

May 22nd, 2026

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend a meeting of the

Mid and East Antrim Environment and Economy Committee

to be held on **Wednesday, 27th May 2026 at 6:30 pm** in **Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena and via remote access.**

Yours sincerely



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

Agenda

1 NOTICE OF MEETING

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4 PRESENTATION

4.1 Joint Presentation - Ballymena Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Ballymena Business Improvement District - Presentation circulated

Tom Wiggins, CEO, Ballymena Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Roy Smyth, Ballymena Business Improvement District (BID) Ltd, Chair

Emma McCrea, Ballymena Business Improvement District (BID) Ltd, Manager

[Presentation - Ballymena Area Chamber of Commerce & Ballymena BID.pdf](#)

Page 1

5 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION / DECISION

5.1 Environmental Performance and Carbon Footprint Report 2025-26 - Circulated

[Environmental Performance and Carbon Footprint Report 2025_26.pdf](#)

Page 10

[Appendix 1 - EMS ISO14001 Overview.pdf](#)

Page 15

[Appendix 2 - MEABC Environmental Policy 2025.pdf](#)

Page 17

[Appendix 3 - EMS Contribution Diagram.pdf](#)

Page 18

[Appendix 4 - Environment and Carbon Footprint Report 2025 26.pdf](#)

Page 19

5.2 Operations Sub Committee Minutes held on 18 March 2026 - Circulated

[Operations SubCommittee Action Notes - 18.03.26.pdf](#)

Page 45

5.3 DAERA: From Waste to Worth: NI Waste Prevention Programme Consultation Response - Circulated

From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

 *DAERA From Waste to Worth NI Waste Prevention Programme Consultation Response.pdf* *Page 51*

 *Appendix 1 DAERA Consultation MEA Draft Response.pdf* *Page 56*

5.4 Commercial Waste Collection Policy - Review - Circulated

The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

The Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997

 *Commercial Waste Collection Policy - Review.pdf* *Page 77*

 *Appendix 1 - MEA Policy Commercial Waste Collection (Draft).pdf* *Page 79*

 *Appendix 2 - MEA Commercial Waste Contract (T&Cs).pdf* *Page 85*

 *Appendix 3 - Equality Screening.pdf* *Page 87*

 *Appendix 4 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment.pdf* *Page 100*

 *Appendix 5 - Data Protection Screening.pdf* *Page 109*

 *Appendix 6 - Sustainability Screening.pdf* *Page 115*

5.5 Glenarm Regeneration Sub Committee Minutes held on 26 March 2026 - Circulated

 *Glenarm Regen Sub-Committee Meeting Notes - 26 March 2026.pdf* *Page 116*

5.6 Economic Development Activity Report - Circulated

 *Economic Development Activity Report.pdf* *Page 120*

 *Appendix 1 - Student Pitch Challenge Competition.pdf* *Page 130*

5.7 PEACEPLUS Update - Circulated

 *PEACEPLUS Update.pdf* *Page 152*

5.8 Augmenting Business Growth through Stakeholder Supports - Circulated

Appendix 1 - Augmenting Business Growth through Stakeholder Supports.pdf

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Appendix 1 - Stakeholder Support Leverage 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.pdf

Page 163

5.9 Ballymena Business Excellence Awards - Circulated

Ballymena Business Excellence Awards.pdf

Page 164

5.10 Department for Communities Town Centre Revitalisation Programme Update - Circulated

DfC Town Centre Revitalisation Programme Update - May 2026.pdf

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6 ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

7 TABLED QUESTIONS

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

8 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION / DECISION – CLOSED COMMITTEE

8.1 Business Case for 3x Compact Sweepers - Circulated

Business Case Approval for 3x compact sweepers.pdf

Not included

Appendix 1 Business Case - Compact Sweepers.pdf

Not included

8.2 Rural Business Development Programme - Circulated

Rural Business Development Programme.pdf

Not included

Appendix 1 Proposal to deliver the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme.pdf

Not included

8.3 Capital Plan - FY 2025/26 Quarter 4 Update - Circulated

Capital Plan Update Q4 FY25-26.pdf

Not included

Appendix 1 - Capital Plan 25-26 Q4.pdf

Not included

9 ITEM FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – CLOSED COMMITTEE

9.1 Economic Appraisal – Carrickfergus Harbour Project - Circulated

 *Economic Appraisal - Carrickfergus Harbour - May 2026.pdf*

Not included

 *Appendix 1 Carrickfergus Harbour Economic Appraisal.pdf*

Not included

Open Committee

10 FORWARD PLAN FOR ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY COMMITTEE - Circulated

 *Forward Plan EE 27 May 2026.pdf*

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Ballymena need's your help

Supporting Business

BALLYMENA BUSINESSES NEED YOUR HELP

WORKING TOGETHER WITH A UNITED VISION, SUPPORT AND KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT BUSINESSES NEED, NOT ONLY SURVIVE BUT THRIVE.



BID & Chamber Responsibilities

AT BALLYMENA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, WE EXIST TO SUPPORT, CONNECT AND CHAMPION THE BUSINESSES THAT DRIVE OUR LOCAL ECONOMY FORWARD. REPRESENTING ORGANISATIONS OF ALL SIZES, FROM SOLE TRADERS AND START-UPS TO ESTABLISHED SMES AND LARGER EMPLOYERS ACROSS BALLYMENA AND THE WIDER MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH. WITH A STRONG CALANDER OF EVENTS, NETWORKING, TRAINING AND LOBBYING. CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP INCREASED BY 96% IN PAST 6 YEARS AND 23 BUSINESSES JOINED SINCE JANUARY.

AT BALLYMENA BID, WE ARE A BUSINESS-LED ORGANISATION COMMITTED TO THE TOWN CENTRE AND ITS BUSINESSES WITHIN THE DESIGNATED AREA. SERVICES DELIVERED MUST BE OUSIDE OF PUBLIC BODY RESPONSIBILITIES. BID CONCENTRATES ON THREE PRIMARY AREAS, DECIDED ON BY BUSINESSES; MARKETING, PR, AND EVENTS - SAFETY AND WELCOMING - BUSINESS SUPPORT, TRAINING, AND LOBBYING. THE ESSENCE OF OUR MISSION LIES IN BUSINESSES COLLECTIVELY INVESTING IN THEIR TOWN THROUGH ACTIVATIONS, SEASONAL CAMPAIGNS, TRAINING, AND REACTIVE INITIATIVES. BID HOLDS A BALLOT EVERY FIVE YEARS AND HAS JUST EMBARKED ON ITS THIRD TERM AFTER A SUCCESSFUL VOTING PERIOD IN 2025.

TOGETHER WE:

- REPRESENT BUSINESS INTERESTS**
- PROVIDE DIRECT BUSINESS FEEDBACK**
- SUPPORT ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE**
- PROMOTE BALLYMENA POSITIVELY**

BUSINESSES INVESTING IN AND SUPPORTING BALLYMENA TOGETHER.



Challenges & Strengths



CHALLENGES

- RISING OPERATING COSTS
- REDUCED CONFIDENCE
- NEGATIVE PERCEPTION AND MESSAGING
- LOSSES FOLLOWING UNREST & NEGATIVE PR OF BALLYMENA
- CHANGE IN SHOPPING HABITS & TOWN CENTRE MARK-UP
- POOR ENGAGEMENT FROM DFI/WATER SERVICE
- WATER CAPCITY - DELAYING DEVELOPMENT

STRENGTHS

- STRONG MANUFACTURING SECTOR
- AGRI-FOOD EXCELLENCE
- INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES
- HOSPITALITY GROWTH
- ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT
- NEW INVESTMENT 2025 & 2026
- STRONG COMMUNITY IDENTITY
- STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES
- POSTIVE VISUAL IMPACT FROM SHOP FRONT SCHEMES.
- ALMOST £350,000 IN TOWN CENTRE GIFT CARD SALES



What Businesses Need

- Reduced Financial pressure
- Continued Conversation
- Continued Support for vacant unit occupancy
- Positive promotion of Ballymena
- Support for the evening economy
- Tailored consistent & reactive support from all bodies
- An understanding of business challenges
- A thriving town centre
- A clean vibrant streetscape



A large, vibrant hanging basket of purple and yellow pansies. The flowers are in full bloom, with green foliage visible. The basket is suspended from a metal railing, and the background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

Environment Matters Champion local spend



Vibrancy

5

- CLEANER STREETS
 - BETTER LIGHTING
 - MORE GREENERY
 - OPEN SPACES
 - PUBLIC WIFI
 - PUBLIC FACILITIES
-



Support Local

- COORDINATED "SUPPORT LOCAL" CAMPAIGN
(TO HELP COUNTER NEGATIVE NEWS)
- ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO SHOP AND
SPEND LOCALLY
- REMIND PEOPLE OF THE AMAZING OFFERING
- PROTECT LOCAL JOBS AND BUSINESSES
- SUPPORTS BUSINESSES
- REMINDS LOCALS OF WHAT'S ON THEIR
DOORSTEPS
- BUILD BUSINESS CONFIDENCE



Back to Basics

6

Businesses cannot thrive in an environment that feels neglected. Cleanliness has improved over the past month, yet services dipped dramatically in 2025.

THE EVERYDAY UPKEEP MATTERS PRIORITIES

- STREET CLEANING
- FASTER REPAIRS
- GRAFFITI REMOVAL
- TACKLING DOG FOULING
- IMPROVED PUBLIC TOILETS
- CONSISTENT MAINTENANCE STANDARDS



PARKING & ACCESSIBILITY

RETURN OF 5 HOURS FOR &I SUPPORTS WORKERS, SHOPPERS AND BUSINESSES.

- EASY ACCESS SUPPORTS FOOTFALL
- ENCOURAGES LONGER VISITS
- SUPPORTS LOCAL TRADE





"Those making decisions on public investment should have regular and direct engagement with the realities facing local businesses."

BID and Chamber provide real-time business insight, we encourage councillors to engage.

Some positive town facts 2026

- **Seven** new businesses have opened in Ballymena town centre so far in 2026.
- **Five** fit-outs and refurbishments are currently underway across the town centre.
- A **long-term lease** has been confirmed for the former Tesco building.
- **Redevelopment** works are taking place to create new headquarters for a business owner who already operates three businesses within the town centre.
- Premises linked to recent business closures **have now been sold.**

What can we do now?

7



IMMEDIATE ACTIONS THAT CAN HELP BUILD CONFIDENCE

- CONTINUE TO IMPROVE CLEANLINESS STANDARDS
- SUPPORT POSITIVE BALLYMENA BOROUGH MESSAGING
- INVEST IN A SUPPORT LOCAL CAMPAIGN
- CHAMPTION OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES
- SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH
- CELEBRATE SUCCESSES

LETS WORK ON THIS TOGETHER.

Long Term Goals



Long-Term Goals

- A place businesses want to invest in
- A place people want to visit and stay longer
- A place residents feel proud of
- A place that competes confidently regionally
- A place that businesses thrive.



BALLYMENA BUSINESSES ARE RESILIENT, WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER, BE REACTIVE AND PLAN AHEAD TO SUPPORT THEM.

Questions?

Tom Wiggans

CEO BALLYMENA CHAMBER



**BALLYMENA AREA CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

TOM@BALLYMENACHAMBER.CO.UK

Roy Smyth

CHAIR BALLYMENA BID



Ballymena BID LTD

BIDSMANAGER@BALLYMENABID.COM



Council/Committee:	Environment and Economy Committee
Date:	27 May 2026
Report Title:	Environmental Performance and Carbon Footprint Report 2025/26
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Catherine Hunter, Acting Climate & Sustainability Manager
Approver:	Rowan Moore, Director of Place

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report is to update Elected Members on Council's environmental performance and carbon emission output for 2025/26 and to seek approval to upload the report and the environmental objectives performance summary 2025/26 for public access on the Council website.

2. Background

- 2.1. Council achieved re-accreditation to ISO14001:2015 International Environmental Management Standard across all services in August 2024 for 3 years. This ensures that Council reduces the impact of its services on the environment and improves its environmental performance year on year, **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2. Council benchmarks its environmental performance in several ways:
 - Council's Environmental Management System (EMS) - is externally audited every year by NQA auditing body;
 - Business in the Community NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey Awards - Council achieved Gold Level in 2025;
 - Environmental Performance & Carbon Footprint Report - Council publishes this annually on our website; and
 - Senior Management - Annual Management Review of the EMS including environmental objectives/targets.
- 2.3. All documents relating to Council's environmental performance and carbon footprint are publicly available on the Council website at:
<https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/council/policies-and-documents/climate-change-sustainability/climate-sustainability-environment-reporting/>
- 2.4. Council's Environmental Policy (**Appendix 2**) and Environmental Management System meet the requirements of the standard and contribute



to Councils strategic priorities, efficiency programmes, sustainable development duty and the Programme for Government (PfG), illustrated in **Appendix 3**.

- 2.5. Council's environmental objectives and targets are reviewed quarterly by the Environment Champion Team, made up of representatives from all service areas and reviewed annually with senior management. Council plan to set 15 new environmental objectives and targets for 2026/27 on 27 May.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. Council has performed well across all its environmental objectives and targets for 2025/26, achieving green status in all 11. Highlights include:
1. **Energy** – 6 LED lighting projects, 6 solar PV projects and 6 new BESS installations delivered. 6 new EV chargepoints also delivered. Data Officer continues to collate, analyse and report on energy data and capture actual monthly reads on electricity metering to better inform decision making.
 2. **Water** – online supplier secured who are working with the capital team and providing products to trial e.g. hand-washing taps that make cold water feel warm, without any heating demand. Capital is also now specifying waterless urinals, and sensor taps as standard.
 3. **Estate (rationalization)** - Disposals have begun, and recommended improvements to the thermal envelope, heating controls added & lighting upgraded. Staff movements: into The Braid: HR (August 2025), Finance (Aug 2025), Performance (Jan 2026), Economic Development, Health and Safety, Regen and some Facilities/Assets team moved to Lamont (Sept 2025). Wellington Court refurbishment completed - Regen and Capital teams moved mid Dec 2025. Env Health and Community moved to Ardeevin (Jan 2026). IT and Legal moves into The Braid in Spring 2026.
 4. **Fleet** – 3% reduction in fleet fuel use compared to 2024/25. Telematics now installed in all fleet – understanding and identifying further efficiencies. HVO trial ongoing.
 5. **Resource Management** – Assets team completed inventory list of office furniture/equipment at Sentry Hill. Council has reused a significant number – estimated at 113 prior to a few final moves. There are still a few on-going moves at present. Next steps are to identify items not needed (to be donated), identify items to retain for potential internal use, identify items which need to be recycled/dumped and finally proceed with disposals.
 6. **Harbours & Marinas** – a new seagrass pontoon (Glenarm) was installed July. Ulster Wildlife has installed native oysters and native plants. Plans to install an underwater camera to monitor developments in 2026.



7. **Biodiversity** – Council has developed four new tree nurseries (Ecos, Jubilee Farm, Carnlough, Doury Road, Ballymena) through collection of local seed and development of raised beds for initial growing period.
 8. **Biodiversity** – Larne Town Park Nature Recovery Plan consultation issued – not significant support for 're-wilding' of park, but further options being considered.
 9. **Biodiversity** – Community Garden Network established including Glynn Community Garden, with Dunclug Community Association joining in 2026. Supply of growing beds, advice and support.
 10. **Carbon Literacy Training** – Giraffe Associates provided training to Elected Members on 16 and 22 January 2026 to help inform strategic decision making in relation to Council's climate action (mitigation and adaptation).
- 3.2. Council's Carbon Footprint Report 2025/26 reports on our use of resources and highlights environmental performance during 2025/26 across Council, (**Appendix 4**). Headlines include:
- Council reduced energy consumption by 2% compared to previous year (reduced 25% compared to 2019/20 baseline year).
 - Council reduced fuel consumption by 3% compared to previous year (reduced 5% to 2019/20 baseline year).
 - Council reduced water consumption by 9% compared to previous year (reduced by 31% compared to 2019/20 baseline year).
 - **Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 3.5% compared to the previous year (and by 21% 2019/20 baseline year) due to the introduction of energy efficiency measures, electricity being generated from more renewable sources and behavioural change of staff.**
- 3.3. With ever increasing services (e.g. new public toilets, community centres / pavilions, 3 & 4 G pitches etc) along with the leasing of additional buildings, actual carbon savings achieved are significant against the carbon emission baseline year (2019/20), which had lower demand.
- 3.4. Highlights in the report include awards received during 2025/26 for environmental management and a summary of environmental initiatives across different service areas.
- 3.5. It should be noted that Council, over a 3-year investment period, has maximised Return On Investment (ROI) through careful consideration of opportunity cost when identifying projects for investment. The opportunity to maximise ROI through selecting projects with extremely short payback periods is diminishing. The approach to date has allowed ~20% reduction



In carbon emissions to be delivered from modest CapEx, however it should be understood that in order to meet the Climate Change (NI) Act 2022 emission targets (48% by 2030, 77% by 2040, net zero by 2050), a more committed budget will be required as payback periods increase. Below details potential options:

- 3.5.1. **Purchase of 'green' energy tariff** – Council leads in joint procurement with 9 other NI Councils to procure energy. 2025/26 has seen Council capitalize on this approach, reducing 100% green electricity premium from 0.65p per kWh to 0.05p per kWh. Purchasing energy on a 'green' tariff allows use lower value emissions factors when calculating carbon output.
- 3.5.2. **Energy Efficiency** – Investment in this program of works continues, currently funded from Council's capital budget and supported, when possible, by NISEP part-funding material costs. While the rest of public estate is supported by DfE funding opportunities, Councils are the only public body excluded from this fund – Elected Member lobbying is welcomed to access this.
- 3.5.3. **Renewable Energy** – further expansion and roll out of programmes is planned from Council capital budget, but also not supported by DfE funding opportunities – Elected Member lobbying is welcomed to access this.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. *Financial implications:* Effective environmental management drives the efficient use of energy, water and fuel, resulting in measurable cost reductions. An annual budget is allocated to maintain ISO 14001 accreditation. The Invest to Save budget is also allocated annually; however, it is essential that this allocation increases year-on-year to sustain decarbonisation momentum and deliver long-term savings.
- 4.2. *Human Resources* – environmental performance and reduction in carbon footprint is currently met by Council officer resource.
- 4.3. *Assets* – all Council assets are in-scope of the EMS and carbon accounting.
- 4.4. *Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan - Planet* - Council are leading by example to reduce the impact of services on the environment and protecting it for future generations.
- 4.5. *Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact* – accreditation to ISO14001 ensures that Council reduces the environmental impact of its services and improves its environmental performance year on year.
- 4.6. *UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs):* UN SDGs all 1-17 engaged.



5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. Progression of environmental targets in 2026/27 will contribute to reducing Council's carbon footprint and support delivery of Council's Climate & Sustainability Action Plan / MEA Adaptation Plan, requirements in the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 and deliver upon our sustainability duty.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to
 - (i) Note the performance of the Council's environmental objectives and targets 2025/26 and 4% carbon footprint reduction compared to 2024-25 and 21.4% reduction from 2019/20 baseline year; and
 - (ii) Approve the upload of Council's Carbon Footprint Report 2025/26 and Council's Environmental Objectives Performance Summary 2025/26 for public access on the Council website.

7. Appendices / Links

Appendix 1 Environmental Management System ISO14001 Overview


Appendix 2 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Environmental Policy 2025

Appendix 3 Environmental Management System Contribution Diagram

Appendix 4 Mid and East Antrim Borough Carbon Footprint Report 2025/26

Environmental Management System ISO14001:2015



<p>What is the system?</p>	<p>Council is accredited to ISO 14001:2015, the international standard for environmental management. This system ensures that we identify, manage, monitor and control our environmental impact. It requires us to continual improvement of environmental performance.</p>		
<p>What are the benefits to Council?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved awareness of the staff and public of their individual environmental impact; 2. Prevention of pollution through efficient energy management, waste minimisation and efficient resource consumption; 3. Promotion of environmental improvements throughout our borough; 4. Compliance with relevant environmental legislation; 5. Continually improving environmental performance through setting and achieving realistic objectives and targets; 6. Making everyone (employees, public and interested parties) aware of Council's Environmental Policy. 			
<p>How do we measure environmental performance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system is externally audited every year by NQA Assessors; • Council achieved a Gold Award at the NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey Awards 2025; • Council publish an annual Carbon Footprint Report on its website • Annual Management Review of environmental objectives/targets. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource consumption: water/fuel/electric/gas/paper/plastic; 2. Managing emissions: boilers/vehicles/air conditioning; 3. Managing discharges: storm/sewage/consents; 4. Managing chemicals: storage/controlling spills; 5. Waste management: internal/contractors/hazardous; 6. Visual impact: use of land; 7. Review activities for environmental impact; 8. Review compliance with environmental legislation; 9. Promoting sustainable procurement; and 10. Influencing suppliers and customers. 		
<p>Your Environmental Champions</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><i>Tourism, Arts and Cultural</i> - Alison Mahwhinney, Jayne Clarke, Elaine Hill</p> <p><i>Climate and Sustainability</i> - Catherine Hunter</p> <p><i>Harbours & Marinas</i> - Ryan Hack</p> <p><i>Policy</i> - Lesley Kerr, Liza Walker</p> <p><i>PAs</i> - Shelley Whitebread</p> <p><i>Human Resources & Organisational Development</i> - Ciara McBride</p> <p><i>Performance</i> - Laura-Jane McCloy, Danielle Hollinger</p> <p><i>BRCD</i> - Hugh McNally,</p> <p><i>Capital Works</i> - Andrew McMullan,</p> <p><i>Regeneration</i> - Eamon McMullan</p> <p><i>Procurement</i> - James Sweeney</p> <p><i>Communications</i> - Aisling Maguire</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><i>Waste, Energy & Building Services</i> - Neil Patrick, Steven Bailie, Joe Jordan</p> <p><i>Assets</i> - Alison Penny, Ruairi McAllister</p> <p><i>Planning & Building Control</i> - Emma Ferguson</p> <p><i>Finance</i> - Claire Loy, Karl Wade</p> <p><i>HR</i> - Ciara McCann</p> <p><i>H&S</i> - Jessica Graham</p> <p><i>Transport</i> - Nat Woodside</p> <p><i>Community Planning and Development</i> - Lisa McKay</p> <p><i>Parks and Open Spaces (Development)</i> - Lisa Kirkwood, Lindsay Houston, Juls Hanvey</p> <p><i>Public Protection, Health & Wellbeing</i> - Catriona Muldoon, Terry Diamond, Emma McCabe</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><i>Tourism, Arts and Cultural</i> - Alison Mahwhinney, Jayne Clarke, Elaine Hill</p> <p><i>Climate and Sustainability</i> - Catherine Hunter</p> <p><i>Harbours & Marinas</i> - Ryan Hack</p> <p><i>Policy</i> - Lesley Kerr, Liza Walker</p> <p><i>PAs</i> - Shelley Whitebread</p> <p><i>Human Resources & Organisational Development</i> - Ciara McBride</p> <p><i>Performance</i> - Laura-Jane McCloy, Danielle Hollinger</p> <p><i>BRCD</i> - Hugh McNally,</p> <p><i>Capital Works</i> - Andrew McMullan,</p> <p><i>Regeneration</i> - Eamon McMullan</p> <p><i>Procurement</i> - James Sweeney</p> <p><i>Communications</i> - Aisling Maguire</p>	<p><i>Waste, Energy & Building Services</i> - Neil Patrick, Steven Bailie, Joe Jordan</p> <p><i>Assets</i> - Alison Penny, Ruairi McAllister</p> <p><i>Planning & Building Control</i> - Emma Ferguson</p> <p><i>Finance</i> - Claire Loy, Karl Wade</p> <p><i>HR</i> - Ciara McCann</p> <p><i>H&S</i> - Jessica Graham</p> <p><i>Transport</i> - Nat Woodside</p> <p><i>Community Planning and Development</i> - Lisa McKay</p> <p><i>Parks and Open Spaces (Development)</i> - Lisa Kirkwood, Lindsay Houston, Juls Hanvey</p> <p><i>Public Protection, Health & Wellbeing</i> - Catriona Muldoon, Terry Diamond, Emma McCabe</p>	<p>Council has 12 environmental objectives for 2024/25 (overleaf). These are reviewed quarterly by the Environment Champion Team. End of year progress summary shows all 12 objectives 2024/25 as green.</p> <p>What can YOU do?</p> <p>If <u>office based</u>, please consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid single-use plastics, use items that can be re-used; • Be energy conscious - close doors/windows/turn down thermostats; • Turn of monitors/computers/lights at end of the day; • Use recycling bins where possible; • Don't litter! • Avoid travelling to meetings where possible; and • Avoid using chemical cleaners where possible. <p>If <u>outdoor based</u>, please consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing fuel use where possible, optimise your route and driving efficiently; • Pollution prevention when re-fuelling/using chemicals; and • Keeping accurate records of any pollution/fire event. <p>Everyone has a role to play! Contact your personal Environmental Champion for further information, or to provide new ideas to improving Council's environmental performance.</p> 
<p><i>Tourism, Arts and Cultural</i> - Alison Mahwhinney, Jayne Clarke, Elaine Hill</p> <p><i>Climate and Sustainability</i> - Catherine Hunter</p> <p><i>Harbours & Marinas</i> - Ryan Hack</p> <p><i>Policy</i> - Lesley Kerr, Liza Walker</p> <p><i>PAs</i> - Shelley Whitebread</p> <p><i>Human Resources & Organisational Development</i> - Ciara McBride</p> <p><i>Performance</i> - Laura-Jane McCloy, Danielle Hollinger</p> <p><i>BRCD</i> - Hugh McNally,</p> <p><i>Capital Works</i> - Andrew McMullan,</p> <p><i>Regeneration</i> - Eamon McMullan</p> <p><i>Procurement</i> - James Sweeney</p> <p><i>Communications</i> - Aisling Maguire</p>	<p><i>Waste, Energy & Building Services</i> - Neil Patrick, Steven Bailie, Joe Jordan</p> <p><i>Assets</i> - Alison Penny, Ruairi McAllister</p> <p><i>Planning & Building Control</i> - Emma Ferguson</p> <p><i>Finance</i> - Claire Loy, Karl Wade</p> <p><i>HR</i> - Ciara McCann</p> <p><i>H&S</i> - Jessica Graham</p> <p><i>Transport</i> - Nat Woodside</p> <p><i>Community Planning and Development</i> - Lisa McKay</p> <p><i>Parks and Open Spaces (Development)</i> - Lisa Kirkwood, Lindsay Houston, Juls Hanvey</p> <p><i>Public Protection, Health & Wellbeing</i> - Catriona Muldoon, Terry Diamond, Emma McCabe</p>		

ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS 2025/26

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Ref	Climate Action Plan Theme	UN SDG	Sub-theme	Objective	Target	Responsible Officer
Obj1	Buildings & Energy	7, 9, 12, 13	Energy	Improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings to help deliver carbon reduction targets and reduce costs.	Target of 10 EE projects	Joe Jordan
Obj2	Buildings & Energy	6, 9, 12, 13	Energy	Maximize the use of renewable energy sources to help deliver carbon reduction targets and reduce costs.	Target of 3 solar projects 6 will be delivered by year end.	Joe Jordan
Obj3	Buildings & Energy	12, 13, 17	Water	Implement water-saving technologies into Councils Capital Works Program.	Delivered- Projects are typically designing in water saving technology as standard.	Joe Jordan
Obj4	Buildings & Energy	6, 7, 9, 12, 13	Estate Review	Maximize the efficient use of buildings and facilities.	Complete review of energy/ thermal efficiency of Council estate.	Joe Jordan
Obj5	Transport	9, 11, 12, 13	Fuel usage	To reduce fuel usage across fleet by 5% each year, over the next 3 years, compared to 2022/23.	To deliver Eco-Driver training to fleet officers as part of CPC. HVO trial.	Nat Woodside
Obj6	Resource Management	12	Reuse	To review and dispose of office- based assets from Sentry Hill and LEDCOM.	To promote the waste hierarchy- reuse office-based assets through a network of sustainable options.	Alison Penny / Catherine Hunter
Obj7	Protecting the Environment	6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	Harbours & Marinas	Improve water quality and encourage blue carbon sequestration.	By the end of 2025, have a seagrass pontoon installed in Glenarm Marina.	Ryan Hack
Obj8	Protecting the Environment	1, 12, 13, 17	Tree Nurseries	Expansion of community tree nurseries across the borough.	Development of 3 nurseries (locations tbc)	Lindsay Houston
Obj9	Protecting the Environment	13, 14, 15	Nature Recovery Plan	Support nature recovery across the borough.	Development of Nature Recovery Plan for Larne Town Park.	Lindsay Houston
Obj10	Protecting the Environment	13, 14, 15	Community Garden	Expansion of MEA Community Garden network.	Development of 1 community garden (location tbc)	Lindsay Houston
Obj11	Resource Management	11, 12, 13	Training	Climate literacy education to Elected Members and key staff.	Provision of training provided by external body.	Catherine Hunter



Mid and East Antrim Borough Council - Environmental Policy

In maintaining its responsibility to provide high quality services, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council recognises environmental management to be of equal importance to other prime management considerations. As such, we acknowledge that our activities and services impact, directly and indirectly, on the environment. In this respect, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council accepts its obligation to minimise its environmental impacts through co-ordinated environmental management.


Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is committed to:

- Preventing pollution through efficient energy management, waste minimisation and efficient resource consumption;
- Responsible plastic management;
- Promoting environmental improvements throughout our Borough;
- Complying with relevant environmental legislation, regulations and appropriate sector best practice initiatives;
- Continual environmental performance improvement through setting and achieving realistic objectives and targets;
- Communicating this policy to all employees and those who work on our behalf; and
- Making this environmental policy available to interested parties, on request.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council will implement and review this policy within the framework of a systematic environmental management system.



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive



Cllr Jackson Minford
Mayor

June 2025

Corporate Plan 2024-28 - Planet

1. Empower, educate, and work in partnership with our citizens, communities, and businesses, to progress the borough towards net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.
2. Support local communities to create an environmentally resilient and sustainable borough that is equipped to deal with emergency situations, including climate adaptation.
3. Protect our natural environment, enhance biodiversity, and retain or increase Council's current levels of carbon capture.
4. Lead by example and reduce the impact of our own operations to progress our organisation towards net zero emissions by 2040, by embedding sustainability and climate adaptation into all decision making.
5. Deliver an effective and efficient waste service that supports citizens, communities, and businesses to reduce waste and promote a more circular economy.

Community Plan 2017-2032 - Environment pillar implemented across all other pillars (encourage environmentally responsible behaviour).

Local Development Plan 2030 - supports Economic, Social and Environmental objectives.

Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2023-27 – supports delivery of 93 actions within this plan.

MEA Adaptation Plan 2023 -27 – supports delivery of actions within this plan.

Business in the Community NI Climate Action Pledge – supports delivery of projects to help decarbonise Council's Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

Meets requirements of ISO 14001:2015 - Demonstrates annual improvement in environmental performance.

External credibility - informs the Arena Network survey, environmental performance benchmark across NI organisations. MEA holds Gold status (Nov 2023).

Annual Environmental Performance and Carbon Footprint Report - Publicly accessible, good PR, demonstrates leadership, posted on website, carbon footprint, holistic view, incorporating work across all Council services.

Agile Working Framework - Digital transformation.

Local Government Act - Performance criteria around efficiency and sustainability.

Contributes to Council's **Sustainable Development Duty** - environment, economic, social.

Programme for Government - Outcome: we live and work sustainably - protecting the environment. Indicators: Increase environmental sustainability. Increase household recycling rate.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Environment & Carbon Footprint Report 2025/26



Councils are in a leading position to demonstrate carbon (tCO₂e) reductions through their activities and behaviour as an example of best practise to residents and local businesses. By calculating our own emissions and making in-house reductions, in addition to increasing awareness and supporting local businesses and residents, carbon emissions can be reduced across the Council area and therefore across the country, meeting the NI Executive's climate change targets.

1. Carbon Footprint

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere as a result of the actions and choices of an individual, organisation, event or product. These gases, mainly carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, are measured in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) to allow for comparison and tracking. Council measures its carbon footprint annually and provides a total tonnage of carbon per annum (tCO₂e).

Our carbon footprint is comprised of direct emission from heating our buildings and facilities (LPG, gas, oil) and fleet fuel which is known as 'Scope 1'. Scope 2 emissions are from the electricity we use. Everything else falls into Scope 3, which includes waste generated, wastewater treatment, procurement of products and services, upstream and downstream leasing of facilities etc.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and improving environmental performance year on year. This is demonstrated through our Climate & Sustainability Action Plan, our (BITCNI) Climate Action Pledge and through our accreditation to ISO 14001:2015, the international standard for environmental management. It is also incorporated into our Environment Policy can be viewed on the Council website [here](#).

Council adopted 2019/20 as its carbon baseline year.

Energy Use (Scope 1 & 2)

Year	Energy use (Electric gas oil)	tCO ₂ e (LGA Accounting Tool)	No. employees	tCO ₂ e per employee
2025/26	20,407,449 kWh	3,924	780	5.03
2024/25	20,790,645 kWh	4,107	766	5.36
2023/24	21,102,645 kWh	4,380	816	5.92
2022/23	22,840,333 kWh	4,457	830	5.37
2021/22	23,229,518 kWh	4,680	837	5.59
2020/21	17,509,843 kWh	3,714	878	4.23

2019/20	24,552,132 kWh	5,307	880	6.03
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Council has reduced its energy consumption by 2% compared to previous year (and by 25% compared to 2019/20 baseline year) due to energy efficiency measures and the implementation of renewable energy projects.

Transport (Scope 1)

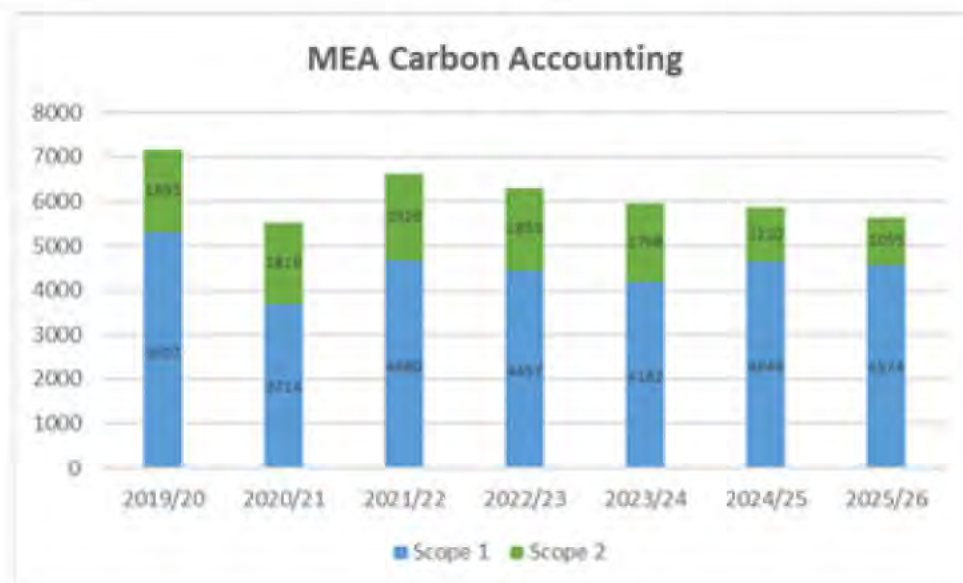
Year	Total fuel used by vehicle fleet (litres)	tCO ₂ e (LGA Accounting Tool)	No. employees	tCO ₂ e per employee
2025/26	678,500	1,705	780	2.18
2024/25	698,194	1,752	766	2.17
2023/24	698,433	1,768	816	2.17
2022/23	723,504	1,853	830	2.23
2021/22	766,639	1,926	837	2.30
2020/21	713,089	1,816	878	2.07
2019/20	714,228	1,853	880	2.11

Council's fleet fuel consumption decreased 3% from previous year (and by 5% to the baseline year). A HVO trial is currently underway. Based on current calculations (2024/25), Council can reduce annual fleet fuel emissions from 1,705 tonnes CO₂e (using diesel and limited HVO) to approximately 132.3 tonnes CO₂e by switching entirely to HVO fuel.

Carbon Footprint (Scope 1 and 2)

Year	Total tCO ₂ e (LGA Accounting Tool)	tCO ₂ e per employee
2025/26	5,722	7.3
2024/25	5,859	7.64
2023/24	5,950	7.5
2022/23	6,308	7.6
2021/22	6,606	7.9
2020/21	5,530	6.3

2019/20	7,159	8.1
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Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 3.5% compared to the previous year (and by 21% compared to the 2019/20 baseline year). This has been achieved through the introduction of energy efficiency measures, electricity being generated from more renewable sources and behavioural change of staff.

With ever increasing services (e.g. new public toilets, community centres / pavilions, 3 & 4 G pitches etc) along with the leasing of additional buildings means carbon savings achieved are significant against the carbon emission baseline year (2019/20), which had lower demand.

Waste (Scope 3, Category 5)

Year	Waste generated per employee (kg)	% Recycled	tCO2e from waste landfilled	tCO2e from waste landfilled per employee
2025/26	123	61.13%	0	0
2024/25	121.14	60.55%	0	0
2023/24	95.3	52.74%	35.3	0.4
2022/23	115.3	50.2%	48.9	0.06
2021/22	68.0	68%	19.53	0.02
2020/21	69.0	68.7%	19.32	0.02

2019/20	139.7	73.2%	33.7	0.04
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Internal recycling arisings have increased on previous year due to an increase in material shredded as a result of large office moves. Staff have achieved an internal recycling rate of 61.13%.

Water (Scope 3, Category 5)

Year	Water Consumption (m3)	No. of Employees	Water Consumption per employee (m3)
2025/26	46,347	780	59.42
2024/25	50,886	766	66.4
2023/24	49,769	816	61
2022/23	64,003	830	77.1
2021/22	49,897	837	59.6
2020/21	37,870	878	43.1
2019/20	66,764	880	75.9

Water consumption has decreased by 11% compared to the previous year (and decreased by 22% compared to 2019/20 baseline year).

Business Miles (Scope 3, Category 6)

Year	Total litres	tCO ₂ e	No. of employees	tCO ₂ e per employee
2025-26		44.86	780	
2024-25	33,147	44.37	766	0.11

Business miles have increased marginally compared to the 2024-25 baseline year.

Commuter Miles (Scope 3, Category 7)

Year	Total litres	tCO ₂ e	No. of employees	tCO ₂ e per employee
2025-26	4,109,318	798	780	1.02
2024-25	4,035,561	780	766	1.01


It should be noted that from 1 April 2024 a revision to the Agile Working Policy requires staff to work in the office 3 days per week (previously 2). Commuter miles have increased by almost 2% compared to the 2024/25 baseline year.

Downstream Leased Assets (Scope 3, Category 13)

It should be noted Council is now collating data on Downstream Leased Assets (Scope 3, category 13). These are emissions resulting from Council leasing out buildings / facilities to other businesses e.g. ECOS Sustainability Hub. 2025-26 will be the new baseline year for this category.

Year	Total kWh	tCO2	No. of employees	tCO2 per employee
2025-26	739,480	152	780	0.19

2. Key Achievements 2025/26

Environmental Education in MEA Schools	
	<p>Eco Schools Programme</p> <p>Council continues to support the programme through online learning to all 74 registered MEA schools, including Wrigley's Litter Less Campaign, Translink Travel Challenge, Single-Use Plastic Project. Council provided £10,942 to KNIB for 2024/25 academic year to support a new Big Wheelie Bin Challenge to encourage school pupils (and their families) to recycle.</p> <p>Council and Eco Schools - Alice Buchanan (Environmental Education Manager) delivered an Eco Schools Cluster meeting on the 9 September 2025 which brought together 22 school teachers and delivery partners.</p> <p>The Eco Schools team undertook 55 school visits, delivered coastal projects to 3 coastal schools, delivered Wheelie Big Challenge to 10 schools, and awarded new Green Flag awards to 60 schools.</p> <p>Awards: Eco-School of the Year - Castletower School, Eco Pupil of the Year - Esme Abram, Carnlough Integrated Primary School, Eco Teacher of the Year - Ashleigh McIlrath, Carnlough Integrated Primary School.</p> <p>All 74 schools in Mid and East Antrim are registered in the Eco-Schools programme. 2024/25 saw 29 (39%) schools with Green Flag (up by 3% from previous year). 8,307 pupils reached in schools with active green flags.</p> <p>We continue to keep all MEA schools up to date with funding opportunities including the DAERA Climate Challenge Fund, the Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme and the DAERA Marine Litter Capital Grant. We also keep schools up to date with training opportunities including DAERA/KNIB Climate Change Programme and Carbon Literacy Programme.</p>
Activate Your Curiosity 2026	



2026 was the fourth year 'Activate Your Curiosity', part of the MEA Summer Science School. It has evolved from a single one-off event for Year 10 to a full programme of activities and events throughout the year to ensure that the wider school community can benefit. These activities include inspirational and engaging competitions, behind-the-scene company visits, in-school workshops, Global Entrepreneurship Week school events, NI Apprenticeship Week Events.

Interest from leaders in STEAM is very high and we have established in-kind support from a range of organisations to facilitate the broad spectrum of interactive, engaging and thought-provoking workshops and TED style presentations, co-designed with teachers and educators to blend with the curriculum, skills needs and to appeal to young people. All workshop facilitation time for the annual flagship event is provided at no cost and all speakers give their time in kind. Partners who have collaborated with the initiative include QUB, Ulster University, Royal Academy of Engineering, Artemis Technologies, NI Space Office, Armagh Observatory and Planetarium, Nerve Centre, NI Screen, Cinemagic and The Big Bridge delivered by HMKNI.

Shared Goals:

- Provision of inspirational careers education and engagement.
- Embedding real life work practices and research into the curriculum.
- Developing a strong partnership between companies, schools, academia and public sector.

Waste Management and Sustainability Communication Campaigns




We delivered a series of waste management / sustainability comms campaigns annually, in partnership with [WRAP](#). In terms of waste management specifically, we promoted the new DAERA/WRAP designed [My Recycling NI](#) website, which clearly demonstrates end destinations for waste/recycling streams - this provides information and gives confidence to our residents as to the actual end destination of their recycling efforts. We continue to be a member of the Northern Ireland Resources Network (NIRN) who promote sustainable reuse and repair as a practical and effective way of tackling Northern Ireland's waste generation and develop opportunities in the Circular Economy.



We continue to engage with our residents through social media/press releases/website info/Bin-ovation app delivering waste reduction and recycling comms campaigns to help to reach EU recycling targets (50% by 2020 [achieved], 55% by 2025 (not achieved, currently 50.67%, 60% by 2030).

Recycle Week 2025

Between 22 - 28 September 2025 we delivered Recycle Week which focussed on 'Rescue Me!' recyclates with human personalities. We continued our highly successful 'Rescue Me! Recycle' campaign, adding new characters to highlight commonly mis-captured items that can be recycled. We supported this campaign through social

	<p>media (FB, Twitter, Instagram), press release, Council website update, Bin-ovation app update, as well as 'sharing' online posts issued by WRAP.</p>
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Food Waste Action Week 2026

Make your food go fuuuurtherr



In March 2026 we delivered a WRAP supported 'Food Waste Action Week' comms campaign aimed at encouraging residents to reduce the amount of excess food shopping, to meal plan, to store food properly and to use up leftovers more effectively. Convened by Love Food Hate Waste, national and local governments, community groups, NGOs and brands around the world for action on food waste. The week inspires simple, practical action that helps food go further - saving money, time and stress, while protecting the planet. We supported this campaign through social media (FB, Twitter, Instagram), press release, Council website update, Bin-ovation app update, as well as 'sharing' online posts issued by WRAP.





Community Engagement




	<p>Climate & Sustainability Workshops / Talks</p> <p>Five climate & sustainability workshop sessions delivered over 2025/26 to five community groups. Community engagement commenced October 2025 to support the implementation of the Christmas Toy Container campaign. We have delivered environmental education sessions to 10 local community groups, businesses and social enterprises up to 31 March 2026.</p>
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	<p>Live Here Love Here Small Grants</p> <p>In 2025 Council awarded a total value of £11,012.17 through this scheme. 15 projects met the funding criteria and nine were awarded funding by Council. Glenravel project has been funded by the NI Housing Executive (NIHE). These projects are delivered in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful - projects are to support communities to improve their local area and promote civic pride among residents.</p>
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Circular Economy Projects

	<p>Christmas Toy Scheme 2025</p>
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	<p>Council officers realised the huge potential for diverting pre-loved and unwanted toys from landfill, especially on the run up to Christmas, when families are planning to purchase new toys. Partners: local charities, local community centres, MEA waste team, comms team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019 (pilot year): 1 tonne of toys diverted • 2020: 2 tonnes of toys diverted • 2021: 2.3 tonnes of toys diverted • 2022: 5.2 tonnes of toys diverted • 2023: 3.2 tonnes of toys diverted (families selling on marketplaces instead) • 2024: 3.1 tonnes of toys diverted • 2025: 4.1 tonnes of toys diverted
	<p>MEA School Uniform Scheme 2025</p> <p>Mid and East Antrim's Community Planning Partnership and Waste Management team teamed up with Mid and East Antrim Community Advice Services (MEACAS) and Volunteer Now to help provide families with good quality, clean and pre-worn school uniforms. MEA Poverty Action Group (PAG) are also involved. This project has been running since 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021 - 1,156 uniform items gifted to 700 individuals, savings c. £24,000 • 2022 - 2,568 uniform items gifted 929 individuals, saving c. £40,000 • 2023 - 5,369 uniform items gifted to 1,676 individuals, saving c. £96,000 • 2024 - 2,977 uniform items gifted to families, saving c. £50,000 <p>In 2025 we teamed up with Mid and East Antrim Affordable Food Collective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 - 1,336 uniform item gifted, cost savings -£4,0813 based on current school uniform prices.
	<p>Habitat for Humanity (DIY/furniture items from HRCs)</p> <p>DIY materials and furniture items collected by Habitat for Humanity from our 5 HRCs are taken to their ReStore Shop - the low-cost, do-it-yourself stores sell donated new and used building supplies and home improvement materials at 50 percent to 75 percent of the normal retail price. As well as raising funds for our work, the stores enable local people to improve their homes for less cost, provides opportunities for volunteers from different abilities and backgrounds, and diverts tons of reusable waste from landfill.</p>
	<p>Community RePaint 2025/26</p> <p>RePaint Community, in partnership with Resource Futures invites resident to drop off half to ¾ full paint tins to our 3 main HRCs. This is then gifted to local community and school projects. This reduces landfill and supports local projects. 2025-26:</p> <p>Total paint received to sites (in litres) = 2,932 litres Total paint given out = 1,831</p>

	<p>Total groups helped = 1 Total individuals helped = 1,498</p>
	<p>Reading Glasses Scheme 2025/26</p> <p>We have teamed up with Antrim Coast Lions Club to launch a spectacle recycling scheme to help people in developing countries.</p> <p>This scheme has designated drop off points at our five Household Recycling Centres, as well as at main Council buildings. Residents can bring their old spectacles - along with the case if available - to any of the centres across the borough and put them in dedicated used spectacle containers.</p> <p>Spectacles left for recycling will then be collected by the members of the Antrim Coast Lions Club and transported to Medico Lions Clubs de France in Le Havre for sorting and grading before shipping to third world countries.</p> <p>2025-26: 720kg (or 0.72 tonnes) of glasses provided to Antrim Coast Lions Club.</p>
	<p>Sustainable Food Places - Community Fridges</p> <p>A total of 5 community fridges are now in operation organised and facilitated by volunteers in partnership with the Council. All fridges have set up important relationships with local businesses which supply the bulk of the food available for those who need it. In addition, where available, locally grown fruit and vegetables are donated from local home growers or allotment holders.</p>
	<p>Social Supermarkets</p> <p>Serving the entire Borough and helping those most in need during the current cost of living crisis. Based at the newly established MEA Community Hub in Ballymena, the 'Mid and East Antrim Affordable Food Club' was established in October 2022 and continues to operate into 2025/26, thanks to funding from the Department for Communities, distributed through Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. The Affordable Food Club offers a membership scheme, which gives members access to food at a reduced cost alongside a wraparound service to enable them to address any challenges that contribute to their food insecurity. This is the first 'Affordable Food Club' in Northern Ireland. Since October, membership has been growing steadily with over 200 members. Membership covers the entire Mid and East Antrim Borough. For those members across the Borough that cannot shop in person, they can access the Club online and avail of the service through the project's click & collect service. This is assisting the Club in growing their membership across every part of MEA.</p>

3. Recycling Performance

Council's current recycling rate is 50.73% (2024/25) with 2025-26 performance estimated to be similar (tbc end May 2026). We've met the 2020 EU target (50%) but haven't met the 55% by 2025.

The new Climate Change (NI) Act 2022 includes a more ambitious target of 70% for all municipal waste. There is proposed expansion into municipal waste collections from businesses etc in borough. It is also anticipated that with the roll out of waste harmonisation across the borough, recycling performance will increase with greater participation and set-out rate.

Dry recycling collection service to 60k households - processor [Bryson Recycling](#) - [link](#) to end destinations.



- 2024/25: 12,070 tonnes recycled from MEA
- 2025/26: (tbc end May) recycled from MEA



Organic recycling collection service to 60k households - processor [Natural World Products](#) - converted into [compost](#) and sold on market, and also provided back to Council for use in parks and open spaces, as well as provision to local community groups and schools for environmental improvement projects. NWP also support the annual National Compost Awareness Week which Council promotes.

- 2024/25: 21,500 tonnes recycled from MEA
- 2025/26: (tbc end May) recycled from MEA

Household Recycling Centres (x5) and Bring Centres (32) - collect a range of [HRC materials](#) and [Bring Bank materials](#). Materials transferred to local processors (and onto re-processors, in some instances). Processors are tendered each year to establish one-year contracts.

There are other projects ongoing which also support the circular economy, e.g. Belfast Regional City Deal (BRCD) and 'Levelling Up' projects which will embed sustainable practices in their design, construction and operation. Specifically look at waste management in these developments, sourcing local products, re-using and recycling materials, where possible.

Confidential Shredding Contract



April 2025 saw the continuation of a new Council-wide confidential shredding contract with ShredBank. This not only ensures proper document disposal, it promotes recycling of this material, with carbon savings provided. This contract has been extended into 2026/27.

4. Litter and Fly-tipping

Council participate in the bi-annual Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Survey each year. For Jan - Mar 2026 - Council scored 66%, which is on par with the NI average (66%) over this period.

The BIG Spring Clean 2026



and April 2025 and 2026.

Council continues to support all litter picking volunteer groups across the borough, with a lot of focus on the Eco Rangers in Larne and Carrickfergus, County Antrim Countryside Custodians (Ballymena area) who continue to tackle polluting litter, enhancing our borough. We also supported the KNIB 'Big Spring Clean' throughout March

Fly-tipping and Littering Enforcement

In terms of resident complaint reporting re: fly-tipping and littering, we've seen a steady decrease in levels (2025-26 = Reports of fly tipping: 242 (down from 294 [2024/25]), Complaint substantiated on investigation: 57 (down from 143 [2024/25]), Reports of Litter: 111 (up from 48 [2024/25]), Complaint substantiated on investigation: 16 (down from 18 [2024/25])).



Keep Britain Tidy - Chewing Gum Task Force 2025






In 2025 Council secured £22,190 funding from the Chewing Gum Task Force Grant to purchase new equipment (Eco-Gum machine and accessories) to tackle gum staining across the borough. The funding also provided anti-gum staining signage to promote positive behavioural change. This has been installed at 'hot-spot' location across the borough e.g. outside shops, schools, shopping centres etc.

5. Environmental Performance

	<p>Business in the Community NI - Environmental Benchmarking Survey 2025</p> <p>Council achieved Gold Level at the 2025 Business in the Community NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey. Council is entering the Awards again in June 2026 with the aim to obtain 'Platinum' level, based on the reduced carbon emissions and wide range of environmental projects delivered this last year.</p> <p>This benchmarking exercise helps businesses to examine, review, compare and improve their environmental performance, and champions organisations who are demonstrating action for real change.</p>
	<p>Business in the Community NI - Biodiversity Charter 2026</p> <p>In January 2026, Council applied to complete the Business in the Community NI Biodiversity Charter. The Charter is based around a staged approach and is applicable to all organisations from micro-businesses to large facilities owned by multi-national companies. To successfully determine an organisation's level of achievement within the Charter, participants will need to demonstrate how they meet each level - Foundation, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. Council is aiming for Foundation Level in 2026. The aims of the Biodiversity Charter are to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a framework for organisations of all sizes to address their impact on biodiversity, not only in terms of land-holding management but also in relation to their activities, products and services. • Provide a mechanism for third-party recognition of organisations' biodiversity management. • Give employees the capacity to undertake biodiversity-related actions at home, and in their communities outside work. • Enable employees to gain the health and wellbeing benefits associated with green space/biodiversity activities. • Foster links between environmental organisations, business and the community.
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  	<p>ISO14001 International Standard - Environmental Management System</p> <p>Council continue to be accredited to ISO 14001:2015 International which includes the ongoing management of an Environmental Management System (EMS) across all services, with 8 new sites being audited in August 2025.</p> <p>An Environmental Management System (EMS) is a structured framework that helps organizations manage their environmental impacts, comply with regulations, and improve operational efficiency through a "Plan-Do-Check-Act" cycle. It acts as a management tool to identify, control, and reduce risks related to energy, waste, and emissions.</p> <p>We were reaccredited until 2027. The next Surveillance Audit is scheduled for September 2026.</p>
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Within the ISO14001 framework we delivered the following objectives/targets over 2025/26:

Obj 1: Energy

Improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings to help deliver carbon reduction targets and reduce costs.

Target: Target of 5 EE projects will be delivered by year end.

- Larne LC Pool area - completed.
- Larne LC hallways, dance studios & administration areas - completed.
- Carrick LC Pool area - completed.
- Carrick Civic centre administration areas - completed.
- STD building - double glazing - completed.
- Showgrounds 1st & 2nd floors - completed.
- The Braid - strip lighting / maintenance replacements - ongoing.

6 projects fully completed, The Braid completing 2026/27.



Obj 2: Energy

Maximize the use of renewable energy sources to help deliver carbon reduction targets and reduce costs.

Target: Target of 5 solar projects will be delivered by year end.

6 new solar PV systems completed:

- Tully Waste Depot - completed.
- Peoples Park - completed.
- ECOS - 1st array operational, 2nd array design and approvals completed. Install delayed due to additional generation equipment being specified as part of the Hydrogen Demonstrator Project (postponed to 26/27).
- Extended array (increased capacity) @ Portglenone Marina- completed.
- Extended array (increased capacity) @ Waveney HRC - completed.
- Waveney CC solar PV x3 also delivered.



2026/27 Pipeline:

- 2 planned arrays moved to next year were ECOS & Carnfunnock.
- 2 additional through a capital project.

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Obj 2: Energy

Maximize the use of renewable energy sources to help deliver carbon reduction targets and reduce costs.

Target: Target of 5 solar projects will be delivered by year end.

4-6 new BESS:

- **Ballymacvea Landfill** (see previous slide).
- **Tully Waste Depot** - 22kWh BESS Planned install Q4 25/26.
- **Peoples Park** - 20kWh BESS Planned install Q4 25/26.
- **ECOS Sustainability Hub** (see previous slide).
- **Waveney Community Centre** - 20kWh BESS Planned install Q4 25/26.
- **Carnfunnock Country Park** - postponed due to budget. Invest to Save budget donated £60k to capital team to install solar generation, BESS postponed to Q1 26/27.
- **Springwell Multi-story car park, Sullatober WTC, Sullatober Depot, Portglenone Marina** battery arrays all upgraded.



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Obj 2: Energy

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (excluding public charging infrastructure projects):



Sullatober Depot: 2 charge points installed, supplied from solar PV & BESS (grid backup) – additional module arrays.
Now delivered.



Waveney WTS: 2 charge points, planned install Q4, to be supplied from solar PV & BESS (grid backup) – additional modular arrays.
Will be delivered before year end.



Tully WTS: 2 charge points, planned install Q4, to be supplied from solar PV & BESS (grid backup).
Will be delivered before year end.



Peoples Park: 1 charge point, planned install Q4, to be supplied from solar PV & BESS (grid backup).
Cancelled due to site limitations. Additional now moved to Tully.



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Obj 3: Water

Implement water-saving technologies into Councils Capital Works Programme.

Target: Projects are typically designing in water saving technology as standard.



Energy Manager secured a supplier online that is working with capital and giving them products to trial e.g. hand-washing taps that make cold water feel warm, without any heating demand. Capital are also now specifying waterless urinals, and sensor taps as standard, but the wider rollout is delayed as project delivery is postponed.

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Obj 4: Estate Review

Maximize the efficient use of buildings and facilities.

Target: Complete review of energy /thermal efficiency of Council estate.

The review is ongoing with a range of attributes being considered for each building including incl. age, insulation, lighting, primary heating systems, any secondary heat sources including renewable energy sources and windows).

Disposals have begun, and recommended improvements to the thermal envelope, heating controls added & lighting upgraded.

Staff movements:

- HR moving to The Braid (July/Aug 2025)
- Finance moving to The Braid (July/Aug 2025)
- Economic Development, Health and Safety, Regen and some Facilities/ Assets team to Lamont (Sept 2025) - in total about 45 staff on hybrid basis.
- Wellington Court refurbishment is completed and the Regen and capital teams have moved in from mid Dec.
- Ongoing are now internal moves:

Team	From	To	Date (Provisionally set)
Performance team	Arlewell	The Braid	21st January
Environment	Arlewell	The Braid	21st January
Community	Arlewell	Arlewell	End of Jan
IT	Arlewell	The Braid	10C spring 2025
Legal	Arlewell	The Braid	10C spring 2025



Obj 5: Transport

To reduce fuel usage across fleet by 5% each year, over the next 3 years, compared to 2022/23.

Target: To deliver Eco-Driver training to fleet officers as part of CPC. HVO trial.



HVO Trial
We're continuing with the HVO trial and expect to gather comparative emissions data in the new year, especially against the latest vehicles we purchased in August/September.

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Training
January to date: 30 drivers trained CPC Ballymena and Carrick have 50% of HGV staff trained. Aim to get the remaining staff trained within before the year end for these 2 depots. Modules include elements focused on environmental protection



Telematics Project:
Our recent acquisition of telematics is another exciting development. The data now available allows us to monitor excessive idling and speeding, helping us understand and reduce their environmental impact.



Fuel Usage
Apr-Dec 2024: 534,789.3 litres
Apr-Dec 2025: 512,924.2 litres
4.1% reduction, on target.



Obj 6: Resource Management

To review and dispose of office-based assets from Sentry Hill and LEDCOM.

Target: To promote the waste hierarchy - reuse office-based assets through a network of sustainable options.

Assets team completed inventory list of office furniture/equipment.



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We have reused a significant number - estimated at 113 prior to a few final moves. There are still a few on-going moves at present.

- Next steps:**
1. Identify items not needed (to be donated)
 2. Identify items to retain for potential internal use.
 3. Identify items which need to be recycled/dumped.
 4. Proceed with disposals.



Obj 7: Protecting the Environment

Improve water quality and encourage blue carbon sequestration.

Target: By the end of 2025, have a seagrass pontoon installed in Glenarm Marina

- This pontoon was installed at Glenarm on 02.07.2025.
- Ulster Wildlife (UW) have started to populate the cages with oysters.
- UW will be adding several different plants and sea animals to see which coexist the best.
- Signage being installed late December 2025.
- Q4 update: signage being installed March 2026.



Obj 8: Protecting the Environment

Expansion of community tree nurseries across the borough.

Target: Development of 3 nurseries

Locations are:



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- Ecos - 'Friends of Ecos' - Seed collecting lots of lovely hazel. Seed processing to be completed and beds still to be built.
- Jubilee Farm outside Larne - Really successful seed collection on the farm itself. Processing seeds and bed filling took place on 30th Sept.
- Carnlough Community Association - beds put in and filled on 3rd October, conscious of ASB before seed planting.
- Groundbreakers CIC - Doury Road, Ballymena - beds built, seed collecting in Shanes Castle. Lots of lovely acorns.

This project is both the physical development of the nursery and also workshops to ensure investment from local communities.



Obj 9: Protecting the Environment

Support nature recovery across the borough.

Target: Development of Nature Recovery Plan for Larne Town Park



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Larne Town Park Nature Recovery Plan is completed and public consultation completed. Unfortunately, only 15% were in favour of the current rewilding efforts, with an additional 18% in favour of the LRP but not for the grass to be left uncut. More work needed to bring people on board.

BITCNI - Ulster Wildlife Survey - 15 April 2026 - baseline.



Obj 10: Protecting the Environment

Expansion of MEA Community Garden network.

Target: Development of 1 community garden



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Currently supporting Glynn Community Association with their community garden. We supplied and built beds with the community group, running a community event to get the beds planted and get them up and running. The group are aiming to apply for funding, and we will support this as much as possible.

Dunlug Community Association have also expressed an interest in developing a Community Garden.

We now have a new Sustainable Development Officer in post in (April 2026) to take forward lots of fab initiatives.



Obj 11: Resource Management

Climate literacy education to Elected Members and key staff.

Target: Provision of training provided by external body.

Carbon Literacy now organised for Elected Members in January 2026.
Q4 update: Training has now been delivered (15 & 22 January).

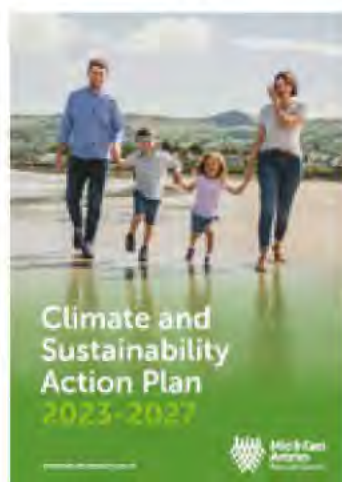


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Looking forward to 2026/27:

Establishing new ISO14001 2024/25 environmental objectives/targets: energy efficiency, renewable technologies (energy), water, estate review, fleet, office equipment disposal (circular economy), biodiversity (seagrass pontoon), community tree nurseries, nature recovery, community gardens.

6. Climate Action



Climate & Sustainability Action Plan 2023-27

Council continues to deliver the 93 actions in our Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2023-27 which commits Council to achieve net zero by 2040 and support the borough to net zero by 2050. It includes six key themes: Good Governance and Community Leadership, Economy, Transport, Resource Management, Protecting the Environment and Buildings & Energy.

The Plan will deliver key actions to help deliver climate mitigation (including carbon reduction targets) and climate resilience, ensuring both Council services and communities are prepared for the impacts of climate change.

Climate Mitigation Initiatives:

- **Scope 1: Energy (heating)** - Energy Efficiency (EE) and Renewable Energy (RE) projects over 2025-26 (see Environmental Performance EMS slides above).
- **Scope 1: Fleet fuel** - reduction through Eco Driver training, telematics in vehicles, more efficient fleet replacement, HVO trial, EV infrastructure roll out (see Environmental Performance EMS slides above).

Scope 1 fleet fuel decarbonisation is supported through our MEA Fleet Strategy and Michelin sustainable tyre contract:



MEA Fleet Strategy 2023-27

Council has continued to deliver actions within our Fleet Strategy which focus on reducing fleet emissions, drive efficiencies to ensure a cost and effective fleet and continue to ensure a safe and complaint fleet. Council officers undertook an HVO trial with Kennedy Fuels over 2024, 2025 and into 2026. We have clearly demonstrated CO2 emission reductions by trialling this low-carbon alternate fuel. Final decisions on transition to this fuel type are still in discussion.

Council continues to replace older fleet with newer Euro6 engines which perform more efficiently and emit lower emissions.

www.michelin.com/uk



Michelin Sustainable Tyre Contract

Council has adopted a 'cradle to grave' (sustainable) tyre management system with Michelin. Headline figures for 2025 include savings of 3.4 tonnes of CO2e in reduction of waste, 4.2 tonnes of CO2e reduction in material use, 8.1 tonnes CO2e reduction, 4,760 litres fuel savings. Tyres are re-grooved and re-used and eventually recycled in road making materials. Council is using less tyres and the longevity reduces particulate air pollution.

- **Scope 2: Electricity** - Energy Efficiency (EE) and Renewable Energy (RE) projects over 2025-26 (see Environmental Performance EMS slides above).
- **Scope 3 - Category 6 Employee Business Miles and 7 Employee Commuter Miles** - encouragement of active and sustainable travel, new Cycle2Work Scheme.

Training - We continue to promote the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Carbon Literacy Training to local community groups, schools, Elected Members and Council staff throughout 2025/26. Giraffe Associates provided Carbon Literacy Training to Elected Members on the 16 and 22 January 2026.

Decarbonisation in the wider business sector is supported through cleantech and green hydrogen developments with Council's Economic Development.

The HyTech NI Project



Hydrogen Fuel **Mobility** Testbed
(via a shared H₂ Refueling Station)



Hydrogen **Blending** Testbed
(in closed loop section of local gas network at St Patrick's)



Hydrogen **Skills** Testbed
(Future CleanTech sector & Hydrogen economy skills training at the Ecos Demonstration Hub, Ballymena)

Represents a collaboration between Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University and industry underpinned by £15million funding leverage from the NI

Complementary Fund. The Outline Business Case for the project was submitted to Invest NI in February 2025 and was independently appraised throughout Summer/Autumn 2025.

The Universities are leading on the creation of a hydrogen technology accelerator while Council and local industry partners are developing three hydrogen demonstrators in Ballymena. These demonstrators will serve as pathway finder projects in the transition to net zero and position the Borough as a hub for manufacturing and supports in the future hydrogen and cleantech economies.

The i4C Innovation and CleanTech Centre

Funded under the Belfast Region City Deal, this project has now received a contract for funding for c£20.5m. The i4C Centre will include Grade A office space, co-working office space, workspace/labs for short term SME rental and an innovation lab, providing hands on support for entrepreneurs and SMEs. Designs for the building are progressing, and Council's Capital Projects team are working towards a BREEAM 'excellent' standard for the c5,200sq m building. The i4C Centre will be a driver for an enhanced enterprise and innovation support ecosystem in the Mid and East Antrim Borough and will be a hub for CleanTech sector supports for Northern Ireland, aligned to the global transition to net zero. The project will also be a flagship building for the St Patrick's Barracks regeneration site located in the heart of Ballymena.

The Hydrogen Training Academy (HTA)

Continued to be operational in 2024/25 with accredited training delivery being led by Northern Regional College. Council continues to work in partnership with NRC and other HTA partners on delivery of the OCN accredited Level 3 in Hydrogen Technologies and Applications, providing the H2 Gas Safe Lab and equipment for the H2 Fuel Cell Skills Lab to support the training delivery. There have now been more than 350 trainees accredited to date. A Level 5 in Green Technologies has also been developed by NRC, with 20+ trainees completing the course in 2025/26.

The Mid and East Antrim Net Zero 'MEANZ' Business Project

A Fast Followers project funded as part of the Innovate UK Net Zero Living Programme, was delivered between July 2023 and June 2025. This 'MEANZ Business' project supported both Council and businesses to achieve a higher level of net zero readiness and increased capacity, helping to realise organisational sustainability targets faster and support the national transition towards net zero.

The project included delivery of a tailored programme of information and best practice sharing, including a best practice visit to Birmingham for local SMEs, an eight part Net Zero Insights webinar series with subject experts and company case studies with more than 180 attendees to date, and a six part Net Zero Insights video series, highlighting the work which local companies are doing on their journey to net zero.

The project has also supported a range of Council and industry led decarbonisation projects working across Council Departments and in partnership with local industry to advance net zero and sustainability initiatives, many of which are now being embedded as standard practice.



MEA Adaptation Plan 2023-27

Council also continues to deliver on 36 indicators in this Plan. The plan was developed using the Climate NI 'NI Adapts' Planning toolkit which aims to support organisations to undertake a methodological approach to 'adaptation' with the overall aim of enabling NI to build resilience to the potential negative impacts of climate change, whilst allowing us to take advantage of any possible opportunities.

Climate Adaptation Initiatives:

ArcPro Climate Project



Council's Climate and Sustainability team along with the GIS team have developed a new digital transformational project titled 'ArcPro Climate Project'. This project identifies climate-related risks in relation to extreme weather (flooding, snow/ice, extreme heat, sea-level rise and storms) and the potential impacts it has on Council's assets and service delivery.

We first focused on flooding. This involved overlaying DfI strategic floodmaps shapefile layers (current and climate change-projected) over Council assets shapefile layer and running modelling to identify assets at highest risk from flooding.

Each asset was assessed in terms of their value in relation to critical Council services (e.g. HR, Finance), revenue income, community usage, biodiversity value, carbon sequestration potential etc.

Utilities including NI Water (WWtW infrastructure), NIE (Primary Stations), NI Rail network etc were also included in the analysis to understand the current level of risk.

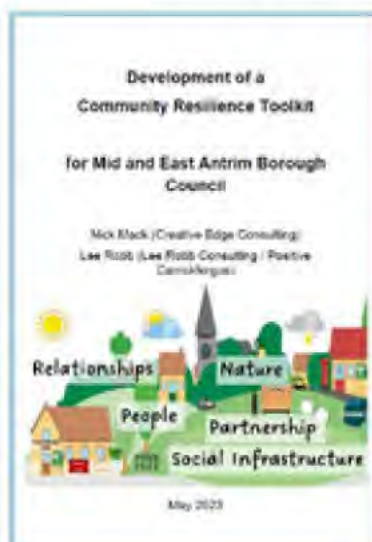
A risk register was developed identifying inherent risk, identifying current mitigation measures and concluding with residual risk.

The project has resulted in the development of Severe Weather Plans for the sites and is now embedded in Business Continuity Planning for each service.

In addition to focussing on Council-owned assets, the project was expanded to assess neighbouring properties in terms of climate risk. A 50m buffer was applied; residential address, businesses, churches, schools etc have been identified within the climate projection scenarios. This information can be used to contact these addresses in the case of extreme weather-related flooding events.

This project was presented as 'best practice' example to the DfI Regional Community Resilience Group (RCRG) in early 2025. It has led to a cultural transformation with Council in relation to staff and resource allocation. It is a tangible tool to understand and quantify climate risk / impact and inform strategic climate-related decision making.

Community Resilience Toolkit



The MEA Community Resilience Toolkit was developed by Creative Edge Consulting, Positive Carrickfergus and Council on the following basis:

The concept of resilient communities has its roots in work to assist communities to plan for and better cope with major incidents. In particular, extreme weather events such as flooding and heavy falls of snow.

We recommend that regional bodies take this into account in thinking about how best to respond to large scale challenges going forward. Strong local communities can be a valuable asset in protecting wellbeing and safety for all.

We sought out innovators piloting initiatives with potential for strengthening resilience; to learn more about these and the insights about community resilience that arose. We benefitted from reflection and discussion with The Council Project Steering Group. We organised a co-design workshop including a mix of

community and Council individuals to explore and input to our early draft of the toolkit. The final version is available.

MEA Tree & Woodland Strategy



This strategy has been funded by The Emergency Tree Fund (ETF), a Woodland Trust led funding opportunity which supports local authorities to manage the tree cover in their borough, through planting, maintenance, community engagement, plans and strategies. The Parks Development Team secured funding over a 2-year period to deliver increase woodland cover and community engagement in relation to canopy cover across the borough.

The development and implementation of this Tree and Woodland Strategy will ensure a lasting legacy from this funding.

Work carried out through Council's 'Climate Canopy Project' and following recent storms has demonstrated the need for a coordinated response to Trees and Woodlands across the borough to ensure that not only is the tree canopy for the borough increased but also that the health of the current tree and woodland stock is maintained on an ongoing basis.

A draft Tree and Woodland Strategy was developed following a thorough consultation process. To

The Tree and Woodland Strategy will ensure a borough-wide approach to tree and woodland management to include tree planting and appropriate maintenance of woodland within Councils remit.

The Strategy was developed in consultation with key officers across a number of Council departments including parks development and operations, planning, tourism, Health and Safety, GIS, Economic Development and Climate & Sustainability.

The strategy also aims to develop working relationships with relevant public and private bodies to ensure woodland cover throughout the borough is well maintained and increased where possible and appropriate.

7. Policy and Governance

Over 2025/26 Council has responded to multiple consultations requests from Defra, DAERA, DfE etc including:

- DESNZ UK ETS Carbon Leakage [March 2025]
- DfC Fuel Poverty [March 2025]
- Defra Reform of Landfill Tax in England and Northern Ireland [July 2025]
- North Channel Wind consultation [July 2025]
- DAERA NICCAP3 [4 August 2025]
- DAERA Fisheries and Water Environment Bill [Sept 2025]
- DAERA Plastic Pollution Plan [24 Sept 2025]
- DAERA NI Climate Action Plan [October 2025]
- DAERA Draft Nature Recovery Strategy [Feb 2026]
- DAERA NI Waste Management Strategy [March 2026]
- DAERA Waste Prevention Programme [July 2026]

8. Sustainability

Capital Works in Council are delivering several capital projects over the next few years which are considering sustainable development practices at both the design stage and operational stage.

New Council Leisure Centre - St. Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena - targeting 'Excellent' BREEAM



The redevelopment of St Patricks is a significant regeneration plan led by the Department for Communities (DfC) and being delivered by a number of key stakeholders including Council. This regeneration project includes new social housing, new North Regional College, new cleantech centre as well as new facilities and public realm for Council.

The ambition for the new leisure, health and wellbeing facility is to provide a modern state of the art centre in Ballymena for all members of our community to come and enjoy. Council is targeting BREEAM 'Excellent' in this design.

The proposed development seeks to improve "community connections" by creating a new civic space for leisure and recreational activities whilst also improving connectivity in the area.

The state-of-the-art i4C Centre will provide a physical base offering a range of accommodation types and programmes to support businesses and entrepreneurs with innovation and commercialisation.

This level of practical support will be vital in helping businesses launch ideas or improve their existing product and service offering.

The i4C Centre will focus on the development and adoption of clean technology (CleanTech) as part of the transition to net carbon zero and the creation of solutions in response to the challenges of climate change.

Carnfunnock Country Park, Larne - targeting Passive Haus Standard



The extensive works underway marks the beginning of a new chapter for one of the Borough's most cherished outdoor destinations.

The redevelopment is being delivered through funding from the UK Government, with £6.1m funding secured to revitalise the 191-acre site along the stunning Causeway Coastal Route.

This ambitious project will see the creation of a modern energy efficient visitor centre, a fully inclusive adventure play park, new amenity facilities for caravan park visitors and a bike park, among many other improvements.

The investment will significantly enhance the park’s facilities and accessibility, ensuring it continues to attract residents and visitors alike for generations to come.

SNI Sustainability Compass



The new Sustainable NI Sustainability Compass supports climate change compliance by helping public bodies screen projects, plans and investments for climate and environment impacts. The tool helps embed environmental considerations into corporate decision-making, preventing unnecessary harm from new decisions.

Council adopted the use of this new tool in January 2026. All new and reviewed policies, new strategies, plans and programmes are screened using this tool. These are appended to SMT / Committee and Full Council reports.

9. Biodiversity/Community

The following programme of activities and educational events have been hosted through 2025/26:

Month / Year	Activity
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willow Weaving Courses (x3) Oakfield Community Centre: 24 participants (8 per course)
May 2025	<p>(National Walking Month) There was a large walking programme but below are nature centric walks from the wider programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mindful Kids Walks (mindfulness and nature connection for primary school ages children: Glenarm 8 participants, Peoples Park 11 participants, Bashfordlands 9 participants Portglenone Wild Wanders - nature connectivity walk for adults 14 participants
June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Foraging - Blackhead Path 12 participants, Portglenone Forest 18 participants
July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bat Walk: 25 participants
August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Oceans Healthy Minds Programme (connecting with local blue spaces - Live Here Love Here Partnership) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach Babbies (Ballygally) 40 participants Gobbins Coastal Walk 14 participants Rockpool Safari 27 participants Beach Babbies (Browns Bay) 40 participants Biodiversity University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diamond Jubilee Wood: 45 participants per day for 3 days Larne Town Park: 40 participants per day for 3 days ECOS: 35 participants per day for 3 days

September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Bat Night Bat Walk: 55 participants
October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seed Gathering (Friends of Bashfordlands) 25 Wild About Food (Autumn Fruits - Diamond Jubilee Wood) 15
November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wild About Food (Autumn Foraging - Cranny Falls) 15 participants Hazel coppicing and willow weaving with St Patricks College special needs unit 25 Wild About Food (Winter Wildfowl Walk - ECOS) 15 participants
December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wild About Food (Winter Trees - Galgorm) 20
January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bird Walk and Talk - Bashfordlands 26 participants Wild About Food (Winter walk by the lake - Lough Mourne) 15 participants Big Garden Bird Watch Event - Diamond Jubilee 12 participants
March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wild About Food (Seaweed Creations - Browns Bay) 22 participants

Total engagement in Parks & Open Spaces (Development)-led biodiversity initiatives 25/26: **854 participants.**

Council also promote a range of citizen science projects via MEA Outdoors throughout the year, including:

- RSPB - Big Garden Bird Watch (January 2026)
- Pollinator Monitoring Scheme - Flower-Insect-Timed (FIT) Count (April - September 2025)
- The Rivers Trust - Big River Watch (April 2025 and 2026)

Operations Sub Committee Notes – Wednesday 18 March 2026 at 3.00pm – Hybrid Meeting

Attendees: Cllr G McKeen (Chair), Ald T Gordon, Cllr M Warwick, Ald M Morrow, Cllr R Quigley, Andrew Cassells (SIB), Donna Carey, Amy Millar, Catherine Hunter, Megan Bowe, David Anthony

Apologies: Cllr A Skinner, Valerie Watts (Interim Chief Executive)

Notes: PA to Director

Agenda Item	Action Required	By
1.	<p>Welcome & Apologies</p> <p>Chair Cllr G McKeen welcomed everyone to the sub-committee.</p> <p>Apologies received from Cllr A Skinner.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed two officers/attendees who may not yet have met members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Cashell, SIB Consultant currently supporting the Chief Executive until Director posts are filled. • Megan Bowe, Temporary Waste Manager 	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest</p>	
3.	<p>Actions Notes of Waste Harmonisation Sub Committee held on 07 October 2025</p> <p>The notes were agreed.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that some matters had already been ratified at the Environment and Economy Committee.</p>	

	No further issues were raised from the previous notes.	
4.	Items for Decision / Update	
4.1.	<p>Street Cleansing</p> <p>It was noted that this issue may need to wait until the new Director is in post.</p> <p>Members stressed that the matter should not simply keep being delayed and that previous work suggested there were worthwhile opportunities and potential savings to be explored.</p> <p>Officers confirmed that street cleansing remains part of the ongoing service review and would stay as a recurring agenda item until it can be progressed properly.</p> <p>No further comments were raised, and members agreed to move on.</p>	
4.2.	<p>Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) – including commercial waste management</p> <p>The Chair introduced the item, noting that Council had already agreed the commercial elements. Officers then updated members on progress. Key points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure is being installed at sites, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ barriers and access controls ◦ signage ◦ arrangements for staff managing vehicle access • Height-restriction barriers are being added at some locations. • The system will require bookings for vans and trailers only, not cars. • The software is being customised to meet Council needs. • Progress has been delayed due to changes needed to align with IT and corporate systems. • Officers had aimed for a 1 June launch, but this may slip. <p>Member discussion</p> <p>The Chair emphasised that clear communication would be crucial, so businesses and residents understand the changes, the public isn't misinformed, and the media doesn't misrepresent the scheme.</p>	

	<p>They highlighted that early conversations with local businesses suggested the impact on many would be limited.</p> <p>Officers advised there would be an 8–10 week lead-in period, with communications starting once the contract is awarded. Messaging will focus on those most affected, using social media, Council channels and direct contact, with clear guidance on who needs to book and how.</p> <p>Members asked whether site activity had changed since the proposal became public. Officers reported some public discussion and queries but no clear shift in vehicle numbers yet.</p> <p>A question was raised about gardeners and trailer users in summer. Officers confirmed gardeners will need a permit, can book daily if slots are available, block-bookings will be prevented, only borough-based operators will qualify, and waste-carrier documentation will be required.</p>	
4.3.	<p><i>Update on Waste Harmonisation</i></p> <p>a. Judicial Review</p> <p>Members were advised that the JR applicant indicated in mid-February that they wished to withdraw. Following legal advice, both parties agreed to withdraw and cover their own costs. The case is now closed, allowing the Council to proceed with waste harmonisation.</p> <p>The Chair asked about the financial impact and whether costs could be recovered. Officers said final figures were not yet available. Andrew Cassell noted that withdrawing was the most practical outcome and that courts generally discourage returning solely to argue over costs. He added that waste management in Northern Ireland is often subject to legal challenges used by incumbent contractors to delay change. Cllr Warwick expressed frustration that public money must be spent defending decisions the Council believes were properly made.</p> <p>Procurement and implementation</p> <p>Elected Members were updated on procurement for harmonisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A business case for the purchase of 50,000 blue bins has gone through the Environment and Economy Committee and will be ratified at Full Council on 31 March 2026. Once ratified, procurement could proceed through the relevant framework 	

	<p>Andrew Cassells (SIB) updated members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The required vehicles have been ordered through the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation framework with delivery of vehicles expected around October / November. • The glass contract (Larne) is due to end around the end of September / start of October and remains on schedule. • The kerbside box collection arrangements (Bryson Contract) are more complex and linked to the end of the Bryson contract at the end of October. • Officers are continuing to work through the implementation timetable and related issues. <p>No further questions were raised.</p>	
4.4.	<p><i>Update on standardisation of the Larne routes in preparation for Waste Harmonisation</i></p> <p>Members were provided an update on standardisation arrangements in the rural Larne area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 450 households in rural areas are currently serviced by a narrow-access lorry • These households currently receive weekly food waste collections • To prepare for waste harmonisation, the plan is to standardise these households with the rest of Larne and the wider borough • This will involve moving to 140-litre brown bins collected fortnightly, replacing the current 25-litre weekly food caddies • Smaller 16-tonne vehicles are now on site and being prepared • The current target is for the first collection week to begin on 12 May, subject to vehicle readiness • A communications plan, delivery plan, and timetable are being prepared <p>Members noted that the scale of change was relatively small but agreed it made sense to complete this before wider harmonisation so that messages to residents could be consistent.</p> <p>No further comments were raised.</p>	
4.5.	<p><i>Update on replacement waste system procurement</i></p> <p>Members were updated on the replacement waste system. The contract has now been awarded to Whitespace, which will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online collection calendars • in-cab technology via tablets rather than fixed devices • future digitisation of services not currently on the system, such as: 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o bulky waste requests o bin deliveries o missed bin reports <p>The officer noted that phone and email channels will remain available and that the new system should improve the online user experience. The first phase is expected around early May, with residents seeing minimal change apart from a slightly updated online calendar.</p> <p>Officers advised that once the initial like-for-like replacement is live, additional services will be added gradually, with the long-term aim of fully replacing the current system and integrating with the future corporate CRM/GOSS platform so residents continue to use a single front end.</p> <p>Member Questions</p> <p>Members asked whether missed bins could be reported online. The officer confirmed they could and noted the new system will be smarter: residents cannot report a missed collection before the vehicle reaches their street, and valid reasons such as contamination will be shown automatically, reducing unnecessary calls.</p> <p>Officers also plan to create a central webpage linking all request forms and service points.</p> <p>On timescales, the officer said the provider will assign developers for around 10 weeks, with policy work and system build happening in the background. Additional services are expected to roll out over the summer, and officers are keen to move quickly to avoid staff operating two systems simultaneously. Members thanked the officer for the update.</p>	
4.6.	<p><i>Marine Litter Engagement Sculpture Pilot, Ballygally Beach</i></p> <p>Elected Members were provided with an outlined proposal from Sustainable NI, who are applying to the Sea-Changers Fund for a pilot project involving a large litter-bin sculpture made from reclaimed fishing gear and shaped like an endangered marine species. The aim is to encourage beach users to “feed the animal” with litter, promote behaviour change, and raise awareness of marine species and marine pollution. Sustainable NI requested the Committee’s support in principle and a letter of support for the funding bid.</p>	

	<p>Members asked whether Council funding was required; officers confirmed there was no financial ask, only support for the concept and permission to place the sculpture on the beach if funded. Concerns were raised about accessibility, height, and wind-blown litter. Officers said the project was at an early stage and Council input could shape the final design.</p> <p>Members were broadly supportive, noting the project's educational value and potential for wider rollout, and highlighted the importance of strong communications and launch activity. Promotion through social media, photography, press, and local content creators was discussed.</p> <p>When asked about timescales, officers said the bid would be submitted in April, with timing thereafter dependent on assessment, approval, design, and build. Officers will seek a more detailed timeline.</p> <p>The Sub-Committee agreed that a letter of support should be issued: Proposed: Ald M Morrow Seconded: Cllr M Warwick</p>	
4.	<p>Next Operations Sub-Committee Meeting</p> <p>20 May 2026 at 2pm</p>	

Meeting ended 14.41



Council/Committee:	Environment and Economy Committee
Date:	27 May 2026
Report Title:	DAERA: From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme Consultation Response
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Andrew Cassells, Waste Specialist, Strategic Investment Board
Approver:	Rowan Moore, Director of Place

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report is to update Elected Members on the DAERA "From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme" consultation and to seek approval for the draft response at **Appendix 1**.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is seeking views on the proposed Waste Prevention Programme for Northern Ireland. This Programme sets out the actions we intend to take to reduce the generation of waste across our economy, encourage more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, and support a transition to a circular economy in which resources are kept in use for as long as possible.
- 2.2. Waste prevention is the most effective way to reduce environmental harm, conserve resources, and limit carbon emissions associated with the extraction, manufacture, and disposal of products. By focusing on designing out waste, extending product lifetimes, and supporting reuse, repair, and remanufacture, the Programme aims to support long-term environmental, social, and economic benefits for individuals, businesses, and communities across Northern Ireland.
- 2.3. This consultation outlines the strategic priorities, proposed interventions, and supporting measures that will guide our approach over the coming years. It reflects our statutory obligations under the Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011, aligns with commitments in the Circular Economy Package, and supports Northern Ireland's wider climate and environmental ambitions. DAERA invites responses from Northern Ireland local councils and Northern Ireland environmental groups. Feedback will help shape a Programme that is effective, evidence-based, and reflective of the needs and opportunities across Northern Ireland.
- 2.4. This consultation opened on 20 April and will close on 10 July 2026.



3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. **Waste Prevention** means stopping waste from being created in the first place. Waste prevention can be achieved by:
- reducing the amount of material used
 - extending the life of products
 - avoiding unnecessary consumption and waste generation
 - changing how products are designed and made.
- 3.2. It aligns with the principles of the circular economy, which seeks to design out waste and decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation.
- 3.3. The “**Waste Hierarchy**” is a legally binding hierarchy, introduced in the European Waste Framework Directive (WFD) [2008/98/EC] which establishes an order of preference for actions in sustainable waste management. If properly implemented, it minimises the amount of waste generated and improves the overall waste management process.:
1. **Prevention** – Stop waste before it starts. This means using fewer materials and making products that last longer.
 2. **Reuse** – Use things again. Instead of throwing items away, find ways to use them again—like repairing or donating.
 3. **Recycling** – Turn old materials into new products. This helps save resources but still uses energy.
 4. **Recovery** – Get energy from waste. Some waste can be burned to produce energy, but this is less ideal.
 5. **Disposal** – Throwing waste away. This includes landfill and incineration without energy recovery. It’s the least preferred option.
- 3.4. The goal is to reduce the amount of waste we create and to handle it in the most sustainable way possible.
- 3.5. A **Circular Economy** is an economic model that aims to eliminate waste and keep resources in use for as long as possible. Unlike the traditional “make-use-dispose” linear model, the circular economy focuses on designing products and systems that use fewer raw materials, generate less waste, encourage reuse, repair & recycling and promote sustainable production and consumption. The benefits include reducing environmental impact, supporting innovation and green jobs, building resilience in supply chains and helping meet climate and sustainability goals.



- 3.6. Waste prevention is an essential component of an effective circular economy. It both helps prevent waste from having a negative impact on the environment and health and directs it to more efficient uses. The actions required to move toward a more circular economy are twofold. In the first instance, resource consumption must be reduced in order help eliminate the use of virgin materials and to support our finite biosphere. Secondly, any waste that is generated must be used in a resource efficient manner. This can be achieved in a number of ways.
- 3.7. Encouragement and education to create a culture that values its resources is of high importance, as well as making information about how to reduce waste and resource consumption, how to reuse and how to repair easy to access. There is a responsibility for producers to undertake building waste prevention into design and alternative business models must be implemented to enable the success of circularity. Eco-design is important to help achieve this, as well as the introduction of producer responsibility schemes.
- 3.8. As well as creating new opportunities for growth, a more circular economy can:
- reduce waste
 - help create 'green' jobs
 - drive greater resource productivity
 - deliver a more competitive economy
 - position Northern Ireland to better address emerging resource security and scarcity issues in the future
 - help reduce the environmental impacts of our production and consumption.
- 3.9. The legal requirements for waste prevention in Northern Ireland are primarily governed by the Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 (SR 2011/127), which transpose the EU Waste Framework Directive (Directive 2008/98/EC) into domestic law. These regulations establish a statutory framework for developing and implementing waste prevention programmes and enforcing the waste hierarchy. Core requirements include;
- Establishment of a Waste Prevention Programme Northern Ireland is legally required to maintain a Waste Prevention Programme, which must be reviewed at least every six years.
 - Assess Existing Measures Evaluate current national waste prevention actions and their effectiveness.
 - Define National Objectives Set clear measurable goals for waste prevention tailored to national context.



- Evaluate Strategy Suitability Ensure strategies are appropriate for inclusion in the Programme.
- Promote Product Reuse Take measures to encourage reuse of products and materials.
- Support Reuse and Repair Networks Facilitate the development of reuse and repair infrastructure and services.
- Public Procurement Criteria Integrate reuse and waste prevention principles into public procurement policies.
- Set Benchmarks Establish qualitative or quantitative benchmarks to assess waste prevention measures.
- Adopt Targets and Indicators Use indicators and targets to monitor progress and evaluate success.
- Apply the Waste Hierarchy Prioritise prevention, followed by reuse, recycling, recovery, and disposal.
- Ensure Environmental and Health Protection Waste must be managed without harming human health or the environment.
- Implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Producers must take responsibility for the lifecycle of their products, especially at end-of-life.

3.10. The first Waste Prevention Programme for Northern Ireland – “The Road to Zero Waste”, was produced in 2013. This was reviewed in 2019 and revised as - “Stopping Waste in its Tracks”. This Programme contained 22 waste prevention actions, of which 21 have either been implemented or are ongoing. The primary aim of the Programme was to reduce the generation of waste at its source in order to conserve resources, minimise environmental impact, and support a transition to a circular economy. This has been achieved through actions such as the creation of the Northern Ireland Resources Network (NIRN) which promotes the reduction of waste and building a more circular economy. Since incorporation, their members totalled carbon savings of over 126,000 tonnes, reused almost 23,000 tonnes of waste and generated a saving of nearly £45M. They now support 1,295 employees, 7,036 volunteers, totalling over 910K hours, and benefitting almost 1M people.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. *Financial implications* – supporting the delivery of the NI Waste Prevention Programme will over time deliver financial benefits to the Council.
- 4.2. *Human Resources* – staff from all Council services will be impacted through the delivery of the Waste Prevention Programme.
- 4.3. *Equality Screening* – this consultation is subject to Equality Screening, and one has been provided with the consultation by DAERA.



- 4.4. *Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan* – supporting this consultation will help Council deliver on strategic priorities in all four pillars of the Corporate Plan.
- 4.5. *Reputation* – waste is of significant public interest – by supporting this consultation we are demonstrating our commitment to address the waste, climate and circular economy challenges.
- 4.6. *Legal* - Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 (SR 2011/127) places statutory requirements on central government to deliver waste management including prevention policies and these are supported by climate change and circular economy legislation. Council supporting the consultation will help to fulfill this requirement.
- 4.7. *Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact* – This consultation is subject to a Rural Needs Impact Assessment under Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and one has been included by DAERA with the consultation documents.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. To seek approval of the draft response at Appendix 1 and to submit to DAERA, prior to the deadline of 10 July 2026.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Approve the draft response (Appendix 1) to this consultation.

7. Appendices / Links

Appendix 1 DAERA Consultation Mid and East Antrim Draft Response.

Link: Full consultation document portfolio:

[From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Appendix 1 Draft Mid and East Antrim Response**Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
Response to From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste
Prevention Programme Consultation**

Actions

1. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

A key form of producer responsibility is Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), which is increasingly being adopted across the UK and internationally. Under EPR schemes, producers are required to fund or directly manage the collection and treatment of waste arising from their products. This encourages them to design products that are easier to reuse, recycle, or dispose of safely.

Action 1 - Extended Producer Responsibility and Reducing Packaging
DAERA will continue to work in conjunction with the UK Government and the Devolved Governments in the implementation of the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024 which aims to reduce the amount of unnecessary and difficult to recycle packaging.

Question 1 - Do you agree with action 1 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 1 and the continued implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility through the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024. The Council welcomes measures that place greater responsibility on producers for the full costs of managing packaging waste. Local authorities currently bear significant financial and operational pressures in collecting, sorting and treating packaging materials. A well-designed EPR scheme has the potential to shift these costs more fairly to those placing packaging on the market, in line with the polluter pays principle. The Council is however disappointed that DAERA did not support the inclusion of packaging Litter in the pEPR Regulations.

We also support the objective of reducing packaging and improving the recyclability of packaging, and difficult to recycle. Excessive and non-recyclable packaging increases processing costs, contaminates recycling streams and creates avoidable environmental impacts.

Incentivising producers (through Moderation) to improve packaging design should help increase recyclability, reduce waste arisings and support progress toward a circular economy.

It is important that implementation is clear, consistent and adequately resourced

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across all UK regions. Councils must be fully engaged in the rollout of the scheme, with funding arrangements that reflect the true cost of local collection and waste management services, including rural service delivery challenges. Practical and achievable targets must also be set to ensure consistency of approach across all Councils.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council therefore supports this action and looks forward to continued collaboration to ensure the scheme delivers practical environmental and financial benefits for local government and residents.

2. Collaboration with Defra and Other DG's in relation to Eco-Design and Ecolabelling
Eco-design and eco-labelling are two complementary approaches aimed at reducing the environmental impact of products throughout their life cycle. Eco-design refers to the process of integrating environmental considerations into the design and development of products while Eco-labelling is a communication tool that helps consumers identify products with lower environmental impacts.

Action 2 – Eco-Design and Eco-Labeling

DAERA will continue to work collaboratively with the Devolved Governments to support eco-design and develop eco-label frameworks.

Question 2 - Do you agree with action 2 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 2 and welcomes continued collaboration between DAERA, Defra and the Devolved Governments on eco-design and eco-labelling frameworks.

We recognise that eco-design plays a key role in reducing waste at source by ensuring products are more durable, repairable, reusable and recyclable, which is essential to advancing circular economy objectives. We also support the development of clear and consistent eco-labelling to help consumers make informed choices and encourage demand for more sustainable products.

Alignment and consistency of standards and labelling across jurisdictions is especially important to avoid consumer confusion and to support businesses operating in multiple markets.

The Council would also emphasise the need for any frameworks to be practical, evidence-based and accessible to businesses of all sizes, including SMEs, while remaining simple and easy for the public to understand. Details on implementation timelines and funding mechanisms should be clearly set out.

Overall, the Council supports this action as it will help reduce waste, improve resource efficiency and promote more sustainable consumption.

3. Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

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A Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) is a circular economy initiative designed to reduce litter and increase recycling rates by incentivising the return of single-use drinks containers.

Under the scheme, consumers pay a small deposit when purchasing drinks in containers such as plastic bottles or aluminium/steel cans. This deposit is refunded when the empty container is returned to a designated collection point, such as a shop or a reverse vending machine.

Action 3 – Deposit Return Scheme

DAERA will implement the Deposit Return Scheme for single use drinks containers. This is due to go live from October 2027 to include PET plastic, steel, and aluminium drinks containers from 150ml to 3l to further drive-up recycling rates and reduce littering.

Question 3 - Do you agree with action 3 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 3 and the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme for single-use drinks containers. The Council recognises the potential for DRS to significantly reduce littering, improve recycling rates and recover high-quality materials for reuse and reprocessing.

Drinks containers make up a visible proportion of litter in streets, parks, rural roadsides and public spaces. Reducing this waste stream would bring environmental benefits and help lower cleansing and litter collection costs for councils. A well-designed scheme can also encourage positive behavioural change by placing a clear value on recyclable materials.

As a largely rural borough, Mid and East Antrim has particular considerations that should be reflected in implementation. Residents in dispersed rural communities must have convenient access to return points, and the network should not be concentrated solely in larger urban centres. Adequate infrastructure for villages, smaller towns and rural retailers will be essential to ensure fair access and strong participation rates.

The Council also notes the significant cross-border movement of people between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Alignment, or as close a degree of compatibility as possible, between schemes Northern Ireland and Eire will be important to minimise confusion for consumers and retailers, reduce fraud risk, and maximise effectiveness.

It will also be important that the introduction of DRS is coordinated with existing kerbside recycling services so that councils are not financially disadvantaged. The Council notes that the introduction of DRS may alter the composition and tonnage of materials collected through existing kerbside recycling services, particularly plastic bottles and cans. Consideration should therefore be given to the impact on local

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authority recycling performance targets, funding arrangements and reporting mechanisms. Councils should not be disadvantaged where materials are diverted from household collections into a producer-funded DRS system.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council therefore supports this action and looks forward to continued engagement to ensure the scheme is practical, accessible and effective for rural and border communities.

4. Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

WEEE refers to discarded electrical and electronic devices, such as computers, phones, household appliances, and lighting equipment. These products often contain critical raw materials like copper, lithium and cobalt, as well as hazardous substances such as lead, mercury, and flame retardants. Proper management of WEEE is essential to prevent environmental harm and recover resources.

Action 4 – WEEE Reform

DAERA will collaborate with Defra and the other Devolved Governments to implement WEEE Reform.

Question 4 - Do you agree with action 4 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 4 and welcomes collaboration between DAERA, Defra and the other Devolved Governments to implement reform of the existing Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regime.

WEEE is a rapidly growing waste stream and contains both valuable materials and potentially hazardous substances. Effective collection, treatment and recycling systems are therefore essential to prevent environmental harm, recover critical raw materials and support circular economy objectives.

The Council supports reforms that encourage producers to take greater responsibility for the end-of-life management of electrical goods, improve product design, and make repair, reuse and recycling easier for consumers and businesses. Measures that increase durability, repairability and take-back options would help reduce waste arisings and extend product lifespans.

From a local authority perspective, it is important that any revised system is clear, properly funded and easy for residents to use. Councils play a frontline role in household WEEE collection through recycling centres and public engagement and should be fully considered in the design of future arrangements.

As a rural district, convenient access to collection infrastructure is particularly important. Residents in dispersed communities should not face barriers to responsible disposal, and consideration should be given to cross-border consumer behaviour where products may be purchased in one jurisdiction and disposed of in another.

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Mid and East Antrim Borough Council would also welcome stronger support for reuse networks and repair initiatives, helping to divert suitable items from disposal while creating social, environmental and economic benefits.

5. Carrier Bag Levy

The Carrier Bag Levy was introduced in Northern Ireland on 8 April 2013 through the introduction of The Single Use Carrier Bags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 to address the environmental damage caused by the excessive use of carrier bags.

Prior to

its introduction, around 300 million bags were used annually across the region, contributing significantly to litter, landfill waste, and resource depletion. In April 2022 the levy increased to 25p per bag and still contains some exemptions, including an exemption for bags used to contain hot foods or hot drinks intended for consumption away from the premises on which they are sold.

Action 5 – Carrier Bag Levy

DAERA will continue to administer the levy and ensure the revenue is allocated to additional environmental projects within Northern Ireland

Question 5 - Do you agree with action 5 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 5.

The Council supports the continued operation of the Carrier Bag Levy and the commitment to reinvest revenues into practical environmental projects in Northern Ireland. The levy has been a highly effective waste prevention measure, significantly reducing single-use carrier bag consumption and encouraging more sustainable behaviour.

From a local authority perspective, the reduction in discarded plastic bags has had clear environmental benefits, helping to improve street cleanliness, reduce litter in rural and urban areas, and lessen impacts on the wider natural environment, including roadsides and waterways across the district.

We also welcome the reinvestment of levy income into environmental initiatives such as biodiversity projects, litter prevention, reuse and repair schemes, and community based environmental improvements. Continued transparency on how these funds are used and the outcomes achieved is important.

As a rural borough, we also recognise the importance of consistent messaging and public awareness.

Overall, the Council supports this action and the continued use of the levy as an effective and well-established tool for reducing waste and supporting wider environmental objectives.

6. Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP's)

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Absorbent hygiene products (AHPs) include disposable nappies, incontinence pads, sanitary products, and other single-use items designed to absorb bodily fluids. Due to their mixed material composition, often combining plastics, cellulose, and superabsorbent polymers, AHPs are challenging to recycle and are typically disposed of through energy recovery processes.

Action 6 – Absorbent Hygiene Products

DAERA will support WRAP in conducting an AHP collection study into the separation of AHP waste.

Question 6 - Do you agree with action 6 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 6 and welcomes DAERA's support for WRAP to carry out an Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) collection study.

The Council recognises that AHPs make up a significant proportion of residual household waste and currently present challenges for waste management due to their volume, composition and limited treatment options. We therefore support an evidence-based approach to explore whether separate collection could improve resource efficiency and reduce environmental impacts.

It is important that any future decisions are based on robust evidence covering practical, financial and environmental factors, including collection logistics, treatment capacity, contamination risks, carbon impacts, cost-effectiveness and levels of public participation.

From a local authority perspective, any potential system must be practical for households and deliverable for councils, particularly in rural areas such as Mid and East Antrim where dispersed populations and longer travel distances can increase service costs. Consideration should also be given to hygiene, storage and convenience, especially for households with young children, older people or those with care needs.

The Council also highlights the importance of considering equality and affordability impacts, particularly for Section 75 groups, including low-income households, older people, persons with disabilities and women and girls affected by period poverty. Any approach must avoid placing additional financial or practical burdens on those who rely on these essential products.

Overall, the Council supports this action and welcomes further research to ensure that any future approach to AHP waste management is practical, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable.

7. Waste Levies

Levies applied to waste products over a range of benefits for waste prevention, particularly when designed to influence consumer behaviour, support sustainable alternatives, and fund waste prevention initiatives. Levies create a direct financial

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incentive for individuals and businesses to reduce waste. For example, charges on single-use items like plastic bags have led to dramatic reductions in consumption. By making wasteful choices more expensive, levies encourage consumers to opt for reusable or more sustainable alternatives.

Action 7 – Waste Levies

DAERA will continue to tackle the problem of littering and work with stakeholders to advance the circular economy including the potential for introducing bans or levies on certain problematic product materials.

Question 7 - Do you agree with action 7 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 7.

Waste levies, where carefully targeted and proportionately introduced, can play an important role in reducing litter, preventing waste at source, and encouraging more sustainable consumer behaviour. The success of the Carrier Bag Levy demonstrates that well-designed fiscal measures can deliver measurable environmental benefits while also helping to raise awareness of waste prevention.

The Council supports consideration of levies or bans on problematic materials where there is clear evidence of environmental harm, viable alternatives are available, and proposals are supported by appropriate consultation with local government, businesses, producers, and communities. Any measures introduced should be practical to administer and aligned with wider circular economy objectives.

It is important that revenue generated from future levies is reinvested in environmental improvement initiatives, including litter prevention, recycling and reuse infrastructure, behaviour change campaigns, and support for councils managing the impacts of waste and litter locally.

The Council would also emphasise the need to consider potential financial impacts on residents and small businesses, particularly in rural areas, and to ensure that any new levies are introduced fairly, consistently, and with adequate lead-in time.

Overall, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 7 as part of a balanced approach to waste prevention and environmental protection.

8. Plastic Pollution Reduction Plan

DAERA's Plastic Pollution Plan is Northern Ireland's strategic approach to tackling plastic waste and its environmental impacts. The plan aims to reduce plastic pollution, particularly in marine environments, and to support the transition to a circular economy where resources are used efficiently and waste is minimised. It builds on previous initiatives, such as the successful removal of unnecessary single-use plastics (SUP) from the government estate and aligns with broader UK and EU commitments on waste prevention and resource efficiency.

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Action 8 – Plastic Pollution Plan

DAERA will publish a Plastic Pollution Plan for Northern Ireland to achieve a reduction in plastic pollution.

Question 8 - Do you agree with action 8 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 8 and supports the development of a Plastic Pollution Plan for Northern Ireland.

The Council considers this a positive and necessary step to reduce plastic waste and protect the environment. In a largely rural district, addressing plastic pollution is particularly important for safeguarding rivers, lakes, countryside, and biodiversity, as well as supporting tourism and maintaining high-quality local environments.

The Council would highlight the importance of practical, deliverable measures, strong partnership working with local government, and ensuring that councils are properly supported as key delivery partners.

We continue to support a strategic approach that prioritises waste prevention, reduces unnecessary single-use plastics, expands reuse and refill options, improves recycling systems, and promotes sustained public awareness and behaviour change.

Overall, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council welcomes Action 8 and the opportunity to continue working with DAERA and partners on delivering an effective Plastic Pollution Plan for Northern Ireland.

9. European Week for Waste Reduction

The European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR) is a major annual campaign across Europe that promotes awareness and action on sustainable resource and waste management. In Northern Ireland, it is coordinated by WRAP and supported by DAERA. Local councils, businesses, schools, and community groups are encouraged to register and carry out awareness-raising actions. Participants can access toolkits, communication resources, and even enter the EWWR Awards for outstanding initiatives.

Action 9 – European Week for Waste Reduction

DAERA will continue to support the European Week for Waste Reduction and will seek

to build upon the outcomes and successes generated through participation in its associated competitions.

Question 9 - Do you agree with action 9 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

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If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 9. The European Week for Waste Reduction is a valuable initiative that helps raise public awareness of waste prevention, reuse, and sustainable resource management. The Council supports continued DAERA involvement and opportunities for councils, schools, businesses, and communities to participate in campaigns and share best practice.

10. Circular Councils

DAERA delivery partner, Northern Ireland Resources Network (NIRN), through its Local Authority Forums is developing a co-created education programme with councils to raise awareness of the circular economy and waste hierarchy among council staff and elected members. They will showcase and celebrate reuse and repair initiatives currently being delivered by councils and to identify further opportunities for collaboration, innovation and public engagement.

Action 10 – Circular Councils

DAERA will assist NIRN to establish a Circular Councils network and develop a cocreated waste prevention education programme with councils.

Question 10 - Do you agree with action 10 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council generally agrees with Action 10. A Circular Councils network would provide a valuable opportunity for councils to share best practice, develop collaborative approaches, and strengthen awareness of the circular economy and waste hierarchy among staff and elected members.

The Council supports partnership working with DAERA and NIRN to help identify practical opportunities for reuse, repair, waste prevention, and public engagement across local government. The Council would query however as to how NIRN were selected by DAERA to deliver on this and a number of other actions.

11. Waste Prevention Metrics

Waste prevention metrics are essential tools for evaluating the effectiveness of policies, programmes, and interventions aimed at reducing the generation of waste at source. Current waste prevention metrics in Northern Ireland and across the UK face several challenges that limit their effectiveness in guiding policy and evaluating progress. One of the most significant issues is the incomplete coverage of data. In Northern Ireland, detailed monitoring is largely confined to municipal waste collected by councils, which represents only about 10% of total waste.

Action 11 – Waste Prevention Metrics

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DAERA will support NIRN to explore the establishment of a framework of metrics to monitor, evaluate, and report on waste prevention efforts across Northern Ireland.

Question 11 - Do you agree with action 11 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 11. The development of a clear and consistent framework of waste prevention metrics is essential to effectively monitor progress, assess the impact of policies and programmes, and support evidence-based decision making across Northern Ireland.

At present, much of the available data focuses on municipal waste collected by councils, which provides only a partial picture of overall waste generation. A broader and more robust metrics framework would help identify trends across households, businesses, construction, commercial, and industrial sectors, while also measuring progress in key areas such as reuse, repair, waste reduction, and behavioural change.

The Council would emphasise that any new waste prevention metrics should also take account of existing recycling targets and performance measures. Successful waste prevention initiatives may reduce the amount of material entering the waste stream, including materials that would otherwise have been recycled. This could unintentionally impact recycling rate calculations if performance frameworks are not designed to recognise waste prevention outcomes alongside recycling achievements. The Council therefore supports the development of balanced indicators that reflect the full waste hierarchy, ensuring prevention, reuse, recycling, and recovery are all appropriately recognised. It will also be important that any reporting requirements placed on councils are streamlined and aligned with existing data systems to avoid unnecessary administrative burden.

Overall, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 11 and recognises the importance of reliable and balanced data in delivering successful waste prevention outcomes.

12. Circular Communities

Circular Communities are grassroots initiatives that place community at the heart of the circular economy. These communities focus on waste reduction, reuse, repair, and sharing, creating local hubs where people can come together to extend the life of products, reduce consumption, and build social connections. Examples include repair cafés, community fridges, tool libraries, and upcycling workshops, all designed to make sustainability accessible and practical for everyone.

Action 12 – Circular Communities

DAERA will support NIRN to develop & deliver a Circular Communities Programme to embed reuse & repair into everyday community life.

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Question 12 - Do you agree with action 12 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 12. Circular Communities can play an important role in promoting reuse, repair, waste prevention, and community wellbeing. The Council supports initiatives that make sustainable behaviours practical and accessible while strengthening local skills, volunteering, and social connections.

13. Recognised Awareness Days

Recognised waste awareness days play a crucial role in promoting sustainable practices and reducing environmental impact. These days serve as focal points for education and advocacy, helping citizens and businesses understand the consequences of waste and the benefits of resource efficiency. By highlighting issues such as plastic pollution, food waste, and electronic waste, they encourage people to rethink consumption habits and adopt more sustainable lifestyles.

Action 13 – Recognised Awareness Days

DAERA will support NIRN to co-ordinate a schedule of recognised awareness day campaigns.

Question 13 - Do you agree with action 13 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 13. Recognised awareness day campaigns are a useful way to promote waste prevention, resource efficiency and positive behavioural change among residents, schools, and businesses. The Council supports coordinated campaigns that raise awareness and encourage practical action across Northern Ireland such as NI Repair week this June.

14. Love Food Hate Waste Communications Campaign

The Love Food Hate Waste campaign is a UK-wide initiative launched in 2007 by WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) to tackle the growing issue of food waste, particularly in households. Its core mission is to help people reduce the amount of food they throw away by raising awareness, changing behaviours, and providing practical tools and advice.

Action 14 – Consumer Food Waste Prevention

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DAERA will maintain its partnership with WRAP to support the delivery of the Love Food Hate Waste campaign, aimed at preventing consumer food waste. DAERA and WRAP will co-develop follow-up initiatives designed to strengthen behavioural change and enhance messaging around food waste prevention.

Question 14 - Do you agree with action 14 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Continuing the partnership with WRAP and the Love Food Hate Waste campaign is a sensible way to reduce household food waste, as long as the focus is on delivering measurable behaviour change and not just raising awareness.

15. UK Food and Drink Pact

The UK Food and Drink Pact, formerly known as the Courtauld Commitment 2030, is a voluntary agreement led by WRAP that brings together nearly 200 organisations across the food and drink supply chain including businesses, trade bodies, local authorities, and charities to tackle key sustainability challenges. The Pact aims to build a circular food system that supports the planet, people, and business.

Action 15 – UK Food and Drink Pact

DAERA will continue to support WRAP with the UK Food and Drink Pact to deliver against UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3: a 50% per capita reduction in food and drink waste by 2030 vs the UK 2007 baseline.

Question 15 - Do you agree with action 15 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 15.

The Council agrees that continued participation in the UK Food and Drink Pact, led by WRAP, is an important step in reducing food and drink waste and contributing towards UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3.

Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 aims to halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains by 2030.

16. Food Redistribution

Large quantities of edible food are wasted every year by producers, retailers, and consumers. This not only represents a loss of valuable resources such as water, energy, and labour but also contributes to environmental degradation through

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increased greenhouse gas emissions from landfill waste. Many individuals and families across Northern Ireland also face food poverty, struggling to access sufficient, nutritious food on a regular basis. Food redistribution involves collecting surplus food, often from farms, manufacturers, supermarkets, and hospitality businesses and redirecting it to people in need through charities, food banks, and community organisations.

Action 16 – Food Redistribution

DAERA will work in partnership with NIRN to collaborate with food redistribution networks to reduce avoidable food waste by enhancing their visibility and facilitating connections with businesses and public sector organisations. DAERA will provide support for targeted projects focused on food waste prevention.

Question 16 - Do you agree with action 16 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 16.

We recognise that large quantities of edible food continue to be wasted across the supply chain while many households across Northern Ireland experience food poverty and food insecurity. In a largely rural borough such as Mid and East Antrim, these issues can be further compounded by geographic isolation, transport challenges, and reduced access to services, making effective local solutions particularly important.

Food redistribution should therefore be clearly recognised not only as a waste prevention measure, but also as an important anti-poverty intervention, particularly for rural and isolated communities.

We welcome DAERA's partnership with the Northern Ireland Resources Network (NIRN) to strengthen collaboration with food redistribution networks, improve visibility, and support stronger connections between surplus food providers, businesses, public sector organisations and community groups. This approach has clear potential to make better use of existing resources while supporting households experiencing food insecurity. It can also play a preventative role by reducing the need for later crisis responses, such as emergency food aid, through earlier and more accessible community-based support. In the borough, community-led initiatives could demonstrate the value of this approach. Community fridge examples have shown how successful these initiatives can be in rural areas, providing accessible local points where surplus food can be shared, reducing waste, and supporting residents in a dignified and inclusive way.

However, successful food redistribution depends on having suitable local infrastructure in place, including community buildings, refrigeration and cold storage, transport capacity, and volunteer networks. These can be more limited in rural areas. Investment in small-scale, community-based infrastructure should therefore be recognised as an essential enabler of redistribution, reuse, and wider circular economy activity.

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The Council also emphasises the need for sustained revenue funding, rather than reliance solely on short-term pilot programmes, to support governance, volunteer capacity, safe food handling, coordination, and the long-term viability of community food initiatives.

Successful delivery will also require coordinated, place-based working across environmental, community development, health, and anti-poverty partners. DAERA should encourage flexible cross-departmental approaches that allow councils and community organisations to design responses tailored to local circumstances and need.

Finally, monitoring arrangements for this action should capture social outcomes such as reduced food insecurity, improved wellbeing, and increased community participation, alongside environmental outcomes such as food waste prevented and tonnage diverted from disposal.

Overall, the Council supports this action as it offers significant environmental benefits through reduced food waste and meaningful social benefits by helping to address food insecurity, particularly in rural communities where such support is especially valuable.

17. Industrial Symbiosis

Industrial symbiosis is a collaborative approach where traditionally separate industries work together to exchange materials, energy, water, and by products in ways that create mutual economic and environmental benefits. It is a key strategy in the circular economy, aiming to keep resources in productive use for longer and reduce waste generation.

Action 17 – Industrial Symbiosis

DAERA will continue to collaborate with Invest NI to promote its waste prevention initiatives, particularly those relating to resource efficiency and industrial symbiosis

Question 17 - Do you agree with action 17 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 17.

We agree that continued collaboration between DAERA and Invest NI to promote waste prevention initiatives, particularly those focused on resource efficiency and industrial symbiosis, is a positive and forward-looking approach. Supporting businesses to share materials, energy, and by-products more effectively can play an important role in reducing waste, lowering costs, and improving environmental performance across the economy.

This approach aligns well with the principles of a circular economy and can help businesses in both urban and rural parts of Northern Ireland make better use of available resources. In a borough such as Mid and East Antrim, where the business base includes a significant number of small and medium enterprises, encouraging practical and accessible resource efficiency measures is particularly important.

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We also recognise that strengthening industrial symbiosis can contribute to wider environmental goals by reducing landfill use, lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and improving overall sustainability within supply chains. Continued partnership working between DAERA and Invest NI will be important in ensuring that businesses are aware of opportunities and supported to participate effectively. Overall, the Council is supportive of this action as it promotes both environmental responsibility and economic efficiency.

18. Eco- Schools

Eco-Schools is the world's largest environmental education programme, empowering young people to lead sustainability efforts in their schools and communities. The programme began in 1994 and now spans 101 countries, with over 52,000 registered schools and more than 13.7 million students participating globally. The programme follows a seven-step Framework that guides schools through forming eco-committees, conducting environmental reviews, creating action plans, linking sustainability to the curriculum, and engaging the wider community. Schools work on up to 14 themes, including biodiversity, climate change, energy, litter, marine, transport, and waste.

Action 18 – Eco-Schools

DAERA will further support the Eco-Schools Programme to embed waste prevention and circular economy principles into the curriculum.

Question 18 - Do you agree with action 18 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supports Action 18.

We are a long-term supporter of the Eco-Schools programme and strongly welcome continued DAERA support to further embed waste prevention and circular economy principles within the curriculum. Eco-Schools plays a vital role in developing environmental awareness among young people and encouraging practical action on sustainability within schools and the wider community.

In a largely rural borough such as Mid and East Antrim, the programme has particular value, with schools often acting as important community hubs that influence households and local behaviours. The Eco-Schools framework helps ensure that messages around waste reduction, recycling, and resource efficiency extend beyond the classroom and into everyday life.

The Council recognises the programme's proven track record in empowering pupils to take ownership of environmental initiatives, and we support its continued development as a key tool in promoting long-term behavioural change and strengthening understanding of the circular economy.

19. Circular Schools

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The Circular Schools Programme in Northern Ireland is an educational initiative designed to embed circular economy and waste prevention principles into school communities. Its core aim is to help pupils understand how resources can be kept in use for as long as possible, reducing waste and promoting sustainability. Rather than focusing solely on recycling, the programme encourages schools to rethink consumption patterns, repair and reuse materials, and design out waste from everyday activities.

Action 19 – Circular Schools

DAERA will support NIRN to promote reuse and repair in school communities.

Question 19 - Do you agree with action 19 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 19.

We welcome DAERA's support for the NIRN in promoting reuse and repair within school communities through the Circular Schools Programme. The Zero Waste Champion programme experience has provided very positive feedback from participating schools, demonstrating strong engagement from pupils and staff and clear value in practical, hands-on approaches to waste prevention. We recognise that initiatives which move beyond recycling and focus on reducing consumption, reusing materials, and encouraging repair help to embed lasting behavioural change. In our experience, schools respond particularly well to these types of programmes, as they make sustainability tangible and relevant to everyday life.

In a rural borough such as Mid and East Antrim, these approaches are especially beneficial, helping to build skills and awareness that support more resource-efficient living while also strengthening community resilience. Schools often act as key local hubs, meaning the impact of these initiatives can extend well beyond the classroom into households and wider communities.

Overall, the Council is strongly supportive of this action, building on the Zero Waste Champion programme and reinforcing our commitment to practical waste prevention and circular economy principles in education.

20. Support to the Third Sector & Zero Waste Projects

DAERA provides targeted support to the third sector in Northern Ireland to help tackle waste and promote circular economy practices. This includes funding, strategic partnerships, and programme delivery aimed at empowering charities, social enterprises, and community groups to reduce consumption, increase reuse, and divert waste from landfill.

Action 20 – Support to the Third Sector for Zero Waste/Circular Economy Projects

DAERA will continue to provide support to the Third Sector for zero waste/circular

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economy projects as part of ongoing funding operations and investigate new ways to do so.

Question 20 - Do you agree with action 20 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 20.

We welcome DAERA's continued support for the third sector to deliver zero waste and circular economy projects, alongside exploration of new funding and delivery approaches. Charities, social enterprises, and community organisations play a vital role in driving practical waste prevention activity and often have strong local trust and reach, particularly in rural areas such as Mid and East Antrim.

In our experience, third sector organisations are highly effective at delivering initiatives that promote reuse, repair, and behaviour change at community level.

They are often well placed to respond flexibly to local needs and to support vulnerable groups, including those experiencing food or material poverty, while also reducing waste and environmental impact.

Sustained and targeted funding is essential to allow these organisations to plan effectively and deliver long-term impact. In rural districts, where access to services and infrastructure can be more limited, third sector involvement is especially important in ensuring that circular economy opportunities are accessible to all communities.

Overall, the Council supports this action as it strengthens partnership working, builds local capacity, and delivers both environmental and social benefits across Northern Ireland.

21. Reuse & Repair Week

Reuse and Repair Week 2025 marked a significant milestone for sustainability in Northern Ireland, running from 3rd to 9th March 2025. Led by the Northern Ireland Resources Network (NIRN) and funded by DAERA through the Carrier Bag Levy, this was the first time an entire UK region hosted a dedicated Repair Week. The initiative aimed to foster a culture of repair and reuse, helping individuals and communities extend the life of everyday items, from textiles and furniture to bikes and electronics, while reducing waste and supporting the circular economy.

Action 21 – Reuse & Repair Week

DAERA will support NIRN to establish an annual Reuse & Repair Week to promote waste prevention across Northern Ireland.

Question 21 - Do you agree with action 21 above? If your answer is no, please explain why.

Appendix 1 Draft Mid and East Antrim Response Agree Disagree No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

*Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees with Action 21.**We welcome DAERA's support for the Northern Ireland Resources Network (NIRN) to establish an annual Reuse & Repair Week as a means of promoting waste prevention and strengthening the circular economy across Northern Ireland. Building on the success of previous initiatives, including Reuse and Repair Week 2025, this type of coordinated campaign has clear value in raising awareness and encouraging practical action.**In a rural borough such as Mid and east Antrim, initiatives that promote repair and reuse are particularly important. Access to services and retail options can be more limited in rural areas, so encouraging people to extend the life of everyday items such as clothing, furniture, bicycles, and electrical goods can make a meaningful difference both environmentally and economically. It also helps to support skills development and community-based solutions, which are often central to rural resilience.**The Council also recognises the strong role of community organisations and third sector partners in delivering repair and reuse activities locally. An annual themed week provides a useful platform to bring together these groups, raise public awareness, and encourage greater participation in waste prevention behaviours. Overall, the Council supports this action as it helps embed a culture of reuse and repair, reduces waste going to landfill, and contributes to a more sustainable and resource efficient society across Northern Ireland.***22. Waste Prevention Programme**

The Waste Prevention Programme has previously been published as a standalone document, aimed at recognising its importance in its own right, however, consideration

is being given to integrating it into the Resources and Waste Management Strategy. As waste prevention is a fundamental component of effective resource and waste policy and the core purpose of the Strategy is to set the strategic direction for waste policy over the next six years, embedding waste prevention priorities within the Strategy could ensure clearer alignment, strengthen policy coherence, and signal a more ambitious, long-term commitment to reducing waste at source.

Question 22 - Do you agree that the Waste Prevention Programme should be incorporated into the Waste Management Strategy?

 Agree Disagree No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council agrees that the Waste Prevention Programme should be incorporated into the Waste Management Strategy.

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We recognise that waste prevention is a fundamental part of an effective resource and waste policy and integrating it within the overarching strategy would help ensure stronger alignment, clearer priorities, and a more joined-up approach across government. This would also reinforce the importance of prevention as the top tier of the waste hierarchy, rather than treating it as a separate or secondary strand of activity.

Embedding the programme within the wider strategy would also support more consistent delivery and long-term planning, ensuring that waste prevention is fully considered alongside recycling, recovery, and disposal. This is particularly important in a rural borough such as Mid and East Antrim, where practical, upstream waste prevention measures can have a significant impact on reducing costs, improving service efficiency and supporting community sustainability.

Overall, the Council supports this approach as it strengthens policy coherence and demonstrates a more ambitious commitment to reducing waste at source across Northern Ireland.

23. Equality Screening Assessment

An Equality Screening is one of the key tools to enable public authorities to fulfil their statutory obligations and mainstream the Section 75 equality and good relations duties

into policy development. It provides an opportunity to improve decision-making, support 'evidence based' policy making and can help improve a public authority's service provision through a systematic review of all services, policies, procedures, practices and/or decisions.

Question 23 - Do you agree with the conclusions of the Equality Screening Assessment of the draft Waste Prevention Programme?

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council disagrees with the conclusions of the Equality Screening Assessment for the draft Waste Prevention Programme.

While recognising the strategic, high-level nature of the Programme, the Council does not agree that it will have no impact across all Section 75 categories. In a predominantly rural borough, there are clear factors that may influence how different groups experience and engage with waste prevention measures, including access to services, transport limitations, and levels of digital connectivity.

We are concerned that residents in dispersed rural communities, including older people, persons with disabilities, and those without access to private transport, may face additional barriers to participating in reuse, repair, and recycling initiatives.

Socioeconomic

differences may also affect the ability of households to engage with certain waste prevention measures, while increasing reliance on digital engagement could

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disadvantage those in areas with limited connectivity or lower digital access. Those with dependants may face difficulties with capacity to engage in prevention activities.

The Council also notes that the assessment identifies no opportunities to promote equality of opportunity or good relations. However, we believe the Programme presents clear potential to support inclusive outcomes through community engagement, education, skills development, and local green job opportunities, particularly in rural areas.

Overall, the Council considers that a finding of minor impact, with appropriate mitigation and ongoing monitoring, would be more realistic than a conclusion of no impact, and encourages DAERA to ensure equality considerations are fully integrated into future policy development and delivery. Given the Programme's emphasis on behaviour change, access to services and local delivery, the Council considers it important that equality considerations are explicitly embedded and monitored as individual actions are developed and implemented.

24. Rural Needs Impact Assessment

Public authorities must undertake a Rural Needs Impact Assessment when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. A Rural Needs Impact Assessment is a step-by-step process aimed at helping public authorities to ensure that the due regard duty imposed under section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 ('the Act') duty is fulfilled.

Question 24 - Do you agree with the conclusions of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the draft Waste Prevention Programme?

Agree

Disagree

No opinion

If you disagree, please explain your answer, free text (max 500 words)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council does not fully agree with the conclusions of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) for the draft Waste Prevention Programme.

While the Council recognises that the Programme is strategic in nature and largely consolidates existing policy, we consider that the assessment does not adequately reflect the realities of delivering waste prevention in a predominantly rural borough. In particular, the RNIA is seen as underestimating key rural challenges such as longer travel distances to services, dispersed populations, higher per-household delivery costs, and barriers to participation in reuse, repair and recycling initiatives due to limited infrastructure and transport options. It also does not fully reflect differences in digital access, local service availability, or the needs of rural businesses, especially small and micro-enterprises transitioning to circular economy practices.

The Council is also concerned that the assessment does not properly consider cumulative impacts. While individual policies may not appear to create significant rural effects in isolation, the combined impact of multiple waste-related policies over

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time is likely to place greater pressure on rural communities and service delivery, including increased complexity, infrastructure gaps, and financial pressures. Overall, the Council believes the RNIA takes too narrow a view and does not fully capture the broader and cumulative rural implications of waste prevention policy. While the Programme may not introduce new statutory measures, its strategic framing will influence local delivery, behaviour change initiatives and access to services, all of which can affect rural communities differently. The Council therefore considers that a more explicit recognition of rural considerations at programme level would strengthen compliance with the Rural Needs Act.



Committee: Environment & Economy Committee
Date: 27 May 2026

Report Title: Commercial Waste Collection Policy - Review
Publication Status: Open

Author: Amy Millar, Service Support Manager
Approver: Rowan Moore, Director of Place

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the commercial waste collection policy for review by Committee (**Appendix 1**).

2. Background

- 2.1. This service has been managed by the agreed terms and conditions that customers agree to abide by to receive the service (**Appendix 2**). The operational elements of the service have been managed within the general MEA waste collection policy to date.
- 2.2. While this is a statutory service for Council to provide (Links 1 & 2), businesses within the Borough that generate waste do not have to avail themselves of Council's commercial waste collection service. As business rates do not include waste collection and processing, businesses are free to select a service from a private waste collection contractor that better suits their needs.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. This policy is based on legislative requirements governing commercial waste collections by a local authority.
- 3.2. There is no change to any aspect of the terms and conditions of service that determines the scope of the service provided, or requirements from businesses and organisations to avail themselves of the service.
- 3.3. The terms and conditions are reviewed annually and updated to reflect changes to service costs as required.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications – Council generates income from the service from organisations that are required to pay, however churches and charities avail



of a free limited service. Income does not generate profit when considering the cost of providing the service, as per the legislation.

- 4.2. Human Resources – There is no change to the service by defining this policy, and service will continue with its current resources.
- 4.3. Equality Screening – Screening has been completed and no enhanced review is required. **(Appendix 3)**
- 4.4. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan – This service ensures that Council is delivering its statutory functions.
- 4.5. Rural Proofing and Data Protection Impact - Screening has been completed and no enhanced review is required. **(Appendix 4 & 5)**
- 4.6. Sustainability – the draft policy has been screening and has positive short term outcomes supporting waste diversion from landfill and supports a local low carbon circular economy through collection of organic material from businesses. **(Appendix 6)**

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. That the Environment and Economy Committee review the document and associated screening documents.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Approve the attached policy.

7. Appendices / Links

Appendix 1 MEA Policy: Commercial Waste Collection

Appendix 2 Commercial Waste Collection Terms and Conditions of Service

Appendix 3 Equality Screening

Appendix 4 Rural Needs Impact Assessment

Appendix 5 Data Protection Screening

Appendix 6 Sustainability Screening

Link 1 – [The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2013](#)

Link 2 – [The Waste and Contaminated Land \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1997](#)

Commercial Waste Collection

Approved Date	26 May 2026
Review Date	May 2027
Related Legislation/Applicable Section of Legislation	The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 Data Protection Act 2018 The Waste and Contaminated Land Order (Northern Ireland) 1997
Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks	Debt Management Policy Finance Policy
Replaces	Previously contained within service provision terms and conditions document
Policy Lead (Name/Position/Contact details)	Head of Service (Waste)
Sponsor Directorate	Place
Version	1

Revision record

Date	Version	Revision Description

1. Title and summary

Commercial Waste Collection policy covers the scope of Council's collection of waste from non-domestic properties within the Borough.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to outline the scope of Council's provision of a chargeable non-domestic waste collection service to businesses and organisations within the Borough, and the criteria and limitations of exemptions to charges.

3. Scope

This applies to non-domestic premises within the Borough that wish to avail of Council's commercial waste collection service. For the purposes of this policy, non-domestic premises includes premises and sites registered for businesses, organisations, churches and charities.

Commercial waste includes waste produced from commercial activities, excluding hazardous waste, animal by-products, agricultural waste, industrial or construction & demolition waste.

The waste streams included in the commercial waste collection service are residual and organic waste.

4. Policy Detail

4.1 Collection Service

Council offers a waste collection service from non-domestic premises, within the scope and terms outlined above on the receipt of a completed and signed contract from the organisation requesting the collection. If the organisation is eligible for a free of charge collection under the approved terms, a completed collection outlining the service required must still be completed and returned to begin the service.

Council charges organisations for waste collection a set cost, per bin, per collection. These prices are reviewed for each financial year.

Waste collections can be completed on the following frequency options:

Residual Waste: Weekly, Fortnightly, Monthly or seasonally within these frequencies.

Organic Waste: Fortnightly, Monthly or seasonally within these frequencies.

Collection days are set by operational supervisors to ensure collection efficiency and cannot be changed by the customer.

Container sizes and types available for each waste stream is outlined on the valid terms and conditions of service available on the contract at the time of implementation.

Customers have the option of pre-purchasing tags to attach to bins to present them on an ad hoc basis. The collection day will still be set in advance and communicated to the customer.

Customers may be able to receive an additional collection outside of their scheduled collection. This must be paid in advance either via invoice or using a pre-paid collection tag. Additional collections will only be completed at the discretion of a supervisor, and on a date/ time when it is operationally feasible.

Council will provide a free collection for registered charities of up to 1x 240l bin of residual waste collected fortnightly, and 1x 240l bin of organic waste collected fortnightly. Any additional or larger bins, or more frequent collections will be charged at the standard rate. Organisations must provide their charity registration number on their completed contract to avail of this.

4.2 Bin Provision

Council will provide bins at the set rate agreed for that period. Bins must be paid for in advance of delivery. Organisations that qualify for payment exemption, can avail of 1x free of charge 140l or 240l brown bin. Residual bins are charged to all organisations at the standard rate.

Council offers 5 years warranty for bin replacement when damage has occurred as a part of standard use. Bins requiring replacement outside of the warranty period will be charged to the customer.

Customers are not required to purchase the bins directly from Council however it is the responsibility of the customer to ensure that the bin(s) purchased are compatible with Council's bin lifting equipment. Council will not be responsible for replacing or repairing any bin damaged during the emptying process that has not been supplied by Council.

Council can only supply bins available and in stock. Council no longer supply 660l containers for residual collections, however, these will be collected as a part of the contracted services if the customer has sourced the container.

Council provides and replaces damaged contracted 240l organic bins free of charge.

4.3 Terms of Service

All service recipients must complete and return a contract prior to service commencement. (See Appendix 1)

Customers must abide by the terms of the service agreement or service provision may be suspended.

Customers must treat Council staff with respect; aggressive behaviour including threatening or foul language will result in a review, the outcome of which may be service termination.

The service is invoiced biannually for all customers receiving a chargeable service. Customers must pay invoices within 30 working days, or service will be suspended until the balance is paid.

If customers terminate their service with Council with unpaid balance on their account, this must be cleared before a new contracted service can begin.

Council will provide the service as per the terms of the agreed contract. If Council cannot complete the collections on the agreed date for any reason that is not the customer's fault, e.g. access issues caused by roadworks etc., Council will either arrange an alternative collection or credit the customer account for the non-completed collection. Where Council cannot complete a collection on the scheduled day due to it being a non-collection day (e.g. Christmas Day) Council will advise customers of the alternative collection date in advance.

If the customer misses their bin collection due to non-presentation of the bin, as noted by collection crews, Council will not return to collect it. If practicable, and with agreement of operational supervisor's a return collection may be completed if paid in advance on a per bin, per collection basis.

If the customer wishes to skip a scheduled collection, this must be requested in advance and in writing to the commercial waste team, at least 3 working days prior to the scheduled collection. This collection will be credited to the customer account.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or with any change to the applicable legislation which would impact the policy or terms or service provision.

The policy review will be conducted by a waste manager.

6. Definitions and abbreviations

7. Supporting documents (including screening/assessment exercises)

MEA Commercial Waste Policy - Section 75 Equality Screening Document

MEA Commercial Waste Policy - Rural Needs Impact Assessment Document

MEA Commercial Waste Policy - Data Protection Impact Assessment Document

MEA Commercial Waste Policy - Sustainability Screening Document

8. References

[The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2013](#)

[Data Protection Act 2018](#)

[Waste hierarchy guidance | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

[The Waste and Contaminated Land \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1997](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1 Commercial Waste Collection Terms and Conditions
(2026/27)

**MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMERCIAL WASTE SERVICE
CONTRACT FOR COLLECTION OF COMMERCIAL WASTE**

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SECTION A – COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS

Please indicate number of bins/tags and frequency of collection required

Residual Waste

No. ___ 240L weekly/fortnightly/monthly @ £12.51 per bin per lift
 No. ___ 360L weekly/fortnightly/monthly @ £15.38 per bin per lift
 No. ___ 660L weekly/fortnightly/monthly @ £27.84 per bin per lift
 No. ___ 1100L weekly/fortnightly/monthly @ £33.35 per bin per lift

Organic Food Waste

No. ___ 240L fortnightly/monthly @ £9.27 per bin per lift
 No. ___ 140L fortnightly/monthly @ £6.39 per bin per lift

Up to 10 Tags (Residual Bags)

No. ___ Tags weekly/fortnightly/monthly/seasonal @ £18.79 per lift

Pre-Pay Seasonal Bin Tags (Waste Type) Residual/Organic (Please Tick)

- Seasonal Bin Tags operate as per bin pricing policy/ unscheduled collections are available on approval

Please note prices will be reviewed on the 1st April each year

SECTION B – COLLECTION POINT

Business Name* _____

Business Address* _____

Postcode _____ Tel.* _____ Email * _____

MANDATORY FIELDS*SECTION C – CUSTOMER DETAILS**Business Type: Sole Trader Partnership LLP Company PLC Community Group *(Please tick)*Limited Co. Church Charity School* *Schools, please details holidays

Company Registration No./Registered Charity No. _____

(Delete as appropriate)

Name of Business Owner/Partners/Trustees _____

(Delete as appropriate)

Business Name _____

Business Address _____

Postcode _____ Tel. _____ Email _____ Mobile _____

*(home address if operating as a Sole Trader)*Payment Method* Direct Debit (Mandate required) BACS Cheque Cash/Card *(Please tick)*Preferred contact method for service communications* Letter Electronic (E-mail/Text) *(Please tick)***SECTION D - AGREEMENT**

The customer acknowledges that s/he:

- 1) Is duly authorised to request a commercial waste service
- 2) Has read and fully understands the Conditions of the Contract
- 3) Accepts this Contract will continue on a yearly basis until such times as a termination clause has been invoked
- 4) Will observe these Conditions at all times
- 5) Accepts validity for payment (excluding Limited Company)

*Customer Signature _____ Position _____ Date _____

*Please print name in BLOCK CAPITALS _____

COMMERCIAL WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT

INTERPRETATION

- 1 In these conditions 'commercial waste' means commercial waste as defined in Article 2 of The Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 and Regulation 7 of The Controlled Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002.
- 2 'The Council' means Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.
- 3 The expressions of 'the customer' and the 'service' shall be construed in accordance with the Contract Particulars to which these Conditions are appended.
- 4 The expression 'service charges' shall mean those charges, fixed by the Council from time to time in respect of the provision of the service.
- 5 The expression 'the contracted quantity' shall mean the quantity of commercial waste specified in the said Contract Particulars.

SERVICE CHARGES

- 6 Service charges will be payable by Cash, Cheque, BACS or direct debit set up before the commencement of the Contract. Invoices must be paid within 30 days from date of issue. If payment is not received within the specified timeframe, collections will be suspended. Should the invoice remain unpaid, the Finance team will escalate the matter to Small Claims Court and the contract will be cancelled.
- 7 The service charges are reviewable by the Council at its discretion. Notice of any revision shall be sent by the Council to the customer at least one month before coming into operation.
- 8 The weekly service charge is the minimum weekly charge payable notwithstanding that the amount of commercial waste is less than the contracted quantity. This is inclusive of holiday periods. An additional charge will be made for the collection and removal of any commercial waste exceeding the contracted quantity and shall be payable in the same manner as the service charges referred to in clause 5 above.
- 9 The service charges for commercial waste are charged by container to the customer.

PROVISION OF SERVICE

- 10 Subject to all other provisions of these conditions, the Council will provide a service to the customer for the collection of commercial waste on the days indicated in the Contract Particulars (or such other days and times as may be notified to the customer from time to time).
- 11 The Council will not provide this service unless payment has been made in advance. Should payment desist for any reason Council reserves the right to terminate the Contract with immediate effect.
- 12 The Council may, during the period of the contract, introduce new methods or vary the method of containment of waste for collection e.g. introduction of prepaid bag system or use of binding tape (this is not an exhaustive list).
- 13 The customer shall ensure that all commercial waste is placed in suitable receptacle(s) as specified by the Council. The receptacle(s) must be positioned at a specified collection point and must be presented for collection by 7.30am. Customers must remove receptacles from the street immediately after collection.
- 14 Receptacles must not be overfilled, nor include sharp objects, or be filled in such a way as to restrict the closure of the lid or cause damage to the receptacle.
- 15 The customer shall not compact the waste within a container.
- 16 The customer shall be responsible for ensuring unobstructed access to the receptacle(s) for the purpose of waste collection but without causing any obstruction or interfering with the rights of any other person.
- 17 In the event of a missed collection or unsatisfactory service, the customer shall notify the Council as soon as practicable by telephoning 0300 124 5000 (Option 0) Waste Operations Helpdesk.
- 18 All waste must be removed back into your business premises until an alternative arrangement is made.
- 19 No special or hazardous waste, building rubble or other hardcore, or any burning or smoldering material, or any waste other than commercial waste shall be placed in any receptacle or presented for collection. In the event that such waste has been placed or compacted inside any receptacle the Council may refuse at its discretion to collect same, notwithstanding that the receptacle may also contain commercial waste.
- 20 The type of commercial waste presented for collection must be compatible with the Council's collection methods. If a customer has any queries relating to their waste, they should contact the Council for advice by telephoning 0300 124 5000 (Option 0) Waste Operations Helpdesk. All customers must declare a business name, owner's name, address, email and contact telephone number, for collection and invoicing purposes and notify the Council of any changes to these details.

CONTAINERS

- 21 The containers are purchased from Council and in the event that the container should be damaged or lost during the period of this agreement the customer will be liable for the cost of repair or full replacement value thereof which shall be due as a debt on demand.

INDEMNITIES

- 22 The customer shall keep the Council indemnified against any claims or damages arising as a result of any failure to observe any of their obligations contained in this Agreement.
- 23 The Council shall indemnify the customer against any loss (but not consequential loss) or damage arising as a result of any negligent performance of the service. In the event of a missed collection due to industrial action, bad weather, vehicle breakdown, civil disturbance or act of force majeure, the Council's liability will be limited to refunding or crediting the appropriate part of the service charge.

TERMINATION

- 24 The Council may terminate the Contract forthwith in the event of any failure by the customer to observe any of the conditions contained within the Contract and in accordance with provision 10 above. Customers may terminate the contract by giving 1 weeks written notice. Customers should write to: Commercial.Waste@midandeantrim.gov.uk or, Commercial Waste Team, Mid & East Antrim Borough Council, Waste Operations, c/o The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ.
- 25 Notwithstanding the provisions of clause 24, Council may adjust the terms of contract or service provision with **one month's notice**. Any in service costs caused by this will be charged to or credited from the customer's account.
- 26 Upon termination of the Contract under clause 24 the Council shall refund within twenty eight days any pre-paid charges for the period after termination.

ALTERATIONS TO CONTRACT

- 27 The Contract Particulars and these Conditions shall to the exclusion of any other terms and conditions form the whole of the terms of the Contract between the Council and the Customer and no variation thereof shall be of effect unless agreed to or notified in writing by the Council.

JURISDICTION

- 28 This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of Northern Ireland and subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Northern Ireland.

Section 75 Equality Screening

Part 1	Policy Scoping
Part 2	Screening Questions
Part 3	Screening Decision
Part 4	Monitoring
Part 5	Approval and Authorisation

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Part 1: Information about the policy

Information about the policy	
Name of policy	Commercial Waste Collection Policy.
Is this an existing, revised or new policy?	This is a new policy, that has previously been covered within a general waste collection policy, and by terms and conditions of service contract documents.
What is it trying to achieve? (<i>intended aims/outcomes</i>)	The purpose of the policy is to outline the scope of Council's provision of a chargeable non-domestic waste collection service to businesses and organisations within the Borough, and the criteria and limitations of exemptions to charges.
Are there any section 75 categories which might	All section 75 categories will be expected to benefit from this policy.

be expected to benefit for the intended policy? <i>If so, explain how.</i>	
Policy Lead Officer <i>(who initiated or wrote the policy)</i>	Service Support Manager
Who owns/implements the policy?	Head of Service (Waste)
Implementation factors	
<p>Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?</p> <p>If yes, are they <i>(please tick as appropriate)</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> financial</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> legislative</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify _____</p>	
Main stakeholders affected	
<p>Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? <i>(please tick as appropriate)</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other public sector organisations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/community/trade unions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</p>	
Other policies with a bearing on this policy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what are they? • who owns them? <p>Financial policy - Finance Team Data protection policy - Governance Team</p>	

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to signpost to S75 data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	Religious belief does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding religious belief for this policy.
Political opinion	Political opinion does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding political opinion for this policy.
Racial group	Racial group does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding race for this policy.
Age	Age does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding age for this policy.
Marital status	Marital status does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding marital status for this policy.
Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding sexual orientation for this policy.
Men and women generally	Gender does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding gender for this policy.
Disability	Disability does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding disability for this policy.
Dependants	Having dependants does not form part of the criteria for this service which is available to all non-domestic premises within this group. As such Council are not required to collect specific data regarding dependants for this policy.

If you do not have enough data to tell you about potential or actual impacts you may need to conduct a pre-consultation to generate more data and to distinguish what groups are potentially affected by your policy.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Section 75 category	Details needs, experiences and priorities
Religious belief	There is no evidence that this group has different needs or priorities in using the Council's commercial waste collection service.
Political opinion	There is no evidence that this group has different needs or priorities in using the Council's commercial waste collection service.
Racial group	This group may require information in accessible formats to support understanding of the policy.
Age	This group may require information in accessible formats to support understanding of the policy.
Marital status	There is no evidence that this group has different needs or priorities in using the Council's commercial waste collection service.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence that this group has different needs or priorities in using the Council's commercial waste collection service.
Men and women generally	There is no evidence that this group has different needs or priorities in using the Council's commercial waste collection service.
Disability	This group may require information in accessible formats to support understanding of the policy. In addition, any purchased bins will be delivered to the customer's premises, and reasonable adjustments, such as alternative collection points, can be accommodated where necessary.
Dependants	There is no evidence that this group has different needs or priorities in using the Council's commercial waste collection service.

Part 2. Screening questions

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Positive major Positive minor None Negative major Negative minor
Religious belief	<p>This policy is not considered to have any identifiable impact on any of the Section 75 categories. It is an operational policy that defines the scope of the Council's chargeable non- domestic waste collection service for businesses and organisations within the Borough, including the criteria for, and limitations to, any exemptions from charges.</p> <p>Alternative formats are available upon request to ensure accessibility of policy information. In addition, any purchased bins will be delivered to the customer's premises, and reasonable adjustments, such as alternative collection points, can be accommodated where necessary.</p>	None
Political opinion		
Racial group		
Age		
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependants		
2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious Belief		There are no further

Political opinion		opportunities identified within this policy to promote equality of opportunity for individuals across the Section 75 categories.
Racial group		
Age		
Marital Status		
Sexual Orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependents		
3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none		
Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Positive major Positive minor None Negative major Negative minor
Religious belief	No impacts on good relations have been identified in relation to this policy.	None
Political opinion		
Racial group		
4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		There are no further opportunities identified within this policy to promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

No impacts of this policy on individuals with multiple identities have been identified.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

Not applicable.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

An equality impact assessment is not considered necessary, as this screening process has not identified any adverse impacts arising from the policy.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

Not applicable.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Not applicable.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

- Yes
 No

If so, give the reasons to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

Not applicable.

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to a public authority's functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details.

Not applicable.

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 - 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Equality Screening undertaken by:	
Position/Job Title:	Service Support Manager
Department:	Place Waste
Date Completed:	16/04/2026

Equality Screening approved by:	
Position/Job Title:	Director of Place
Department:	Place
Date Completed:	16/04/2026

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

Appendix 1 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

Section 1: Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by MEABC that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Developing a dedicated Commercial waste Collection Policy, separate from the Domestic Waste Collection Policy, to provide a clearer more distinct framework for commercial waste services.

1B. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1A above relates to.

Developing a	Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Devising a Public Service	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering a Public Service	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>

1C. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1B above.

Commercial Waste Collection Policy.

1D. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The purpose of the policy is to outline the scope of Council's provision of a chargeable non-domestic waste collection service to businesses and organisations within the Borough, and the criteria and limitations of exemptions to charges.

1E.	What definition of 'rural' applies in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).
<input type="checkbox"/>	A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.
<i>Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.</i>	
Not applicable.	
<i>Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.</i>	
Not applicable.	
<i>Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.</i>	
Not applicable.	

Section 2: Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

Not applicable.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact people in rural areas more or less than people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

Not applicable.

2D.	Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Services is likely to primarily impact on.		
Rural Business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Jobs or Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Education or Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Broadband or Mobile Comms	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Transport Services or Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Health or Social Care Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deprivation in rural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not applicable.			
If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A			

2E	Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.
<p>The Council is legally required to provide this service across all areas of the Borough. Collection routes are designed to ensure comprehensive weekly coverage throughout the Borough, accommodating all residual waste collection frequencies provided by the service. Domestic waste collections are carried out on a fortnightly basis in every area, ensuring that the full service is delivered consistently under the terms of each contract, irrespective of the rurality of the premises.</p> <p>In addition, any bins purchased are delivered directly by Council staff, eliminating the need for residents to travel to Council premises and avoiding any disproportionate impact on customers in rural areas.</p>	



Section 3: Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas.

3A. Has MEABC taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

Yes No If the response is **NO GO TO Section 3E**

3B Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by MEABC to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods of Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources MEABC used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names or organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

Not applicable.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by MEABC?

Not applicable.

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by MEABC to identify the social and economic needs of people

As outlined in 2E, this is a policy relating to a statutory service that is applied across the entire Borough, removing any possible difference in service between urban and rural commercial customers.

Section 4: Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

As outlined in 2E, this is a policy relating to a statutory service that is applied across the entire Borough, removing any possible difference in service between urban and rural commercial customers.



Section 5: Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A.	Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C

5B.	Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.
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Not applicable.

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES** GO TO Section **6A**



C.	Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.
<p>As outlined in 2E, this is a policy relating to a statutory service that is applied across the entire Borough, removing any possible difference in service between urban and rural commercial customers.</p>	

Section 6: Documenting and Recording

6A.	Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by MEABC and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I can confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained, and relevant information compiled

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	
Position/Grade:	Service Support Manager (P03)
Department	Waste
Date:	13 April 2026
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	
Position/Grade:	Director of Place
Department:	Place
Date:	13 April 2026



IDENTIFYING THE NEED FOR A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) - SCREENING QUESTIONS

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is a process to help you systematically and comprehensively analyse your personal data processing and help you identify and minimise any data protection risks of a project.

You must do a DPIA before you begin any type of personal data processing that is “likely to result in a high risk.”

This set of screening questions will help you decide whether a DPIA is necessary. Please note, if there is a change to the nature, scope, context or purposes of your processing you will be required to complete this screening template again.

You will be accountable for the screening decisions you make. Therefore, it is critical that you document via “Explanatory Notes” the screening decisions you have made, providing logical reasons regarding whether to do a DPIA or not.

Section A - Project Details	
Title of Project/Plan/Policy	Commercial Waste Collection Policy
Is this an existing, revised or new project?	Creating a specified Commercial waste collection policy to standalone from the domestic waste collection policy
What is the purpose of the project, plan or policy? <i>e.g. intended aims/outcomes</i> Include any relevant background information here	The purpose of the policy is to outline the scope of Council's provision of a chargeable non-domestic waste collection service to businesses and organisations within the Borough, and the criteria and limitations of exemptions to charges.
Which MEABC Department owns or holds responsibility for this project, plan or policy?	Waste Place Directorate

Section B - Personal Data		
Does this project, plan or policy involve the processing of personal data?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If the answer to this question is 'No', you do not need to conduct a DPIA. Please proceed straight to Section E.		

If the answer to this question is 'Yes', please proceed to Section C.

Section C: Questions 1 - 13

Examples are for guidance only and should not be considered exhaustive or definitive.

For questions 1 to 13, a DPIA **MUST** be carried out if the answer is YES. Your documentation should explain very clearly whether there are any indicators that a type of processing will likely result in 'high risk'.

High risk means a risk that could result in a significant impact on individuals' rights and freedoms.

For some of these questions, the answer will only be "yes" if the processing occurs in combination with criteria (see questions 14 to 22) in the Article 29 Data Protection Working Party's European Guidelines.

Screening Questions - <u>Will the project:</u>		Yes/No	Explanatory Notes
1	Use systematic and extensive profiling or automated decision-making to make significant decisions about people? <i>e.g. using technology to analyse personal data or make decisions without human involvement.</i>	No	The service if provided to businesses that are in the Borough that complete a contract and abide by T&Cs
2	Process special category data or criminal offence data on a large scale? <i>e.g. health, medical, racial/ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, trade union or political views.</i>	No	Business information including contact information, collection information and where applicable, bank details
3	Systematically monitor a publicly accessible place on a large scale? <i>e.g. CCTV.</i>	No	
4	Use innovative technologies or the novel application of existing technologies? <i>e.g. AI-driven systems, or repurposing data for new functions.</i> <i>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</i>	No	
5	Use profiling, automated decision-making or special category data to help make decisions on someone's access to a product, service, opportunity or benefit? <i>e.g. use of computer systems to automatically decide, or by using sensitive data to decide whether someone can get access to a service provided by Council.</i>	No	
6	Carry out profiling on a large scale?	No	

	<p><i>Profiling is using personal data to assess or predict things about a person, e.g. job performance, financial situation, interests, reliability, behaviour, location, or movements.</i></p> <p><i>To decide what constitutes 'large scale' you should consider and include information on factors such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of individuals concerned - volume of data - variety of data - duration of processing - geographical extent of processing. <p><i>Also see examples in ICO's guidance of processing/ projects they consider to be large scale.</i></p>		
7	<p>Process biometric data?</p> <p><i>e.g. Fingerprints, facial/voice recognition.</i></p> <p><i>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</i></p>	No	
8	<p>Process genetic data?</p> <p><i>e.g. DNA or data from ancestry/genetic testing</i></p> <p><i>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</i></p>	No	
9	<p>Combine, compare or match personal data from multiple sources?</p> <p><i>e.g. proof of life enquiries, receiving information from external organisations.</i></p>	No	
10	<p>Process personal data without providing a privacy notice directly to the individual?</p> <p><i>Signposting to a privacy notice on the website is sufficient to satisfy this requirement.</i></p> <p><i>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</i></p>	No	
11	<p>Process personal data in a way which involves tracking individuals' online or offline location or behaviour?</p> <p><i>e.g. are you collecting information about where people go or what they do? [online activity or GPS].</i></p> <p><i>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</i></p>	No	
12	<p>Process children's personal data for profiling or automated decision-making or for marketing purposes, or offer online services directly to them? e.g. running an online library service for children and using their reading history to suggest new books.</p>	No	

13	Process personal data which could result in a risk of physical harm in the event of a security breach? <i>e.g. revealing home addresses of people in a protected role.</i>	No	Some businesses are registered to, and have collections from the owner's home address.
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Section D:

Article 29 Data Protection Working Party's European Guidelines

When considering if your processing is "likely to result in high risk," you should consider the [European guidelines](#). These define **nine** criteria of processing operations likely to result in high risk. In most cases, a combination of two factors indicates the "need" for a DPIA. Although this is not a strict rule.

Therefore, if the answer to any of questions 14 to 23 is "yes" a DPIA should be "considered."

Your documentation should explain very clearly whether there any indicators that a type of processing will likely result in high risk.

Will the project:		Yes/No	Explanatory Notes
14	Involve evaluation or scoring? <i>e.g. a recruitment panel scoring candidates against set criteria.</i>	No	The service is elective and offered to all businesses that complete a contract and abide by T&Cs
15	Involve automated decision-making with legal or similar significant effect? <i>e.g. an automated system decides to assign a fixed penalty notice without human review.</i>	No	
16	Involve systematic monitoring? <i>e.g. CCTV, use of software to monitor staff emails</i>	No	
17	Involve sensitive data or data of a highly personal nature? <i>e.g. processing health information or information about neighbour disputes</i>	No	Financial data (account information) forwarded to Finance Dept. for businesses opting to set up direct debits
18	Involve data processing on a large scale? <i>e.g. electoral roll data for all residents</i>	No	
19	Involve matching or combining datasets? <i>e.g. matching HR records with payroll data or combining customer data from different platforms, e.g. combining someone's Te</i>	Yes	Location will be matched to Pointer data for Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) to be added to route sheet for crew to find premises to complete collection. Access to personal data is restricted

	<i>Dogs record with their planning portal application.</i>		on a need-to-know basis, with crews viewing only limited location details.
20	Involve processing of data concerning vulnerable data subjects? <i>Note: this does not always mean a traditionally considered vulnerability, e.g. staff may be considered to be vulnerable data subjects due to the imbalance of power between employer and employee.</i>	No	
21	Use innovative technological or organisational solutions? <i>e.g. AI.</i>	No	
22	Prevent data subjects from exercising a right or using a service or contract? <i>e.g. restricting access to an online application unless identity verification is completed, restricting someone's right of access, etc.</i>	No	Service is restricted except for businesses and organisations that require collections within MEA boundary.
23	Process personal data which could result in a risk of other forms of harm (e.g. emotional, psychological, financial) in the event of a security breach? <i>e.g. details of a disciplinary investigation or complaint, bank details, etc.</i>	No	Account information is provided by organisations that are required to pay for the service, and opt to pay by direct debit. This is processed and managed by Councils' Finance dept, similar to other transactional activity within Council.

Section E: Findings

Does this screening indicate that a DPIA is required? Yes No

Note: Data Protection legislation and ICO guidance state that you should seek your DPO's advice when you need to do a DPIA. If this box is ticked 'yes', please complete the full Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) template on the P-drive.

Has a DPIA been recommended? Yes No

You may wish to conduct a DPIA even if the screening indicates that one is not required. A DPIA is a useful tool to consider any impacts and/or risks involved in processing personal data.

Final Comments

Please outline anything you feel relevant to the decision whether to conduct a DPIA or not.

On some occasions your project may require the processing of a minimal amount of personal data, e.g. for administrative purposes only. Use this space to outline any such circumstances.

The processing involves limited personal data relating to business owners for the provision of a paid commercial waste service. Financial data is processed in line with standard Council arrangements for chargeable services. This activity will be covered by a Customer Privacy Notice to be published on the Council website. -
Information Governance Officer

DPIA Screening completed by:

Please detail level of Council Officer completing this screening and forward for further sign off

Position:	Service Support Manager	
Department:	Waste Place	Date: 20/04/2026

Information Governance review:

This screening can be reviewed by any member of the Information Governance team

Position:	Information Governance Officer	Date: 05/05/2026
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DPIA Screening Approval:

This should be the Information Asset Owner, which is usually the HoS/AD

Position:	Director of Place	
Department:	Place	Date: 05/05/2026

Date created
05/05/2025

Lead author
Amy Miller

Organisation
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

New report

Commercial Waste Collection Policy

Our Climate, Environment and Social Assessment has been designed to help make sustainable development more readily understood by examining the everyday work taking place within an organisation.

Commercial Waste Collection Policy

Completed by	Completion time	General result
Amy Miller	7 minutes	No known impact

- Key**
- Long term negative impact
 - Short term or limited negative impact
 - No known impact
 - Short term or limited positive impact
 - Long lasting positive impact



Tips & Advice

We've identified several factors in your assessment that could have an impact. Here are some advice and tips.

Has this work considered climate change at a strategic level?

- Climate affects nearly every aspect of our lives, from our local towns to our transport infrastructure, from what clothes we wear to where we go on holiday. It has a huge effect on our livelihoods, our health, and our future.
- It is vital that all news plans and policies strategically consider and outline the climate-related factors associated with their work at the earliest stage.
- Identifying and planning for climate-related risks and impacts is a necessity for any project and failing to do so can have severe negative implications for the local environment and community.
- The LGA has several resources available that are specifically designed to help councils and other local authorities take strategic action against climate change. These can be found [here](#) 'Climate change resources' (Local Government Association)

Health & Wellbeing

Has the work considered how it can help increase or improve the physical and emotional mental health and well-being of residents, employees, and the public at a strategic level?

- It is essential that all projects authorised by local authorities align themselves with the wider existing frameworks within Northern Ireland.
- "Making Life Better" is the current strategic framework for public health in Northern Ireland, it aims to ensure that "All people are enabled and supported in achieving their full health and wellbeing potential. The aims are to achieve better health and wellbeing for everyone and reduce inequalities in health."
- All council-authored projects should aim to improve community health and well-being at a strategic level, this is emphasized in the "Making Life Better" framework, "Public policies should contribute to protecting and improving health and wellbeing, and public bodies should work in partnership with local and interest group communities."
- Public bodies should focus their health and wellbeing strategies around the 8 core themes laid out in the framework (where possible):
 - Giving Every Child the Best Start
 - Equipped throughout Life
 - Empowering Healthy Living
 - Creating the Conditions
 - Empowering Communities
 - Developing Collaboration
- More information on improving community health and wellbeing within your project can be found [here](#) Making Life Better - Strategic Framework for Public Health | Department of Health (health-ni.gov.uk)

Education & Engagement

Will the work utilise workshops and public information points to engage with the community throughout development to ensure that residents and stakeholders needs are recognised and considered?

- Engaging the public when developing new policies and strategies is an important part of the process, if it is not done well, it can damage the reputation not only of the specific policy or strategy, but of the organisations developing it.
- Effectively engaging with citizens can bring several benefits to the policy/strategy development process.
- Community engagement and participation makes for stronger policy.
- Community engagement helps ensure that all voices are heard.
- Community engagement and participation builds trust and improves accountability between stakeholders.
- Community engagement and participation is ethical.
- Using workshops, consultations, information points, and regular meetings to establish a dialogue between your project and the local community ensures community involvement and satisfaction.

How will this work impact children and young people and address the UN Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC)?

Glenarm Regeneration Plan Sub-Committee Meeting

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Wilson Room, Larne Town Hall, Larne

26 March 2026 – 2:30pm

Attendees: Ald G Mulvenna (Chair), Ald M Morrow, Cllr R Lawrence, M Hyndman (MH), S Kirby (SK), D Wall (DW), F Wilson (FW), J McVeigh (JMcV), E McMullan (EMcM) and K Steele (KS)

Apologies: Cllr G McKeen, Cllr A Clarke, A McMullan, L Morrow, L Cowan, A Moran and B Bolgar

Notes: B Thompson

No.	Action	
1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES	
	The Chair (Ald Mulvenna) welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr G McKeen, Cllr A Clarke, A McMullan, L Cowan, L Morrow, A Moran and B Bolgar.	Noted
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	None.	
3	MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2025	
	The minutes were received as an accurate record. Proposer – Mrs F Wilson Seconder – Ald M Morrow.	Noted
4	KEY MATTERS ARISING	
4.1	Update on Quarry JMcV updated members on the two areas proposed for development - the upper site for 50-60 dwellings and the lower site (former Mill) for commercial development. The upper site requires approval of DfI Roads and for this to go ahead the housing needs to be reduced to 10 dwellings due	Noted

Glenarm Regeneration Plan Sub-Committee Meeting

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No.	Action	
	<p>to the significant cost to realign the road, which Council would have to incur. This would include 25% affordable housing to comply with guidelines of the development.</p> <p>The lower site being the former Mill site, proposed existing Mill structure to be demolished (except for the chimney), move site lines back and this could be open for multipurpose development.</p> <p>Proposals will be brought to Council in May, for either Council to solely develop site; work jointly with a Developer; or put out to market for disposal for development.</p> <p>JMcV referred to some ongoing legal issue with the Antrim Estate around the Council and ownership of site.</p> <p>The revised planning application will be open to a public consultation before proceeding.</p> <p>Action Point JMcV to seek confirmation on the access road to and from the upper site.</p>	JMcV
4.2	<p>Eglinton Barn – Issues Remaining EMcM provided an update to members advising that everything has now been carried out and has been handed over to Facilities Maintenance to check for any defects.</p> <p>Action Point EMcM to raise the ongoing issue of the roof leaking and report back.</p>	Noted EMcM
4.3	<p>Update on Eglinton Yard/Barn and Harbour Regeneration Designs Council have recommissioned the Design Consultants for phase 2, and they are currently working on the detailed design to move to appointing a Contractor. The Community Hub element of the design will be taken right through to managing a build, subject to Peace Plus funding. EMcM circulated a copy of the design which includes 1x accessible toilet facility available externally and another 1x internal; plant room; and windows adjusted to allow 1x solid wall for TV/screen for presentation purposes.</p> <p>Concerns were raised by Community Members highlighting that the 2 pubs are up for sale, and the current hall is leased from one of the pub owners. This may leave the Community Group with no room to meet in as the village is at capacity,</p>	Noted

Glenarm Regeneration Plan Sub-Committee Meeting

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No.	Action	
	<p>and nothing would be available, free of charge to carry out community activities on a daily basis until the new hub would be completed.</p> <p>Discussions ensued around the size of the new hub, which is similar in dimensions to the current hall being used. Storage space would be required and additional space to allow indoor bowling and table tennis activities. The Committee would like to see the most recent designs and it was agreed for Council Officers to arrange a follow up meeting with Glenarm Village Committee on site to discuss further.</p> <p>Action Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) EMcM to forward an emailed copy of design to members of Committee for information. b) JMcv to seek advice from the Capital Works team around alternations at this stage. c) Council to organise a meeting to further discuss the design of the community hub. <p>The new Harbour Master's Office designs have not progressed due to any road realignment required would have an impact on this development.</p>	<p>EMcM JMcv EMcM</p> <p>Noted</p>
4.4	<p>Signage</p> <p>EMcM gave an update on the signage and advised that Council are awaiting a response from the Housing Executive to erect the entrance sign, from the Ballymena side, at the road junction opposite the cemetery.</p>	Noted
5	UPDATE ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	
5.1	<p>Update on Shared Island Fund Activities</p> <p>Members noted that all funding opportunities were being actively pursued, and the possibility of smaller projects may be more successful.</p> <p>LC has successfully received funding for a more accessible interpretation for Gobbins, and a bigger project linking into signage.</p>	Noted
5.2	<p>Capital Plan FY 2026/27 Update</p> <p>JMcv updated Members on the Capital Plan element for Glenarm, adding that there was some money available for Glenarm but not as much as originally envisaged.</p>	Noted

Glenarm Regeneration Plan Sub-Committee Meeting

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No.	Action	
	Council will continue to work on the Eglinton Barn with the intent to have projects ready should funding become available.	
5.3	<p>PeacePlus Application EMcM referred to the Connexus funding which is 100% funding towards the delivery of a Connection Hub and covers support costs, IT infrastructure and contribution towards the rental costs over a period of 3 years. This will involve linkages with Sligo and Leitrim to see how they run their existing Hubs.</p>	Noted
6	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	<p>Members raised the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 3 summer seats which had previously been removed had yet to be installed along the Bar mouth area. Mrs F Wilson to organise addition of plaques to seats. • 3 dangerously deteriorating 'Britain in Bloom' summer seats and posts, located along the slipway side of the Rowing Club to be removed and replaced with new plastic seats. • The Rowing Club shed was painted and a sign 'Welcome to Glenarm Marina' has been painted over. Can this writing be redone. <p>Action points JMcV/Ald Mulvenna to refer the above issue to Parks for attention/action.</p>	Noted JMcV/ GM
7	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	The next meeting to be held on Thursday 25 June 2026 in the Wilson Room, Larne Town Hall.	BT



Council/Committee: Environment and Economy Committee
Date: 27 May 2026

Report Title: Economic Development Activity Report

Publication Status: Open

Author: Ursula O'Loughlin, Assistant Director
Approver: Ryan Black, Director of Growth and Major Projects

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on current Economic Development activity.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Economic Development Function includes five key strategic areas including:
- Skills and Entrepreneurship
 - Business Growth
 - Investment and Funding
 - Investment and Place
 - Town Centre Development

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. The following update is to provide Members with an overview across the five key operational areas within the Economic Development Team:

NAME OF ACTIVITY:	UPDATE:
Investment and Funding	
PEACEPLUS Programme	A separate report is provided to this Committee.
Rural Development Programme	<p>Under the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 85 applications were received. 72 applicants were issued with a Letter of Offer with a total value of £313,007.48.</p> <p>62 claims have been reviewed by Council staff and are either paid, or are complete and do not require any further action by Council.</p> <p>1 claim is being audited by Department of Environment, Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DAERA) external auditor and will be paid on completion.</p>

	<p>4 applications have been provided with extensions and are due to be submitted in May and June.</p> <p>5 applications have been withdrawn.</p>
Skills and Entrepreneurship	
<p>Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Currently Recruiting</p> <p>For further details on all programmes, please email: LMP@midandeantrim.gov.uk</p>	<p>Reignite - The Reignite 50+ Programme is a 10-week structured support programme to help men aged 50+ prepare for work, re-enter employment or build their confidence and skills.</p> <p>Greenworks - This Academy will offer participants an opportunity to build key competencies in a range of accredited courses, develop their employability and personal skills and progress to employment or self-employment. Participants will take part in a range of core skills training and elective specialist training based on their key areas of interest.</p> <p>Construction and Scaffolding – This Academy offers participants the opportunity to gain skills, accreditation and access to employment in the construction sector.</p> <p>PROPEL – This programme is for young people aged 18 – 25 to support the development of employability skills and work readiness through a range of activities to reduce barriers to employment.</p> <p>Craft to Commerce – This programme is designed to support hobby/craft enthusiasts to develop their products into business opportunities. The programme will be delivered during June with a special showcase event scheduled for Saturday 27 June 2026.</p> <p>Security Industry Authority Academy – Will provide residents who are interested in a career in the Security Industry with the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge via Door Supervision Training.</p> <p>Forklift Academy – This 2-day training is carried out to approved standards and uses a combination of theory and practical sessions to provide an understanding of forklift trucks, best practice and safe systems of work.</p> <p>Merchandising Essentials Programme is a structured 6-week training and development programme designed to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of individuals working in merchandising and retail environments. It supports both new starts and existing staff to understand merchandising principles, improve</p>

	<p>performance and increase sales through effective product presentation and stock management.</p>
World of Work Update	<p>The Primary and Post-Primary World of Work Programme is well underway, with the majority of activities now completed. By the programme's conclusion in June, the Council will have delivered 54 activities in partnership with schools and local employers, highlighting career opportunities within the Hospitality and Tourism sectors and engaging approximately 470 students from schools across the borough. Companies involved in the programme include Galgorm Resort, Adair Arms, Tullyglass House Hotel, Papa Browns, Harbourview Hotel, MEA Tourism Team and Tourism NI.</p> <p>Papa Brown's, in partnership with Roddensvale School Leavers, have organised an Afternoon Tea event at the school on 22 May 2026. The event will be attended by several dignitaries, including the Deputy Mayor, two Deputy Lieutenants representing the Antrim Lieutenancy, and representatives from Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and the School's Board of Governors.</p>
Activate Your Curiosity	<p>The final three events of the 25-26 Activate Your Curiosity Initiative will take place in June 2026. The Soapbox Science event will take place in People's Park, Ballymena, on Friday 12 June 2026, from 11am to 2pm. This free, drop-in event will see inspiring female researchers from Queen's University step onto their soapboxes outside the Pavilion and Play Park, to share their science with passers-by. The event is being tailored especially for primary school pupils, offering an engaging and accessible introduction to real-world science.</p> <p>On 17 June and 25 June Year 9 STEM Events will take place in Larne Leisure Centre and Seven Towers Leisure Centre respectively with each event inviting 150 students to a day of hands on, inspirational workshops. Companies taking part in the events include Royal Academy of Engineering, Teva, QUB, NI Space Office, EPUKI, Saint Gobain and AECOM.</p>
Making A Mark – European Year of the Normans	<p>Officers are working with colleagues in Culture, Arts and Regeneration teams, DfC Heritage Environment Division, Northern Regional College and the Jean Jooris Vocational School in Dives Sur Mer, Normandy on the Making a Mark project. This project will include a range of activities to promote and develop a legacy of heritage skills in Mid and East Antrim as part of the regeneration</p>

	<p>of Carrickfergus and the European Year of the Normans. Making the Mark will include 4 Skills projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making A Mark – Heritage Skills Northern Regional College (NRC) Students 2. Heritage Skills Exchange – NRC and Jean Jooris Vocational School, Dives Sur Mer 3. Creative Careers Takeover Day – Year 12-14 students 4. Community Heritage Skills including the creation of a Carrickfergus quilt/tapestry. <p>Officers are currently working to secure the budget to deliver the programme.</p>
<p>Go Succeed Engage and Foundation 2025-26</p> <p>For further information or to sign up please visit:</p> <p>www.gosucceed.com</p>	<p>All 11 Councils exceeded their respective targets for undertaking Engage Diagnostics. In MEA 309 were carried out in the year to 31 March against a target of 259. 4 Council Areas exceeded their target for 'sign offs' (participants completing the Engage pillar). In MEA 258 individuals completed against a target of 240, equating to 108% which was the highest achievement rate recorded by any Council.</p> <p>262 Business Plans were approved across both the Engage and Foundation pillars (77 more than the target of 185) resulting in an estimated 157 jobs created, 46 more than the statutory jobs target of 111.</p> <p>Delivery of the 2026/27 Go Succeed programme is underway with 37 new MEA client accounts created during April. A range of masterclasses covering topics which include Business Finance for Start Ups and Generating Impactful Social Media Content has been scheduled with more to be added throughout the year, for further details and registration please see Business Events & Networking in NI Go Succeed.</p>
<p>Investment and Place</p>	
<p>MTF 'Making the Future' Network (MTF)</p>	<p>The Gallaher Trust-funded Manufacturing Academy which supports pathways into manufacturing employment for economically inactive individuals concluded on 24 April 2026 with a celebration event at Northern Regional College (NRC) who delivered the course. Six participants completed the programme and are now progressing to interview stage with MTF companies.</p> <p>The MTF Chair, David Watson hosted a panel session at a Lean Cluster NI event in April at the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown, attended by approximately 160 delegates from across NI. The panel which included representatives from local companies Moore Concrete</p>

	<p>and demanu highlighted the work of the MTF Lean Network.</p> <p>The MTF feasibility study, funded through Invest NI's Cluster Acceleration Programme (CAP), is nearing completion and will inform the future direction of the Network beyond 2026 including its potential role as part of an NI-wide advanced manufacturing supercluster. Initial recommendations in the report include establishing MTF as a limited company with Directors drawn from MTF industry members. Engagement on this is ongoing with updates to be provided to Members in due course.</p>
i4C Innovation and CleanTech Project	<p>The i4C addendum has been approved by the Department for the Economy (DfE) Permanent Secretary and is awaiting final approval from the Department of Finance (DoF) which is anticipated in late May. Regular engagement with the ICT team, WH Stevens and Oxford Innovation, the managing agent for i4C continue to progress the project to the next stage.</p>
iLAB Pilot Project	<p>i4C will include an iLAB/makerspace facility, with £250k of funding available from Belfast Region City Deal for equipment for the pilot iLab under the i4C Contract for Funding. The pilot iLAB will be located in temporary premises in Ballymena ahead of permanent relocation to i4C.</p> <p>Funding for fit-out costs, programming costs and running costs are not covered under Belfast Region City Deal and alternative sources of funds for these core aspects of the pilot project including from the Local Economic Partnership are being explored.</p> <p>Officers recently identified additional opportunities for 100% funding for the iLAB pilot under PEACEPLUS Investment Areas 1.1 (Local Action Plan), 1.2 and 6.2 (both Change Makers fund). The funding could cover capital fit-out costs, programming, and overheads with the 6.2 call including funding to run cross border programmes in Ballymena and Donegal, in partnership with Údarás na Gaeltachta, Council's partner in a recent unsuccessful "Innovate Green" project under the PEACEPLUS Innovation stream.</p> <p>Funding of up to £100k is available per project with Officers currently working on proposals for submission before the deadline of 30 June 2026.</p>
HyTech NI Project	<p>Members have previously been advised that the £15m HyTech NI project funded, via the NI Complementary Fund has been appraised by Invest NI on behalf of the Department for the Economy.</p>

	Officers continue to work with funders and partners to design, develop and deliver the project in partnership with Queens University Belfast, University of Ulster and industry to secure economic benefits to the Borough.
Investment Promotion and Opportunities	Officers are actively engaged in activities to secure investment to the Borough including engagement with potential investors. Officers recently hosted a visit from a GB based engineering company seeking 5,000 – 10,000 sq ft of industrial space ready for fit-out, presenting on a range of Council supports and networks and showing the company several different property options available across the Borough.
(BCRPP) Belfast City and Region Place Partnership	Through Council's sponsorship of the BCRPP programme, two Officers attended the UKREiiF Investment Conference in Leeds from 19-20 May 2026 as part of the BCRPP delegation, which included public and private partners, to promote the Borough's investment proposition and engage with potential investors. The delegation was joined by the Minister for Communities, Gordon Lyons MLA on Tuesday 19 May. Officers participated in the Belfast Region showcase, Northern Ireland and Scotland investor showcases, and seminars on logistics and industrial development, and green energy and infrastructure.
ECOS Hub	<p>EcOS Hub is currently at full occupancy, with several existing tenants expressing interest in any office space that may become available within the building.</p> <p>A new co-working space is now fully operational with three new users utilising the services.</p> <p>A new social media campaign is being planned for the summer months, given the significant impact previous campaigns have had on lead generation for meeting rooms and co-working facilities.</p>
Business Growth	
Go Succeed Grow & Scale	<p>Delivery of Go Succeed Grow and Scale mentoring for 2026/2027 has commenced, with provision for 102 businesses to receive support by 31 March 2027 with 12 businesses successfully onboarded to date.</p> <p>Officers will commence work to carve out a series of Masterclasses for the year ahead based on business needs and Officers will also start to work on the development of Mid and East Antrim tailored programmes.</p>
Amplify Business Support Programme	The Amplify Business Support Programme was developed in partnership with Michelin Development Ltd, offering micro and small businesses, primarily in

	<p>manufacturing with tailored mentoring support for those falling into the following two categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses who have maximised the available hours of support on Go Succeed and are unable to return until the 1-year post support period has ceased and have a clear need for further support to continue with their growth plans • Businesses who are not seeking growth support but have a need to address issues in business performance and need intensive mentoring support to regain position and remain sustainable. <p>The programme aims to support up to 30 businesses by December 2026, there are currently 14 businesses receiving support.</p>
Augmenting Business' Growth potential via Stakeholder Supports	A separate report has been tabled.
<p>Invest NI Partnership Working</p> <p><i>Update on Council's local level partnership work to increase the pipeline of businesses capable of access Invest NI financial assistance.</i></p>	<p>Ambition to Grow call opened on Monday 12th January and closed on Friday 30th January. The programme targets businesses that are not currently Invest NI clients, with successful applicants becoming Invest NI clients and receiving a grant offer of up to £45,000 to assist with new employment and growing sales in new markets.</p> <p>Council's Business Client Managers worked closely with Invest NI to promote the opportunity and offered tailored support to potential applicants. From the latest call 8 applications had been submitted from local businesses. 2 of these businesses have received a Letter of Offer with a total value of £90,000, with a third business likely to receive an offer post March.</p> <p>4 local businesses were also successful in their bid to Call 2 of Invest NI Business Innovation Grant; leveraging a total of £44,150.00 between them. In Call 3, 6 applications were made from local businesses with outcomes expected in May.</p> <p>Further information on partnership working is included in the Stakeholder Support report tabled separately.</p>
Balmoral Show	A separate report will be tabled at a further meeting to update on the 3 businesses that traded at Balmoral Show during 13 – 16 May 2026.
Digital Transformation Flexible Fund	Call 6 of the fund is currently in applicant project phase. All projects must be completed and all claims for call 6 must be submitted by 4pm on 23 rd June 2026. There are currently 7 MEA businesses in this call; of which 5 are in

	<p>the Ballymena area, 1 located in the Larne area and 1 located in the Carrickfergus area.</p> <p>Call 7, is expected to be the last call within this fund. This call has completed its Expression of Interest (EOI) phase and a total of the 28 EOIs were received from within the council area. From those 21 businesses were successfully invited to make an application, the breakdown by area in applications as follows: Ballymena area – 14, Carrickfergus area – 4 and Larne area – 3. Deadline for Full applications was of 1 May 2026.</p>
Town Centre Development	
Carrickfergus Artisan Market	<p>The Artisan Market held on 2 May was organised as a specialty 'Paws and Produce' dog themed market which took place in Market Place. The activity included 17 Artisan vendors alongside face-painting, walkabout dog characters and a caricaturist. The market was very well attended with high footfall throughout the day. The market received positive feedback from attendees and vendors. The next market will take place outdoors in Market Place on Saturday 6 June.</p>
Business Support	<p>Ongoing business engagement takes place via the Town Centre Newsletters which are bespoke to each town.</p> <p>Daily support for town centre issues and business support for retailers continues to be provided.</p> <p>A pilot content creation scheme is being delivered in Larne to support up to 10 town centre businesses with an existing social media presence. Each business will receive a free, one-to-one session with a professional content creator at their premises, resulting in either one 60-second reel or two 30-second reels to enhance their online promotion. The initiative aims to strengthen digital visibility, helping businesses showcase their offer and attract new customers.</p> <p>The Town Centre team is currently collaborating with the Grants team and Environmental Health to develop a proposal for a new grant scheme aimed at enabling businesses to deliver their own events. This initiative remains in the research phase, with ongoing work to determine how the scheme could be effectively designed and rolled out to support local businesses.</p>
Town Centre Animation Activity	<p>A new programme of animation activity for Spring/Summer/Autumn is currently being planned for each town commencing in June.</p> <p><u>Ballymena</u> Many events will be joint ventures with Ballymena BID</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 fun Fridays commencing on the 24 July – inclusive family events throughout the town • Ballymena birthday fun (Ballymena 400) Tuesday 25 August • Ballymena Fashion Show & Health & Wellbeing Week • Halloween Family event <p><u>Carrickfergus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artisan market held on 6 June, 4 July, 1 August, 5 September, 3 October • Themed summer event aligned to market day • Live music 1st Saturday of every month • Halloween Event <p><u>Larne</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel good Fridays, live music and street entertainment in Broadway, commencing July • Summer Carnival - August • Horticultural & Food Demos • Halloween Family Event
Student Pitch Challenge	<p>A PowerPoint detailing the students ideas have been attached at Appendix 1 as requested at April's Environment and Economy Committee. These are the actual slides produced by the teams that participated in the competition and show their innovative suggestions for reviving the Town Centres.</p>
Town Centre Revamp Refresh Grant	<p>The Revamp and Refresh scheme provides grant of up to 80% of eligible costs, capped at £1,000 per business. A total of 106 applications were received, of which 13 were deemed ineligible due to factors such as location outside the town centre boundary, incomplete submissions, or pre-purchased items.</p> <p>82 Businesses with a grant allocation of £68,577.68 completed their project.</p> <p>An evaluation of the programme will be carried out and a report outlining the outcomes will be presented to a future committee.</p>
Pavement Cafe Furniture Project	<p>Hospitality businesses across Ballymena, Carrickfergus, and Larne town centres have been invited to apply for pavement café furniture to support outdoor dining during the summer months. The available provision includes bistro tables, chairs, parasols, and hedging barriers.</p> <p>An expression of interest form has been issued to eligible businesses, with procurement and distribution of the furniture to follow the closure of the application process.</p>

	All participating businesses will be required to have a valid pavement café licence in place prior to receiving the furniture.
Encouraging Footfall	Cross Departmental development work is ongoing to identify opportunities to encourage footfall and rejuvenate the Town Centres.
Vacancy Audit	The Town Centre team, working with the Planning team, has successfully carried out a vacancy audit in each of the town centres. The data collected will now be analysed to present the figures for 2026.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications: All Economic Development activity is undertaken within the approved estimates budget with additional funding levered from a range of key Stakeholders and Government Departments.
- 4.2. Human Resources: Economic Development staffing resources are included within agreed budgets.
- 4.3. Equality Screening: Economic Development activities are equality screened as required in line with Letters of Offer requirements from co-funders
- 4.4. Assets: No direct asset impact.
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: All Economic Development activity is aligned with the People and Place corporate objectives within Council's Corporate Plan.
- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: Any rural needs implications will be identified using the Council's screening process

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. The report is presented for noting.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Note the updated Economic Development Activity report.

7. Appendices/Link

Appendix 1 - Student Pitch Challenge Competition

Student Pitch Ideas

- Larne Grammar School
- Slemish Ballymena
- Cambridge House Grammar School
- Ballymena Academy



Larne Grammar School – Bazaar 360

- The idea is a proposed Market in the vacant 'Iceland building'.
- Market will commence on the same day every other week.
- Bazaar 360 is one of a kind!
- Bazaar 360 increases footfall to other businesses through pedestrian traffic.
- It can contain multiple stalls, entertainment and attractions to interest all age groups.
- There is beyond delicious food!
- Business opportunities brings more sellers. Therefore, rotating stalls and keeping Bazaar 360 boredom-free!
- The cost of the unit would be £20,000 per annum. In addition to the base rent, a service charge of approximately £7,920 plus VAT applies to this unit. It is positioned as a retail unit within the centre

Target market for Stalls would be:

- Foreign nationals
- Small growing minority groups (1.5% of Larne have a ethnic background)
- Visitors & Day-Trippers

Target market as customers:

- People who live in the surrounding area (aged 18-65+)
- People interested in local culture and creativity this includes families, retirees and young professionals
- Small traders who will want low-risk selling spaces, community support and exposure by footfall
- Local community and voluntary groups will use the space for events and workshops to encourage customers to invest.
will commence on the same day every other week.



BAZAAR 360

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Larne Grammar School – Bazaar 360 (Slide 2)

Revenue

- Stall hire (15-18 stalls) = £60 PER DAY = £1080 per day from stall hire (18 stalls)
- Grants: Help with launch and regeneration aspect including;
- MEA “Revamp and Refresh” programme- Covers up to 80% of the cost of eligible internal works or items.
- Shop Front Revitalisation- Covers up to 80% of costs for improving the external appearance of the shop front.
- Department for Communities Investment in Town-Centre Initiatives (MEA)-Up to a maximum of £5,000 (covering 80% of project costs).
- Invest NI- Business Innovation Grant (BIG): Offers grants from £5,000 to £20,000 (at a 70% grant rate) for innovative ideas or services.
- Sponsors - Local Shops (supermarkets), Ferry, Travel Agents, Banks etc.
- Dot.com app- free way to gain attraction and local support
- Offer “Sponsored stage”, Kids activity zone, Banners, Flyers, Social Media Shoutouts



Larne Grammar School – Two Peas in a Pod



- The idea is Garden Rooms situated in Broadway or the Pop-up Park
- The Target market for these would be social enterprises, local businesses, Artisan Traders, Tourists or Businesses who want to test the Market.
- A fee would be charged for the rent of the pods.
- 5 pods are anticipated to cost £58,400 with £8,000 expected for Electricity and Rates
- This would bring new and fresh ideas into the Town Centre to see which group/business is in the pods for that week.
- How will this increase footfall?
 - P - PRESENCE/PLACE
 - E - EVER CHANGING
 - A - ARTISTS/TALENT
 - S - STAY

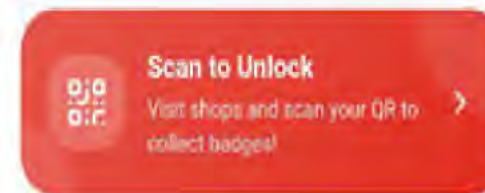
Larne Grammar School - DotComm

- DotComm is a FREE loyalty app for Town Centre Businesses
- The App highlights nearby shops including retail, hospitality and service sectors.
- Businesses can upload offers or events on to their profile on the app.
- The hosts of the app can set challenges and reward points for the customer whereby they scan a QR code at each shop to earn a reward.

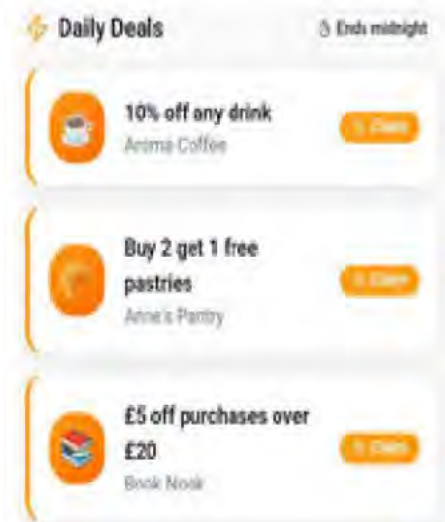
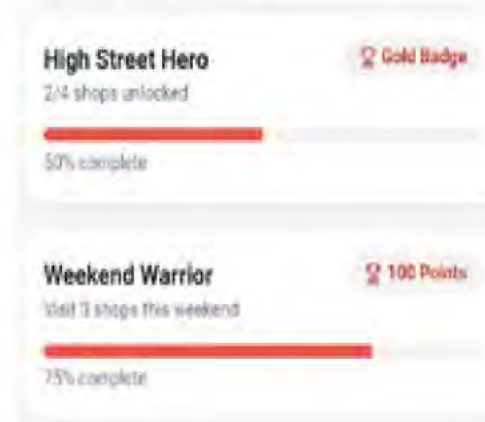
Promotion:

- Deals and special offers, e.g they can get special offers in-store for using the app.
- Use of badges and rewards, like a game.
- Collectables, fear of missing out.
- Could be trendy to the younger audience, may get a lot of attention.
- Sponsor a local event to raise awareness for the application

Explore & Earn



Active Challenges



Larne Grammar School – DotComm (Slide 2)

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Costs:

- AI development - £15/m to £30/m
- Infrastructure + cloud - £7.50/m to £35/m
- Large Administrative fees
 - Apple = £75/y,
 - GPlay = £25
- Estimated Total Start-up - £150 to £350
- Ongoing Running - £4000 to £6000

Business Innovation Grant(BIG):

Delivered by Invest NI, £5000 - £20,000

(70% of our funding)

for SMEs.





Cambridge House Grammar – Strike City

- The Idea is a 'Strike City' arcade and bowling alley all in the one place.
- With 8 bowling lanes with booths and bowl assisters, to arcade games and ticket prizes. Along with hot food, snacks and drinks for all ages!
- The arcade has a wild selection of games for all ages with a kid's section for younger ones
- You can collect tickets off every game, when your done you can either take your tickets to the prize stand or get a receipt with the number of tickets collected which can be saved for later.

Target Audience

- Strike city accommodates for all ages, with different arcade game levels to bowling assisters.
- People that enjoy spending quality time with family or friends or just want something to do over a break or a weekend, strike city is the perfect place to be.
- With food and drinks available (hot and cold) it's the perfect place for a day out or an evening with friends or family.

Cambridge House Grammar – Strike City (slide 2)

Location:

- Strike City will be located in the old Primark in the Tower Centre, beside B&M and Sports Direct.

Cost:

- The total breakdown cost for strike city as follows:
- To buy the unit of old Primark = £100,000 - £300,000
- -To put in bowling lanes, lighting seating, scoring systems and decor = £230,000 - £470,000
- — Arcade and ticket machines = 25,000 - £75,000
- —food and drink stand = £20,000



As the cost of strike city is quite high, we would ask for the mayor and council to put funding towards Strike City or intend to do fundraising to bring down the cost.

Cambridge House Grammar – Rock and Roll

- The Idea is a 'Rock and Roll' Family fun activity centre.
- The centre would include Rock Climbing, Karaoke Booth, Café, Arcade, VR Machine, Photo Booth.
- The proposed location for this would be the Vacant Primark building located in the Tower Centre.
- The Total cost to get this running would estimate at £182,300
- In Ballymena young adults may feel like there isn't a lot of exciting or new things to do
- Nowhere for people to have birthday parties
- An Arcade would attract lots of children, teenagers and young adults and this would bring in footfall from other towns.



Cambridge House Grammar – Ballymena Local Finds

- The Idea is a monthly market showcasing the talent of independent businesses, local artists and the community including Family entertainment, Pop-ups, Local business' Stalls, 15% discount for in store shopping.
- The market will be held in the Braid Arts Centre. Local businesses will have the opportunity to have a stall showcasing their products
- Vouchers for 15% in certain shops in town will also be available for those who attend the market to help support local business. These are valid for 24 hours
- A vast range of entertainment will be provided to accommodate families with children of ranging ages, this will include; A soft play area, A games corner and a movie screen

Costs:

- Individuals will pay £3.50 for entry
- Family passes are available for £10
- Children under 5 go free
- Advertising will cost £200 each month on varying social media platforms where we will promote the businesses attending
- The Braid Art Centre is renting out to us for free
- All profits will be reinvested into the Ballymena community.



Cambridge House Grammar – Ballymena Alive

- The Idea is a monthly themed town event events including Music, food, pop-ups, youth activities and Stalls for local / Artisanal businesses
- Social-media driven to make Ballymena an EXPERIENCE and bring back Ballymena's atmosphere

EXAMPLES: Street food festivals, Live music stages, Seasonal Markets

Costs:

- To include all equipment, staffing, marketing and insurance, the total start up costs would range from £3k – 6k.

Target Market

- The Target market would local shoppers, out of town shoppers, families and small businesses of every industry.

Long term Future

- Busier streets
- Happier Businesses
- Youth involvement
- Unforgettable Atmosphere

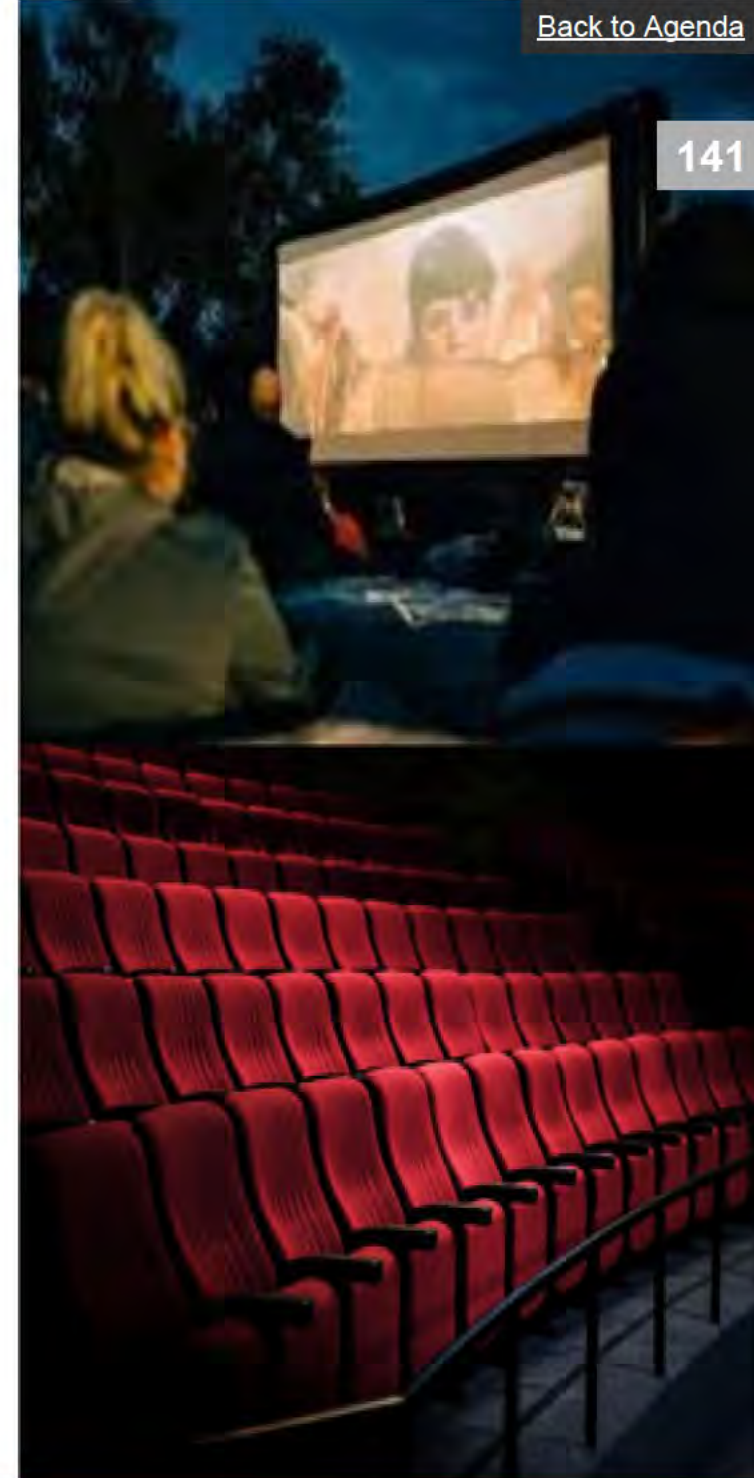


Slemish Ballymena – Power Pack

- The Idea is an outdoor cinema night at the Tower Centre Car Park.
- An outdoor cinema night could be a great idea for Ballymena , bringing people back together into the town
- It would be a great atmosphere every other Saturday , bringing people together for a relaxing even after a stressful week for families and individuals proving a new appeal to Ballymena life.
- Every other Saturday a throw back movie will be played from the 90s and 2000s to bring a nostalgic feel back to the town.

What will be there?

- Food stalls and trucks will be available such as:
 - Chippy vans
 - Sugar coated donuts
 - Syds ice cream truck [a Ballymena favourite]
 - Popcorn machines
 - Hot dog stand



Slemish Ballymena – Power Pack (slide 2)

- Outdoor cinema night will start summer 2026
- A summer outdoor cinema night in the tower centre car park will be a boost community spirit and provide a fun , accessible activity for everyone.
- It's a chance to enjoy the warmer weather, support local businesses and create a memorable experience that bring funs to a summer in Ballymena
- Located in the tower centre car park as its central to Ballymena it's the perfect flat surface for setting up a large screen and seating

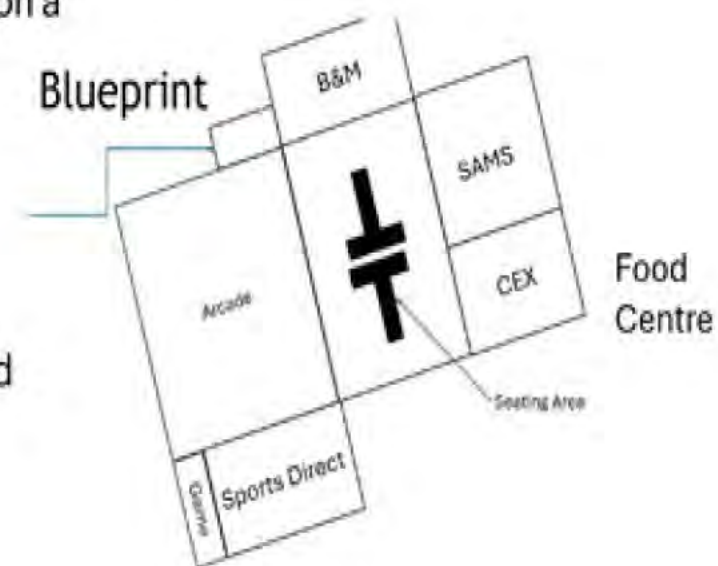
Cost:

- Screen and projector renting-£500-£1000 depending on size
- Movie licensing-£150 - £500 depending on film and distributor
- Sound system-£200-£400
- marketing/flyers-£100 made through Canva
- permits-£50
- Staff/volunteers-£200
- Miscellaneous extension cords-£50
- Comfy blankets and fairy lights-£100-£2000



Slemish Ballymena – The Apprentices

- The idea is 'Seven Towers Arcade'
- Entertainment in Ballymena is lacking slow decline in the Tower Centre shops with less customers, Mostly older audiences. Eg. Shopping only nothing to visit.
- Safe & Vibrant: A dedicated space for youth and families, providing a reason to visit on a "rainy Tuesday."
- The Local Spirit: A destination reflecting our town's independent and welcoming character.
- The Impact: Boosting the Local Economy
- Increased "Dwell Time": Social gaming keeps visitors in the town centre longer.
- The Multiplier Effect: Group spending drives secondary revenue for nearby cafes and shops.
- Economic Growth: Potential to boost localized group spending by up to 50%.



Why an arcade?

- Missing entertainment
- Not much arcades near
- Fills empty units
- Stress free zone



Slemish Ballymena – The Apprentices (slide 2)

Financial Overview: Transforming the Former Primark Unik

- Total Project Estimate: £450,000 – £600,000.
- Infrastructure & Fit-Out (£150k): Transitioning from retail to high-capacity leisure.
- Specialized "Category B" works: Neon lighting, soundproofing, and HVAC upgrades.
- Heavy-duty electrical rewiring to support 60+ high-performance machines.
- Core Equipment (£250k): Premium VR pods and motion-base racing simulators.
- Latest-gen arcade cabinets and ticket redemption systems.
- Operational Runway (£100k): Six-month buffer for business rates, service charges, and initial staffing.



Slemish Ballymena – Ballymena Nights

- The Idea is a Ballymena Pop-up Cinema and Culture nights
- Once a week an empty shop unit or public space in Ballymena town centre is turned into a pop-up cinema and culture venue, showing films local documentaries, sport highlights, or hosting talks and performances in the evening.

Places for this idea:

- Peoples park
- Open areas in shopping centres
- Empty shop units
- The showgrounds
- Community centres

**BALLYMENA
NIGHTS**

Lights on, Towns alive



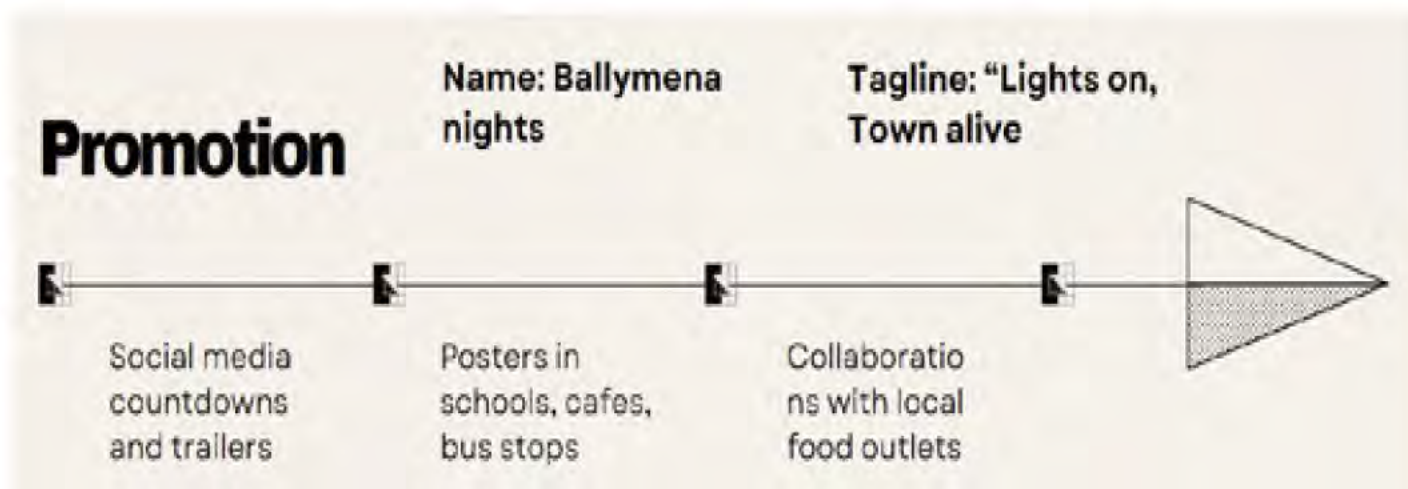
Slemish Ballymena – Ballymena Nights (Slide 2)

Target Market

- This idea will bring on so many different age groups such as Teenagers and young adults
- Family fans and community groups which is extremely important | this day and age as I myself find a lot of things going on in town not catering to my age range .

Cost

- Costs can be reduced with sponsorship, council support, local volunteers and gifted supplies.
- With equipment, venue hire, licensing, projection and seating set-up, this would cost £7,000



Ballymena Academy– BA-1

- This idea is to Elevate digital and physical marketing strategies by harnessing the power of social media, festivals and Interactive events to reinvent Ballymena.
- By investing in promotion through Facebook groups, local radio and newspapers, posters in shops, leisure centres and schools as well as festivals and shows.
- Promoting Ballymena through Branding and social media will encourage more footfall into the Town
- Encouraging Revitalisation of Ballymena Shops will attract new businesses.

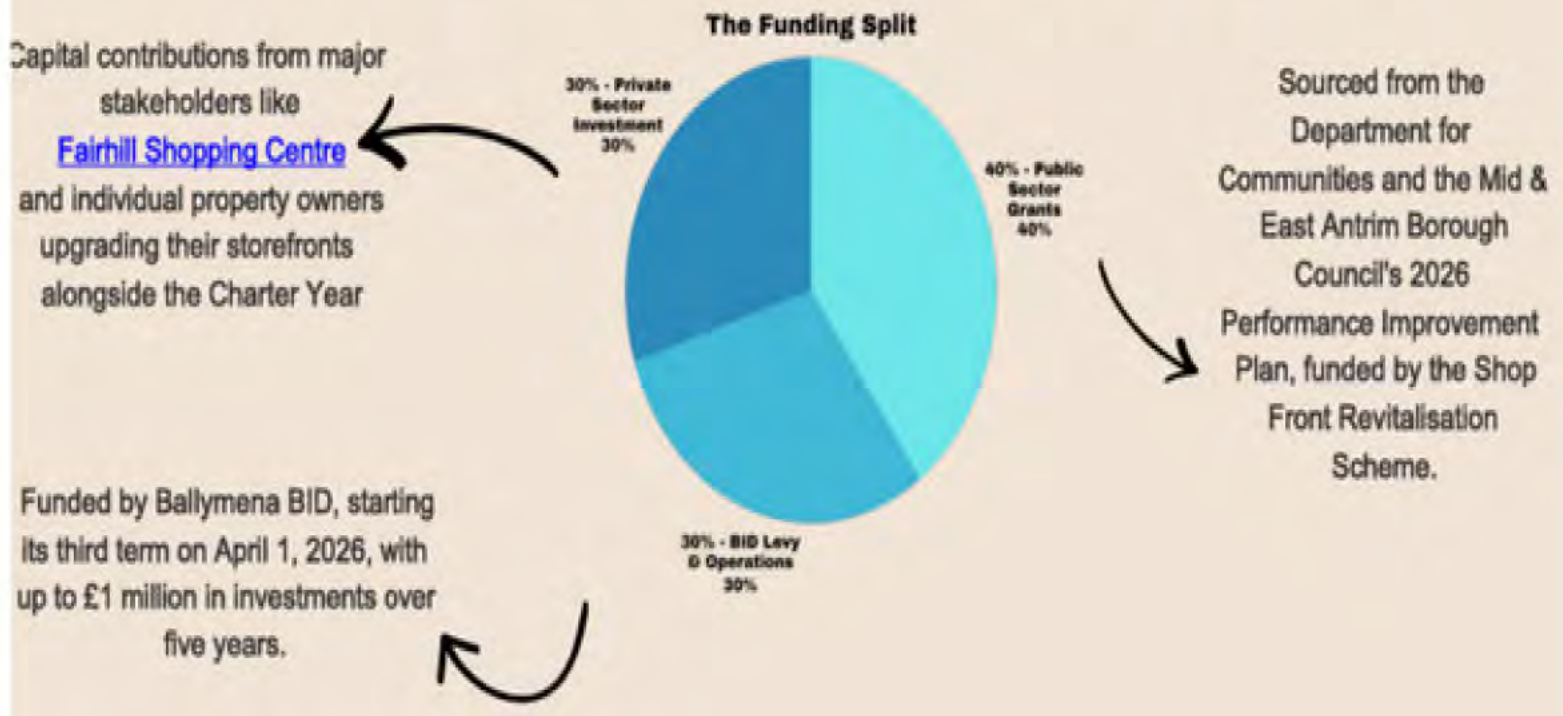
TARGET MARKET

- Teenagers
- Senior Individuals
- Young Adults



Ballymena Academy– BA-1

BUDGET, FUNDING & SUCCESS METRICS



Ballymena Academy– BA-2

- The idea is **EVENTS AND MARKETS** – A regular festival, night market and cultural celebration to give residents a reason to visit that cannot be replicated online
- During research we found that there aren't many shops that aren't online, so this is why a market would be beneficial for Ballymena.
- The Target demographic is Teenagers and Adults – they can bring their friends, children and parents to the events.
- If we had night markets and regular festivals, which is an event that cannot be done online – this brings more people into the centre of Ballymena.



Cost

- Market stall costs vary significantly based on location, type, and popularity, typically ranging from £20–£100 per day for standard markets, up to £200–£500+ per day for premium or festive events. This would cost over £1500 as you want a variety of markets



Ballymena Academy– BA -3

- The Idea is a 'Peoples Market'. This would be a Seasonal Cultural Market located on Greenvale Street.
- The market would include Local Traders & Cultural Groups, Food, Crafts, Art & Displays, Live Music & Family Activities
- Four Events Per Year: Christmas, Halloween, Easter & Summer

- Why it works?
- Events People Expect - Christmas, Halloween, Easter, Summer
- Encourages Repeat Visits
- Multiple events throughout the year
- Creates Tradition & Identity
- Anticipation and excitement
- Regular Busy Periods
- Predictable footfall for businesses
- Supports Town Centre Regeneration



Ballymena Academy– BA -3 (Slide 2)

Breakdown of Costs:

- £20 Stallholder Fee
- Covers Basic Event Costs
- Waste collection
- Street management
- Organisation & safety
- Minimal Setup Costs
- Self-Sustaining Model
- Low Financial Risk

Target Market

- Families
- Weekend activities & day trips
- Tourists & Visitors
- Cultural experiences
- Local Residents
- Community engagement
- Young People
- Social & cultural events



Council/Committee:	Environment and Economy Committee
Date:	27 May 2026
Report Title:	PEACEPLUS Update
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Ursula O'Loughlin, Assistant Director
Approver:	Ryan Black, Director of Growth and Major Projects

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the implementation of the Mid & East Antrim PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1. The PEACEPLUS allocation for Mid & East Antrim is €5,848,008 under the PEACEPLUS Measure 1.1 for Co-Designed Local Community Peace Action Plans for the period up to 2028 across three key themes:
 - Community Regeneration & Transformation
 - Thriving & Peaceful Communities
 - Building Respect for All Cultural Identities

The programmes developed will result in 5,848 participants engaged in cross community activities across Mid and East Antrim.

- 2.2. The Action Plan was developed via a co-design process with a wide range of stakeholders and community groups to ensure the needs of the community across the borough are met. The goal is to deliver shared solutions to social challenges and maximise the impact of the endeavours of local community and voluntary sector organisations.
- 2.3. The Action Plan will engage people from different socio-economic and community backgrounds with special consideration given to under-represented groups including women, those living with a disability, those particularly impacted by the legacy of the Conflict, our ethnic minority communities and young people as detailed in Appendix 1.
- 2.4. The Environment and Economy Committee at their meeting on 2 March 2026 recommended the approval of the PEACEPLUS Action Plan Economic Appraisal, which was agreed at March Full Council, allowing for the timely procurement of external suppliers.
- 2.5. The PEACEPLUS Partnership continues to meet regularly with the next meeting scheduled to take place during June 2026.



3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. The delivery of the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan is led by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council through a partnership approach:
 - 3 large and 10 small capital projects will be delivered within Communities with Council as Lead Partner.
 - Council will undertake 8 large revenue based procurements (Plot to Plate; Women's Programme; Youth Programme; Sports Cluster Programme; Who Do We Think We Are Programme; Veteran's Programme; It's Our MEA Too Conscious Inclusion Programme; It's Our MEA Too All Backgrounds Programme) through appointing Delivery Agents to deliver these programmes.
 - 6 Project Partners namely, Ballymena Business Centre, Carrickfergus Enterprise, LEDCOM Larne, Turning Point NI, Positive Carrickfergus and Larne YMCA will deliver the Community Social Enterprise Hubs Programme and the Strengthening Communities Programme.
- 3.2. Project partners are now commencing project mobilisation, including recruitment of staff and confirming activities that will be delivered as part of the project.
- 3.3. The tender for a professional consultancy team to support the capital build elements of the project is currently out for procurement.
- 3.4. Tenders for delivery of the revenue projects are currently under development with the Plot to Plate Programme currently being advertised, with the remaining programmes following over the coming months.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications: The budget for PEACEPLUS Measure 1.1 for Co-Designed Local Community Peace Action Plans expenditure is €5,848,008, covering 100% costs of the Action Plan programmes and staffing.
- 4.2. Human Resources: The staff position of Project Assistant was advertised in February 2026 and a staff member commenced employment on 14 May 2026. This will bring the project team to 2 full-time and 3 part-time staff members. One further recruitment is required to support the delivery of the Strengthening Communities Programme activities and recruitment is likely to commence in the coming weeks. The posts are all approved by the PEACEPLUS Programme with costs fully recoverable.
- 4.3. Equality Screening: The requirements of the PEACEPLUS Programme include collection, processing and some limited sharing of personal and sensitive data of participants accessing the programme of activities. A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system has now been created in line with



the Equality Screening and Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) presented at the last Environment and Economy Committee meeting.

- 4.4. Assets: No direct asset impact
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: The PEACEPLUS Programme is aligned with the corporate objective relating to the People Theme where programmes will be developed to encourage good relations, enhance community pride, and reinforce a strong sense of belonging in our communities.
- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: The Action Plan is being delivered in line with the Rural Needs and Environmental screenings previously provided to the Environment and Economy Committee.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. The Monitoring and Evaluation system is now in the testing phase before rolling out to project partners.
- 5.2. Project partner training took place on 13th May to include procurement, communications, GPDR and reporting.
- 5.3. Recruitment for the Project Coordinator post will commence in the coming weeks. This post holder will assist partners in the development and implementation of project activities, ensuring complementarity whilst avoiding duplication with current Council support.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Note the progress made to date in delivering the PEACEPLUS Action Plan and the proposed way forward.

7. Appendices / Link

Appendix 1 – PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan Programmes

Appendix 1 – PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan Programmes

The three main activities/thematic strands centre around three core themes:

1. Local Community Regeneration and Transformation
2. Thriving and Peaceful Communities
3. Celebrating Cultures and Diversity

These will be implemented through local community partnerships and supported by Council over the 3-year project delivery timeframe. The activities within the Action Plan will span the entire Borough area.

Delivery includes:

Community Social Enterprise Hubs (Capital Element)

This Programme will support the capital costs and establishment of 3 shared spaces - 1 shared space in the centre of each of the three main towns in the Borough, in which a range of community and social enterprise activities can then take place.

3 x community social enterprise hubs to be refurbished

Total: 600 participants

Community/Sports Facilities Major Capital Works Programme

This Programme will support the capital development costs of 3 new or improved strategically significant shared spaces and facilities across the Borough (1 per legacy Council area), to enable increased physical activity, health, and wellbeing opportunities, as well as to facilitate meaningful cross-community interaction to occur. The 3 strategically significant community/sports facilities will be provided with up to £200,000 capital to maximise greater participation by all communities within each legacy Council area.

Total: 600 participants

Community/Sports Facilities Capital Enhancement Programme

This Programme will revitalise communities from across the Borough, by bringing underused facilities into community use and/or refurbishing existing community/sports facilities. Capital improvements of up to £30k per project to include measures to e.g. improve energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, health and safety, modernisation, or access (this list is not exhaustive). 10 x improved community /sports facilities across the Borough

Total: 500 participants

Community Social Enterprise Hubs (Programme Support Element)

This Programme will support the capital costs and establishment of 3 shared spaces - 1 shared space in the centre of each of the three main towns in the Borough, in which a range of community and social enterprise activities can then take place.

Strengthening Communities Programme

The Strengthening Communities Programme aims to develop area-based programmes in each of the legacy Council areas, for shared learning, cooperation, and celebration between local community and voluntary organisations.

Each programme will be community-led and tailored to the specific skills and needs of the local area, fostering collaboration, social cohesion, and capacity-building. Partners will work closely with Council in the design and delivery.

Total 800 participants

Events and Festivals Programme (sub-part of Strengthening Communities)

Each area to provide 4 events or festivals and facilitate related volunteer training.

Delivery to include facilitating, coordinating, and leading on community festivals, events, and celebrations organised with and supported by local organisations.

Total 60 participants

Social Enterprise Development Programme (sub-part of Strengthening Communities)

A social enterprise programme bespoke to the aspirations of the community and voluntary sector groups in the area - this could be themed around facilities; makers; service providers etc.

Total 60 participants

Plot to Plate Programme

This Programme is designed to engage community organisations, volunteers, and individuals across the Borough through a variety of approaches, maximising participation opportunities, including participation from schools in some elements. This core health and wellbeing programme encourages outdoor activities, improved nutrition knowledge, and promotes sustainability and horticulture's wider mental health benefits.

Total 230 participants

Women's Programme

This aim of this Programme is to bring women from a variety of areas and backgrounds together to share experiences and build confidence and skills. It will involve initially engaging with individuals and women's groups within the Borough to identify what they want and need from the programme to help shape the content.

Total 210 participants

Youth Programme

The Youth Programme will fully engage with young people to co-design and implement a comprehensive program to build cultural awareness, promote inclusion and empathy, and provide intercultural activities across the Borough.

Total 220 participants

Who Do We Think We Are Programme

This Programme aims to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in creative activities that explore the history of their local communities and the meaning of the word 'community' itself.

Through various artistic mediums such as poetry, storytelling, art, song, and drama, participants will delve into their shared histories, legends, and personal stories, fostering a deeper sense of belonging and understanding of their communities.

Total 898 participants

Veteran's Programme

The aim of this Programme is to increase social inclusion among individuals and families from the services background. The primary focus of the Programme will be about building trust, relationships, and confidence.

The Veteran's Programme will include facilitating a number of events in a 'safe space' where the participants are most comfortable but will progress beyond this by collaborating with other organisations.

Total 270 participants

Sports Cluster Programme

The Sports Cluster Programme will facilitate sports clubs and physical activity groups from across different communities throughout the Borough to come together and develop multi-sport programmes. The goal of the Programme is to build physical literacy, core skills, and lasting relationships between clubs from different sporting and very often community backgrounds.

Total 420 participants

It's Our MEA Too – Conscious Inclusion Programme

The Programme aims to improve access for people with different abilities and neurodiversity rather than creating separate programmes. It is designed to promote and support conscious inclusion across all community activity.

The Programme will initially involve working with individuals, disability groups and organisations to identify the themes that will be promoted through the programme i.e. autism, visual impairment, learning disability, learning difficulty, age related issues, emotional health etc.

Total 500 participants

It's Our MEA Too - Inclusion Of All Backgrounds Programme

This Programme aims to build, improve, and sustain relationships between minority communities (including newcomers, refugees, asylum seekers, ethnic minorities, and neurodiverse individuals) and the wider resident community in the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council area. The Programme aims to address issues of trust, prejudice, and intolerance while increasing levels of understanding, integration, and civic participation among these groups.

Total 480 participants



Council/Committee:	Environment and Economy Committee
Date:	27 May 2026
Report Title:	Augmenting Business Growth through Stakeholders Supports
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Ursula O'Loughlin, Assistant Director
Approver:	Ryan Black, Director of Growth and Major Projects

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the supports that Officers have leveraged for local businesses through stakeholder working relationships to augment their growth and development during 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

2. Background

- 2.1. Members are updated monthly within the Economic Development Activity report tabled at Environment and Economy Committee of the ongoing work with local and regional stakeholder support organisations to help augment local businesses growth potential.
- 2.2. Council's Business Client Managers take a holistic view of a business to understand their requirements and growth potential. Officers navigate the Northern Ireland business support ecosystem on behalf of the business to map out and advise on potential intervention, utilising one or a combination of the following routes:
 - a) Match the business to relevant business growth support available from Council led programmes to include the Go Succeed Service, Amplify Business Support Service and open Grant programmes.
 - b) Engage internally with colleagues to refer businesses to support initiatives which includes apprenticeship and training opportunities under the Labour Market Partnership, engagement in Making the Future Network and support to locate workspace provision, including retail and tourism opportunities.
 - c) Identify alternative suitable support from external organisations; to avoid duplication and to source complementary follow-on support as typically no one intervention addresses all business needs where a blend of support is required.

This approach ensures businesses get access to the right support at the right time and acknowledges the Borough's reliance on micro sized businesses (accounting for 91% of the business base) who typically face



significant time constraints as owner/managers navigating daily business operations.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

3.1. Council have a long established Stakeholder Reference Panel which has proved beneficial in leveraging additional investment for our local companies. Membership of the Stakeholder Reference Panel includes relevant key contacts within the following organisations:

- Invest Northern Ireland
- Intertradelreland
- Local Enterprise Agencies: Ballymena Business Centre, Carrickfergus Enterprise and Local Economic Development Company Ltd
- Further Education/Higher Education Colleges: Northern Regional College, South-Eastern Regional College, North-West Regional College and Belfast Metropolitan College
- Michelin Development Limited
- Universities: Ulster University and Queen's University
- Innovate NI
- Hartree Foundation NI
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive

In addition, as and when required Officers liaise with organisations such as Labour Relations Agency, Business in the Community NI, International Synergies to name a few.

3.2. A review of the stakeholder supports levered for Mid and East Antrim businesses from the Stakeholder Reference Panel concluded that there was a total of 82 referrals made by Officers to 11 stakeholder organisations of which 41 (50%) progressed to accessing either financial support for job creation, further growth through innovation or export related activity, creating new revenue streams, skills development support or innovation accreditations.

3.3. The total value of support levered during 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 was £425,353.61. A breakdown by stakeholder is provided in Appendix 1.

3.4. As part of the ongoing work to expand the Stakeholder Reference Panel, Officers identified an opportunity to work with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) following a presentation to Councils regarding the lack of contractors applying for works associated with the Disabled Facilities Grant.

3.5. Officers designed a support programme to assist construction sector businesses to develop the necessary skills, experience and knowledge of the NIHE and Radius Housing tender processes. As a result, 9 businesses



were supported, of which to date 2 businesses have won contracts totaling £167, 653.61 and a further 5 businesses are awaiting confirmation of award of contracts.

- 3.6. The ongoing close working relationship between Invest NI and Council plays a crucial role in driving the pipeline of new businesses to Invest NI. In addition to the referral's information appended, following signing of Invest NI's new Data Sharing Agreement with Council, they have been able to confirm that since 2023, 24 out of 28 companies that are new to Invest NI from the Borough have previously been supported by Council's Business Client Managers and referred to Invest NI. This strong conversion rate (86%) highlights the value of aligned working, where early-stage support through Council helps prepare businesses to successfully transition into Invest NI's client base.
- 3.7. Council's Business Client Managers also work with the three Local Enterprise Agencies promoting their support and hosting key business events in their venues to maximise reach. Events this year included Invest NI business drop-in clinics, the Artificial Intelligence Collaboration Centre roadshow and Mid and East Antrim tailored Digital Transformation Flexible Fund workshops.
- 3.8. Officers hosted a Stakeholder recognition and insights session with the Stakeholder Reference Panel on 25 March 2026 to acknowledge the strong working relationships. The session showcased real business case studies where positive impact has been achieved together, endorsing the need for stakeholders to continue to harness positive productive relationships. Discussions also took place on how we can build upon success; and there was strong appetite from stakeholders to partner up to run local events throughout the Borough.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications: A maximum budget of £1,000 has already been accounted for within Economic Development budget to host 6 monthly insights sessions with the Stakeholder Reference Panel.
- 4.2. Human Resources: Staffing resources are in place through Economic Development budgets. Council's Business Client Managers manage all aspects of the Stakeholders Reference Panel.
- 4.3. Equality Screening: No equality implications have been identified.
- 4.4. Assets: No direct asset impact.
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: The support offered aligns with Council's Place corporate objective supporting



the development of a sustainable, dynamic and prosperous local economy that helps businesses to grow and promote the Borough as an ideal place to do business for both new and existing companies.

- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: Business support is offered to all urban and rural businesses across Mid and East Antrim with any rural needs implications to be identified using the Council's screening process.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. Officers will continue to develop the Stakeholder Reference Panel through actively identifying opportunities to bring new stakeholders on board.
- 5.2. From the stakeholder recognition session, it has been agreed to progress:
- Hosting 6 monthly insights and information sharing workshops with stakeholders.
 - Working with partners to determine opportunities to partner together to run business support events in the Borough.
 - Working together on joint Public Relations opportunities and case studies, championing the collective efforts to strive for a connected ecosystem to support Mid and East Antrim businesses and the associated benefits.
- 5.3. This working relationship will support the Local Economic Partnership. (LEP) projects delivery, by ensuring participating businesses access follow on or complementary supports to bring added value to the borough's business base.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to:
- (i) Note updates on the significant supports leveraged for local businesses through stakeholder working relationships to augment their business growth and development during 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

7. Appendices / Link

Appendix 1 - Stakeholder Support Leverage 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Appendix 1 - Stakeholder Support Leverage 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

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Stakeholder	No of referrals made	No of referrals accepted (confirmed by stakeholder)	Value	Support types
Invest NI	6	4	£44,150.00	Business Innovation Grant (BIG)
Intertradelreland	1	1	£133,250.00	Acumen VI, Business Explore, Equity Advisory Service, Innovation Boost, Supply Chain & Sourcing Service, Go Tender, Trade Export Pathway, Trade Hub, We Grow IT, We Scale
NRC	28	13	£79,400.00	InnovateUS, Productivity Booster
NWRC	4	0		InnovateUS
SERC	1	1	£900.00	Connected Programme – mini project
Michelin Loan Fund	9	0		Potential Loans
Belfast MET	1	0		Potential InnovateUs
DfC	3	0		Potential Job Start Scheme
Queen's University	1	0		Potential Post Graduate Placements
Innovate NI	23	20	Innovation Accreditations	Innovation Accreditations
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	5	2	£167,653.61	Contractors were supported with bespoke tendering supports to win procurement contracts for Disabled Facilities Grants
Total	82	41	£425,353.61	



Council/Committee:	Environment and Economy Committee
Date:	27 May 2026
Report Title:	Ballymena Business Excellence Awards
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Ursula O'Loughlin, Assistant Director
Approver:	Ryan Black, Director of Growth and Major Projects

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Elected Members for the costs associated with sponsoring the Ballymena Chamber of Commerce & Industry's 2026 Ballymena Business Excellence Awards.

2. Background

- 2.1. At the May 2024 Environment & Economy Committee, Members were presented with a report outlining sponsorship approvals for business awards events that have taken place across Carrickfergus, Larne and Ballymena in previous years.
- 2.2. It was noted within the report that although the Larne and Carrickfergus Business Awards have previously been bi-annual events, organised and managed by JPI Media, the Ballymena Awards have been held annually and are organised by Ballymena Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- 2.3. The report detailed the sponsorship financial arrangements where £12,000 is set aside annually in the rates with £6,000 per event to sponsor the Larne and Carrickfergus events on a biannual basis along with £6,000 annually for Ballymena Business Awards.
- 2.4. A further report was presented to the Environment & Economy Committee in December 2024 outlining a proposal from JPI Media for the Larne Business Awards to take place during the 2024/2025 financial year. Elected Members approved the sponsorship request with the event taking place in March 2025 at the Ballycastle Hotel.
- 2.5. A sponsorship request from Ballymena Chamber of Commerce & Trade for funding the 2025 Ballymena Business Excellence Awards was tabled at the April 2025 Environment & Economy Committee. This was approved by Elected Members, and the event took place in the Tullyglass Hotel on 23 October 2025. It was reported that the event was the best to date, with a record number of entries and 474 people attending.



- 2.6. As previously noted, the Carrickfergus Business Awards have been held biannually and therefore would have been due to take place during the 2025/2026 financial year.
- 2.7. The Carrickfergus Business Awards ceremony scheduled for March 2024 was unfortunately cancelled (due to low uptake) and was replaced with a celebration lunch. JPI Media therefore did not progress with seeking sponsorship to run a larger event in Carrickfergus during the last financial year.
- 2.8. Officers had previously entered discussions with key stakeholders across the legacy Council areas of Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Lame to scope interest in having one Business Excellence awards event rather than three separate events. Feedback received by the event organisers, stakeholders and businesses at that time proved that they were not in favour of one event.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

3.1. Ballymena Business Excellence Awards 2026 Sponsorship Proposal

On 17 March 2026, the Interim Chief Executive received a proposal from Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce & Industry requesting that Council consider the principal sponsorship package for the Ballymena Business Excellence Awards 2026 to be held in the Tullyglass Hotel on the evening of Thursday 22 October 2026.

- 3.2. The aim of the Awards is to recognise and reward the contribution that the Ballymena businesses contribute to the local economy. It also provides an opportunity to showcase the businesses in the Ballymena area and to promote the strong partnership that exists between Council and the Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The Awards are open to all businesses in the area, large or small, commercial, manufacturing and also the service sector. There is an award category suitable for every business sector.
- 3.3. This year's awards will also be an opportunity to celebrate Ballymena's 400 year anniversary, a significant milestone for Ballymena.
- 3.4. Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce & Industry has formally invited Council to be the principal sponsor for this event at a cost of £6,000. The principal sponsor package will include the following:
 - The guarantee that there will only be one principal sponsor.
 - Council logo prominently displayed on the Awards brochure, tickets and menus.
 - A welcome message from the Mayor in the Awards brochure.
 - Double centre page feature in the Awards brochure.



- Immediate press coverage on agreement of this proposal.
 - Pre-launch coverage in the local papers, social media and Q Radio.
 - Sponsorship of Commitment to Ballymena Award.
 - Social media, press and radio coverage in the run up to the Awards.
 - The opportunity to display PR material at the launch and at the Awards.
 - Two tickets for the Mayor and two further Council guests at the President's table.
 - The opportunity for the Mayor to speak at the Awards Ceremony.
 - Follow up social media, press and radio coverage.
 - Coverage on the Chamber website.
 - Extensive coverage in the Chamber Newsletter Awards Special.
 - A free table of ten at the Gala Event.
- 3.5. The event also brings tangible benefits to the Ballymena area. It raises the profile of local businesses and the profile of the local area. With over 470 people attending each year, the preparations for the event have put much needed cash into the tills of local retailers, barbers, hairdressers, suit hire shops and beauticians. Additionally, there will be a charity raffle planned during the event.
- 3.6. Larne & Carrickfergus Business Excellence Awards
Officers are currently in discussions with event organisers, key stakeholders and business representatives to firm up the plans for the organisation of both the Larne and Carrickfergus awards. A paper will be presented to the Environment & Economy Committee in coming months. It is envisaged that the Larne event will take place this financial year and Carrickfergus in early 2027/28.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications – Costs associated with sponsoring the Business Excellence Awards event will be met through the Economic Development budget.
- 4.2. Human Resources – No staffing requirements to support this event; however, the town centre team and communications team will help generate interest and encourage local businesses to enter for an award.
- 4.3. Equality Screening: As Council are not the organiser of the event, equality screening is not required.
- 4.4. Assets: No direct asset impact
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: The Business Awards are aligned with the Council's People and Place corporate

objectives in that they recognise and celebrate local talent, enterprise and entrepreneurial success, while promoting Ballymena as a vibrant, competitive, and attractive location to live, work and invest.

The Integrated Economic Strategy for Mid & East Antrim prioritises the promotion of enterprise and entrepreneurship. In the current economic climate, where local businesses continue to navigate cost pressures and changing market conditions, supporting initiatives such as the Business Awards demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to the local economy. The event provides an important platform to acknowledge innovation, determination, and success across the business community, while reinforcing a clear message that Council values the contribution businesses make and is committed to championing their continued growth and development.

- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: All businesses in Ballymena both urban and rural are encouraged to apply for recognition.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. Council to approve the sponsorship request received from Ballymena Chamber of Commerce & Industry for the Ballymena Business Excellence Awards to be held on 22 October 2026.
- 5.2. Council Officers to support Ballymena Chamber of Commerce & Industry to promote the event to the local business community.
- 5.3. Elected Members to consider attendance at the event and inform Member Services of their intention along with any dietary requirements.
- 5.4. Council Officers to bring back a proposal to Committee outlining the detail of both the Larne and Carrickfergus events.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Approve the principal sponsorship request from Ballymena Chamber of Commerce & Industry for £6,000 towards the 2026 Ballymena Business Excellence Awards event.
 - (ii) Members wishing to attend can express their interest through Members Services.
 - (iii) Note that a further report will be tabled to consider delivery of the Carrickfergus and Larne Business Awards.

7. Appendices / Links

N/A



Council/Committee:	Environment and Economy Committee
Date:	27 May 2026
Report Title:	Department for Communities Town Centre Revitalisation Programme Update
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Eamon McMullan, Capital Regeneration Manager
Approver:	John McVeigh, Assistant Director

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an update on the Department for Communities (DfC) funded Town Centre Revitalisation Programme, in support of the Town Centre Investment plans and Town Centre Strategies for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years.

2. Background

A. Origins of the Programme

- 2.1. At the September 2021 Borough Growth Committee, Elected Member approved the Investment Plans and Town Centre Strategies for Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne, noting the plans provide a clear strategic direction for how Council plan to progress investment over the next 10-year period.
- 2.2. Each Investment Plan and Town Centre Strategy is built around five core intervention areas, each designed to support long-term regeneration and economic vitality. These themes provide a strategic framework for project development and investment.
- 2.3. Governance is provided by a multi-stakeholder Steering Group, which meets monthly. The group includes representation from Council departments, Elected Members and town centre stakeholders (e.g. Larne Trader's Forum, Ballymena BID, Larne Renovation Generation, and Positive Carrickfergus), ensuring a coordinated approach to project delivery. The group provides strategic direction; monitors progress across all projects and supports effective decision-making.
- 2.4. Building on the experience of delivering the COVID Recovery Programme, Council Officers have been working with the Steering Group since 2023 to deliver a programme of initiatives to "revitalise" our town centres and complement the extensive public realm schemes already delivered in each town. These "town centre revitalisation" initiatives consist of a range of



programmes and projects designed to enhance the appeal and enjoyment of Town Centres, encouraging increased footfall and economic growth. The objectives of the Town Centre Revitalisation Scheme are to:

- Increase in private and public investment in town centre properties;
- Improve physical appearance of our town centres;
- Encourage footfall and dwell time in our town centres;
- Increase positive PR for our town centres;
- Increase civic pride for users and local businesses;
- Deliver on recommendations from the local community; and businesses highlighted in the town centre Investment Plans.

2.5. This has enabled the development and delivery of a range of projects and programmes over the past 3 years including:

- The purchase of new artificial Christmas Trees for each of the 3 town centres in the Borough;
- The introduction and delivery of 3 rounds of a Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme;
- Festive Lighting Enhancements including the introduction of the Twinkle Trail festive lighting trail in Shaftsbury Park, Carrickfergus for the 2025 Festive Season;
- The installation of new public address systems in Ballymena and Carrickfergus town centres;
- The pilot development of meanwhile use "pop up" park for a gap site in Larne town Centre; and
- A complementary range of town centre animation activities.

2.6. Since 2023, Council has secured almost £2 million in grant support from DfC towards these projects, with Council providing match funding of 10% to each scheme.

2.7. Elected Members have been briefed at regular intervals on progress at meetings held in January 2025, April 2025, September 2025 and most recently at the December 2025 meetings of the Environment and Economy Committee. Elected Members participating in the Revitalise Steering Group can also regularly review progress and input into forward planning during these monthly meetings.



3. Key Issues for Consideration

A. Ongoing Projects

- 3.1. Council Officers are actively progressing a range of projects aligned to the strategic priorities within the Investment Plans. These are currently under development or delivery:

B. Council's Town Centre Revitalisation Programme 2025 -2027

- 3.2. An application for funding for this scheme was formally submitted to DfC in late June 2025 securing grant assistance of 90% up to £603,000 towards the total project cost of £670,000 towards the ongoing development and delivery of this scheme in the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years. This funding will cover the following activities;
- Shopfront Grant Scheme (launched October 2025);
 - Carrickfergus Heritage Shopfront Renewal Scheme;
 - Pavement Café Furniture;
 - Carrickfergus Twinkle Trail (December 2025); and
 - Animation Activities (September 2025).

C. Shopfront Improvement Scheme Grant Phase III

- 3.3. Following the success of the first and second phase of the Shop Front Grant Scheme, an application to DfC was approved in June 2025 to deliver a third phase.
- 3.4. The maximum grant award available was increased to £7,500 (previously £5,000) and requires 20% match funding in line with the previous two schemes.
- 3.5. The project objectives are:
- Improve the street facing property façade;
 - Impact positively on the overall streetscape; and
 - Bring further investment into town centres.
- 3.6. As with the previous scheme, applicants can avail of a dedicated architect team to offer support for securing planning approval for their shop front enhancements.
- 3.7. The scheme was opened for applications on the Council's grant portal on 13 October 2025 and closed on 1 December 2025 at noon. An information session was held in each town for applicants to learn more about the scheme.



- 3.8. The total grant amount awarded to date is c.£372,097 and the total number of applicants awarded to date is 83.

Town	Grant Awards to date
Ballymena	53
Larne	22
Carrickfergus	7
Greenisland	1

- 3.9. Each applicant that is awarded a grant will have 6 months from the date of issue of a Letter of Offer to complete their project.
- 3.10. Subject to budget confirmation, it is hoped that the Scheme will re-open for a further round of applications in Summer 2026.

D. Carrickfergus Heritage Shopfront Renewal Scheme

This enhanced shopfront improvement plan aims to offer increased grants of up to £30,000 for properties located on target streets within the Carrickfergus conservation area. This area is subject to Conservation Area Design Guidelines which requires where possible, preserve and restore traditional features such as original fascias, corbels, pilasters, tiled entranceways, and stall risers. These shopfronts must be replaced with timber rather than uPVC materials. The aim is to reinstate traditional shopfronts using appropriate materials and methods.

- 3.11. The Capital Regeneration team is currently procuring an architectural condition survey report, design and specification for the designated area to help assess the scope of the project.
- 3.12. This scheme aims to launch in Summer of 2026.

E. Pavement Cafe Furniture

- 3.13. Due to the success of previous schemes £30,000 has been allocated for the supply of outdoor street furniture to town centre hospitality businesses. Expressions of Interest are currently being sought by the Town Centre Development team for additional pieces of Tables, Chairs, Branded Parasols, Movable Hedges and Café Barriers. Delivery direct to the businesses is planned for Summer 2026.

F. Enhanced Seasonal Lighting Project

- 3.14. Following on from the success of the Artificial Christmas Tree project in 2024, a further £135,000 of funding was secured from DfC to enhance the



existing lighting schemes and develop a seasonal lighting trail in Carrickfergus.

3.15. Projects included:

- 29 x New larger 3.2m pole mount features on Main Street and Upper Main Street and installation of a skynet in Laharna Car Park linkage from Main Street, Larne;
- 11 new pole mounts in Castle Street and Bridge Street, 2 new pole mounts in Meeting House Lane, 6 new pole mounts in Alexander Street and 10 x .2m Artificial Christmas trees and lights on Linen Hall Street, Ballymena;
- 3x-coloured uplighters on Clock Tower, 30 x wrap around lights on Marine Highway Promenade, Carrickfergus; and
- The creation of a new Twinkle Trail in Shaftesbury Park, Carrickfergus where the park was transformed into a gentle, glowing Christmas walk, with a series of illuminated features. The Trail was well attended and received positive feedback.

3.16. An opening event for the Trail, organised for children attending Local Primary Schools, took place on 6 December from 4pm to 8pm, with a quiet session from 4pm to 5pm. Numbers were capped to 20 family tickets for every 30-minute slot to provide an exclusive experience. Additional entertainment was provided by Uplift and Castle Voices and hot drinks provided by Twisted Bakes. There were also walkaround characters and an Arts and Crafts Marquee.

3.17. From 7 December onwards, the trail was open to the public free of charge daily from 8am to 8pm, with the lights coming on at 4pm. Approximate footfall was as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| • Sunday 7 December | 200 |
| • Monday 8 December | 400 |
| • Tuesday 9 December | Closed due to storm |
| • Wednesday 10 December | 600 |
| • Thursday 11 December | 700 |

G. Dunluce Street Environmental Enhancement Scheme

3.18. An application for funding for up to £108,000, or 90% of estimated total costs of £120,000, was secured from DfC to cosmetically improve Dunluce Street in Larne in advance of any future public realm schemes. The scheme includes:

- Cleaning of property facades and gable walls;
- Treatment of down pipes/guttering;
- Painting of property facades and gable walls; and



- Replacement hoarding at derelict gap site with new graphics panels and artwork.

3.19. All substantive works on this project are now complete with the artwork and graphic panels due for installation by end June 2026.

H. Street Art Project Phase 2

3.20. Following on from the success of an initial Street Art project in 2024, a further £85,000 of funding was secured from DfC to enhance the scheme. The programme aims to animate underused areas, celebrate local identity and creativity, and contribute to town centre regeneration by improving the visual environment, increasing footfall, and fostering community engagement.

3.21. The Larne Street Art event took place on the 30 August 2025, with positive feedback from residents.

3.22. A Ballymena mural site has been secured on William Street where two murals will be installed by the end of June 2026. The Carrickfergus underpass project will be procured for installation before the end of June 2026 and will incorporate public engagement to develop ideas for the designs that will tie in with the wider City Deal project aims.

3.23. A complimentary street art youth academy in Carrickfergus has been planned in partnership with the YMCA to take place in June 2026.

3.24. Ongoing discussions with businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders shows a continued interest and demand to further develop Street Art across our town centres; with expressions of interest received from additional property owners to host street art on their properties, and ongoing discussions with Libraries NI showing interest in working with Council to progress street art projects in partnership, as well as positive feedback received through evaluation surveys and workshops.

I. Larne Pop Up Park

3.25. Following a scoping exercise to identify potential pop-up park/meanwhile use sites, a site at Point St/Main St Larne was identified an initial pilot opportunity to develop a pop-up park. This is being undertaken as part of ongoing efforts to activate underused spaces and improve the town centre environment.

3.26. Funding of up to £153,945, or 90% of project costs has been secured from DfC towards this project, and a lease for the site was agreed with the property owner in May 2025.



- 3.27. Following community consultation and the development of a design for the park, a contractor has now been procured, with completion planned for Summer 2026. An opening event and subsequent animation programme are part of the project. Officers have been scoping out a draft programme with other Council Departments and external delivery agents including Groundworks NI.
- 3.28. Officers continue to engage with the owners of other brownfield town centre sites in all 3 towns to explore options for further similar schemes as meanwhile use projects.

J. Future Projects

- 3.29. As previously stated, it is intended that the Shopfront Improvement Scheme will be opened to new applications during summer 2026 for both the main scheme and the new enhanced Carrickfergus scheme. The implementation of projects awarded for funding under Round 3 will also be monitored during this time to ensure completion and support the drawdown of allocated funding.
- 3.30. As a result, of positive feedback received through residents' surveys, and from town centre businesses, and approval at the Revitalise Steering Group, officers are seeking approval to progress the development of 2 further projects for delivery in 2026/27 and submit applications to DfC for;
- A further programme of street art installations in Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne in 2026/27, to build on the positive engagement developed through delivery of the current project; and
 - Further enhancements for the existing town centre festive lighting schemes, expand the scope of the Shaftsbury Park Twinkle Trail following the successful pilot phase in 2025, and provide festive lighting features for the Larne Pop Up Park for December 2026.
- 3.31. In addition, as reported separately to Committee in March 2026, Council officers have been engaged in scoping activities, including carrying out a property owners survey in 2025, to develop a strategic approach to addressing the ongoing issue of vacancy and dereliction across our town centres, and in particular those hotspot areas where the area is most prevalent (such as Dunluce St in Larne, West Street and North Street in Carrickfergus, and Wellington Street in Ballymena).
- 3.32. The survey identified a number of property owners who were interested and willing to progress the redevelopment and repurposing of their properties but for whom barriers such as demand, financial viability, access to finance, or infrastructure issues prevented progress.



- 3.33. Officers have been actively liaising with colleagues in DfC for some time on the development of possible funding programmes to target this issue of vacancy and dereliction and are continuing to carry out research and prepare the evidence base to support the development of such a programme.
- 3.34. DfC has been undertaking a review of previous and current interventions, to establish a set of guiding principles to apply to any future DfC funding. It was anticipated that these guidelines would be released in late March 2026, enabling officers to progress to progress the design of a funding programme to align with the Borough's identified vacancy and dereliction challenges. There has been a delay in finalising this guidance, although it is still hoped this will enable Council to apply to DfC for funding in early 2026/27, and open new grant programme(s) for applications within the 2026/27 financial year.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial Implications – Applications to DfC will be made to cover 90% of project costs of proposed projects. A Council Match Funding requirement of 10% will be required and has already been included and approved in the Capital Plan for FY 2025/26 and FY 2026/27, under DfC Partnership Projects.
- 4.2. Human Resources – No additional staffing resources required.
- 4.3. Equality Screening - Officers will undertake appropriate Equality Screenings prior to submitting applications to the DfC for future projects, including the next phase of Street Art and further Enhanced Seasonal Lighting schemes.
- 4.4. Assets - The Larne Pop Up Park is a Council asset. Arrangements will be in place for the ongoing maintenance, management and insurance of the site in line with existing Council asset management, with associated revenue costs factored into future service planning.
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan – Council is committed to the economic regeneration of the Towns and Villages in the Borough. All the projects outlined above contribute to the delivery of the Town Centre Investment Plans for Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. Officers from the Regeneration and Town Centre Teams will continue delivering the projects listed above in line with the Letters of Offer from DfC. The team will remain focused on project delivery, working on closing reports, evaluations, and associated documentation, while also actively



scoping out new regeneration projects to support future town centre development.

- 5.2. Officers will continue to liaise with DfC to support the development of new programmes and funding opportunities, ensuring future project proposals align with emerging DfC priorities and support continued town centre regeneration.
- 5.3. Following approval, Officers will submit applications to DfC for additional funding for Enhanced Seasonal Lighting and Street Art for delivery FY2026/27.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Environment and Economy Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Note the progress on projects delivered and ongoing projects in FY26/27.
 - (ii) Note the ongoing development and research of new regeneration projects by Officers, including early engagement with the Department for Communities, to identify future funding opportunities.
 - (iii) Approve Officers continue the further development of additional Enhanced Seasonal Lighting and Street Art projects for delivery in FY26/27 and progress the submission of grant applications to DfC towards their delivery.



Forward Plan – Environment & Economy Committee

Planned Agenda Items Next meeting – 22 June 2026

Items	Purpose	Report by:
• Terms of Reference	Approval	Ryan
• Economic Development Activity Report	Noting	Ryan
• Labour Market Partnership Update	Noting	Ryan
• Local Economic Partnership Update	Noting	Ryan
• Introduction of barriers and closing of Church Street 3 car park	Approval	Rowan

Items to be programmed

Item	Purpose
Business Cases (DC)	Report for Approval
Business Cases for Fleet for year ahead	Report for Approval
Tenders	Report for Approval