



**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 20 APRIL 2021**

Table of Recommendations

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations
1.	Apologies	None
2.	Declarations of Interest	Alderman S McKillop and Hillis; Councillor Schenning
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee Meeting held Tuesday 16 th March 2021	Confirmed
4.	Garvagh Museum	Recommend that Council continue the partnership with Trustees of Garvagh Museum for a 4 year period and to provide support of £10,000 per year.
5.	2021-22 Business Plans	Recommend to Council that given the detailed information contained and to afford elected members the opportunity to fully scrutinise the business plans that a workshop be held at the earliest opportunity to include Heads of Services for the Leisure and Development Directorate, whilst permitting officers to continue to work on the business plan in the interim period.

6.	<i>Growth Deal</i>	<i>Recommend that Council adopt Option 3 - Carry forward Priority One projects and a maximum of two projects from Priority Two for further assessment. Option 3 is similar to Option 2, the main difference being that two additional projects from Priority Two will also be taken forward to SoC stage i.e., Mountsandel Development (project no. 13) and Regeneration of Dunluce Castle (project no. 17).</i>
7.	Volunteer Policy	<i>Recommend that Council approve the Volunteer Policy</i>
8.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Schenning, Seconded Councillor Dallat-O'Driscoll, referred from the 2 March 2021 Council Meeting (Abbrev. Recognising importance and impact of volunteers in CC&GBC area)	<i>Support Notice of Motion</i>
9.	Articlave Management Agreement	<i>Recommend that Council enters into a Management Agreement with Articlave Community Development Association for the operation of Articlave Community Portacabin.</i>
10.	SWB Facility Management Agreement	<i>'Members to approve the 'policy position' of adhering to the best practice guidance...'</i> <i>'Members to approve the community asset transfer of</i>

		<i>McCamphill Park to Dunloy FC...'</i> <i>'Members to approve a review for the waiver of rental payments due in 2020/21 from Portstewart FC...'</i>
11.	Landfill Community Fund	<i>Recommend to the Landfill Regulator funding to projects 1-5 totalling £71,587.50.</i>
12.	Tourism Events Strategy	Recommended that the matter be referred to a workshop and allow members the opportunity to consider the outcome of the Blue Sails further
13.	PEACE IV Closure and PEACE Plus	<i>Information</i>
14.	Covid Town Centre Recovery Fund	<i>Information</i>
15.	Correspondence	<i>Information</i>
	(i) Protection from Stalking Bill	
16.	Matters Reporting to the Partnership Panel	<i>Nil</i>
17.	Consultations	<i>Nil</i>
	<i>'IN COMMITTEE' (Items 18-20 inclusive)</i>	
18.	Dunluce Centre	<i>Recommend that given the magnitude of the decision to be taken and the lands involved in the potential sale that Council should convene a Special meeting for this Item only at the earliest opportunity to afford all 40 elected</i>

		<i>members an input into the decision.</i>
19.	Residual VAT Liability HALP	Information
20.	Growth Deal Staff Resource	Recommend that in order to commence the work required within Stage 2 of the Growth Deal Process following the HM Treasury business case development framework, Council enters into an Operational Partnership Agreement with Strategic Investment Board for the provision of an experienced and expert project manager for a 3 year period commencing at the earliest opportunity.
21.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)	
	(i) CCTV Provision (Councillor McCaw)	Noted
	(ii) CCTV Provision (Alderman Fielding)	

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF
THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
IN CIVIC HEADQUARTERS AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, ON
TUESDAY 20 APRIL 2021 AT 7:04 PM**

In the Chair: Councillor Nicholl (C)

Members Present: Alderman Baird (R), Hillis (C), S McKillop (R), Fielding (R) and McCorkell (R); Councillors Anderson (R), Bateson (R), Callan (R), Holmes (C), MA McKillop (R), Knight-McQuillan (R), McCaw (R), C McShane (R) , Schenning (R), Watton (C)

**Non Committee
Members in Attendance** Alderman Duddy (C)

Officers Present: R Baker, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism & Recreation (R)
J Welsh, Head of Community & Culture (R)
N McGurk, Strategic Projects Manager (R)
J Beggs, SIB Capital Projects (R)
N McGurk, Strategic Projects Manager (R)
Sarah-Jane Goldring, Peace IV Officer (R)
Kerry McMullan, Assistant Events Manager (R)
Julienne Elliott, Town and Countryside Manager (R)
Helen Perry, Museums Manager (R)
Louise Scullion, Community Development Manager

In Attendance: Ian Davidson } Item 4
David McMeekin }

A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer (C)
C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer (C)

Press 4 (no) (R)
Public 2 (no) (R)

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

The Chair read the remote meetings protocol at the beginning of the meeting:

Welcome to the Leisure and Development Committee Meeting.

I extend a welcome to members of the press and public in attendance. You will be required to leave the meeting when Council goes into committee. You will be readmitted by Democratic Services Officers as soon as the meeting comes out of committee. I would also remind you that the taking of photographs of proceedings or the recording of proceedings for others to see or hear is prohibited.

If you are having technical difficulties try dialling in to the meeting on the telephone numbers stated on the chat and then Insert the Conference ID code.

If you continue to have difficulties please contact the number provided on the chat at the beginning of the meeting for Democratic Services staff and ICT staff depending on your query:

The meeting will pause to try to reconnect you.

Once you are connected

- *Mute your microphone when not speaking.*
- *Use the chat facility to indicate to that you wish to speak. The chat should not be used to propose or second.*
- *Please also use the chat to indicate when you are leaving the meeting if you are leaving before the meeting ends.*
- *Unmute your microphone and turn your camera on when you are invited to speak.*
- *Only speak when invited to do so.*
- *Members are reminded that you must be heard and where possible be seen to all others in attendance to be considered present and voting or your vote cannot be counted.*

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

SUBSTITUTION

Alderman S McKillop substituted for Councillor Wallace; Alderman Fielding substituted for Councillor McAuley.

With the permission of the Chair, Alderman Baird wished to record her distain at the recent attack in Dungiven on a female PSNI officer and her young child and said that those responsible had no part to play in our democratic society.

Alderman Hillis asked that Item 18 – Dunluce Centre, be discussed ‘in public’ but that specifics regarding cost and potential developers would be held for consideration ‘in

committee'. The Chair said that the matter would be considered in full 'in committee' as indicated by the Agenda. Alderman Hillis referred to requests for briefs regarding the Dunluce Centre sale which had not been forthcoming and wished to have on record his dismay that some of the business could not be considered 'in public'..

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies recorded.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Alderman Hillis – Item 11 Landfill Community Fund. Alderman Hillis did not participate in this Item; Councillor Schenning – Item 7 Volunteer Policy. Councillor Schenning did not participate in this Item.

Alderman S McKillop wished to have recorded that a previous interest declared at 2 March 2021 Council Meeting did not materialise - Leisure and Development Committee minutes, Item 11, Prosperity & Place Progress report, Revitalisation Grants.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 16TH MARCH 2021

Summary minute, previously circulated.

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 16 March 2021 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. GARVAGH MUSEUM

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a brief summary of the previous Partnership Agreement 2016-2021 with Trustees of Garvagh Museum within the context of Council's Cultural strategy and, in the context of the pandemic, outline the new proposed Partnership 2021 – 2023.

Background/Context

In 2016 Council agreed to support Garvagh Museum, a community and volunteer led museum, with £7500 annually until 31st March 2021 on the understanding that the Trustees would deliver on agreed actions and targets in support of Council's Culture Arts and Heritage Strategy under a partnership agreement.

In addition, there were a number of conditions agreed including maintaining UK Accreditation Standard for Museums and providing annual reports and yearly accounts, which the Trustees have met.

The agreed actions and targets 2016 – 2021 with annual reporting, are as follows:

Agreed activity	Agreed outputs	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019 - 20	2020 -21*
Collections and programme development	Up to 3 exhibitions	2	1	3	3	Reopening post lockdown New displays
	3 public events	1	1	5	-	N/A due to COVID19
	Up to 5000 visitors/participants	1750	500	1700	1555	45 after reopening Impact of COVID19
Support to local organisations	2 groups supported	3	3	6	2	N/A due to COVID19
Community engagement	2 projects delivered	2	1	2	-	N/A due to COVID19
	14 group visits	14	3	19	33	N/A due to COVID19
Volunteering	200 volunteer hours	800	800	506	600 +	280
	1 training programme provided	0	1 attended	1 attended	3 attended	Online training attended

*2020 -2021 has been a challenging year not least for the museums sector. Garvagh Museum Trustees had to refocus towards keeping volunteers and their visitors safe by closing the museum for approximately 10 months in line with Government Covid 19 restrictions. However, the Trustees and their volunteers have been carrying out facilities management work, collections management and preparing to reopen whilst keeping their team safe.

From the table above it can be demonstrated that whilst there have been challenges to some targets prior to 2020, the Trustees have not only met but overachieved on a number of their targets as agreed by Council in 2016.

The period of the partnership agreement with Council has now been completed.

The Trustees will be presenting at the April committee meeting to report on their work and to seek Council support to renew their partnership arrangement with Council.

Proposal

The proposed partnership agreement would continue to support the Councils Culture Arts and Heritage Strategy as before. This would include actions that deliver on the Councils Strategic Themes of:

- Theme 1: Enhancing our Cultural Assets.
- Theme 3: History Heritage and Tourism.

Standard Conditions of the contract/agreement would include:

- Provide a six monthly and an Annual Report with Accounts to Council.
- Acknowledge Council support in all communications including website, flyers and social media.
- Maintain Accreditation (any reporting or reviews are currently paused by Arts Council UK and the Museums Association for at least 2021 - 2022).
- Maintain annual insurance, providing copy to Council.

For 2021 -2022 plans for the Museum are dependent on when museums are allowed to open within the NI Executive Covid 19 regulations. The actions and targets of the previous agreement are therefore not appropriate at this time.

Proposed 2021- 2022 targets:

- Prepare to reopen to the public.
- Up to 1000 visitors or participants either through the door or online.
- Maintain venue and collection.
- Participate in at least 2 training sessions.
- Up to 150 hours volunteering.

Officers will meet with the Trustees to review the annual targets in line with forthcoming strategic priorities, and provide subsequent proposals for Council's consideration.

Recommendation

Subject to annual review and in line with forthcoming strategic priorities, Council agree to continue the partnership with Trustees of Garvagh Museum for a 2 year period, in line with the remaining term of council and to provide support of £7,500 per year.

The Chair invited Mr McMeekin and Mr Davidson from Garvagh Museum to present to Committee.

The presentation included what makes Garvagh Museum unique in the following areas: Connecting Communities; Preserving Memories; Promoting Education and Tourism Asset. Also outlined was Strategic Partnership Activities and a breakdown of finances which included running costs; training; events and maintenance. The presenters confirmed that no cost was incurred for the voluntary labour provision and the presentation closed by a summary of the challenges ahead faced by Garvagh Museum.

Members paid tribute the outstanding work undertaken by the volunteers and the fantastic provision available to the community as well as initiatives to preserve the heritage of the rural area. The Chair of the Leisure and Development thanked the presenters.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Councillor Watton

- to recommend that Council continue the partnership with Trustees of Garvagh Museum for a 4 year period and to provide support of £10,000 per year.

The Chair put the Proposal to the committee to vote
16 voted For; 0 voted Against; 0 Abstained
The Chair declared the Proposal Carried

*** Ian Davidson and David McMcMeekin left the meeting after consideration of this Item.**

5. 2021-22 BUSINESS PLANS

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Members the 2020/2021 Leisure and Development Business Plans for member's consideration.

Introduction

As Council optimistically leaves the Covid 19 Pandemic Period, this plan provides an opportunity to get back to business, with a focus upon efficiency, service improvement and the opportunities arising from the Growth Deal and other major funding schemes.

The business plans represent a continuation of work for:

- Sport and Wellbeing.
- Community and Culture.

- Tourism and Recreation.
- Prosperity and Place.
- The Funding Unit.

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

- The emerging actions from the Community Planning Process.
- The Council's exiting Corporate Plan.
- Endorsed service area strategies.
- Relevant Central government strategies and policies.
- Council decisions and direction from the 20/21 period.

The Purpose of the Plans

The purpose of the annual business plans is to:

- Give a clear sense of what the service is for and the challenges it faces.
- Show how it is supporting Council's priorities.
- Show how it is contributing to the efficiency drive and transformation of service delivery.
- Show how it is aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Help us to hold ourselves to account and ensure we deliver for Council and its residents.
- Bring key information together in one place about the service, which Members, staff and stakeholders can understand.

2020 – 21 Business Plans

Looking forward, the proposed work activities are detailed in the attached Service Area Business plans at Annexes A – E (previously circulated)

The following tables summarise the strategic work activities:

The committee is asked to consider and approve the proposed business plans for the 2021/22 period, providing a focus for officers responsible for delivering Leisure and Development services.

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Alderman Baird and

AGREED – to recommend to Council that given the detailed information contained and to afford elected members the opportunity to fully scrutinise the business plans that a workshop be held at the earliest opportunity to include Heads of Services for the Leisure and Development Directorate, whilst permitting officers to continue to work on the business plan in the interim period.

The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed that with the agreement of members and in consultation with the corporate calendar a date could be accommodated in June or early July.

6. GROWTH DEAL

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Strategic Projects Manager.

Purpose of Report/ Background

The purpose of this paper is to agree prioritised Growth Deal projects to be carried forward to Strategic Outline Case (SoC) stage.

Causeway Coast and Glens is set to receive £72m capital funding for a Growth Deal after the NI Executive agreed to match fund the UK Government's Growth Deal allocation. The Growth Deal capital fund will be used to support digital and innovation projects. The Executive investment will focus additional funding on supporting infrastructure, tourism, and regeneration along with employability and skills.

In line with Growth Deal criteria, it is critical that Council prioritise key catalyst projects over the next 5-10years to help shape and grow our local economy.

Proposals

Growth Deals are models of economic growth which provide regions with the opportunity to:

- Take charge and responsibility of decisions that affect their area.
- Do what they think is best to help businesses grow.
- Identify priorities for economic growth in the region.
- Decide how funding should be spent to meet those priorities.

Following members commitment to a Growth Deal in October 2019, Council established a Growth Deal Sub-committee to deliver upon each of the key priorities identified above. The Growth Deal Sub-committee is made up of eight Councillors; with representatives from Council and Ulster University staff.

The Growth Deal Sub-Committee have identified six key themes/ sectors to help grow our local economy in line with Growth Deal criteria i.e.:

- Innovation;
- Tourism and Regeneration;
- Infrastructure;
- Employability and Skills;
- Digital Connectivity; and
- Energy/ Green Economy.

Following approval from Full Council, Grant Thornton was engaged to independently assess the longlist of Growth Deal projects proposed by the Growth Deal Sub-Committee.

To enable the longlist of projects to be independently assessed, Grant Thornton developed a scoring criterion in line with Growth Deal criteria. This scoring criteria was approved by Full Council on the 5th of January 2021. Please see Annex A for further details.

To summarise, Grant Thornton has prioritised the long-list of Growth Deal projects using a two-stage assessment approach. Stage One involved an assessment of general information provided by project promoters in relation to the project. General information was provided pertaining to the projects, such as project type, summary of project indicative scope, location, capital cost etc.

Criterion	Assessment approach
General information	Project information should be provided to at least a basic level to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project description • Strategic alignment • High level costs • Delivery partners
Scoring	Pass/Fail

The second stage assessment looked at three key criteria i.e.:

1. **Rationale and Strategic Alignment (20%)** - Strategic alignment was assessed to determine how a project supports, either directly or indirectly, the strategic and policy focus at a UK/ NI/ CC&G level.
2. **Project Impact (60%)** - Project impact was assessed to ensure that projects with greatest impact on Causeway Coast and Glens are taken forward. This was assessed through a project's ability to demonstrate impact on employment, productivity and/or inclusion for disadvantaged groups or communities.
3. **State of Readiness (20%)** - A project's state of readiness was assessed to provide a view on the level of a project's development. Projects should be capable of being delivered within a 10-year timescale. Project state of readiness considered:
 - a) Level of appraisal development: the stage of a project's appraisal development.
 - b) Funding plan: An indicative high level funding plan to demonstrate the extent to which funding has been considered during the projects development to date.

As a result of the independent scoring process, the Growth Deal Sub-Committee members have:

- Gained a deeper understanding of which initiatives have the greatest potential to fulfil Growth Deal objectives; and
- Been able to identify why initiatives failed to meet Growth Deal requirements.

Council's Officers have worked with Grant Thornton to ensure that they:

- Were provided with all available details on initiatives;
- Understood the key objectives of Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal; and
- Can deliver outcomes within agreed timescale.

An anonymous short survey was also issued to all elected members to gain a better understanding of key priority projects for the Borough. 29 elected members completed the survey with 'innovation' identified as the key theme to be considered in all shortlisted projects.

Set out below is a summary of the results from Grant Thornton's prioritising assessment. Please see Annex B for details for further details. Applying the prioritising criteria set out above, a total of 12 projects have been identified as Priority One projects. Totalling £128.5m, these projects are representative of all six key priority themes.

Priority 1 Projects	Rank	Indicative Costs - £m
Bushmills Regeneration Programme	1	7.5
Enterprise Zone Digital Innovation Hub	2	7.5
School of Veterinary Medicine at Ulster University	3	35
Centre for Drug Discovery and Pharmaceutical Innovation	4	20
Rural Digital Hubs	5	5
Girona Project	6	7.5
Greenways	7	12
Dungiven/ Benbradagh Regeneration Programme	8	3.5
Foodovation Centre	9	7
Digital Infrastructure Support Fund	10	10
Connected Causeway Traffic & Parking Infrastructure	11	7
Skills, Apprenticeships and Employability	12	6.5
Total Indicative Cost		£128.5m

In terms of Priority Two projects, 10 projects, totalling £217.5m have been shortlisted. This is set out in the table below.

Priority 2 Projects	Rank	Indicative Costs £m
Mountsandel Development	13	20
Coleraine Harbour	14	-
Council Leisure Centres	15	28
Coleraine Smart Energy Demonstrator (CSED)	16	13.5
Regeneration of Dunluce Castle	17	8.5
Ballykelly By-pass	18	40
Village Regeneration Projects	19	22
Active Economy: Causeway Outdoor Education Centre	20	10.5
A26 - dualling extension	21	75
Ballykelly Site - MJM Group	22	-
Total Indicative Cost		£217.5m

A total of 6 projects were identified as Priority Three projects. These projects had no or very limited information and could not be scored/ ranked.

Priority 3 Projects	Rank	Indicative Costs - £m
Borough Wide Heritage Trail	-	-
Blue Ways - rivers and coastline	-	-
Benone Tourist Complex/ Downhill	-	-
Dualling Limavady - Coleraine – Londonderry	-	332
Bridge across Bann – Coleraine	-	20
Ballycastle Harbour	-	-
Total Indicative Cost		£352m

Grant Thornton's proposed scoring criteria has been well received by both the Department of Finance's Growth Deal Working Groups and the Economic Advisory Group.

It is important to highlight that whilst not all projects have been identified as Priority One projects, these projects will remain key strategic priorities for the Council over the next 5-10 years. As part of the prioritising exercise, a funding matrix has been prepared which identifies a long list of potential funding opportunities associated with all 28 Growth Deal Projects. Please see Annex C for further details. For those projects which do not meet the Growth Deal criteria specifically, there are several alternative funding opportunities that each project can avail of. This funding matrix will also be shared with the relevant individual project leads/champions.

Timing is critical as we are coming under increasing pressure from both the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, and the NI Executive to confirm our prioritised Growth Deal projects. It is important that we agree the prioritised projects to be taken forward for further assessment via Strategic Outline Cases.

Options

In terms of agreeing the best options to take forward, three options have been discussed/identified by the Growth Deal Sub-committee. These are set out below.

Option 1 – Do nothing. This is not a realistic option as our borough would lose out on a minimum of £72m funding to support key economic strategic projects over the next 5-10 years.

Option 2 – Grant Thornton Recommendation - carry forward Priority One projects only for further assessment. This option ensures that all 12 projects being carried forward to SoC stage have been independently assessed and meet the Growth Deal scoring criteria as presented by Grant Thornton.

Option 3 – Carry forward Priority One projects and a maximum of two projects from Priority Two for further assessment. Option 3 is similar to Option 2, the main difference being that two additional projects from Priority Two will also be taken forward to SoC stage i.e., Mountsandel Development (project no. 13) and Regeneration of Dunluce Castle (project no. 17).

Recommendation

It is recommended that members agree their preferred option from the list above (section 3.0) to enable officers to carry forward the agreed Growth Deal projects to SoC stage.

- Annex A – Grant Thornton Growth Deal Scoring Criteria
- Annex B – Grant Thornton Growth Deal Prioritising Assessment
- Annex C – Growth Deal Funding Matrix

Members welcomed the projects developed and acknowledged the hard work undertaken by Officers.

Alderman S McKillop said that the impact of this on Bushmills was enormous in terms of economic growth, employment opportunities and benefits to the community.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Councillor Callan and

AGREED - to recommend that Council adopt Option 3 - Carry forward Priority One projects and a maximum of two projects from Priority Two for further assessment. Option 3 is similar to Option 2, the main difference being that two additional

projects from Priority Two will also be taken forward to SoC stage i.e., Mountsandel Development (project no. 13) and Regeneration of Dunluce Castle (project no. 17).

7. VOLUNTEER POLICY

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present a draft Volunteering Policy to Committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Statement

The purpose of the Volunteering Policy is to enable Council to involve and value volunteers and to achieve clear, workable principles and guidelines to which volunteers all can follow. It sets out guidelines in relation to equality of opportunity, recruitment, training, support and development of volunteers within a service. The policy also recognises the commitment given to and the value achieved from a dedicated team of volunteers and it recognises the importance of building on the relationship between volunteers and those who engage with them. The policy demonstrates how council employees have the opportunity to volunteer and the beneficial experience gained for employees through Employer Supported Volunteering.

Strategic Context

Join in Get Involved, Build a Better Future (2012) is the Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland and aims to coordinate activities across government, the voluntary and community sector and other stakeholders to promote the positive experience and increase levels of volunteering across Northern Ireland.

The strategy describes volunteering as:

'the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern or financial gain.'

Volunteer Now has designed a Council Volunteer Policy Procedures Framework to cover standard volunteer policy information for volunteers involved in supporting Council services, as well as employer supported volunteering. Council sought input from Volunteer Now into best practice in relation to Council Volunteering Policies as well as gathering learning from other Councils which are currently implementing such policies.

The Volunteering Policy for Causeway Coast and Glens has also been developed in association with the two local Volunteer Centres, Causeway Volunteer Centre and Limavady Volunteer Centre who will work closely with Councils Community Development Team to promote and recruit for volunteering opportunities within

Council as well as providing support with good practice and recognition for volunteers.

CCG Volunteering Policy

The draft Volunteering Policy is attached at Annex A (previously circulated) The Policy covers all aspects of recruitment, selection and management of volunteers, training, supervision, insurance and payment of expenses as well as arrangements for Employer Supported Volunteering.

Volunteers placed in Council will enhance and complement work within each department but never replace core services or staff. Some of the possible roles volunteers could be involved in are 'Meet and Greet' with arts centres and museums; museum's collection volunteer; volunteer ranger. All roles will be endorsed by the Trade Unions and HR. Volunteer opportunities will be identified, where appropriate, by the specific service area in which the role will be located. The overall responsibility for volunteer/s would rest with the Head of Service where the volunteer/s may be based, with the day-to-day management of the volunteer being the responsibility of the specific manager/member of staff supervising the volunteer/s, with guidance from Human Resources as required. Additionally, the local Volunteer Centres can also assist with promotion of volunteer opportunities.

Council will also seek to promote Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) and recognises that employees may seek the opportunity to volunteer and the beneficial experience it offers. Through the Policy, Council will support its employees to participate in volunteering and ESV days organised by Council. Staff will be allowed up to 2 days paid leave to participate in voluntary activity during working hours, within any 12-month period.

Trade Unions have been consulted and inputted to the final draft and the Volunteering Policy was ratified at JCNC on 17th December 2020.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Leisure & Development Committee recommends the Policy for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Watton

Seconded by Councillor MA McKillop and

AGREED to recommend that Council approve the Volunteer Policy

8. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR SCHENNING SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR DALLAT O'DRISCOLL, REFERRED FROM MARCH 2021 COUNCIL MEETING

This Council recognises the importance and impact of volunteers in the Causeway Coast and Glens area over the last 12 months and pays tribute to those in the community and voluntary sector who have stepped up to support

the delivery of critical Covid – 19 related services over the past year. The Council commits to valuing and providing support to volunteers and their organisations through funding streams and training opportunities, recognising the expertise that local groups have in delivering on the ground services to local communities. This council will continue to strive to make the funding application a more simplified process while staying within the guidelines and requirements of outside funding bodies. This council will further provide employees with the opportunity to benefit from the experience of volunteering through the Employer Supported Volunteering Scheme.

Councillor Schenning spoke in support of the Motion commenting that many people stepped up during up the pandemic to assist the statutory agencies which resulted in many volunteers on the ground.

Councillor Dallat O’Driscoll concurred with these remarks paying tribute to the volunteers in her District Electoral Area.

Councillor Bateson referring to his term as Mayor said that he witnessed across the borough first-hand the exceptional work undertaken by volunteers during the pandemic and said he fully supported this Motion.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Councillor Dallat O’Driscoll and

AGREED to support the Notice of Motion

9. ARTICLAVE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is provide Elected Members with an update about the Council owned community portacabin located on Council owned land adjacent to Woodend Park in Articlave.

Background

The portacabin in Articlave was sited a number of years ago whilst a previous community development group was operating, in order to offer activities, classes and address other issues within the area. That group subsequently ceased community development activities and the community portacabin has remained unoccupied and unused since.

During the Covid-19 pandemic a group of committed local residents came together to provide much needed community services to isolated, vulnerable and lonely people within the area. From this they recognised needs in the area and formed a new group, the Articlave Community Development Association, to build

upon and formalise the work already carried out. The new Articlave CDA received support from the Community Development team in relation to increasing their capacity as an organisation and securing funds for community projects. The Association subsequently approached Council officers to request use of the portacabin for community activities.

Current Position

Minor remedial work to bring the portacabin back into safe use has been carried out, including reconnection of water and electricity supply as well as Fire Risk Assessment, Legionella Risk Assessment, PAT Testing of all electrical equipment and a general tidy up of the area. Also required was external re-painting and removal of graffiti from the structure. This is being completed through Councils Good Relations Programme as part of a wider programme of activities to encourage good relations within the area.

Articlave Community Development Association wish to take responsibility for operating the facility as key holders rather than as a user group where they would be required to book through Council. As a result it is proposed that the Association enters into a Shared Management Agreement with Council similar to the arrangements with 5 other Council owned community centres which are operated by community groups.

In November 2019 Council approved the Management Agreement and Schedule of Maintenance Operations for these 5 centres which lays out the responsibilities of Council and of the community organisations which operate the centres on Council's behalf. A draft copy of the proposed Shared Management Agreement is attached in Annex A.(previously circulated)

The community group will continue to receive support from Council's Community Facilities Development Officer and training will be provided as required in association with Sport & Community Facilities Manager who will provide support with operational issues.

Recommendation

It is recommended Council enters into a Management Agreement with Articlave Community Development Association for the operation of Articlave Community Portacabin.

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor Watton and

AGREED to recommend that Council enters into a Management Agreement with Articlave Community Development Association for the operation of Articlave Community Portacabin.

Both members congratulated the group on their efforts during the pandemic in the village the surrounding area and on the creation of a Community Association.

10. SWB FACILITY MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Leisure and Development and the SIB Capital Projects Manager.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval of a Strategic Outline Case which assesses the various legal options available in the event that Council is approached by a Borough based Sports Club or Community Association to take on responsibility for the management and maintenance of a Council pitch and associated changing pavilion.

This paper develops the initial proposal for the potential development of a Facility Management Agreement for shared responsibility of outdoor sports pitches presented to the Leisure & Development Committee on 19th January 2021.

Current situation

Council has been approached by two local Football teams and asked to consider the potential for a Facility Management Agreement at two sites across the Borough – McCamphill Park / Dunloy FC and Mullaghacall / Portstewart FC.

Currently McCamphill Park is managed by Council and booked primarily by Dunloy FC for home matches in their local Football League. Council maintains the surface and surrounding grounds and provides a caretaker for all bookings.

Dunloy FC play in Ballymena & Provincial Intermediate League and qualified for promotion in the 2019/20 season and are therefore eligible to participate in the NI Football League's Premier Intermediate League subject to compliance with the new regulations regarding ground specification as set out by the IFA. These new regulations will require a level of investment in ground(s) which Council was not in a position to be able to complete within the original timeframe proposed by the IFA for implementation of the new standards. In an attempt to ensure they progress into the Premier Intermediate League, Dunloy FC have been proactive and proposed that the club make the required investment and in return take on responsibility for the management and upkeep of the site.

Mullaghacall is currently leased to Portstewart FC and they are responsible for all maintenance at the site and operate the pavilion / clubhouse without any input or support from Council.

Portstewart compete in the Premier Intermediate League and are well established at that level. However, as a Club they struggle to maintain all aspects of the current lease agreement and have approached Council to request a review of that arrangement to see whether a more effective system can assist the club to maintain their current standard of football and remain sustainable as a

thriving local Club which contributes much to the local community in terms of sporting participation and community efforts.

Strategic Drivers

Facilities Strategy: Council's Sports & Leisure Facilities (2015) highlights the potential benefits of working collaboratively with others in the provision of accessible and quality facilities which operate in an effective and efficient manner. The strategy highlights several "wider considerations" which help in considering how services can be delivered including:

- The Council is not the sole 'supplier'; clubs, sports associations and community groups will play an increasingly important part.
- Revenue savings need to be delivered to help fund investment.
- More effective and 'joined up' programming and management of all facilities can help meet demand.

Pitch Strategy: the Council's Pitch Strategy and Investment Plan (2020) offers further options for the development of the pitch infrastructure in the Borough in a way that is affordable, sustainable, inclusive, high quality and consistent with current best practice in public pitch provision and recognises the value in providing services in collaboration with the community. The strategy also highlights for example that of the 50 full size grass pitches owned by Council only one is currently leased (Portstewart FC).

IFA Intermediate Ground Criteria: One of the long-term objectives within the Irish FA's 5- year strategy 2017-2022 is to reinvigorate the everyday game. Specifically, within this objective is a proposal for the restructure of Intermediate Football. The restructure aims to raise standards and continue the development of the game at Intermediate level by seeking to improve the standard of football on the pitch, introducing a more standardised league format and enhancing the quality of facilities/spectator experience. The proposed ground improvements including pitch, changing accommodations, spectator stands and associated access/boundaries were to come into effect from 2021-22 playing season.

However, the IFA has recently confirmed that due to the impact of Covid-19 on the financial viability of clubs and budgets of local councils (as significant providers of intermediate football facilities) the planned restructure of intermediate football will be discontinued at this time.

DfC Sub Regional Programme for Soccer: The 'New Decade, New Approach' Deal published on January 10th 2020 to underpin the restoration of the NI Executive committed to advancing with plans to 'complete both the Regional and Sub Regional Stadia Programmes'. The Department for Communities (with the support of the SIB) has recently completed a 'refresh and re-engagement' exercise to gather a robust evidence base on the challenges, strategic priorities

and needs of soccer in NI with a view to drafting recommendations to DfC Minister/NI Executive on the future implementation of the Programme and significant investment in facility infrastructure.

Rationale for Intervention (and ‘policy position’ on this issue)

Potential demand: as indicated above there is total of 75 full size grass association football pitches suitable for adult, youth and small sided games matches, and 6 full size 3G pitches. In addition there is 10 youth pitches as summarised below:

Ownership	Full and Youth Match Pitches			Training Pitches – varying sizes			
	Grass Full	3G Full	Youth Grass + 3G	Grass	Astro Turf	3G	Shale
Clubs/Community	9	1	1 x grass	3	0	2	1
Education	15	1	5 x grass 2 x 3G	9	0	3	0
CC&G	50	4	2 x grass	5	3	4	1
Leased from CC&G	1	0	0	-	-	-	-
Total	75	6	10	17	3	2	4

There is therefore significant potential for clubs to come forward with pitches under Council ownership and make requests to make ground improvement to meet new Governing Body standards (e.g. IFA Intermediate Criteria when re-introduced) or to avail of external funding opportunities (e.g. Sub-regional Programme for Soccer) and also require security of tenure in the process. Ground improvements could be significant with costs in the region of £50k+ (as evidenced by Dunloy FC).

Benchmarking against English FA Asset Transfer Guidance: Local Authorities have the general power to dispose of land, including the sale of freehold interest and granting a lease. When dealing with outdoor space, the general professional advice is to retain the freehold interest in the site so that a level of control is maintained. Any such disposals are usually done on a purely commercial basis because there is a general legal requirement that the authority must achieve ‘best value’ for the site. However, the government has recognised that there may be circumstances where it is appropriate for a local authority to dispose of land at below market value. These circumstances are when such a disposal will secure a benefit to the community which can be measured by an improvement in economic, social and environmental wellbeing. This is known as ‘community asset transfer’. In some circumstances it means that an asset can be disposed for very little or even no consideration. Local authorities are not obliged to undertake community asset transfer but many do

as they recognise it is likely to increase investment and sustainability of the asset.

Drivers for 'Community Asset Transfer': the drivers are summarised below:

Drivers for the local authority	Drivers for a club
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to legislation and guidance • Focus for community-led service provision • Opportunity for new funding and partnerships • More efficient and effective use of assets • Potential capital receipts • Unlocking latent enterprise and volunteer commitment • New approach to a long-standing problem • Reduce liabilities • Cost savings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom to operate and security of tenure • Improving the quality of experience for users • Opportunities to increase its membership • Opportunities to increase its facilities and progress through the league system • Strengthen community relationships and support the development of new partnerships • Provide a solution to a failing site or a site at risk of closure • Strengthen the operational, legal and governance structure of the club • Develop skills/knowledge base of club.

Benchmarking against other NI Local Authorities: examples of various forms of legal agreements between voluntary clubs and Councils (Belfast and Newry, Mourne & Down) as facility/land owners have been reviewed. These range from long term lease (20+ years), license agreements (10+ years), facility management agreements (5+ years) and service level agreements (1+ year). There would appear to be a move away from medium-term facility management agreements/license agreements into either short term service level agreements or long term leases depending upon the circumstances. Council also has in-house examples of well-established Shared Management Agreements with community groups which on review appear to work well in practice for both parties.

Dunloy FC case study (request for security of tenure): as referenced above the club formally approached Council last year regarding a request for a lease of McCamphill Park and officers have met the club representatives on a number of occasions in recent months. Whilst the immediate pressure to develop the grounds and meet the IFA Intermediate Criteria has been removed for now, the club are proposing to develop plans to install a covered spectator stand, fencing and turnstiles at an estimated capital cost of £60k. To make this investment the club proposes a 25 year lease of the lands and will assume responsibility for shared community use, insurance, utility costs, maintenance etc.

Portstewart FC case study (request for variation to existing lease arrangement): as referenced above the club have formally approached Council regarding a waiver of agreed rental payments in 2020/21 resulting from the financial impact of Covid-19 along with a review of lease terms. Officers have met the club representatives on a number of occasions in recent months to review this

request and they have also been informed of a 'Master Plan' for the development of Mullaghacall Park to potentially avail of external funding opportunities, including the Sub Regional Programme for Soccer in the future.

Options Appraisal

High level options available: the high level options available to address the needs above include: 1. Council direct investment (demand undetermined and unaffordable within current Capital Programme priority projects); 2. Council indirect investment via Grants Programme (currently suspended and again potentially unaffordable within Capital Programme); and 3. Club investment with 'Community Asset Transfer' (which would appear to be the only preferred way forward in the short to medium term).

Community Asset Transfer': the legal options available are assessed as follows: Freehold; Long Leasehold; Lease; Tenancy Agreement; Licence to Occupy; Tenancy at Will (table previously circulated to members)

Conclusions

The essential learning from this Strategic Outline Case is to reduce the risks in asset transfer. Asset transfer is not new and whilst there are many successful examples, there are equally many poor examples where insufficient research and preparatory work can result in certain issues being overlooked which ultimately turn the asset into a liability:

- Historic lack of investment in facilities;
- Poor location of an asset and/or hidden structural problems;
- Lack of strategic alignment and capacity within the club;
- Limited market demand for an asset due to changing needs of user groups;
- Restrictive leases for clubs and community use;
- Failure to explore all current and anticipated costs (management and maintenance);
- Costly environmental liabilities such as contaminated land or asbestos; and
- Unrealistic expectations by all parties leading to disputes and failure to meet obligations.

Therefore in taking the initial decision to pursue an asset transfer Council should follow the English FA Guide to Asset Transfer¹ (specifically the 'Ten Steps to a successful asset transfer'.)

In adopting this approach and reducing the risks above, Council will achieve best value for money from community asset transfer and ensure long term facility provision for the benefit of the local community.

The choice of legal agreement will clearly depend upon the individual circumstances and risks associated with the request for asset transfer. However the in the case of ground

improvement proposals the preferred option is long term lease arrangements (10-20 years) in line with the economic life of investment with all other proposals agreed on short term license to occupy or service level agreement (1-2 years) which allow Council to terminate if arrangements are not working.

Recommendations

- 1) Members to approve the 'policy position' of adhering to the best practice guidance issued by English FA and reviewing the legal options available on a case-by-case basis in line with the risk based approach summarised in Section 6 above.
- 2) Members to approve the community asset transfer of McCamphill Park to Dunloy FC under the terms of a new lease arrangement subject to: officers risk appraisal of the business case for ground improvements and confirmation of the club's investment; and approval by the Land & Property Committee in due course.
- 3) Members to approve a review for the waiver of rental payments due in 2020/21 from Portstewart FC on the existing lease of Mullaghacall Park for approval by the Land & Property Committee in due course; and to note the potential for future ground improvement works and future request for a renewed lease and security of tenure.

The Director provided clarity for members regarding possible financial risks to Council and safeguarding measures should the clubs fail to meet their obligations. The Director further confirmed that all applications of this nature would be dealt with on a case by case basis and that proposals for these clubs would be considered as a pilot scheme for Council.

It was the wish of some members to agree the policy position and defer the individual applications to allow further consideration, however the Director suggested that both clubs had aspirations and that the proposals for Dunloy and Portstewart FC had been previously agreed by Council.

Proposed by Alderman McCorkell

Seconded by Councillor Bateson and

AGREED to recommend to Council that:

- 1) Members to approve the 'policy position' of adhering to the best practice guidance issued by English FA and reviewing the legal options available on a case-by-case basis in line with the risk based approach summarised in Section 6 above;

- 2) Members to approve the community asset transfer of McCamphill Park to Dunloy FC under the terms of a new lease arrangement subject to: officers risk appraisal of the business case for ground improvements and confirmation of the club's investment; and approval by the Land & Property Committee in due course;
- 3) Members to approve a review for the waiver of rental payments due in 2020/21 from Portstewart FC on the existing lease of Mullaghacall Park for approval by the Land & Property Committee in due course; and to note the potential for future ground improvement works and future request for a renewed lease and security of tenure.

11. LANDFILL COMMUNITY FUND

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development on behalf of the Funding Unit Manager.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend grant decisions and awards to the Landfill Regulator (ENTRUST) for projects to be supported under the Landfill Communities Fund for the 2021-22 period.

Background

The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) is regulated by ENTRUST (Landfill Regulator) and managed by her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

The Landfill Communities Fund is an innovative tax credit scheme that enables Landfill Operators to use some of their landfill tax to directly fund projects that improve the lives of communities living within a 10 mile radius of the landfill sites. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council operate the Craigahuller landfill site in Portrush and are able to claim a credit against their landfill tax liability, they then make this contribution to Ulster Wildlife, the registered Environmental Body who administers this fund on behalf of Council.

Applications are received, assessed and scored by Ulster Wildlife Trust, supported by Officers from the Funding Unit and presented to Council for approval. Successful projects are submitted to ENTRUST (Landfill Regulator) whose role is to ensure that the LCF monies are spent by organisations on projects which comply with the objectives set out in The Landfill Tax Regulations 1996.

The Landfill Communities Fund budget available for the 2021-22 financial period is £79,705.75.

Strategic Context

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council review and agree the Landfill Communities Fund Policy and programme on an annual basis (November 2016, November 2017, November 2018, November 2019 and November 2020)

The policy sets out a framework for the processing of Landfill Communities Fund applications. The overall aim of the process outlined in the policy is:

“To ensure a consistent and transparent process with proper and accountable procedures is in place”.

To be eligible for an award, projects must be located within a 10 mile radius of a licensed landfill site in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area. Applications must be made under one of the following Objects set out in the Landfill Tax Regulations 1996:

- Object D - Public Parks and Amenity,
- Object DA - Conservation of Biodiversity; or
- Object E - Restoration of Religious Buildings or Buildings of Architectural or Historical Interest.

In April 2016 Council appointed the Ulster Wildlife Trust as the Environmental Body to administer the fund on behalf of Council.

In November 2020 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council agreed the Landfill Communities Fund programme and criteria for 2020-21. (See Annexes A, B, & C)

Assessment Overview

The fund opened for applications on 4th December 2020 and closed on 05th February 2021.

- Eight applications were received with requests to the fund totalling £116,578.50.
- One application was ineligible and did not proceed to scoring and assessment.
- Six applications with requests totalling £86,578.50 scored higher than 65% minimum threshold.

Stage 1: Eligibility Assessment

1 x application, applying under Object E: Building Restoration Programme, failed to satisfy the eligibility criteria:

Table 1: Ineligible Applications

<u>Name of organisation</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
Bann Rowing Club	River (Re)Connections - £25,515	Part A of Application not submitted - <i>Ineligible</i>

Stage 2: Assessment & Scoring

- 7 x applications (Table 2) were assessed and scored against the full criteria. (Criteria detailed in Annex A - C).
- 6 x applications scored above the 65% minimum threshold.

Table 2: Assessment Table (previously circulated)

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council recommend to the Landfill Regulator funding to projects 1-5 totalling £71,587.50.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning

Seconded by Alderman McCorkell and

AGREED to recommend that Council recommend to the Landfill Regulator funding to projects 1-5 totalling £71,587.50.

12. TOURISM EVENTS STRATEGY

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present on the review of the delivery and strategic approach for the development and future management of the Tourism Events remit 2021.

Background

At the October 2019 Leisure and Development Committee meeting, Members requested that a review takes place of Council events and the external support provided by Council to other events. At the March 2020 Leisure and Development meeting it was approved to appoint external expertise to assist the Tourism and Recreation team to deliver on the review of the existing remit and make recommendations for the development of a framework and strategic approach for Tourism Events for the next 10 years.

Key areas for review included the existing provision of events in the area, how they are resourced, managed and evaluated with a view to develop a framework for the strategic approach of tourism events for the next ten years.

Key requirements of the Terms of Reference included:

- Review the current portfolio of Council Events within wider tourism and economic context.
- Review the current portfolio of Council Events and their capacity to deliver against the following:
 - a. Enhance the visitor experience.
 - b. Increase visitor numbers and spend.
 - c. Ensure year round motivators.
 - d. Develop a positive profile.
 - e. Create a legacy.
- Review the parameters of the Tourism Events Funding Programme within wider tourism and economic context.
- Identify issues, challenges and approach for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council in the delivery of tourism events.
- Any approach must include and assessment of third sector, community, cultural and business events organised by other parties and partner organisations, and Council's involvement with these should be set against the wider tourism and economic context of both the Northern Ireland market and beyond.
- Address how Council can grow existing events, identify new areas for growth with targets and explore partnership opportunities.
- Review the resource and structural requirements - both human and financial required to support the delivery of the ten year Events Approach.

Key expected outputs:

- Analysis and review of the Council's event remit.
- Clear identification of 'best fit' future trends and market requirements.
- A document detailing strategic direction for future development.
- Actions and timelines for delivery.
- Resources identified, including partnership arrangements (internal and external), including financial and funding opportunities.
- Model for future delivery including proposed staffing structure, governance, delivery and monitoring and evaluation.
- The presentation of a bound documented strategic events approach with supporting documentation.

Appointment of External Assistance

In May 2020 Council issued a tender for appointment of services outlined above and Blue Sail were appointed to undertake the commission of carrying out an independent review and making recommendations for how Council supports tourism events. Consultation took place with a range of stakeholders including Elected Members, employees, Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and third party event organisers.

The review was categorised under the following headings:

- Vision.
- The Strategic Approach.
- Roles and Responsibilities.
- Investment Strategy.
- Implementation Plan.

A final report was issued in February 2021 and is attached as Annex A (previously circulated) for Members consideration.

Current Status of the Events Remit:

The key comments from the review in respect of the events status quo are as follows:

Positives:

- The Events Team has a good reputation and is well respected.
- The delivery and operational aspects of events is well done.
- The area has successfully hosted international major events such as The Open Championship and Giro d'Italia.
- There are a small number of distinctive events which have potential for growth.
- The relationship with Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland (marketing and events teams) is good and improving.
- The area has an outstanding landscape, with an iconic name in 'Causeway'.
- Food & drink and music are particularly strong themes with tourism appeal.

Negatives:

- The events programme is mainly small-scale and locally focused.

- The marketing & PR of events in terms of targeting, content and timing could be improved.
- There is a lack of an integrated approach and collaboration within council with the Events Team isolated and overstretched.
- Much of the current support results from the legacy of council unification and the perceived need to be 'fair to all'.
- There is a lack of collaboration with business and commercial sectors.
- The approach to events is cautious, risk averse & lacking confidence.
- Managing health and safety around events is an ongoing challenge.
- There is a lack of professional events production and specialist infrastructure businesses locally.

While the positives do provide a platform on which to build, the negatives are evident and result in a lack of clarity, focus, vision, innovation and ambition around events which is inhibiting their impact and potential.

The evidence suggests that there are currently too many small, local events being shoe-horned into 'a tourism event' because that is where the funding lies. In addition, several 'tired' legacy events are being kept alive because it is difficult to take decisions to cease funding. This means that there are insufficient resources available to properly support and grow the 'right' kind of tourism events to make an impact and is leading to disaffection with the current set-up.

The review of the borough's current events programme has concluded that some have potential (Golf Championships, Auld Lammas Fair, Stendhal and Atlantic Sessions) but there is work to be done to develop their vision, ambition and programming.

Key Recommendations from Report:

The review makes a number of recommendations specific to event delivery.

In essence what is needed are fewer, better events, promoted more effectively - and more enabling and less 'doing' by a new refocused Events Unit. To achieve this will require a new schedule of definitions which very clearly identify those events which are able to deliver wider tourism and economic impact, and those whose priority is social benefit.

The new approach will also require looking afresh at the current programme to identify those with the ambition and aspiration for growth and able to step up to more stringent demands. It will also involve looking for opportunities for new events or events delivered in different ways.

The new approach which is recommended is based on the premise that tourism events will bring economic benefits to the area through visitor spend, increased income for businesses, jobs, and support for the infrastructure of goods and services enjoyed by local people.

The aim is to inspire and sustain tourism events which can deliver against the following strategic objectives:

- Attract visits, bed-nights and spend from Northern Ireland's domestic and international target markets/segments through high-quality, distinctive programming.

- Enhance image, profile and reputation of Causeway Coast and Glens as Northern Ireland's premier rural and coastal tourist destination.
- Showcase and deliver an authentic sense of place based on the heritage, culture and landscape of Causeway Coast and Glens.
- Are a catalyst for creativity, innovation and distinctiveness.
- Are supported and promoted by partners & stakeholders within and outside the Council.

Further general recommendations from the review on the future direction of the events remit are as follows:

- A more ambitious, creative programme comprising a small number of very high-quality, distinctive events, promoted more effectively is required to achieve significant tourism impact. This would be in addition to a varied programme of local events which are focused on local audiences.
- This will require a different approach by the Council and a clearer remit for the tourism events team which should be based on enabling others within and outside the Council.
- The tourism events team will focus on managing partnerships, building capacity and skills to support the local events sector, identifying appropriate one-off events to bid for, commissioning and developing events to optimise the benefits to the Borough.
- It is recommended the role of the tourism events team is to focus on a small number of high-impact events rather than the many small local events which currently overstretch the team's capacity.

The recommendations from the Blue Sail report are under two key headings:

- Strategic Approach.
- Roles and Responsibilities.

Strategic Approach:

The review recommends that events should be categorised by 3 types, and will include both council-run, council-funded and independent events:

Major – large scale international events taking place every 3/5 years e.g. Golf Championships. Criteria includes:

- Global profile for the area.
- Deliver legacy impact which supports tourism.
- Delivered through national and international partnerships with TNI and rights holders.

Signature – high-quality, distinctive events which deliver a strong sense of place and can attract tourist visitors, 4/5 each year. Criteria includes:

- Fit with *Embrace a Giant Spirit NI* brand.
- Demonstrate a high level of quality and ambition in their planning and programming.
- Financing should encompass multiple income streams.

- Capable of achieving international media profile that enhance image and profile of the borough.

Local Events – small or medium scale events focused on towns, villages or communities of interest celebrating local traditions, seasonal festivities etc. attracting local audiences. Criteria includes:

- Must demonstrate participation, involvement, sense of identity and contribute to social well-being of a community.
- Have a clearly identified target audience and a strategy to attract/engage them.
- Organisers must be legally constituted and for larger grants provide evidence of management capacity and expertise.
- Must demonstrate commitment to promoting social cohesion, social inclusion, equality of opportunity and good community relations.

Major and Signature are ‘tourism events’ which will be the priority for the Events Unit. Likely Signature Events will include:

- Developing Auld Lammas, strengthening its heritage and distinctiveness.
- Stendhal Festival.
- Atlantic Sessions.
- A new ‘Causeway Food & Drink’ festival bringing together a number of smaller niche events and developing a new ambitious region-wide programme.

Local events will be supported by the Council’s town teams, community and cultural services, arts services as appropriate and generally delivered by local organisations.

Funding for events by the Council should be consolidated into one budget heading. Bidding and support for Major Events will be on a case by case basis and the annual allocation to other events will be:

- Signature Events – 80%
- Local Events – 15%
- Special Initiatives – 5%

Sporting events which have a limited tourism impact but meet other Council objectives, including NW200, STAT Sports Supercup and Foyle Cup will be reviewed separately to consider appropriate support from the Council. The aim should be to ensure profile for the Council, and provision of appropriate opportunities across its wider corporate strategies of health, community engagement and participatory opportunities for young people.

Roles and Responsibilities

The review recommends that as a general principle the Council will take an approach of enabling others by advising, signposting and supporting in order to build capacity, encourage innovation and creativity and release potential.

The role of the new re-focused Events Unit should include:

- A new strategic role to lead, develop and advise on Major and Signature events.

- An operational role to manage funding and investment for Major and Signature events and advise other Council colleagues and external event organisers on logistical and operational issues.
- Capacity-building for developing and strengthening the skills, knowledge and networks of organisations, communities and businesses to enable the Causeway Coast and Glens events sector to grow.

The responsibilities of other departments in the council with a significant interest in events will be clarified and included in departmental business plans.

A Strategic Steering Group for Events involving senior officers and councillors will ensure better short and long-term planning, integration and oversight.

Role of the Events Unit:

The review states that the principle underlying the operation of the Events Unit is to create a single approach to festivals and events in the region and provide a co-ordinated response to helping them achieve their potential. However, the Events Unit also has expertise in managing events which will be useful for the Council. This expertise should be used not to deliver or programme events but to support others in doing so.

The Events Unit should remain within the Tourism and Recreation Service Area of the Leisure and Development Department but will also have an advisory, signposting and liaison role with other departments across the Council .

The Events Unit should focus on providing high-quality professional leadership for the sector, enabling and facilitating ambition and growth, working across the Causeway Coast & Glens region with festival and event organisers and through other departments of the Council.

Its priority will be on managing partnerships, building capacity, identifying appropriate one-off events to bid for, commissioning and developing events to optimise the benefits to the Borough.

Its role will include managing the allocation of council funding according to clear criteria and priorities.

The Events Unit has a number of distinct roles – one strategic, and the other operational.

The Strategic Role involves:

- Enabling and supporting the development and production of Major and Signature events.
- Providing leadership to the borough's events sector and building and fostering capacity across the sector.

The Operational Role involves:

The continued direct delivery of events for certain Signature events will require a further role which will involve:

- Managing funding and investment.
- Advising Council colleagues and event organisers on logistical and operational issues.

The continued direct delivery of events for certain Signature events will require a further role which will involve:

- Operational project management.
- Event management documentation preparation.

Implementation Plan:

Revive: 2022-23 – New events portfolio in place, continuing implementation of new approach and developing skills and capabilities.

Key priorities include:

- Support and facilitate delivery of first iteration of new Signature Events.
- Commence annual sport partnership agreements.
- Plan and deliver tailored marketing of Signature Events via the Event Marketing Working Group.

Restage: 2024-2031 – establish, develop and refresh the events portfolio.

Key priorities include:

- Signature Events come to maturity – portfolio reviewed and refreshed every 3/5 years by Strategic Steering Group.
- Two or three Major Events take place.

The review notes that events have a natural lifecycle. They generally take at least 3 years to establish, and then after 5 or so years benefit from a major review and possible refresh. For some events, which are of a particular time and moment, it may be appropriate to run only for a few years and then cease altogether. This new approach should build in regular, objective reviews of all categories of events.

Next Steps

Subject to the approval of the recommendations within the review of the remit of tourism events (final report February 2021), Officers will consider the Tourism Event remit from 2022 onwards. Based on the guidance and strategic approach, adjustments will be made to the current portfolio, identification of future best fit for events, and resources identified for an adjusted delivery approach (including financial, staffing, governance, delivery and monitoring and evaluation).

Recommendation

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to agree the general principles presented in the report in order to allow officers to prepare an implementation plan based upon phase 1 i.e. Reset: 2021 for Members consideration.

Councillor Callan felt that there was insufficient recognition of the events team including reference to Halloween and Christmas events.

Councillor C McShane voiced concern about the branding of some events ‘Causeway’ and felt that some of the report was out of date and that the consultation had been inadequate. Councillor C McShane also felt that further detailed discussion was required and a more strategic approach taken.

Alderman Baird concurred with the remarks of Councillor C McShane and also felt that there had been a lack of engagement with key stakeholders and suggested that Blue Sails be invited to present to Council.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation explained to members that there was a budget for consultation which was fully utilised.

Proposal

Proposed by Councillor C McShane

Seconded by Alderman Baird and

Recommended that the matter be referred to a workshop and allow members the opportunity to consider the outcome of the Blue Sails further.

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Callan

Seconded by Councillor Knight-McQuillan and

Recommended to Council to accept the general principles presented in the report, but also included is the requirement and responsibility for Council to programme, deliver and enable Major, Signature and Local Events as necessary. Based upon this amendment to the scope of Council's role, the Officers are to prepare an implementation plan based upon Phase 1 i.e. Reset: 2021, which includes a fit-for-purpose structure aligned to an evolving events portfolio from 2022 for Member's consideration.

The Chair put the Amendment to the committee to Vote

7 Members voted For; 9 Members voted Against; 0 Abstained

The Chair declared the Amendment Lost.

The Chair put the Substantive motion to the committee to Vote

9 Members voted For; 7 Members voted Against; 0 Abstained

The Chair declared the motion Carried.

The Chair advised the following Items were for information.

13. PEACE IV AND PEACE PLUS

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to reflect on the success of the delivery of the Peace IV Programme;

To build on the successes of the Peace IV Programme going forward into Peace Plus;

To examine the opportunities that the Peace Plus Programme offers.

Background

The Local Action Plan for Peace IV was approved by Council in 2016, this led to the delivery and implementation of the Peace IV Programme under three Thematic Areas; Children and Young People; Shared Spaces & Services and Building Positive Relations.

To date £3.3million has been spent.

A total of 5,160 participants were involved in the Programme Delivery, over 125 grassroots Community Organisations and associations participated or were involved in the Programme, Community Participation 40:45 CNR: PUL and 5% Other; 42% Female: 58% Male; 11% reported as having additional or support needs. £125,000 “resource allocations” invested directly back into the communities across the 7 DEAs in addition to Programme Delivery, Study trips, Capital Works upgrades and village/town centre installations or community garden-based projects.

A large Programme of activity aimed at Children & Young People has enabled 1,647 Children and Young People within the Borough to engage in a wide range of activities including outdoor activities, the arts, Leadership opportunities and exposure to expression through digital media. Covid-19 did cut short some of the final presentations in which the Children and Young People had hoped to share, but the momentum and learning will be harnessed and put to good use in their respective communities, not to mention the additional opportunities that Peace Plus will offer them.

Peace Plus – What are the aims and objectives?

Just as the previous Peace Programmes, Peace Plus will continue to build Peace and Prosperity. The Programme’s strategy is to continue to take the opportunities and address the needs arising from the peace process in order to boost economic growth and stimulate social and economic regeneration and secondly, to promote social inclusion, particularly for those of the margins of economic and social life;

The Programme has been developed within the wider political, economic, social and environmental context (set against the backdrop of a Covid/Post-Covid Society).

What it means for Council?

The Local Action Plan will fall under Theme 1

“Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities” - €210 million

The Local Action Plan (Co-Designed) - €90m

Local Community PEACE PLUS Partnerships will be established for designated cluster areas, it will be designed around the aspect of Community Planning Partnerships;

The plans will be centred around 3 core themes:

- Local community regeneration and transformation:
- Thriving and peaceful communities:
- Building respect for all cultural identities.

Each Local Community PEACE PLUS *will be resourced to develop a Priority Action Plan for their individual area*, which combined will form an overall

PEACE PLUS Action Plan for each of the 17 local authorities. Work is underway currently to procure this support and it is expected that initial plans could be drafted by November 2021 as per the details in the Tender Specification authored by the SEUPB.

Each thematic area of the Programme includes a strong community led focus, leading to a more prosperous and “healthy” society.

The SEUPB have developed the Programme on the basis of actions and initiatives which will support, develop, engage and enable communities through the Programme area, which will complement the Council’s Strategic Plan in similar thematic categories.

What learning have we derived from the current Peace IV Programme

Some of the important learning taken from the current Programme is that potential Capital Works Projects for Peace Plus should take account of Council’s Capital Programme priorities and that any support which may be required from Council service areas are adequately resourced from the Programme.

The Peace IV Programme on the whole produced positive engagement and participation by individuals and groups throughout the entire Borough along political, religious, gender, ability, age-groups etc, in each DEA, but low levels of engagement still remain throughout some communities. We are cognisant that there is always room for improvement and the opportunity to engage some of those who have never participated in Peace before. Some thought needs to be given to some of those groups who still lack confidence to engage and in some instances the need for intensive single-identity engagement as a form of capacity building may be required. An example of which could be further “buy-in” from all the Institutions in the Key Institutions Programme, including the Orange Order, and wider representation from the GAA.

In other areas, consideration should be given to additional participation from all section 75 groups. A specific programme could be developed to address any potential section 75 gaps, particularly (as an example) in relation to gender and disability as these two Section 75 groups were comparatively under represented compared to the local demographic in the current programme.

In relation to rurality, some DEAs are more rural and less populated than others, but the Programme has advantages and opportunities for all citizens in the Borough and participation levels were equitably distributed on the whole from across rural communities. The Peace programme actively encourage all “rural” champions to support and encourage wider participation in general.

Continued Community Development and support is required around supporting some groups and organisations whose capacity prevents them from taking full advantage of the Programme, and in some instances for example experienced delays in payments such was the administrative burden on their resources around the verification of expenditure.

Considering the Covid-Context in which we live, how will a new Programme innovate in the current climate in terms of ensuring the cross-community contact can be achieved should interruptions or continued restrictions become a feature, how will we rise to the challenge?

The need to ensure from the outset that a comprehensive, cross-cutting, Cross Border Programme. It is worth considering Cross-Border initiatives whether

that is through tourism, economic development or sport for example should be considered for a mutually beneficial venture.

Legacy

The success of the Programme has been evident in some of the legacy projects that have followed, including the Community & Cultural Institutions. This Programme has a natural continuum in the future e.g. The Culture & Languages Programme and Key Institutions Programme. To date some additional Programming has been further developed with additional engagement through council programmes.

These projects have afforded a safe space for dialogue, an opportunity for conversations to take place and most importantly for people to be heard.

In addition to the natural continuation of Programmes, much of the legacy comprises the resources council have created or imparted, such as the Publications through “Understanding Our Area” (Causeway Museums Services), Research (Scoping Study on Community Integration, Shared Space etc.) Training tools and toolkits delivered through Programmes (Youth Leadership etc.) delivery of OCNs in Good Relations, First Aid, Tour Guiding, resources in terms of equipment, the tangible outputs of the re-imaging projects and community gardens in 8 town/villages locations.

Next Steps

A full Peace Plus Consultation was carried out last year January/February 2020, in which the Partnership. Key stakeholders, including council, the Peace IV Partnership and wider community participated in over a series of events including an SEUPB event at The Lodge Hotel in Coleraine.

The proposed details of the new action plan are based on the results of last year’s consultation and a final consultation of views and opinions of the current plans and associated budgets are currently out for consultation until 12th May.

Full details of the proposed Peace Plus Programme and Consultation can be found <https://www.seupb.eu/PEACEPLUS> and further information is provided [within the presentation for committee.](#)

Councillor Nicholl applauded the hard work undertaken by the groups which engaged, stating that this work should be encouraged and promoted. Referring to Peace Plus, Councillor Nicholl said that elected members had a responsibility to work hard to make this successful.

14. COVID TOWN CENTRE RECOVERY FUND

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the progress of the second tranche of the Town Centre Covid Recovery Programme, funded by DfC, DAERA and DfI for town centres and rural businesses.

Background

In June 2020 Council was awarded £390k in funding from DfC for Town Centre Recovery Plans to be delivered in two tranches. The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) also made funds available to support town centre and rural business recovery, resulting in the overall package as follows:

Department	Amount
DfC	£390k
DfI	£395k
DAERA	£109k
TOTAL	£894k

The first tranche of funding was administered by Council as Covid grant-aid to town centre businesses and rural businesses.

The second tranche of funding was used to support medium to longer term recovery/actions, with the following criteria being applied by the Government Departments:

- Project spend must be capital.
- Funding aimed at helping town centre recovery.
- Deadline for spend 31st March 2021.

Progress / Update

A Steering Group comprising Council, DfC and DAERA Officers has been formed and meets monthly to monitor project progress. (Members are detailed at Annex A).(previously circulated)

Ongoing consultation between the Steering Group and Town Centre Stakeholders has enabled the projects to progress in line with the deadlines and timescales prescribed by the Government Departments.

Town & Village Management is progressing with town engagement sessions in relation to the projects as detailed in Annex C (previously circulated):

- 13th Oct 2020& 16th March 2021 – Ballymoney.
- 20th Oct 2020& 18th March 2021 – Ballycastle.
- 11th Nov 2020& 10th March 2021 – Coleraine.
- 13th Oct 2020 & 24th March 2021 – Limavady.

The final list of agreed projects as described in Annex B (previously circulated):

Timescale

A Letter of Variance has been issued by DfC to Council to extend the programme deadline until 30 September 2021. This greatly enhances Council's ability to deliver all the projects detailed in Annex B (previously circulated).

15. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, to present correspondence for Members' information.

15 (i) Protection from Stalking Bill

Correspondence has been received the NI Assembly on the Damages (Return on Investment) Bill. The Committee for Justice would welcome comments/views on the contents of the Bill. Details of the Bill can be found at <http://nia1.me/4gr> or on request by emailing damagesbill@niassembly.gov.uk. The closing date for submissions is Friday 30 April 2021.

The Director agreed to collate and forward elected members submissions by the due date.

16. MATTERS REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

17. CONSULTATIONS

There were no consultative documents.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN COMMITTEE’

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

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

- * **Press and Public were disconnected from the meeting at 9.40pm.**
- * **The Chair declared a recess at 9.40 pm.**
- * **The meeting reconvened at 9.45 pm.**

18. DUNLUCE CENTRE

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to provide members with an update in relation the sale of the Dunluce Centre in Portrush and seek approval in relation to the preferred option.

Background

Following approval from Leisure and Development Committee in November 2019, NRE Properties were appointed as the preferred commercial realtor (via Council’s Estate Agency Framework) to sell the Dunluce Centre on Council’s behalf.

The Dunluce Development Brief (see Annex A), prepared by both NRE and Officers, required potential bids to be consistent with both the Area Plan (recreation/ tourism use) and the Portrush Regeneration Strategy. The Development Brief process allowed Council to set criteria and select the 'winning bid' based upon an evaluation of a bid against set criteria.

Lessons learnt from the previous sale of the Dunluce Centre were applied with the Development Brief clearly stating:

'The prime objective is to secure quality development that brings this vacant site into viable and sustainable economic use, with the appropriate tourism / leisure development schemes that are in accordance with the council's vision and area plan; thus, supporting prosperity, economic development and job creation within a satisfactory time frame. In addition, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is required to ensure that it secures a sound financial return in any asset release.'

The Dunluce Centre was put on the market in September 2020 for offers in excess of £950,000. In addition to the Dunluce Centre, prospective buyers had an opportunity to purchase additional acres surrounding the site at a cost of £40,000 per acre (validated by NRE).

Proposals

Following considerable interest in the site, six tenders were received before the submission deadline on 27th November 2020. On 1st December 2020, the Scoring Panel met to complete Stage One scoring process. The evaluation panel included officers from Council (x3), Strategic Investment Board (SIB) and Department for Communities (DfC). Tenders were accessed on a Pass/Fail principle, leading to the elimination of two tenders. Both tenders were rejected as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of a financial offer in excess of £950,000.

The four remaining tenders were invited to Stage Two of the scoring process. Council engaged the services of Carson McDowell, to provide professional and independent advice and guidance to assist with the Development Brief scoring process. This required tenderers to present their site proposal to the Scoring Panel on 12th February 2021. Tenderers were issued with Scoring Criteria (Annex B) that was to be followed for their PowerPoint presentation submissions.

The Scoring Panel was formally notified on the 6th of February 2021, that one of the shortlisted bidders would not be moving forward in the process due to financial constraints, brought about through the challenges of COVID.

The Stage Two Scoring Panel took place with the remaining three tenderers as scheduled. Following each presentation, the Scoring Panel questioned each tenderer on their proposal to gain clarity on their offering. Presentations were independently observed by both the Mayor (Cllr Mark Fielding) and the Chair of Leisure and Development (Cllr Dermot Nicholl).

The Scoring Panel reached a unanimous decision that only one tenderer had met the minimum requirement for the site. In terms of the unsuccessful bidders, they both failed to provide acceptable proof of funds on request. In addition, one of the unsuccessful bids had a significant focus on retail and not leisure/tourism.

On the 30th March 2021 the Scoring Panel met with the preferred bidder (Mr Colm O'Donnell) and his team to gain further insight into the details of the

proposal and to assess potential risks to delivery. Also in attendance was the Mayor, the Chair of Leisure and Development and the Chief Executive. The preferred bidder gave another presentation of the proposal which was followed by an in-depth Q&A session to ensure that the proposal met Council's plans for the site.

The preferred bidder's plans for the site are to build an all-year round 'Family Entertainment Centre'. See Annex C (previously circulated) for further details. In summary, the preferred bidder proposes to:

- Establish a superior 'Family Entertainment Centre' – to include a 15,000 sq. ft bespoke 'InflataPark'; kids amusements area; climbing wall; food court; and outdoor activities;
- Provide an all-year round offering with night time leisure activities;
- Create 30 FTE, 10 PTE permanent jobs, 50 additional seasonal jobs, 60 construction jobs, with £2,750,000 per annum in salaries by Year Three;
- Family Entertainment Centre to be operational by March/April 2023.
- Purchase the site and additional four acres for £1,370,000 (One million, three hundred and seventy thousand pounds);
- Total investment of £6.8m by the preferred bidder.

The preferred bidder is aware that freehold for site will not be released until Council is satisfied that tenderer has fulfilled their contractual obligations. Council will work in collaboration with the preferred bidder to clearly establish and outline what these contractual obligations will be.

As throughout the process, Council is under no obligation to proceed with a contract for this opportunity and reserves the right, at its absolute discretion, to withdraw, change, vary, suspend or terminate this process in whole or part.

Options

Option 1 – Recommend that successful tender is permitted to proceed with the purchase of the Dunluce Centre and additional four acres of surrounding lands generating £1.37m for Council in the sale of the site.

Option 2 – Do not proceed with the sale of the site to the preferred bidder.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approves:

Option 1 – Recommend that successful tender is permitted to proceed with the purchase of the Dunluce Centre and additional four acres of surrounding lands, subject to Full Council approval.

Proposed by Alderman Fielding
Seconded by Alderman McCorkell and

AGREED to recommend that given the magnitude of the decision to be taken and the lands involved in the potential sale that Council should convene a Special meeting for this Item only at the earliest opportunity to afford all 40 elected members an input into the decision.

Councillor Holmes and Councillor Callan concurred with the proposals given the lands involved and the fact that the sale had already fallen through there was a need to reach the correct decision.

Councillor C McShane sought clarity from the Director that Council would not be adversely affected should they decided not to proceed prior to signing the contract.

The Director confirmed that Council were not obliged to accept an offer to buy and that in terms of legalities advice had been sought from inhouse solicitor, external solicitor, legal experts and a land agent. In financial terms the Director explained that potentially Council could lose the buyer and lose the rates income which would have been generated. The Director felt that if Council did not continue with the process it was possible that potential buyers may be unwilling to work with Council in future.

Alderman Baird felt that there was a loss of green space in Portrush should the sale proceed and the Director confirmed that Portrush was not lacking in open green space.

The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed, at the request of a member that there was a skate park in the pipe-line in another location in Portrush town.

Alderman Baird suggested consulting with the community and the Director said that as the matter was nearing completion it was not appropriate to give consideration to this. The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed that any development on the Dunluce Centre site would be subject to the planning process which would include consultation.

The Chair advised the following Item was for information

19. RESIDUAL VAT LIABILITY HALP

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present members with the advice received from PWC regarding any VAT liability for the 2020/2021 financial period at Council's Holiday and Leisure Parks.

Background

Caravan parks fall within the definition of hospitality for VAT purposes and for that reason are now subject to the VAT rate change on 8 July 2020 whereby transactions in this sector would be subject to 5% VAT instead of 20% VAT.

In practical terms this means that any transaction created from 8 July 2020 would incur VAT at 5%. Initially this was to be for a period up to and including 12 January 2021 but in November 2020 the Chancellor of the Exchequer extended this to 31 March 2021 and subsequently in the recent budget extended it again until 30 September 2021.

In August 2020 based upon that year's Licence Agreement, Council decided that the reduction in VAT would be passed on to the customer.

The 5% VAT rate applies to the full fee as the invoice was raised after 8 July 2020 and that was the rate applied at that time. VAT rates are applied at the date (tax point) of the invoice. Given the subsequent extensions by the Chancellor to the application of the 5% VAT rate to now 30 September 2021, the date of 12 January 2021 is no longer relevant and does not have any consequence on the transactions in this period.

This is confirmed by PWC:

I have reviewed the refund workings as prepared by the Council. These workings make clear the following:

- *The Council offered a part refund in respect of the net site fees on the basis that the sites were not open for the full season.*
- *The Council offered no refund in respect of rates for the season, on the basis that the rates would be payable, regardless as to access to the site.*
- *The Council applied the 5% rate to the full charge for the 2020/21 season and did not adopt the basic tax point rules (such that part of the charge would be liable to 20% and part of the charge would be liable to 5%). The Council passed the full benefit of the VAT rate reduction to the caravan owners.*

On the basis of the above, no further VAT adjustments would appear to be required in respect of the 2020/21 season charges.

Conclusion

It is confirmed that 5% rate was applied to the full season's fee, therefore no further refund is due to the static caravan customers.

Note

This report has no bearing upon the 2021/2022 financial period, for which, Council has decided to retain the VAT benefit.

20. GROWTH DEAL STAFF RESOURCE

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

Purpose of Report

In order to progress the Council's Growth Deal opportunity, the purpose of this report is to gain member's agreement to resource the next stage of the Growth Deal process.

Background

The growth Deal will help to drive inclusive economic growth across the Borough.

Causeway Coast and Glens is set to receive at least £72m capital funding for a Growth Deal after the NI Executive agreed to match fund the British Government's Growth Deal allocation. The Growth Deal capital fund will be used to support digital and innovation projects. The Executive investment will focus

additional funding on supporting Infrastructure, tourism, and regeneration along with employability and skills.

Additional funding is available through the pan Northern Ireland Complementary Fund (£100m) and potential private sector investment.

Current Position

Having committed to the Growth Deal, Council has now identified potential projects. Each proposed project now requires further development based upon the HM Treasury business case development framework, necessitating Government, specifically the Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government (MCHLG) and Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) collaboration.

Based upon the prescribed plan below, Council is required to move through Stage 2 by completing a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) to establish the viability of each project, in order to move to the Outline Business Case (OBC) stage.

The completion of Stage 2 results in the signing of Heads of Terms, which commits funding from the UK Government, the Northern Ireland Executive and the Council, subject to the approval of Final Business Cases (FBC) for each approved project (Stage 3).

Serial	Stage	Action
1	Stage 1 - Invitation	Bottom up process starting with Council commitment to Growth Deals (internal).
2	Stage 2 – Development of Proposals, including policy input and expertise.	Target: Council commitment to resource Growth Deal delivery
3		Identification of potential projects that would maximise regional economic development in the reserved and devolved space (internal). Working assumption that Growth Deal modelling will align closely with that of previous City Deals on a per head basis. Working assumption of £30m UKG funding to be 100% matched by NI Exec (internal). Working assumption to extend this to an upper limit of £40m for the preparation of business cases (internal). Working assumption that some of these projects may be dropped once final allocations are made known (external).
4		Policy workshops to refine and resolve outstanding issues.
5		Confirm strong local / private sector partnership and investment.
6		Target: signing of the Heads of Terms.
7		Stage 3 - Approval
8		Funding and Governance arrangements agreed.
9	Stage 4 - Delivery	Implementation, monitoring and on-going assurance.

SOC/OBC

For each of the prioritised projects Council will be required to work within the HM Treasury business case development framework.

The Project Business Case is necessary to ensure that projects deliver their intended outputs and benefits having been properly scoped, planned and cost justified from the outset.

Preparing a Project Business Case using the five case model provides decision makers and stakeholders with a proven framework for structured 'thinking' and assurance, as follows:

- The Strategic Case - Provides strategic fit and is supported by a compelling case for change.
- The Economic Case - Will maximise public value to society through the selection of the optimal combination of components, products and related activities.
- The Commercial Case - Is commercially viable and attractive to the supply side.
- The Financial Case - Is affordable and is fundable over time.
- The Management Case - Can be delivered successfully by the organisation and its partners.

A well prepared business case:

- Enables the organisation and its key stakeholders to understand, influence and shape the project's scope and direction early on in the planning process
- Assists decision makers to understand the key issues, the available evidence base and to avoid committing resources to schemes that should not proceed.
- Demonstrates to senior management, stakeholders, customers and decision makers the continuing viability of the project, and
- Provides the basis for management, monitoring and evaluation during and after implementation.

The first stage and the next stage for Council in the Growth Deal is the development of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for each project.

The SOC will:

- Make the case for change.
- Explore the preferred way forward.
- Establish business justification.

At the conclusion of the SOC, Council will have a good understanding of the robustness of the proposal and the future direction of travel, and the business case across the five dimensions of the Five Case Model will have been completed.

Requirement

Council has identified 12+ projects for consideration at the SOC Stage. Dependent upon work to date, partner input and stakeholder consultation, each SOC has an estimated completion period of up to 12 weeks.

This report initiates the resourcing requirement for the Growth Deal to allow for the initial development of both programme and project management.

Options

Based upon the nature of the work required to compete each SOC, ensuring that Council's proposed projects have the greatest chance of adhering to the Five Case Model and Growth Deal modelling, additional specialised staff resource are required.

Three options exist:

1. Procurement of external consultancy services or;
2. Recruitment for fixed term or permanent staff or;
3. An Operational Partnership Agreement with Strategic Investment Board (SIB).

Based upon the open-ended process, the procurement of external consultancy services will be cost prohibitive.

A recruitment process for a Council employee in this role is likely to be protracted, with no certainty that a suitable candidate would be found.

The preferred option, which is tried and tested, is the use of an Operational Partnership Agreement (OPA) with SIB. Following a selection process aligned to the needs of this specific role, SIB does have project managers available for our purposes.

SIB Operational Partnership Agreement

Based upon the requirement for the initial development of both programme and project management (SOC and OBC completion), through an OPA, SIB will provide a project manager experienced and expert in the strategic investment functions relevant to major investment projects.

- Advising those bodies in relation to the carrying out of such projects;
- Assisting those bodies in relation to the carrying out of such projects, including providing research, consultancy, advisory and other services and general assistance; and
- Participating, by agreement with those bodies, in the carrying out of such projects.

SIB staff deployed in support of or embedded with the Partner remain at all times employed by SIB.

Council will be able to avail of wider advice from SIB as and when required.

Recommendation

In order to commence the work required within Stage 2 of the Growth Deal Process following the HM Treasury business case development framework, Council enters into an Operational Partnership Agreement with Strategic Investment Board for the provision of an experienced and expert project manager for a 3 year period commencing at the earliest opportunity.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes

Seconded by Alderman McCorkell and

AGREED to recommend that in order to commence the work required within Stage 2 of the Growth Deal Process following the HM Treasury business case development framework, Council enters into an Operational Partnership Agreement with Strategic Investment Board for the provision of an experienced and expert project manager for a 3 year period commencing at the earliest opportunity.

***Councillor Anderson left the meeting at 10.10 pm during consideration of this Item.**

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Councillor Holmes

Seconded by Alderman Hillis

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

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

21 (i) Car Parking Garvagh Forest (Councillor Holmes)

With the great success of the bike trails in Garvagh Forest there is an ongoing serious issue with car parking. Resident complaints said that on Sunday 21st March vehicles were parked into the town to the extent that residents were having difficulty parking their own cars. We urgently need to address the car parking issue and I would like an update on measures we could take to alleviate the situation both in the short term and long term.

21 (ii) Car Parking Garvagh Forest (Councillor McQuillan)

Inadequate car parking at Garvagh Forest.

The Chair considered the above submissions collectively.

The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed that the capacity of the current car park did not meet the current demand and that discussion with Dfl had suggested that placing yellow lines on the road would take a protracted period of time. In terms of additional car parking the Director confirmed that at this time there was no opportunity to acquire space within the High School but there was a possibility that with the provision of a foot bridge and agreement with Dfl car parking could be accessed from around the corner.

Councillor Holmes confirmed that he was organising a site visit with Dfl Officers and would advise all Bann DEA elected members of arrangements.

Members voiced concerns around potential safety issues and welcomed the opportunity to further explore how best to take forward a plan to improve access to the forest which they agreed had become a popular destination.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 10.35 pm.

Chair