consultee.

Alderman Fielding asked how it was determined the order in which referred applications were re-tabled for the Planning Committee referring to a specific application. The Head of Planning said it depended on the caseload of Senior Planning Officer and further information received after the application has been referred, including objections which could be time consuming.

Councillor Nicholl referred to the current timeline for single rural dwellings which often were considered contentious and felt that with discussion at an early stage to navigate an outcome would reduce workload and time. The Head of Planning concurred saying that often at Planning Committee meetings during speaking rights information is brought to light which if made known to case offers earlier could have been resolved.

Councillor Nicholl referred to a minor application for adaptation which had been in the system for 8 months. The Head of Planning said she would speak to the member outside of the meeting and requested details to be sent regarding this application, that it was unusual for these types of applications not to be expediated.

Councillor Nicholl pointed to the need for a team approach in reaching conclusions in Planning matters and spoke of the hard work undertaken by the Planning Department.

Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

* **The Head of Planning left the meeting remotely at 7.55 pm.**

13. CONFERENCES

There were no conferences.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

15. CONSULTATIONS

The following consultation has been received:-

15.1 Local Government Staff Commissions Trans Equality Policy

The Local Government Staff Commission have developed a Trans Equality Policy. They are now commencing consultation on this. As one of the key consultee groups they would welcome any feedback you may have during the consultation period.

Feedback must be submitted to Paula Hamilton at Paula.Hamilton@lgsc.org.uk by COB Friday 19th January 2024.

The Director of Corporate Services asked the Committee if they wished to have a Corporate response by way of response from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Watton suggesting deferral, however the Director of Corporate Services advised that the closing date was 19th January 2024 and said if the Committee wished she could ask for an extension to the deadline.

Proposed by Councillor Watton
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

AGREED – To recommend to Council that the Director of Corporate Services request an extension to the deadline of 19th January to allow the Committee to fully consider the consultation.

16. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

17. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR WATTON, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR KYLE, REFERRED FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD 7 NOVEMBER 2023

That this Council reinstate the previous policy of full cross party and Independents' attendance at Group Leaders meetings.

The Chair invited Councillor Watton to speak on the Notice of Motion as follows:-

Councillor Watton referred to the previous Council mandate when he had not been permitted to participate in Party Lead meetings which he said was unfair and that he had been deprived of information as a result of being left out. Councillor Watton referred to his mandate and urged Elected Members to reinstate the inclusive Party Lead meetings as per his Notice of Motion.

The Chair advised that the seconder of the Notice of Motion, Councillor Kyle was not in attendance.

Alderman Boyle said she supported this Notice of Motion and referred to the previous exclusion of the Alliance Party also.

At the request of Councillor Wilson, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that at this time there were no Independent Elected Members on Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

Councillor Wilson felt that the Motion should be amended to remove the reference to 'Independent' as he believed to include this was farcical.

Councillor Wilson said that once the Motion was agreed this should not be deviated from at a later time, in the mandate. Alderman Fielding concurred with Councillor Wilson's remarks.

Alderman Coyle said that it made sense for all Group Leads to be involved in these meetings and referred to legacy Limavady Council where there was a great deal of work undertaken in informal Group Lead meetings.

The Chair sought agreement from Councillor Watton and Alderman Boyle that as requested by Councillor Wilson the reference to 'Independent' be removed from the Motion.

Proposed by Councillor Watton
Seconded by Councillor Kyle

To recommend that Council reinstate the previous policy of full cross party attendance at Group Leaders meetings.

The Chair put the proposal to the Committee to vote.
14 Members voted For; 0 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.
The Chair declared the Motion Carried.

* **Councillor Watton left the meeting remotely at 8.10 pm**

MOTION TO PROCEED '*IN COMMITTEE*'

Proposed by Councillor Watson
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and

AGREED – to recommend that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee move '*In Committee*'.

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

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

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

18. TENDER REPORT CITIZENS NEWSLETTER

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

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

Purpose of Report

To inform Committee of the results of a procurement exercise in relation to the production and delivery of the annual Citizens' Newsletter.

In line with Council's decision, the newsletter is distributed annually, with door-to-door distribution to 60,681 homes and mail distribution to each household in the Borough.

It is anticipated that the 2024 Citizens' Newsletter will be printed and delivered in February/March 2024.

Background

A procurement exercise was completed between 11th October and 26th October 2023 via email as this was below threshold to obtain costs in relation to printing and distribution of the Citizens' Newsletter.

The description of works was as follows:

- 12PP A4 100gsm Silk Paper full colour [71,000 Copies]
- Door to Door Distribution: 60,681 homes [BT49] [BT51] [BT52] [BT53] [BT54] [BT55] [BT56] [BT57]
- Distribution of 9,974 homes – addressed mail.
- Fulfilment of 9,974 magazines into envelopes.
- Council will supply the address database

Five companies were asked to quote. One company, Platform Media Ltd returned a costing of £ 26,587.38.

This cost was in line with the baseline figure of £ 27,500.00.

We became aware of an issue relating to potential non-delivery of Citizens' Newsletters in some postcodes within the Borough. Upon investigation, we were provided with 3 addresses of citizens who said they did not receive the newsletter. The supplier, Platform Media Ltd advised that their delivery partner, Royal Mail stated in its terms & conditions that the amount delivered can vary by 5%; i.e, 95% to 105% of agreed amount. Royal Mail has been asked for a delivery report on this, which remains outstanding at this stage.

Financial Implications

The cost of printing and distribution of the 2024 Citizens' Newsletter is £26,587.38 exclusive of VAT.

This cost has been included in this year's Corporate Communications and Public Relations Budget.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the contract award to Platform Media Ltd

Alderman Fielding welcomed the newsletter saying the most recent edition was useful and informative but felt there should be a mechanism to ensure that all 6,000 households in the borough took receipt of it referring to the statistical information from Royal Mail stating the 5 % variation of between 95 to 105 % which could equate to 3,000. Alderman Fielding suggested that Council staff are asked to confirm receipt of the newsletter to their homes.

At the request of Elected Members the Director of Corporate Services advised that the cost of £26,000 included production and distribution, provided clarity of the postcode areas covered by the Royal Mail circulation and advised that surplus copies are re-distributed on request.

Alderman Knight-McQuillan questioned how the 5 companies were invited to quote and selection criteria. The Director of Corporate Services advised that the amount of £30,000 was under the threshold requiring tender procurement.

The Director of Corporate Services agreed to circulate further information to Elected Members in advance of the Council Meeting.

Committee agreed to recommend to Council the contract award to Platform Media Ltd.

19. CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS MONTH 6

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

For information, confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report to provide Members with information on the current financial position of Corporate Services Directorate at the end of Period 6.

Background

Council has approved the annual budget for Corporate Services and delegated authority to officers to utilise this budget in the provision of services to the rate payers. Corporate Services budget for 2023/24 is £ 5,869,506.

Detailed Analysis

The Corporate Services position at Month 6 shows a **£211,227** positive variance, as a result of **£196K** under budget in expenditure and **£15K** over budget in income.

Table 1 Analysis of Expenditure – Corporate Services Months 1-6

Previously circulated.

Democratic Services (DS)

£51K favourable due to various elements of expenditure being less than budget in Period 6 including the following: Members Mileage, Official and Courtesy Visits and an increase in Registration Income.

Land and Property

£23k favourable due to a vacant post within the structure.

Human Resources

£72K favourable in Period 6. approx.

£11k favourable in Occupational Health, £25k favourable in Programme Management Costs, £11k favourable in Employee Relations and £14k favourable in Legal expenses.

There is a risk that ODHR budget may be overspent at year-end as the costs associated with the current recruitment and selection process for Director of Leisure and Development were not budgeted for during the Estimates process.

ICT

£41K adverse overall in Period 6, due to a combination of underspends and overspends. The adverse variance in Internet & Data Connection is currently being analysed.

Contributions to other bodies

£2k adverse as at Period 6. One contribution to other bodies (NILGA) has been paid year to date.

Internal Audit.

£33k favourable as at Period 6.

Internal audit shows an underspend as at month 6. The reason for the underspend is contract terms were not agreed with the co-sourcing partner until August 2023 which has deferred the commencement of internal audit assignments for the 2023/24 financial year. Audit work commenced in September, and it is anticipated that the Internal Audit expenditure code will be on budget at the year end. As the budget is profiled evenly throughout the year the outturn figure currently shows an underspend.

Centrally Managed

Overall, £51K favourable position at the end of Period 6, due to various underspends.

Policy & Community Planning

Overall, £24K favourable position at the end of Period 6, due to various underspends.

Recommendation

That Council considers the information presented.

Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

20. MINUTES OF THE LAND AND PROPERTY SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2023

Confidential by virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Copy minutes previously circulated, presented by the Director of Environmental Services.

Proposed by Alderman Coyle
Seconded by Councillor McCully and

AGREED – to recommend that Council adopt the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 1 November 2023 and recommendations therein approved.

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

There were no items of Any Other Relevant Business.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’

Proposed by Alderman Boyle
Seconded by Councillor McCully and

RESOLVED – that Council move ‘*In Public*’

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and extended seasons greetings.

The meeting concluded at 8.20 pm.

Chair

