ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Meeting No 107
MINUTES
Thursday 25 June 2026
Hybrid meeting hosted by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in Mossley Mill

Members Present:	
Councillor A Bennington *(Chair)*	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor J Cochrane	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Alderman O Gawith	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor A Givan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor U Mackin	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Alderman M Morrow	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor C King	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Members' Apologies:	
Councillor H Cushinan	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor M Goodman	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor C Blaney	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor E Thompson	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Alderman S Copeland	Belfast City Council
Councillor M Collins	Belfast City Council
Councillor E McDonough-Brown	Belfast City Council
Councillor G McKeen *(Deputy Chair)*	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor T Andrews	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Officers Present:	
M Kelly	arc21
T Walker	arc21
H Campbell *(Secretary)*	arc21
K Boal	arc21
J Green	arc21
M Laverty	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
G Bannister	Ards & North Down Borough Council
K Patterson	Ards & North Down Borough Council
B Murray	Belfast City Council
A McCann	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
G Patterson	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
W Muldrew	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
R Moore	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
C Hunter	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
S Murphy	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Officers' Apologies:	
S Leonard	Belfast City Council

The Chair welcomed the new Members Cllr Mackin and Cllr King to their first meeting and also the newly appointed arc21 Chief Executive, Mark Kelly.

Item 1 - Conflicts of Interest Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest Statement, and none were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 2 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 3 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 106 held on 28 May 2026

The Joint Committee approved the minutes. Proposed by Cllr Givan, seconded by Ald Morrow, and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Item 4 - Matters Arising

Structured mentoring programme for new CEX - the Chair reported that she had approved a structured mentoring programme through the LGSC for the new CEX for the next 6 months, which included a one in person meeting followed by 6 monthly online meetings. She noted that this was within the arc21 £3k financial threshold.

There were no other matters arising.

Action: Noted

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move "*In Committee*" which was agreed. Proposed by Ald Gawith and seconded by the Cllr Givan.

Matters of a confidential and commercially sensitive nature were discussed under these agenda items.

Following discussion on the commercially sensitive matters, the Chair recommended that the meeting would now return to the main agenda, which was approved, but whilst "*In Committee*", there were six matters discussed.

Item 5 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 106 held on 28 May 2026 'in committee' - approved

Item 6 - Matters Arising - noted

Item 7 - Residual Waste Treatment Project - noted

Item 8 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues - approved

Item 9 - Financial Report for the year to March 2026 - noted

Item 10 - Audit Committee Meeting 2 June 2026 Report - noted

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Proposed by Ald Gawith and seconded by Cllr Givan.

Item 11 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Ms Boal presented a report to provide the Joint Committee with an update in relation to contracts and operations.

Service Status

She stated that all services had operated well throughout May.

Performance

She provided an update on contractor performance across all the contracts in May and highlighted where some service credits had been applied for turnaround times, the number of overweight vehicles, reporting issues by contractors, and the bring contracts rectification requests issued and serviced.

She reported that in the month of June all contractor sites had been visited and there were some actions arising from a number of those visits.

She noted that overweight vehicles had increased compared to previous months and advised that officers continue to be asked to liaise with their operational teams and sub-contractors to seek to reduce the occurrence of these going forward.

She also noted that the turnaround times for the residual contracts continue to be monitored and in the majority of contracts no service credits were applied and no service credits were applied to the Bring Bank contracts.

Health & Safety

She reported that there were no health and safety (H&S) incidents during May which was a positive result.

Audits

She reported that the external H&S audit programme continued with one conducted at an NWP site and no issues had been identified during this audit.

Health and Safety Workshop

She reported that arc21 was arranging a workshop for council officers in September to try and focus on some of the issues identified on sites.

Rejected Loads

She reported that in May there had been no rejected loads into Bryson Recycling, however there had been three into NWP Glenside due to mixed waste in vehicles.

arc21 Contract Tonnages

Details of the tonnages delivered in May for the main contracts were provided, along with a comparison against the same period last year and these were discussed more fully in the Waste Tonnage Trends report.

Supplies

A summary of the orders and deliveries of supplies for May 2026 was included in Ms Boal's report and she noted that there had been no non-conformances. She reported that due to ongoing issues in the middle east and increased demand council officers were being reminded to place their orders well in advance.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Cllr Givan and seconded by Ald Gawith.

Action: Noted

Item 12 - Waste Tonnage Trends

Ms Boal presented a report showing the tonnage comparisons for material received through the arc21 contracts and an analysis of current performance against future landfill and recycling targets using information from WasteDataFlow (2025/26 unvalidated). She noted that the data presented graphically highlighted the increases and decreases in the tonnage trends over these time periods.

In comparing with the same period last year, she highlighted the following:

- Residual - Lot 1 kerbside collected residual waste, there was a 5% decrease in residual waste in May 2026 in comparison to May 2025; for Lot 2 a 4.3% increase; and for Lot 3 a 4.3% increase in residual waste, however Newry and Mourne region commenced waste under this lot in April 2026.

- Organics - decreases in Type 1 and Type 2 tonnages which had resulted in not being able to achieved any gate fee rebate. She advised that the Waste Compositional Study was due for release in September and it is expected that the results will show that food waste has increased by around 25% in residual bins.

- MRF - decreases in both contracts, which may be due to collection days in month, however she noted that proportion of Lot 1 contract waste had moved from co-mingled to kerbsort.

The other smaller contracts were also presented and she noted that the textiles tonnages were similar to last year, but that we are not seeing the same increases. She advised that she was due to meet the contractor and would report back to the next meeting.

The second part of the report highlighted that the current residual waste treatment contracts had enabled all councils to send less than 10% to landfill (2035 target) and showed the deficit for each council to achieve recycling rates of 60% and 65%. She noted that further interim residual waste procurements would be needed prior to 2035.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by the Chair and seconded by Ald Gawith.

Action: Noted

Item 13 - Consultation - Waste Prevention Programme 2026 - From Waste to Worth- Overview

Ms Boal presented the proposed arc21 response to the consultation – Waste Prevention Programme 2026 – From Waste to Worth.

She reported that she had presented a high level overview at the previous Committee meeting along with the actions from the previous Programme and that, following discussion at two Steering Group meetings, the response presented now reflected the outcome from those discussions along with any further feedback received.

She noted that whilst arc21 supports a number of the proposed initiatives a significant number of the proposals lack detail and are not presented with quantifiable and measurable outcomes and the response therefore highlights that there may be benefits from amending accordingly.

Mr Walker advised that the comments in our response were also reflected at the recent OEP first year review of the Environmental Plan which also highlighted the lack of tangible metrics in the EIP and lack of crossover across the other strategies not reflected in EIP.

Ms Boal advised that, subject to any further comments, she intended to submit it in advance of the deadline of 10 July.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the response for submission. Proposed by Ald Gawith and seconded by Cllr Givan.

Action: Agreed

Item 14 - Governance Matters

Mr Kelly presented a report covering a number of different matters for consideration and approval.

These included a:

- new arc21 Generative AI Policy – presented for adoption;
- general policy update – a proposal to update the arc21 current policies to make amendments in relation to names/positions as appropriate to reflect staff changes, noting that a more formal review will be carried out within the period of the current Corporate Plan and presented to Members for consideration; and
- Bank Mandate – approval of a new bank mandate reflecting the appointment of the new CEX, with the new authorised signatories being: Mark Kelly (Chief Executive); Karen Boal (Acting Policy & Operations Director); and Brian McKeown (Principal Financial Accountant).

The following recommendations were presented for approval:

- **the new Generative AI Policy;**
- **updating of current policies to reflect staff changes; and**
- **the new bank mandate.**

Following discussion the Joint Committee approved the recommendations. . Proposed by Cllr Givan and seconded by Ald Gawith.

Action: Agreed

Item 15 - arc21 Annual Report for the Year to March 2026

Mr Walker presented the Annual Report for the year to March 2026. He noted that this reflected the progress made in the second year of our Corporate Plan 2024-2028. He noted that once approved it would be uploaded onto the arc21 website.

Following discussion the Joint Committee approved the Annual Report 2025-2026. Proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr Givan.

Action: Agreed

Item 16 - AOB

Customer Survey for the year 2025-2026

Ms Boal advised that she was preparing the annual customer survey for circulating to members and officers and, due to poor response in the past, encouraged all to respond as feedback was welcomed.

The Chair suggested that Ms Boal circulate a wider survey to all the Councillors from the 6 participant Councils and Ms Boal advised that she was happy to do so and would tailor accordingly.

Action: Ms Boal

Item 17 - Next Meeting Thursday 27 August 2026 at 10.30am, using MS Teams

The Chair advised that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on 27 August using the MS Teams platform and encouraged all to attend.

Action: Noted

Date: 28 August 2026 **Chair:** A Bennington