

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 8th February, 2022

REMOTE MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Cobain (Chairperson);
Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey;
Councillors Baker, Black, Bunting, Michael Collins,
Corr, Garrett, M. Kelly, McAteer, Mulholland, Newton,
Smyth and Verner.

Also attended: Councillors Brooks and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were recorded on behalf of Councillors Flynn, Magee and McReynolds.

Condolences

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, extended his condolences to Councillor Magee on the recent death of his father.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 11th and 25th January were taken as read and signed as correct, subject to the omission of the minute of 11th January, under the heading "Erection of Dual Language Street Sign at Clifton Street", which was subject to a valid call-in requisition.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were recorded.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 4 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following 3 items as, due to their nature, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that, in May 2021, the Council had agreed to provide £128,500 of funding to the Belfast Advice Group (BAG) towards the provision of the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service (BCTS). Following due diligence, the Council had allocated this financial support with an initial allocation of £75,000, followed by an additional £53,000. The total funding request for the service had been £257,000.

In addition, the Council had also received an allocation of £70,400 towards Welfare Reform Mitigations - Tribunal Representation which had also been paid to the BCTS. This had represented a total allocation of £198,900 in 2021/22. The final £53,000 payment was dependent on completion of a business case and the BCTS had appointed a contractor to produce this. The Director advised that officers had been working with the BAG and had provided feedback on the development of the business plan, however, the final draft of the report was still not available for consideration.

The Committee was asked to note that the BCTS had advised that it was experiencing financial pressures and was therefore asked to consider if it wished to release the agreed £53,000 funding now, in advance of receipt of the business plan, to enable ongoing service delivery. In addition, the Director advised that the BCTS had also requested £2,349.00 of funding to cover the identified deficit for the service in 2021/22.

Several of the Members praised the work of the Belfast Tribunal Service and Department of Communities for the excellent work both undertook in the delivery of these essential services.

The Committee

- noted the previous recommendation that Council would provide up to £128,500 funding to the BCTS for 2021/22 and agreed to release the final £53,000 element of this funding and noted that officers would continue to work with the BAG to bring its final business plan to the Committee; and
- agreed the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service request for £2,349.00 funding to cover the identified deficit in 2021/22.

Requests for the Use of Parks for 2022 Events

The Committee considered requests seeking permission for the use of various parks and facilities during 2022, as follows:

- AVA Festival Bespoke Campsite – 3rd – 4th June at Victoria Park;
- Féile an Phobail annual events programme at Falls Park and Dunville Park;
- Circus Extreme – 21st October– 6th November at Boucher Road Playing Fields;
- and
- Belfast Beer and Cider Festival – 18th – 21st May at Botanic Gardens.

Detailed discussion ensued regarding the need for Equality Impact Assessments to be undertaken in regard to events on Council land, specifically in relation to the Féile an Phobail Festival. During discussion several suggestions and proposal were made, however, following consideration all were withdrawn to enable the matter to be further considered by the Party Leaders.

Following a query from a Member, the Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that reviews were carried out after all events and those events that had requested multiple year approval would be subject to such a review, he added that any necessary changes would be implemented in advance of the next year's event and, if necessary, the event permission could be revoked.

The Committee granted authority for the aforementioned requests and delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to:

- i. negotiate an appropriate fee which recognises the costs to Council, minimises negative impact on the immediate area and takes account of the potential wider benefit to the city economy, in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Manager;
- ii. negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to:
 - o the promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
 - o compliance with Coronavirus restrictions in place at the time of the event; and
 - o the promoter meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence.

The Committee further agreed that those events that had sought multiple year approval would be subject to annual review, pending a satisfactory initial pilot year. The Director of Neighbourhood services would liaise with the relevant officers and take advice on appropriate changes to event management were necessary and this would include the removal of permission if required.

The Members noted that the above recommendations were taken as a pre-policy position, in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Council's Commercial team

Finally, the Committee agreed that the issue of Equality Impact Assessments in relation to events on Council land be referred to Party Group Leaders for further consideration.

Waste Update

The Director of Resources and Fleet provided the Committee with a comprehensive update on the following matters:

- Recent Collection Issues - Bryson House Recycling;
- Ongoing Safety Remedial Work Programme at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) – temporary closure of the Blackstaff Way HWRC to facilitate essential maintenance works;

- Draft Consultation response on Amending Options for the Assessment of Technical Competence available here ; and
- Consultation on the introduction of mandatory digital waste tracking available [here](#) (consultation closing date for submission - 15th April, comments welcome for consideration for inclusion within the Council response to be received by 28th February).

During discussion the Director addressed several queries in relation to the proposed temporary closure of the Blackstaff Way HWRC. The Director advised that the closure was necessary to enable essential maintenance works to be progressed and she highlighted that there was a very small window of opportunity to undertake the works in advance of the onset of the busy Easter period and the resumption of the gardening season.

Several Members of the Committee expressed concern at the displacement of the existing users of the facility during the closure and the lack of alternative recycling facilities in the area, especially given that Belfast residents were still not allowed the access Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) HWRC's. In addition, concern was expressed that there was currently no access for vehicles at the Springfield Avenue HWRC and the Member urged officers to review this decision in advance of the proposed closure of Blackstaff Way HWRC.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- endorsed the DRAFT Belfast City Council Response to the consultation on amending options for the assessment of technical competence and agreed that it be submitted as the Council's response by the 10th January deadline, subject to Council ratification at its meeting on 1st March; and
- agreed that the Director of Resources and Fleet would investigate further the proposed temporary closure of the Blackstaff Way Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and the displacement that this would have on the existing users of the facility. She further agreed to establish if cars could be permitted to enter the Springfield Avenue HWRC.

Mullaghglass Update

(Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee was referred to a report which provided an update regarding the legal proceedings that had been issued against the Council in respect of the ongoing odour nuisance associated with the Mullaghglass Landfill Site, Lisburn.

Moved by Councillor Michael Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

"That the Committee agrees to write to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) urging it to adopt the same arrangements as Belfast City Council and to redirect its waste away from the Mullaghglass Landfill Site."

Discussion ensued, during which several Members discussed whether it was appropriate for the Committee to write to LCCC whilst the legal proceedings were ongoing.

The Divisional Solicitor suggested that it might be appropriate to leave issuing the letter until after the outcome of the judicial review on 4th March, she added that if the Members did decide to proceed with issuing the correspondence, she would recommend seeking Senior Counsel advice before doing so. The proposer of the motion agreed to amend his proposal to reflect this advice, with the proposal now reading:

“Subject to Senior Council advice, the Committee agrees to write to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) urging it to adopt the same arrangements as Belfast City Council and to redirect its waste away from the Mullaghglass Landfill Site.”

On a vote, thirteen Members voted for the proposal and none against and it was declared carried.

Governance

Addition of Legislation to Council's Scheme of Delegation

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The Committee will be aware that Part 3 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation delegates a series of functions associated with performing the Council's statutory role under specific legislation, as listed in Appendix B to the Scheme of Delegation, to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services or their appropriate nominee. New legislation is required to be added to the Appendix to enable the authorised officers to legally enforce the provisions therein.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee

- Approve the addition of the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 to Appendix B of the Scheme of Delegation.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Under the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 new Regulations have been made to prevent smoking in vehicles with children and to prevent children from purchasing nicotine inhaling products. These requirements will come into force on the 1st February 2022 and aim to protect young people.

Smoking in Vehicles with Children

3.2 Council Officers currently enforce legislation which prohibits smoking in certain premises, places and vehicles including

on public transport and in work vehicles used by more than one person. These new regulations extend the current smoke-free provisions to private vehicles where children are present (anyone under the age of 18), when there is more than one person in the vehicle, and the vehicle is enclosed. It will also be an offence for a driver to fail to prevent smoking in a smoke-free private vehicle. The Regulations will be enforced by both district Councils and the PSNI.

- 3.3 Studies have shown that children and young people are more vulnerable to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke as they have a smaller lung capacity and body weight meaning that they breathe more rapidly and inhale more pollutants per pound of body weight than adults. Smoking in a vehicle can generate high levels of airborne particulates and due to the confined space opening windows and air conditioning is not sufficient to remove these.

Preventing the sale of nicotine inhaling products to people under 18

- 3.4 Council Officers also currently enforce legislation which prevents the sale of tobacco products to anyone under the age of 18. The Act brings in a similar offence in relation to nicotine inhaling products, which includes e-cigarettes, making it an offence to sell to persons under the age of 18. A further offence in relation to the proxy purchasing of nicotine products is also being introduced. This makes it an offence for a person over the age of 18 to buy, or attempt to buy, a nicotine inhaling product, such as an e-cigarette, on behalf of someone underage.
- 3.5 The long-term health impacts of using e-cigarettes is unknown and there are concerns that they may act as a gateway by some young people into smoking tobacco. Similar legislation already exists across the UK and this will bring e-cigarettes into line with other age-restricted products, such as tobacco and alcohol.
- 3.6 It is envisaged that enforcement of these provisions will align with the existing tobacco control work undertaken by the Tobacco Control Officers. This work is funded by a grant received from the Public Health Agency.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.7 Financial and Human Resources

There are no additional resource implications. This work will

be undertaken under the existing contract between Belfast City Council and the Public Health Agency.

Asset and Other Implications

- 3.8 None – works aligns with current tobacco control work.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.9 None.”

The Committee approved the addition of the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 to Appendix B of the Scheme of Delegation.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Multi Agency Demonstrator

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 **Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 To further update on the progress of Phase 2 and Phase 3 Department of Justice offer of funding to Belfast City Council to undertake a multi-agency demonstration project to support those at risk of paramilitary attacks in West and North Belfast and their families.

2.0 **Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- Note the Phase 2 update and;
- Agree the extension of this demonstrator as detailed in the report.

3.0 **Main report**

Background

- 3.1 A number of years ago the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) requested Belfast City Council (BCC) to act as the lead co-ordinating agency for organisations who had a role in addressing the systemic issues associated with paramilitary style assaults in the Lower Falls geographical area of Belfast.

- 3.2 It was hoped that the sharing of such information would provide an opportunity for early intervention by the organisations to protect victims, their families and improve how organisations involved could react and provide an adequate co-ordinated service. The following work has been undertaken in progressing this.
- 3.3 As the Tackling Paramilitarism work (arising from the Fresh Start Agreement) developed in central government they met regularly with Belfast to better understand if the work in the city adds value, and the Department of Justice subsequently asked Belfast City Council to make an application for funding to further develop this work as they believed there were important lessons to be learned from it.
- 3.4 DoJ allocated £69,000 for this work to be undertaken in Belfast in the 20/21 financial year and Members were updated in February 2020 through Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on the Phase 1 approach. No funding is used to cover the support from existing statutory services, but to bolster the support needed from the community. Additionally, all funding is conditional on working only with accredited (by DoJ) restorative justice schemes as there are high degrees of vulnerability and safeguarding/legal issues with individuals at risk and their families and the appropriate levels of assurance need to be in place.

Phase 2 (April 21 – March 22)

- 3.5 DoJ allocated a further £95,000 for this work to be undertaken in West and extended into North Belfast in the 21/22 financial year and Members were updated in March 2021 through the People and Communities Committee on the Phase 2 approach;
- Memorandum of Understanding developed and signed by all relevant statutory partners clarifying roles and responsibilities and information sharing arrangements agreed.
 - Inclusion of Northern Ireland Alternatives (NIA) to work alongside Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI) as the accredited restorative practitioners and lead community partners for delivery in West and North Belfast in Phase 2.
 - All partners agreed a safeguarding approach to a community information/intelligence reporting process. The core objectives of the process were to safeguard the individual, their family and protect the community;
 - Fortnightly case management meetings have taken place throughout (including during COVID-19) with both statutory partners and CRJI sharing information regarding young people at risk of paramilitary style

attacks and more importantly taking action to minimise that risk

- An academic from Queens University Belfast is currently undertaking an evaluation with early feedback extremely positive and the final report due by March 2022.

The agreed objectives of the DoJ funded programme are to:

- 3.6 Deliver a targeted, co-ordinated piece of work to address the needs of those under or at risk of threat from paramilitary groups with a particular focus on:-
1. Improve communication, co-ordination amongst service providers creating a process, which allows the sharing of information, whilst meeting all legislative requirements.
 2. Improve the management and flow of information between agencies, administer, monitor and measure threat levels and support for individuals and their families. Update and liaise with all statutory partners recording actions and progress.
 3. Gather the required data and statistics to demonstrate the impact of the PSA multi-agency group.

Phase 3 (April 22 – March 23)

- 3.7 Given the very positive feedback from Phase 2, the Department of Justice have offered a further £90,000 for the 22/23 financial year to cover the following:
- Continuation of the existing work in West and North Belfast led by CRJI and NIA
 - The Phase 3 objectives continue as per Phase 2 and are entirely focussed on preventing paramilitary style attacks in North and West Belfast and supporting/protecting those affected by them.

Financial Implications

- 3.8 The allocated budget for Phase 3 is £90,000 during 22/23 and is entirely provided by external funding received from the Department of Justice.

Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.9 None at present, but given the sensitivity of this work, this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.”

The Committee noted the Phase 2 update and agreed the extension of the Multi Agency Demonstrator.

Operational

Proposal for Naming New Streets

(Mr. I. Harper, Building Control Manager, attended in connection with the following two items.)

The Committee approved the application for naming a new street in the City as set out below:

Proposed Name	Location	Applicant
Hamilton Road	Between Queens Road, BT3 and Sydenham Road BT3	Nikki McDowell, Titanic Quarter Lim

Proposal for Dual Language Street Signs

As at least two thirds of the total numbers of persons surveyed in the streets were in favour of the proposal to erect a second street nameplate in Irish at Koram Ring, the Committee approved the application.

Update on Education Around Responsible Dog Ownership

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview, as requested by Members, on the amount spent on advertising on the education of responsible dog ownership, which helps to tackle the problem of dog fouling. The report also demonstrates the return on investment of advertising and how it sits with operational support to educate, advise and regulate this issue.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Note the overview provided as requested.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

Up until the 2019/20 financial year the marketing budget for department initiatives that required marketing and communication support was determined by and paid for by City and Neighbourhood Services. Following the marketing

and communications structural review and related centralisation of spend in 2018, spend is now determined by the marketing and communications function in consultation with the business area/ department.

3.2 Previous campaign spends

17/18 - £108,300
18/19 - £57,680
19/20 - £25,000 (Jan 2020)
20/21 - £25,000 (Oct 2021)

3.3 Campaign objectives/strategy

The advertising objectives are to generate awareness and to tap into the need to act responsibly, as a dog owner, and to raise awareness of the fines related to enforcement. The key message is 'Pick up or pay up, dog wardens are patrolling your area' and to reduce the number of dog fouling incidents in our city and show our citizens that the council takes this issue seriously. We generally advertise in the winter months as there is an increase in dog fouling in the dark evenings and mornings.

3.4 Media placement

We use a combination of the following to deliver our messaging on dog fouling:

- Radio to reach a large audience quickly and deliver repetition of message
- Bus stops in residential areas and in close proximity to parks and schools, and ads outside newsagents to target dog walkers
- External bus advertising to give an on-street presence and build awareness
- Internal bus panels to target a captive commuter audience
- Online advertising to target people at home

3.5 Our advertising activity allows us to target all Belfast City Council residents during all aspects of their life – showing them that the council is addressing the dog fouling problem in their local area.

3.6 Research

Independent research undertaken by Cognisense in 2019 to evaluate the impact and awareness of the dog fouling campaign (17/18) reported a very low incidence of individuals admitting to having allowed their dog to foul in the last six months. 70% of those asked said they had seen the campaign. The most prevalent area of recalled advertising

was the '£80 fine'. This level of ad recognition is well in excess of the relevant UK awareness norm. Overall prompted awareness was greater than seen in the previous 2017 research. External bus advertising was particularly prominently recalled (85%).

3.7 Results from October 21 campaign

We review all statistics during, and post campaign. We then feed findings into future planning.

- Bus externals – 82% of Belfast adults saw our ad on average 3.4 times
- Bus internals – 30,800 Belfast dog owners notice advertising inside a bus each week
- www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk delivered 320,000 impressions and 423 clicks (click through rate of 0.13% much higher than UK average of 0.13%)
- Belfast Live and Daily Mirror online activity delivered 100,012 page impressions and 144 clicks (click through rate of 0.14%).
- Panels at bus stops and newsagents - 73% of all adults in Belfast saw our ad on average 12.5 times.
- Facebook – strong engagement rates

3.8 In September 2021 there were 128 instances of illegal dog fouling incidents recorded (as part of the 5% random sampling of streets). In October 2021 this had decreased to 101 incidents – a 22% decrease. (It should be noted that the second surveys for Central and City were not carried out due to illness in the section so this may have affected the figures recorded and may have contributed to the decrease in dog fouling incidents recorded).

3.9 Dog Warden Service & Fouling Fines

The Dog Warden Service operates from 08.00 hours to 20.00 hours seven days a week. The team consists of 12 dog wardens and 2 Supervisors. They work in teams of three, with two teams operating daily.

3.10 The service was impacted by COVID 19 restrictions but was partially recovered by August 2020 and has continued to resume activities in the intervening period.

3.11 It should be noted that, as part of an overall transformation project across the City Services Department, management are conducting a resource analysis with the support of Human Resources and the Continuous Improvement teams which includes our Dog Warden Service.

3.12 With approximately 12,000 dogs in the Belfast City Council area, the Dog Warden's role incorporates many activities including:

- Responding to service requests.
- Investigation of complaints.
- Investigation of dog attacks.
- Detecting and dealing with straying or uncontrolled dogs.
- Detecting and dealing with infringements of the legislation, including issuing notices.
- Preparing investigation/evidence files and court attendance where necessary.
- Detecting and dealing with dogs prescribed under the Dangerous Dogs (NI) Order 1991.
- Collecting stray or unwanted dogs and taking them to the appropriate kennelling facility.
- Making recommendations for enforcement action with regards to dog attacks and the imposition of control conditions.
- Assessing conditions of dogs in our care, and dogs seen on properties and referring them to animal welfare where necessary.
- Inspecting and making recommendations for the registration of breeding establishments and guard-dog kennels under the Welfare of Animals Act 2011.
- Patrolling streets and public places.

3.13 To detect owners who let their dog foul in public places and don't pick up their mess, the dog wardens are deployed on routine proactive monitoring patrols. However, securing detections is challenging as in order to effect a prosecution we must witness an irresponsible dog owner in the act, which is unlikely. It is widely recognised that the problem of dog fouling cannot be addressed solely by enforcement intervention. It requires a three-pronged approach which recognises the need to encourage behavioural change, supported by enforcement and underpinned by a regular cleansing regime.

3.14 In order to enhance the patrols undertaken by the Dog Wardens, the following operational arrangements have been reinstated:

- The Dog Warden Supervisor and the Dog Wardens will liaise with the Area OSSS management teams and other enforcement staff in their respective areas to discuss priority areas and hotspots.
- Scheduling of patrols most days at particular times has resumed in the last number of weeks, including early mornings and evenings when resources permit in response to complaints and/or information that identifies a 'hot spot'.

- 3.15 The table below indicates the level of enforcement activities relating to dog fouling offences within the last four years. Covid-19 restrictions have impacted the number of fixed penalty notices issued for dog fouling in the last two years for a number of reasons. The public health restrictions have impacted on staffing levels due to a number of officers having had to isolate due to contact with Covid or having tested positive for Covid. Due to concerns around contracting the virus, the teams had to approach individuals with caution and only where absolutely necessary. Also, the general public when approached were reluctant to engage and sometimes hostile, due to fear of infection.

Year	Total Number of Dog Fouling Fines
17-18	79
18-19	62
19-20	99
20-21	5
21-22YTD	15

3.16 Community Awareness Team

A summary of the Community Awareness Team (CAT) activities focused on responsible dog ownership is outlined below:

- The team has incorporated responsible dog ownership including dog fouling in all their school activity sessions.
- During the Covid recovery phase we are undertaking outdoor playground litter/ waste education sessions which includes dog fouling, in addition we have adapted our resources to be able to offer online workshops with schools.
- A supply of dog bags are regularly distributed to Community Centres for members of the public – this is a resource that the public can avail of if they find themselves without a dog bag in the locality.
- This summer we offered litter game sessions to community centre based summer schemes. This included a dog fouling game to reinforce the dog fouling message and the consequences of noncompliance.
- We have worked with the Dogs Trust supporting them with their microchipping promotion sessions at community centres.
- We normally attend a number of community and parks events with our animation Scoop Dog, including Family Fun Days, Spring and Autumn Fair.

- We launched the Green Dog Walkers project in Belfast. On signing, individuals pledge to commit to the principles of good dog ownership.
- We work with our Dog Wardens Service to ensure compliance with licensing requirements which has resulted in a number of unlicensed dogs being identified.
- We delivered the pilot dog fouling stencilling project in the parks.

Other initiatives

- 3.17 As part of our campaign monitoring, Corporate Communications review all social media comments and feed back to the department with information on parks and streets where dog fouling is a problem. One of the reoccurring messages was that the public did not see dog wardens on our streets. Dog wardens patrol in Belfast City Council marked vans, however at times they need to be discreet to enable them to detect offences. Therefore, we designed magnetic panels for their vans which can be attached when commuting from area to area and removed when required.
- 3.18 There has also been a high level of messages on social media about dog fouling within our parks. To tackle this issue dog fouling related stencils were placed in 19 of our parks in the summer months.
- 3.19 Whilst we recognise that marketing and communications alone does not eliminate and dramatically reducing dog fouling, what it does do is reinforce a message which needs high levels of awareness in order to try and influence behavioural change. As per the research results mentioned above, our campaigns perform well in terms of advertising recall and reach the intended audience. We also work closely with the department to determine ‘hot spot’ areas which see high levels of dog fouling incidents and as such we are then able to target our messaging and advertising within these areas using the appropriate channels to do so. As dog fouling is a behavioural trait it is vitally important that we continue to generate awareness of the issue and the consequences via ongoing marketing and communication support.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.20 There are no additional financial implications associated with this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.21 There are no implications associated with this report.”

Several of the Members welcomed the report and drew reference to the ongoing and unacceptable levels of dog fouling throughout the City. The Committee discussed at length possible further measures that could be adopted to try and encourage responsible dog ownership through education and enforcement.

During discussion thanks was expressed to the staff in the Dog Warden Service for their ongoing efforts and commitment.

It was moved by Councillor Garrett, seconded by Councillor Verner and unanimously agreed that an operational review and refresh of the 'Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign' be undertaken by officers that, along with other areas that might be identified, should include Education, Enforcement and Cleansing, with the findings to be submitted in due course to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration.

Update on the Reference Group on Older People

The Committee was advised that a meeting of the Reference Group on Older People had been held on 24th January and the Director of City Services provided a brief overview of the items that had been considered:

- Update on Age-friendly Belfast;
- Update on Older Volunteers Celebration 2021; and
- Update in respect of Safe Seniors Packs.

The Committee:

Approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Reference Group on Older People meeting held on 24th January, 2022.

Update on Vandalism at Bloomfield Football Club (Verbal)

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided the Members with an update regarding the recent incident of vandalism to the dugouts at Bloomfield Football Club. He advised that officers were currently liaising with officials from the Club and that consideration was currently being given as to what additional measures could be put in place to prevent further incidents.

The Members noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would outline the options available.

Noted.

Chairperson