



1 May 2024

Committee Chair: Councillor J Burbank

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor V McWilliam

Committee Members: Aldermen P Bradley, L Clarke and J Smyth

Councillors R Foster, J Gilmour, AM Logue, H Magill,
A McAuley, E McLaughlin, M Ní Chonghaile,
L O'Hagan, L Smyth and M Stewart

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Tuesday 7 May 2024 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Baker".

Richard Baker, GM MSc
Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

PLEASE NOTE: Refreshments will be available in the Café from 5.20pm

For any queries please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301
memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

A G E N D A

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2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 PRESENTATION

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**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 7 MAY 2024**

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 PK/PG005/VOL2 MAE MURRAY FOUNDATION

Members are advised that Kyleigh Lough, Chief Executive of the Mae Murray Foundation will make a short presentation (**enclosed**) in person to update on the Adapt My Play Guide and Toolkit that is being reported in item 4.1.

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 PK/PG005/VOL2 ADAPT MY PLAY GUIDE AND TOOLKIT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Council to adopt the “Adapt my Play” guide and toolkit, aimed at facilitating the development of inclusive play parks within the Borough.

2. Introduction/Background

Council continuously endeavours to enhance its play parks, particularly by incorporating accessible equipment to promote inclusivity for all users whenever feasible. Recently, £17,500 was allocated from the Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion funding for the installation of more accessible equipment in select play parks across the Borough.

Members are aware that Council approved the Play Park Audit in January 2024, which provided a comprehensive overview of the condition of the Borough's 36 play parks, ranking them in terms of priority for maintenance and refurbishment. The development of a works programme stemming from this audit is currently underway and will be presented for Council approval in due course.

3. Proposal

The “Adapt my Play” guide and toolkit, jointly developed by Playboard Northern Ireland and the Mae Murray Foundation, provides useful support to local authorities and play providers in developing inclusive play parks. A copy of this guide and toolkit is **enclosed** for Member's reference. By adopting this resource, Council will be equipped to effectively execute the recommendations outlined in the Play Park Audit and to incorporate inclusive elements into any future park developments. This adoption will ensure that play parks within the Borough continue to be progressively more inclusive and accessible to all.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that approval be granted to adopt the “Adapt my Play” guide and toolkit to support the development of inclusive play parks within the Borough.

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.2 PK/REG/022 UPDATED CEMETERIES RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed amendments to Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations.

2. Background

Members are advised that Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations were last approved in 2020. Since that date, Council has assumed formal operational responsibility for Church Lane Cemetery, Doagh and maintenance responsibility for Ballylinney Cemetery and Monkstown Cemetery. Furthermore, in 2023, Council approved the pricing schedule for the Council's crematorium, which included a provision that burials for children up to the age of seventeen would not incur a fee.

3. Proposed Amendments

An updated version of Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations is **enclosed** for Members' reference and highlights the amendments, which include:

- Inclusion of the statutory regulations to which Council, as a burial authority, is bound.
- Inclusion of additional cemeteries for which Council has assumed operational responsibility.
- Updated information on child burial fees.
- Operational and maintenance considerations.

The above amendments will improve clarity and provide general information for residents and funeral directors alike.

4. Recommendation

It recommended that approval be granted for the proposed amendments to Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations.

Prepared by: Emma Thompson, Bereavement Services Manager

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks & Leisure

4.3 PK/REG/016 APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the renewal of Antrim Castle Gardens and Clotworthy House as an approved venue in which Civil Marriage/Civil Partnership ceremonies can be conducted.

2. Background

Under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act (2004), Council has the responsibility to approve appropriate applications for Place Approvals for Civil Marriage and Civil Partnerships, which last for 3 years. The process requires that a Notice of Interest be displayed for a three-week period in a prominent place at the venue to allow for any public objection.

3. Current Position

A renewal application for a Place Approval has been received from Antrim Castle Gardens & Clotworthy House, Antrim. The venue was previously approved by the Council in May 2021, with specified areas for the venue for approval as follows:

Antrim Castle Gardens: Oriel Gallery, Masserene Room, Parterre.

No public objections have been received relating to the venue.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that Antrim Castle Gardens & Clotworthy House be re-approved to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act (2004)

Prepared by: Paula Redpath, Registrar

Agreed by: Emma Thompson, Bereavement Services Manager

Approved by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

4.4 PK/GEN/035/VOL4 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES SUB GROUP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the most recent Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 9 April 2024.

2. Summary

At the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting on 9 April 2024, Members considered a detailed report which provided a range of updates from the Park Service. The minutes of the meeting are **enclosed** for Members' consideration.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 9 April 2024 be approved.

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.5 EH/PHWB/014 BREASTFEEDING WELCOME HERE SCHEME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members that all Council premises are signed up to the regional Public Health Agency Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme.

2. Introduction

The 'Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme' promotes breastfeeding-friendly environments for mothers when they're out and about, recognising its vital health benefits for both mother and baby. With Northern Ireland having low breastfeeding rates, the scheme aims to address the lack of support, especially for breastfeeding in public.

Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme provides reassurance to mothers that they are welcome to Breastfeed at the premises. The Council, if it chooses to become a member of the Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme, will be given recognition through ongoing promotion and raising awareness and it will be listed on the www.breastfedbabies.org website.

Membership in the scheme entails:

- Acceptance of breastfeeding in all public areas of the premises;
- Ensuring mothers are not asked to move or stop breastfeeding;
- Staff awareness and support for breastfeeding mothers;
- Displaying a Breastfeeding Welcome Here window sticker and certificate.

To join, the Council signs an agreement committing to the scheme's criteria. The Public Health Agency (PHA) then provides certificates and stickers, listing the Council as a member on the Breastfed Babies website.

Short awareness training sessions will be provided, prioritising frontline staff, with plans to extend training to all staff and elected members in the near future.

The aim is for all Council operated premises to join the scheme by August, coinciding with World Breastfeeding Week (1 – 7 August), with joint publicity efforts between the Council and the PHA.

In the coming months, a forthcoming policy will be brought before the Council, proposing the adoption of the Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme in Council owned premises managed by entities other than the Council. During this time, officers will actively engage with these entities to encourage voluntary enrolment.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that all Council operated premises sign up to the regional Public Health Agency Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme.

Prepared by: Alison Briggs, Deputy Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Sustainability

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 EH/PHWB/002 HOME ACCIDENT PREVENTION 2023-24

1. Purpose

This purpose of this report is to update Members on the activities conducted by the Home Safety Officer throughout the financial year 2023/24.

2. Background

Members are reminded that the Council's Home Safety Officer focuses on offering free home safety inspections to residents aged over 65, vulnerable adults, and eligible families with children under 5. These inspections include the provision of tailored home safety equipment.

Additionally, the Officer coordinates the distribution of such equipment to families with young children who have undergone inspections by Health Visitors. Funding for these initiatives is provided by the Public Health Agency (PHA), which sets annual targets for the number of safety checks for over 65s and equipment deliveries for under 5s.

3. Key Issues

During the previous financial year, the PHA set a target of 156 home safety checks for over 65s and 218 deliveries of home safety equipment to children under 5. Between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024, the Home Safety Officer exceeded these targets by completing 185 safety checks for over 65s and delivering 221 sets of safety equipment to children under 5. Additionally, 17 safety checks were conducted for vulnerable adults, and 8 for children under 5. The PHA commended Council for achieving the targets and the innovative initiatives developed by the Home Safety Officer.

During the home safety checks, assessments were made regarding the need for further support. In the previous year, 51% of households receiving checks were referred to various services such as the Police and Community Safety Partnership, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, and for assisted bin collections. Over the year, a total of 1,004 pieces of equipment were provided to residents following over 65 home safety checks, and 1,446 pieces of equipment were given to eligible families with children under 5.

Furthermore, the Home Safety Officer offered advice through various channels. This included conducting 30 home safety talks, participating in 13 information events, and organising 2 electrical blanket exchange events. Additionally, 7 home safety articles were published in 'Borough Life' and 'News for You', the Council's age-friendly magazine, and 7 social media articles were posted. The Officer also created social media videos on

electrical blanket safety, drowning prevention, and firework safety, collectively gathering over 8,850 views collectively.

The Home Safety website is regularly updated with informational videos and features an "Ask the Home Safety Officer" section for residents seeking advice or guidance on home safety.

The website can be viewed here;

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/residents-community-information/community-advice/home-accident-prevention/under-5s/>

On a recent survey conducted on 10% of households who received a Home Safety assessment in 23/24 found that;

- 60% rated the visit/consultation as Good, 40% as Excellent.
- 55% had used all the equipment provided and 45% had used some items.
- 100% surveyed that used the equipment found it useful.
- 100% stated that it made a change to their lives and felt it made their home safer.
- 100% of those who were eligible for an onward referred, found that referral beneficial.

The work for the Home Safety Officer will continue in the year 2024/25 and Environmental Health will continue to work with PHA to ensure their set targets are met.

4. Financial Position/Implication

The Public Health Agency allocated £33,289 as a contribution to the work carried out by the Home Safety Officer.

5. Summary

In the previous financial year, the Home Safety Officer conducted 185 home safety checks, delivered 221 sets of home safety equipment for children under 5, distributed 2,450 pieces of home safety equipment, and provided advice at 45 events. Home safety information was disseminated through various mediums including Council magazines, social media, and the Council website.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: James O'Kane, Health and Wellbeing Manager

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing.

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

5.2 EH/PHWB/009 OIL STAMP SAVINGS SCHEME

1. Purpose

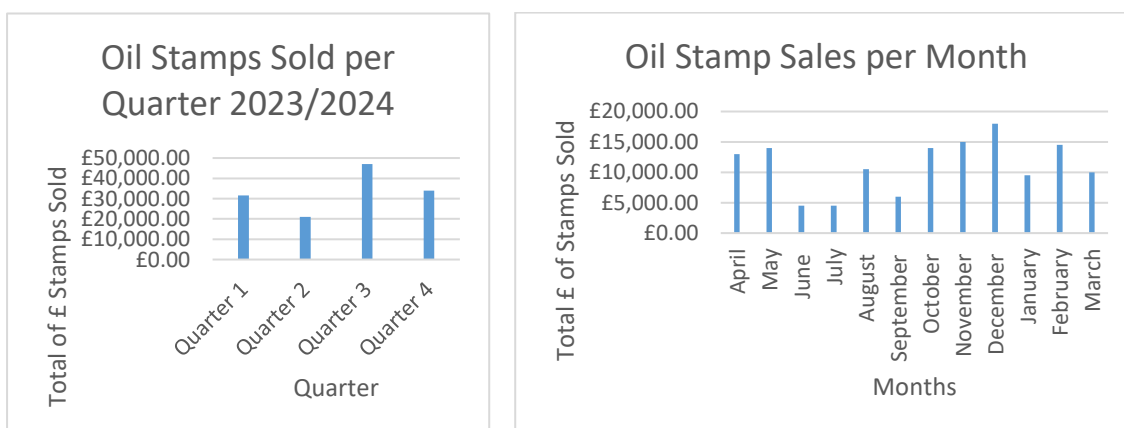
The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of Oil Stamp Savings Scheme for the financial year 2023/24.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that the Environmental Health operate the Antrim and Newtownabbey Oil Stamp Savings Scheme.

The Oil Stamp Savings Scheme allows householders to buy £5 oil stamps from local retailers and Council premises helping them to budget and spread the cost of central heating oil. The scheme operates by the household obtaining a savings card from one of the participating outlets. The householder can purchase a £5 oil stamp and place on the savings cards. Each card holds 40 stamps which is equivalent to £200. The card can then be used for payment or part payment for oil from participating oil suppliers.

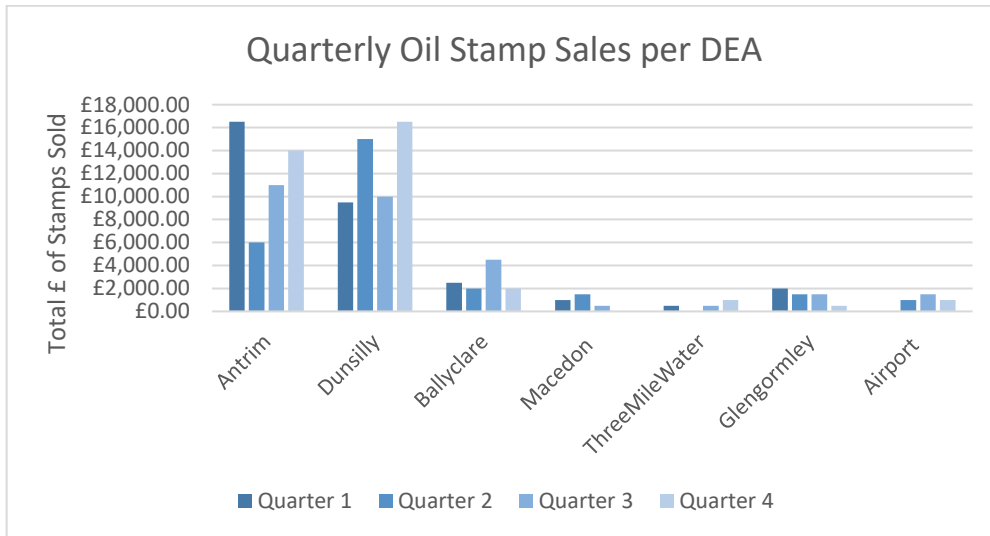
In the past financial year, from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, oil stamps amounting to £133,500 were sold across the Borough. Notably, £47,000 of oil stamps were sold in the third quarter (October 2023 - December 2023.) with December 2023 registering the highest monthly sales at £18,000.



Presently there are 32 retailers selling oil stamps across the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough, with 56 oil suppliers have signed up for the scheme and they will accept oil stamps as full or part payment. A full list of oil stamp retailers and suppliers can be found at;

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/oil-stamp-suppliers/>

The Dunsilly District Electoral Area (DEA) sold the most oil stamps in the financial year, with a value of £51,000 oil stamps sold. This is primarily attributed to the lack of gas infrastructure across that DEA resulting in a predominant reliance on home heating oil among households.



The Oil Stamp Saving Scheme was promoted throughout the year and in February 2024 an animated video was created to explain and promote the scheme on the Council's social media channels and on the Council website. The video to date has been viewed over 100,000 times and is can be found at the following link: <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/oilstamps/>

The Oil Stamp Saving Scheme runs at minimal costs, with retailers selling stamps at no cost benefit to themselves. The cost of printing an annual supply of oil stamps is approximately £3,000 and the animated video was at a cost of £250.

3. Summary

The Oil Stamp Savings Scheme is a practical initiative that can assist householders to budget for the cost of home heating oil particularly with current cost of living difficulties that households are facing. The Oil Stamp Saving Scheme continues to be a popular scheme across the Borough.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: James O'Kane, Health and Wellbeing Manager

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability

5.3 L/LEI/004/VOL2 SUMMER SCHEMES 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the details of the Council's Summer Scheme Programme for 2024.

2. Background

Members will be aware that Council delivers a range of Summer Schemes and Sports Camps across multiple locations throughout the Borough during the schools' summer break for children aged 6 – 12 years old. A screening process is also available for those children with additional individual care needs (medical or disability) to ensure that any required adjustments are met where possible when attending the schemes.

For several years, Council has worked in partnership with the Mae Murray Foundation to deliver an Inclusive Summer Scheme, which provides specialised one-to-one care for up to 25 children each day. This year's scheme will be delivered across two locations and feature a range of activities such as sensory play, inclusive wheelchair games, inclusive biking, and arts and crafts.

Additionally, the Council supports external summer programmes either through the Community Planning Department's Programmes and Activities Grant, which this year funded 17 groups at an estimated total of £34,000, or through Accessibility and Inclusion funding, which provides a maximum contribution of £5000 from a total fund of £25,000 available to Special Educational Needs Schools located within the Borough.

3. Proposed 2024 Council Programme

Booking will be available from May 21st with relevant information widely shared in advance via Council's various communication platforms. The proposed 2024 Summer Scheme Programme is as follows:

Scheme	Dates 2024	Times
Six Mile Leisure Centre (Ballyclare)	22 July-23 Aug	10am-3pm
Valley Leisure Centre	22 July-23 Aug	10am-3pm
Ballyearl Arts and Leisure Centre (Arts and Crafts)	22 July-23 Aug	10am-3pm
Merville House	22 July-16 Aug	10am-1pm
Lilian Bland	22 July-23 Aug	10am-3pm
Thompson Primary School	22-26 July	10am-3pm

Kilbride Church/St Brides	29 July – 2 Aug	10am – 3pm
Ballynure Methodist	5 – 9 Aug & 12 – 16 Aug	10am – 3pm
Hydepark Church	19 – 22 Aug	10am – 3pm
Crumlin Leisure Centre	20 – 22 Aug	10am – 3pm
Antrim Forum Sport & Physical Activity week	23 - 25 July & 30 – 1 Aug	10am – 3pm
Castle Gardens Outdoor Sport & Physical Activity Camp	6 - 8 August	10am – 3pm
Inclusive Summer Schemes		
Antrim Forum	1 – 5 July	11am - 2pm
Crumlin LC	5 – 9 August	
Sports Specific Camps (Athletics, Dance, Tennis & Football) Various centres	July & August	10am – 1pm

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Anna Boyle, Sport & Physical Activity Programmes Manager,
Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager

Agreed by: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Operations Parks and Leisure

5.4 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT Q4 OPERATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with financial performance information at quarter four (January 2024 – March 2024) for Operations.

2. Introduction

As agreed at the August Council meeting, quarterly budget reports will be presented to the relevant Committee or Working Group. All financial reports will be available to all Members.

3. Summary

The budget report for Period 12 does not include adjustments required to arrive at the final financial position of the Council for the 2023/24 financial year. These adjustments include final accruals of expenditure incurred and grants and debts invoiced after 31 March 2024, contributions to or from reserves, and prepayments of expenditure and income.

Budget reports for Sustainability and Parks & Leisure Operations for Quarter 4 – January 2024 to March 2024 are **enclosed** for Members' information. At present the Parks and Leisure budget is in an adverse position of £1,294,659 (9.9%) due to the following reasons:

- Overspend in repairs and maintenance costs at Leisure Centres and other operational facilities;
- Overspend in Parks grounds maintenance cost;
- Overspend in Fleet in particular on moveable plant and equipment costs;
- Delay in opening of Crematorium and resulting impact on budgeted income.

The Sustainability budget is also in an adverse position of £1,464,363 (6.7%) and this is due to:

- Higher than estimated annual inflationary increases on waste contracts;
- Increase in waste arisings, in particular green waste, above predicted levels;
- Removal of funding for the Animal Welfare Service from DAERA;
- Higher than predicted repairs and maintenance costs at the Recycling Centres;
- Delay in the harmonisation of waste collection services.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance