

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 7th March, 2017

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Aldermen Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Austin, Beattie, Copeland, Corr, Heading, Corr-
Johnston, Jones, Lyons, Magennis, McCabe, McCusker,
Milne, Newton, Nicholl and O' Neill.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director;
Mrs. S. Toland, Assistant Director; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Aldermen McCoubrey and McKee.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 6th and 7th February were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st March.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of Interest were reported.

Mr. Sam Skimin

The Chairperson informed the Members that this would be the last meeting of the People and Communities Committee which would be attended by Mr. S. Skimin, Head of Cleansing Service, as he was due to retire from the Council later in the month.

The Chairperson on behalf of the Committee paid tribute to Mr. Skimin for the contribution which he had made to the work of the Committee and the Council over the years and wished him well in his retirement.

Mr. Skimin thanked the Members for their kind remarks.

Matters Referred Back/Notices of Motion

Notice of Motion - Support for Amateur Boxing

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of the Council on 1st March, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McVeigh and seconded by Councillor Beattie, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council has demonstrated its support for amateur boxing in Belfast by developing and resourcing its boxing strategy.

This Council recognises the good results that this strategy has delivered, particularly through its support for sports officers who work specifically with clubs across Belfast.

We believe it is imperative that this support continues and calls on the Council to reaffirm its commitment to supporting amateur boxing in Belfast.

In particular, we call on the Council to continue to employ those sports officers who currently do work to support clubs and assist them in the work they carry out with boxing clubs.”

Councillor Beattie outlined the valuable work that he felt the Amateur Boxing strategy had delivered across Belfast and proposed that the contract for the two Community based Coaches be extended for a period of three months to enable further funding options to be investigated.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Magennis.

The Committee agreed to review resources to support the Boxing Strategy and investigate temporary arrangements for the two Community based Coaches for a temporary period of three months.

Boxing Action Plan 2017/18

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the support that the Council will provide to boxing for the remainder of the strategy period.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) note the update provided;**

- (ii) agree that in the financial year 2017/2018 a proportion of the Support for Sport grant is prioritised for boxing; and
- (iii) further work is undertaken to identify how funding can be established to support the remainder of the Boxing Strategy.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members are reminded that the Council developed a 10 year amateur boxing strategy for the city in partnership with Co Antrim Boxing, Ulster Boxing Council (UBC), Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) and the Irish Amateur Boxing Association (IABA). The final strategy including an action plan was agreed by the former Parks and Leisure Committee in March 2013. It was also agreed that a fund of £200,000 per annum would be allocated for 3 years on a non-recurrent basis for the implementation of Phase 1 of the strategy and this would include funding to put in place a Sports Development Officer (appointed in December 2013) and two community based coaches (appointed in April 2014). Due to the delay in appointing staff there was a significant underspend in Year 1 and this was used to finance the implementation of Year 4.

3.2 The agreed financial support for the implementation of the Amateur Boxing Strategy is coming to an end on 31st March 2017. Whilst this will mean that the direct support through the strategy will end, boxing clubs and the governing body will still be able to access the support that is available to all sporting clubs through the Leisure Development Unit. This support includes:

- Assistance in the completion of club development plans.
- Support in sourcing and completing funding applications.
- Assistance in helping club preparing for clubmark assessments.
- Providing clubmark accreditation and associated financial awards (bronze, silver, gold)
- Providing opportunities to get involved in community/school taster days etc.
- Recognising achievements of local clubs via annual sports awards ceremony
- Delivery club development and coach education training.

- 3.3 **Boxing clubs are eligible to apply for up to £9,000 per annum via Support for Sport funding (small, large and hospitality grant), via a competitive process which is open to all sports clubs in the city.**
- 3.4 **A fund of £600k was allocated to support the Boxing Strategy, (£200k over 3 years on a non-recurrent basis). The implementation of the strategy did not expend significant funds in year one and it was therefore agreed to extend the delivery to year four. An average of £150k has been spent each year with approximately 50% of this allocated to staffing costs and the remainder to programme delivery. Of the amount allocated to programme delivery, approximately £35k supported events across the city.**
- 3.5 **Members will be aware that there is a strategic review of grant-aid underway. In this context, it is proposed for 2017/18 that 15% of the total support for sport grant fund (up to £24k) is allocated to support delivery of the Boxing Strategy programme, to be applied for through existing partnership arrangements by way of an agreed action plan and subject to appropriate due diligence i.e. assessment of strategy outcomes, deliverability and value for money. It is envisaged this will support city wide events such as the very successful Belfast Boxing Day.**
- 3.6 **When the strategic review is completed, further work will be undertaken to establish funding arrangements for the Boxing Strategy.**
- 3.7 **The IABA, boxing's governing body, have also been successful in obtaining funding through the Everybody Active programme. They have been awarded up to almost £100,000 over 4 years to deliver a programme which aims to:**
1. **In the first instance to enhance club capacity (via free coach ed./club dev. training)**
 2. **Provide mentoring support/after care to newly qualified coaches.**
 3. **Utilise newly qualified coaches to deliver female boxing classes within the local community and in clubs.**
- 3.8 **These activities will build on the support that was provided to boxing through the phase 1 strategy funding.**
- 3.9 **IABA have committed to recruiting resource to provide ongoing support for delivery of the Boxing Strategy in Belfast.**

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications.

The support outlined will be met through existing resources.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The strategy has been equality screened in line with the Council's equality process."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Notice of Motion - Review of Enforcement Services

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of the Council on 1st March, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Boyle and seconded by Councillor Mullan, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

"Belfast City Council is responsible for a range of different enforcement services, including such things as on-street drinking, management of litter and addressing noise. It is important that, when carrying out enforcement duties in respect of these types of issues, our approach operates within the principles of consistency, proportionality and fairness, recognising the rights of all individuals.

This Council, therefore, agrees that it is timely for a review to be undertaken of enforcement activities across relevant Council Departments to ensure that such services are effective, efficient and responsive to the needs and demands across the City."

The Committee agreed that a Review of Enforcement Services would be considered within the context of the Departmental Change Programme and noted update reports on the Change Programme would be submitted to future meetings.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Committee Planning Workshop

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services drew the Members' attention to a Workshop Feedback report that provided a brief overview of the discussion that had taken place at the recent Committee Planning Workshop which had been held on Wednesday 15th February.

The Committee noted that the purpose of the Workshop had been:

- to review the performance and achievements of the Committee Plan in 2016/17; and
- to translate the priorities of the Belfast Agenda and Corporate Plan into a work plan for the Committee to deliver in 2017/18.

The Committee noted that the Members had fed back across a range of issues and agreed that officers would proceed to compile a revised Committee Plan for 2017-18, for consideration at the April meeting.

Graffiti Removal Partnership

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services reported that, as Members would be aware, graffiti was often an issue in many parts of Belfast. He advised that Belfast City Council currently removed offensive, sectarian, racist and political graffiti following a signed disclaimer from the tenant/owner of the property, however, it had limited resources to deal with the removal of nuisance graffiti.

He advised that officers from the Cleansing Services section had held a number of meetings with the Probation Board of Northern Ireland (PBNI) with a view to setting up a Graffiti Removal Initiative. He explained that this partnership working would be aimed towards the removal of non-contentious type graffiti and Belfast City Council staff would continue to remove the offensive, sectarian, racist and political graffiti.

The Committee noted that the PBNI had sourced a suitable vehicle and a power washer and it would provide a member of staff as a driver/supervisor and four to five young offenders to make up the team. Belfast City Council staff would train the PBNI staff members in the methods of safe graffiti removal and would also contribute by supplying some of the removal solution, paint brushes and other supplies.

The Committee approved the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the PBNI to implement its Graffiti Removal Initiative.

Food Waste

(Mr. T Walker, Head of Waste Management, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of a change in waste legislation which is seeking to reduce the amount of food waste placed by householders into their residual waste bins from 1 April 2017.**
- 1.2 In terms of facilitating this change, Waste Management intend to commence a food waste campaign involving placing ‘No Food Waste’ stickers on every householders’ residual/black bins. DAERA has agreed funding of £10K to support this programme. To explain and support this change, an explanatory letter will also be delivered by Waste Management to every household.**

- 1.3 In Belfast, despite a food waste collection service being available for every household, approx 25% of the residual bin is still food waste. If this waste was diverted into a food waste caddy or brown bin for composting instead of landfilling, the Council could save around £800K each year. Results from neighbouring councils which have adopted this approach already have shown an immediate uplift in the amounts of food waste collected of around 20% which, if applied to Belfast could also contribute around 1% to the city's recycling rate.
- 1.4 Members should also note that the arc21 Joint Committee meeting of 26 January 2017 endorsed a recommendation to introduce a policy requesting that householders put all food waste only into the receptacle provided by the council for that purpose.
- 1.5 Under the Waste & Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997, the Council is permitted to specify the types of waste it will collect, as well as the type and number of receptacles which can be used to present the wastes. This grants authority to the Council to deliver the requirements of the Food Waste Regulations (NI) 2015 by specifying which wastes go into which bins. To implement the requirements of this more recent legislation, and coordinate roll-out of these requirements with other councils in NI, Waste Management is proposing to run a campaign for householders and introduce a protocol regarding the collection of food waste from residual waste bins in Belfast.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to approve:

- the arc21 Joint Committee recommendation that arc21 constituent councils introduce a policy by 1 April 2017 which requires householders to put all food waste only into the receptacle provided by the Council for that purpose and not to place any food waste into any other waste receptacle for collection by the Council
- a food waste campaign which will involve placing 'No Food Waste' stickers on to every residual/black bin, along with the issuance of an explanatory letter for every household,
- the use of the encouragement protocol to support this initiative and boost recycling).

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1** Members should note that, at the January meeting of the People & Communities Committee, the NIEA Municipal Waste Statistics Annual report 2015/16 reported a fall in the Council's recycling rate from 44% to 40%. This decline was as a result of the impact of the increased tonnages brought about through a number of causes; increasing waste growth across Local Authorities in NI, the transfer of households under LGR with an historical high dependence on residual waste bins and global volatility for recyclables, meaning some local processors diverted materials to alternative energy recovery outlets (stable) rather than recycling markets (variable). These challenges remain and continue to negatively affect the Council's recycling rate. Maintaining current services will not reverse this decline and a paradigm shift will be needed to address this considerable challenge, and forms the basis for the Waste Agenda which will shortly be presented to the Committee for consideration.
- 3.2** In 2015, in order to encourage greater levels of recycling and to target the specific reduction of food waste from landfill, the DOE introduced the Food Waste Regulations (NI). This legislation proposed an initial approach which addressed food waste from commercial properties. As of 1 April 2016, premises generating more than 50KG of food waste a week had to arrange for the separate collection of these materials. From 1 April 2017, the threshold reduced for commercial properties (i.e. from 50KG to 5KG). It also provided for councils to take such steps as considered reasonable to extend the separate collection of food waste. Considerable dialogue was undertaken between councils and DAERA to clarify what separate meant, which has now been addressed.
- 3.3** Under the Waste & Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997, the Council is permitted to specify the types of waste it will collect, as well as the type and number of receptacles which can be used to present the wastes. This grants authority to the Council to deliver the requirements of the Food Waste Regulations (NI) 2015 by specifying which wastes go into which bins. To implement the requirements of this more recent legislation, and coordinate roll-out of these requirements with other councils in NI, Waste Management is proposing to run a campaign for householders and introduce a protocol regarding the collection of food waste from residual waste bins in Belfast.

- 3.4 Compositional analysis of the kerbside waste collected by the Council shows that approximately 25% of the weight of a residual/black bin is food waste, despite a food waste collection service being available at the doorstep for every household. This means that each year, the Council is spending an additional £800K sending this material to landfill rather than compost treatment. This has significant detrimental financial and environmental consequences through wasting ratepayers' monies and creating greenhouse gases through landfill disposal.
- 3.5 In partnership with the other councils, the National Communication Advisory Panel (NCAP), Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and chaired by the Department of Agriculture Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA), Waste Management has been developing shared communication campaigns. The NCAP was established to review best practice on public recycling habits and behavioural change. Over the years, WRAP has tested a range of activities aimed at boosting the capture of food waste and they have demonstrated that operational changes, including frequency, are most promising. Any changes can be beneficially enhanced using a simple sticker along with an explanatory letter and an appropriate encouragement scheme has been recognised as contributing to collection best practice in boosting food waste in a mixed organic (food waste/garden waste) collection scheme.
- 3.6 Some neighbouring councils have already introduced stickers and are achieving uplifts in their recycling rates and landfill diversion. It is envisaged that, in line with the legislative requirements to provide a food waste service to households, the remaining councils are either undertaking, or will undertake a similar exercise to broadcast this new development. The proposed scheme, using stickers as a prompt, has shown to provide an uplift of up to 20% and a similar response in Belfast could contribute to the city's recycling rate by around 1%.
- 3.7 For example, Ards & North Down Borough Council (A&NDBC) undertook a similar food waste campaign in the summer 2016, the results of which have proved to be positive with negligible negative feedback. There has been both an increase in compost/brown bin usage, a corresponding increase in the tonnage of food waste collected, along with a decrease in the residual/black bin tonnage.
- 3.8 It is proposed that following recent '*primer*' articles in City Matters, the Council will follow best practice and, using

WRAP-approved materials, issue letters to each household outlining what is needed to divert food waste from the residual bin, why the action is needed and how to contact the Council, should they not already be participating, to get all the necessary receptacles to take part in either the compost/brown bin (outer city) or the caddy food waste collection service (inner city). The purpose of placing a sticker on each bin alongside issuing a letter to householders is that this will ensure that every resident sees the sticker on their bin. If the Council was to use alternative delivery vehicles, such as City Matters, it is probable that many householders would simply discard the sticker without putting it on their bin. The letter is very straightforward, and is designed to merely highlight why the Council is now seeking to dissuade householders from putting food waste into their residual waste bin. It involves no change to collection date or frequency.

- 3.9 Members may care to note that, shortly, a letter from the Council's Recycling Box contractor, Bryson Recycling, will be issued changing a limited number of households' day of collection for operational reasons to better align their resources. This is not a significant change and will only affect a couple of thousand households across the city.**
- 3.10 Returning to food waste, Members should note that the arc21 Joint Committee considered food waste at their meeting in January and adopted the recommendation that arc21 constituent councils should introduce a policy by 1 April 2017 which requires domestic occupiers to put all food waste only into the receptacle provided by the council for that purpose and not to place any food waste into any other waste receptacle for collection by the council.**
- 3.11 In Belfast, the Service considers that as Council recycling performance has plateaued, a new approach is now needed. The Waste Agenda, which is currently being finalised for consultation, highlights that, for a minimal cost, this initiative has the potential to contribute 1% to the Council's recycling rate (i.e. divert an additional 1,500 tonnes from landfill). This would have the added value of saving the Council around £800K per annum from avoided landfill charges. As outlined above with A&NDBC, several of arc21's constituent councils are developing this approach and a proposal is being presented to the Joint Committee recommending that the constituent councils introduce a policy by 1 April 2017 which requires households to put food waste only into the receptacle provided by the Council for that purpose and not any other.**

- 3.12 Members are being asked to approve the encouragement scheme to support this initiative. This procedure, which will involve consultation with the relevant trade unions, will notify householders of the contamination in the non-recyclables bin, the steps required to address this issue and the graduated enforcement response where there is repeated contamination.
- 3.13 In the first contamination instance (i.e. food waste identified in the bin), it will be emptied but a notification sticker will be placed on the bin by Waste Management staff informing the householder of the requirement to separate out food waste (stage 1).
- 3.14 On the second occasion, the bin will be emptied and again a notification will be placed on the bin by Waste Management staff. A letter will also be sent to the householder informing them of the requirement to separate the food waste and the implications should they not choose to do so (stage 2)
- 3.15 On the third occurrence of contamination the bin will not be collected and a notification will be placed on the bin by Waste Management staff. This will inform the householder that the bin will not be collected until the item(s) of food waste is removed and the collection will be on the next scheduled collection day (stage 3).
- 3.6 The Council will ensure that each household has appropriate receptacles for their food waste collection service prior to considering any enforcement action. To assist in this regard, there will be a transition period of six months from the commencement of the campaign before any stage 3 notifications are issued. If a householder contacts the Council as a result of their bin not being emptied, staff will work with them to ensure future compliance with the policy.
- 3.17 As stated above, most of the councils in NI are adopting the same, or similar, protocol within the timeframe of spring 2017 and it is possible that there may be a financial contribution from DAERA in relation to funding the provision of stickers.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.18 It is worth highlighting that by diverting food waste from being in the wrong bin (i.e. residual bin) could save the Council an additional £800K per annum by sending it for recycling rather than landfilling. Therefore, not only could diverting food waste from landfill make a positive

contribution to the Council's recycling rate (1% approx.), but it could contribute to efficiency savings which could be re-invested elsewhere in the city.

- 3.19** In terms of the food waste campaign, total project costs are estimated at around £65K made up of around £10K for stickers and letters, and £55K for 32 x temporary staff and vehicles to cover all collection rounds before the legislation is introduced (1 Apr). These costs can be offset by a grant from DAERA for the provision of the stickers (£10K) and remaining monies can be accommodated within existing (2016/17) Departmental budgets.

Equality & Good Relations

- 3.20** Equality and good relations implications, in relation to this policy, are still under consideration. Further updates will be sent to the Equality and Diversity Officer in due course."

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that the letter to be issued in support of this initiative would be expanded to include clearer reference to costs and the benefits of recycling in creating/maintaining jobs and this would be approved by the Chairperson in advance of its distribution.

Community Centre Research

(Mrs. C Taggart, Community Development Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee was provided with an update on the research undertaken, to date, in respect of the ongoing mapping and analysis of community centre provision within neighbourhoods and across the city.

The Community Development Manager advised that the initial phase of research had focused on Council-owned community centre provision and those third sector organisations that currently received funding support via the Community Buildings Revenue Grant and the Capacity Building Grants.

The officer reported that it was important to note that this was baseline data which only provided a partial picture given the multiplicity of providers. In order to address this limitation, further research would be required to be undertaken with other key stakeholders and providers.

The officer outlined the next steps as follows:

- further discussion on the Council's ambition for neighbourhood assets and resources;
- further research and wider engagement with other providers to enable the Council to make informed investment decisions;

- collaborative working with key partners for example: health and education on investments;
- development of works on Community Asset Transfer;
- clarity on funding environment; and
- benchmarking with other cities.

The Committee noted the content of the report and agreed that Party Group Briefings would be held to determine the political ambition for neighbourhood assets and resources.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Partnership Agreements - Quarterly Update

The Assistant Director reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to enter into Partner Agreements at seven playing field sites and she then provided an update on the progress in relation to the Agreements for October - December 2016.

She explained that, in line with the Council's objectives, the diversification of use and improved sports development impact were priorities at the partner agreement sites and she advised that so far the programme delivery had led to significant positive achievements across the seven sites. She drew the Members' attention to a table which indicated the outputs at the sites as reported by the partners up to the end of December 2016 and highlighted that, in the initial year of transition from the Facility Management Agreements, there was evidence of growth in the level of diverse use and extensive partnership working.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Crumlin Star Re: Strangford Avenue

The Assistant Director reminded the Committee that, at its meeting held on 10th January, 2017, it had agreed that a breakdown of the estimated £50,000 cost of the required works to bring the Strangford Avenue Playing Fields up to intermediate standard would be submitted to a future meeting.

The officer drew the Members' attention to the estimated costs. She stressed that the costs were an approximation, which had been prepared in the absence of drawings, and they would therefore be subject to variation. She proceeded to detail the projected costs as follows:

- the provision of spectator fencing and outer ball stop/security fencing £28,000;
- the provision of dug outs which varied from £3,500 to £8,500, which excluded the cost of installation which could be undertaken internally;
- the cost of a bitmac path around the whole of the pitch to facilitate movement and access for people with disabilities, prams etc would be £37,000, to provide access along just one side would be £12,000; and
- to provide hedging to disguise the fencing £2,000.

The officer advised that the total cost was estimated at £45,500, but that it was normal to allow for contingency, which in this case was 10%, which give a total estimated cost of £50,050.

Following a query, the Assistant Director explained that, whilst some of the Council's pitches did not meet the existing intermediate ground standard, this was the standard that currently had to be achieved in order to meet the Intermediate League Ground Requirements. In addition, she reminded the Committee that the Irish Football Association (IFA) was currently undertaking a review of this criteria and she advised that an invitation had been issued to the IFA inviting a representative to attend a future meeting to discuss the review and the potential revised standards.

A Member suggested that officers also investigate the potential of football clubs sharing facilities with local GAA Clubs.

Following discussion, the Committee:

- noted that, whilst it appeared that technically the facility could be brought up to an existing intermediate ground standard, there remained a number of issues around funding, planning (including potential local opposition), and the displacement of existing users;
- noted that, as previously agreed, an invitation had been extended to the Irish Football Association (IFA) to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss its ongoing review of Intermediate League Ground Criteria; and
- agreed that officers would investigate the potential of the club sharing of facilities with local GAA Clubs; and agreed that a further report be submitted to a future meeting which would include additional detail in respect of the required works and anticipated costs.

Connswater Community Greenway - Proposed Naming Process for the Third Series of Playparks

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th January, 2016, it had agreed that the Connswater Community Trust (CCGT) would progress a consultative naming process in partnership with the Council, which would give the local community the opportunity to propose and select suitable names for a series of bridges and link paths in the Connswater Community Greenway (CCG). She reported that with the naming of the first and second series of structures having been agreed, the naming of the third tranche of structures was now scheduled to commence.

The Assistant Director detailed that the structures and playparks that CCGT now proposed to commence public engagement upon comprised of the following:

- pedestrian bridge at Connswater Retail Park;
- pedestrian bridge at Ladas Drive/Alexander Road;
- path connecting Ladas Drive to Montgomery Road;
- path/boardwalk connecting Ladas Way to Castlereagh Road;
- playpark at Flora Street Walkway; and

- playpark at Loop River.

She reported that the naming process would commence with a three week consultation period in April, during which the public would have the opportunity to submit ideas for the naming of a further two pedestrian bridges, two link/paths and two playgrounds in line with the Council's naming policy. Following this, a panel of judges would meet to consider the submissions and shortlist two possible names for each structure. The public would have the opportunity to vote for its favourite between 8th and 22nd May.

The Members noted that the final name proposals would be determined by the majority votes for each, with an update report being submitted to the People and Communities Committee at the June meeting for its consideration within the context of the Belfast City Council Naming Policy.

The Committee agreed to the third phase of the consultative naming process to name a further two pedestrian bridges, two links/paths, and two playgrounds constructed as part of the CCG.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Financial Reporting - Quarter 3

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services summarised the contents of a report which presented a Quarter 3 financial position for the People and Communities Committee, including a forecast of the year end outturn. He advised that the detail included the Quarter 3 position for the Committee which showed an under-spend of £1,387k or (2.4%) of the budget, with the forecast year end position being an under-spend of £888k (1.2%) which was well within the acceptable variance limit of 3%.

The Director reminded the Committee that the Land and Property Services agency (LPS) was forecasting a district rate claw back position of £2,024k, resulting in the Council having to find the additional balance to fully finance the rate claw back. The Strategic Policy and Resources had agreed, at its meeting on 18th November, 2016 to cap in year departmental cash limits at the Quarter 2 forecast levels to offset the rate clawback.

The Director advised that the corporate departmental forecast position at Quarter 3 was an underspend of £2,152k (1.6%). The LPS rate clawback was forecast at £2,024k leaving a balance of £128K which the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed would be applied to general reserves.

The Committee noted that the capital financing budget was forecast to be below budget by £675K due to slippage in the capital programme expenditure. The Director advised that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed that this underspend would be re-allocated to specified reserves for the following purposes:

- £294k for the Community Grants shortfall for 2017/18;
- £100k for the City Wide Tribunal Services for 2017/18. It was noted that this payment was subject to a further report to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the receipt and assessment of an application for funding which would detail the achievements to be delivered as well as the plans in place to attract levered funding; and
- the balance of £263k for a potential European Capital of Culture Bid.

The Committee noted the report, the associated financial reporting pack and the update in respect of the Council's corporate position.

**Community Development Grant Programme –
Extension of Contract 2017/18**

(Mrs. C Taggart, Community Development Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to seek permission from Members to offer contract extensions for 2017/18 across the grant categories to funded organisations.**
- 1.2 **In December Members were asked to consider a range of options to address the budget deficit in the Community Development Grants programme, £588,496k. Following consideration the Committee agreed to refer the matter to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration within the context of the overall rate setting process.**
- 1.3 **As part of the rate setting process for 2017/18, SP&R agreed to provide 50% of the funding required for the Community Development Grant Programme, that is, £294k through the district rate and to consider funding for the remaining balance as part of the Quarter 3 forecast. They further agreed that £294k of the capital financing under spend should be allocated to a specific reserve to fund the remaining shortfall in community grant support for 2017/18.**
- 1.4 **Council is awaiting confirmation from the Department for Communities on the level of grant income for 2017/18 from their regional Community Support Programme.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- i. Agree to offer contract extensions for 2017/18 and permit officers to engage with funded organisations on that basis (pending receipt of DfC allocation)
- ii. Note the current assessment of small grant applications based on the same level of available funding as 2016/17.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 The Community Development Grant Programme contains the following grant categories:

- Generalist Advice
- Capacity Support
- Community Buildings Revenue
- Small Grants (inc. Summer Scheme and Community Development Project grants)

Grant category commitments	2017/18 Estimated Cost
Generalist Advice	£931,765.53
Capacity	£705,824.22
Community Buildings Revenue	£846,013.46
Summer Scheme	£177,529.00
Project	£54,160.00
Total	£2,715,292.21

It should be noted that the estimated level of funding required for Community Buildings Revenue in 2017/18 is £25,500 less than 2016/17 because four organisations are no longer operating or in receipt of funding.

3.2 The full list of organisations and the contract value of individual awards for the three large grant categories, Generalist Advice, Capacity Building and Revenue for Community Buildings. Officers are currently assessing small grant applications for both Summer Scheme and Project grants for 2017/18. Recommendations will be

presented to the Director based on the same level of available budget as 2016/17.

3.3 The revenue budget also covers our non-grant support of the Sector via current financial arrangements with community based organisations across the city who deliver services on our behalf in respect of:

- Independent management of BCC Community Centres
- Anchor Tenants
- Service Level Agreement with Play Resource

Funding Contract	2017/18 Estimated Cost
Shaftesbury Recreation Centre	£55,183.00
Grosvenor Recreation Centre	£55,183.00
Ballymacarrett Recreation Centre	£55,183.00
Carrickhill Community Centre	£33,110.00
Denmark Street Community Centre	£20,806.00
Percy St Community Centre	£8,830.00
Sally Gardens	£55,183.00
Fullerton Park	£6,500.00
SLA Play Resource	£31,209.00
Total	£321,187.00

Financial & Resource Implications

3.4 **Financial:**

The total Community Development Grant Programme budget for 2017/18 is £3,036,479.20 funded by BCC and DfC through the Community Support Plan. The total available budget is dependent upon the receipt of DfC Community Support Programme income of £1.404m for 17/18.

3.5 **Human Resources**

This will be covered within the Community Services work programme

3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Operational Issues

Partnerships in Parks and Open Spaces

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the Belfast Mela, Feile an Phobail and the Belfast International Arts Festival to be held in during 2017, along with a proposal to provide financial support to the Belfast Mela and Belfast International Arts Festival (up to £20,000).

It was proposed by Councillor Beattie; and
Seconded by Councillor Magennis:

“That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations and also award financial support of up to £20,000 to Feile an Phobail, in line with the funding requested for the Belfast International Arts Festival and the Belfast Mela.”

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Nicholl,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers,

“That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the report to enable a further report to be submitted to the next meeting, if possible, which would include a breakdown of the annual funding that the Belfast Mela, the Feile an Phobail and the Belfast International Arts Festival received to host the outside events.”

On a vote by show of hands, ten Members voted for the amendment and seven against and it was declared carried.

The amendment was put as the substantive motion and passed.

Update on Grass Cutting and Horticultural Maintenance of Transport NI Sites within Belfast

The Assistant Director reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed that it would enter into an arrangement with Transport NI for the maintenance of the following sites:

- Michael Ferguson roundabout, Stewartstown Road;
- Kingsway Embankment, Dunmurry;
- A55 Knock dual carriageway; and

- Top of Cregagh Road.

The Members noted that these locations were all under the ownership and responsibility of Transport NI, however, due to the financial constraints being faced by the Department for Regional Development (DRD) and Transport NI and the subsequent reduced levels of maintenance the Council had agreed to provide support. She confirmed that a legal agreement had been drawn up between Belfast City Council and Transport NI to facilitate this arrangement.

The Committee:

- noted the arrangements in place for the maintenance of the four sites under ownership of Transport NI for the 2017/18 financial year;
- agreed to continue the maintenance agreement for future years, subject to budget availability; and
- agreed that officers would continue to engage with the Head of Transport NI in attempt to improve the standard of grass cutting throughout the City during the 2017 season.

CCG Animation Programme 2017/18

The Assistant Director drew the Members' attention to the proposed Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) Animation Plan 2017/18. She reminded the Committee that it had granted authority in November 2016 for officers to progress proposals for the Connswater Community Greenway management and animation arrangements.

The officer reported that, as a friend of the High Line, CCG Trust had received an invitation to become part of a 'High Line Network'. She explained that this organisation brought together similar projects in order to learn from one another, to grow success and to share ideas about how to ensure that public spaces would become social and economic successes. The officer reported that it was timely that the co-founder of New York's High Line had made contact and it was suggested that an invitation would be extended to him to help inform this stage of the work.

The Committee:

- agreed to connect with the High Line Network and invite the co-founder of New York's High Line to Belfast to inform the ongoing development of CCG future management arrangements; and
- noted the animation programme for 2017/18 and that all events/use would be subject to all statutory requirements being met.

Girls' Summer Soccer Programme

The Assistant Director advised that a request had been received from the Irish Football Association (IFA) ladies section seeking support for a grassroots girls' summer soccer programme at the City of Belfast Playing Fields.

The Members were advised that the programme encouraged participation at under 9, under 11 and under 13 age groups and would run for 7 weeks, every Saturday during May and June.

The Committee granted authority for free use of the City of Belfast playing fields for the purpose of hosting a grassroots girls' soccer programme.

Street Naming

The Committee:

- approved the naming in respect of Emersons Mews, Emersons Close, and Emersons Road, off Thornberry Road, and Emersons Drive and Emersons Lane, off Wolfhill Link, BT14; and
- the continuation of existing streets in the City namely Thornberry Road and Wolfhill Link.

Publication of Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) statistics

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised the Committee that all 11 Councils had been contacted by the Department for infrastructure seeking permission to routinely publish information of the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued by the Council for breaches of parking conditions in its off street carparks.

The Director advised that the publication of this information would enable the Council to refer queries relating to the numbers of PCNs issued to the statistics section on the Department's website. It was also anticipated that this would reduce the number of Freedom of Information Requests that the Council would have to respond to as information to be published should be exempt from the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Committee agreed:

- to the quarterly publication of information by the Department for Infrastructure on the number of PCNs issued by the Council for breaches of parking conditions in its off street car parks; and
- that this information, which would be provided to Members in advance, would be restricted and not shared until the date of publication.

Consultation Response - Smoking within Private Vehicles when Children are Present

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 Smoking in cars with children present has been a topical issue for the past few years and legislation has been**

introduced in the other parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland to outlaw smoking in private vehicles with children present. This report accompanies the consultation response on the draft regulations to implement similar legislation in Northern Ireland.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- **Approve the Council's response to the consultation. Members should note that the consultation closes on 3rd March 2017, and the Council has been granted a one week extension. The response will therefore be forwarded to the Department of Health by 10th March 2017, with the proviso that it is subject to full Council approval at its meeting in April 2017.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

Smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable illness and premature death in Northern Ireland, killing around 2,300 people each year. In addition a strong relationship exists between smoking and health inequalities. It has a greater impact on people living in areas of social or economic deprivation. Overall, almost one in four adults in Northern Ireland is a current smoker. In deprived areas this increases to one in three; and amongst the prison population, and for those with mental ill-health problems, smoking prevalence rates are considerably higher and one in two will die as a result of smoking.

3.2 This legislation is a landmark in protecting children from second hand smoke. Smoking just a single cigarette in a vehicle exposes children to high levels of air pollutants and cancer-causing chemicals like arsenic, formaldehyde and tar, and people often wrongly assume that opening a window, or letting in fresh air, will lessen the damage. Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of second-hand smoke as they breathe more rapidly and inhale more pollutants per pound of body weight than adults.

3.3 The consultation proposes an enforcement role for both PSNI and district councils but it is difficult to understand how district councils would successfully enforce the regulations given that, unlike PSNI, they do not have the power to stop vehicles. Officers would have to observe

smoking in the vehicle and determine the age of the child or children present. The Council has asked the Department of Health to clarify how it considers district council officers could achieve effective compliance with the proposed regulations.

3.4 Financial & Resource Implications

None. The Council employs two Tobacco Control Officers, who are funded by the Public Health Agency, to enforce the various elements of tobacco control legislation.

3.5 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None.”

The Committee endorsed the draft response, available on the Council's website [here](#), to the Department for Health consultation, relating to Regulations Restricting Smoking in Private Vehicles Carrying Children the Housing Executive. It was noted that the consultation closed on 3rd March and that the Council had already been granted a one week extension, it was subsequently agreed that the response would be submitted with the proviso that it would be subject to ratification by the Council.

**Consultation Response - DFC Consultation Paper
'Proposals for Change to the Private Rented Sector'**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 In January 2016 this committee considered and agreed a response to a discussion document published by the then Department for Social Development on the Review of the Regulation of the Private Rented Sector.

1.2 This public consultation document is the second stage in the Department's Review of this area. It proposes a number of changes which will impact on both landlords and tenants. Officers have prepared a draft response.

1.3 The consultation closes on 3rd April 2017 and a copy of the full consultation document is available at Members request.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Consider and endorse the draft response.

3.0 Key Issues

3.1 Owning a home or renting from a social landlord are the preferred choices for most of the Citizens of Belfast but these are becoming increasingly harder to secure. The private rented sector has become the second biggest tenure in Northern Ireland, the highest proportion being in Belfast. Given the existing waiting lists for Social Housing and affordability issues for first time buyers, this sector will continue to play an important and valuable role in the City's Housing Market.

3.2 The increasing reliance on the Private Rented Sector will make it an important element of any future Housing strategy. The Council recognises that the majority of landlords are good landlords who abide by the law and provide much needed, good quality, accommodation. However management standards can vary so it is important that the Private rented sector is fit for purpose and provides tenancies for people that need them.

3.3 The consultation document sets out proposals to:

- gauge the appetite of institutional investors from Great Britain to invest in Northern Ireland,
- encourage the development of more mixed tenure housing areas,
- scope out the role of Housing Associations in the private rented sector,
- restrict number of times rent can be increased in a 12 month period
- ensure all private tenants are issued with a written agreement which must contain mandatory terms
- increase the minimum notice to quit period for tenancies over 12 months from four weeks to two month
- introduce a Fast Track Eviction process,
- consider a landlord training programme,
- pilot a dedicated landlord advice line,
- develop a tenant information pack,
- amend the Landlord Registration Regulations to incorporate a fitness declaration at the point of registration,
- introduce a regulatory framework for letting agents,
- introduce requirement for landlords to provide smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and carry out periodic electrical checks,

- introduce legislation around Energy Performance Certificate ratings with possible exemptions,
- move the 1945 date for rent control to 1956,
- establish an independent housing panel.

3.4 The Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on these proposed changes. More detailed comments on each are provided in the draft response.

3.5 The Council is disappointed that the Department is not proposing to introduce landlord licensing. Experience in England has shown that it is an effective instrument for authorities to increase the amount of information they hold on the Private Rented Sector in their area, and to open up the lines of communication between local authorities, landlords and tenant communities. Licensing schemes would provide Councils with more effective powers to regulate the sector. It would also enable Councils and Landlords to work together in order to improve housing conditions and tackle problems like increased anti-Social Behaviour that often occur in areas with high concentrations of properties in the Private Rented Sector. More detailed comments on licensing are included in the draft response.

3.6 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The review may result in new regulations and additional responsibilities for Councils. It is unclear whether any additional resources will be made available to Councils for these.

3.7 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

There are no relevant equality considerations associated with the delivery of the strategy.”

The Committee endorsed the draft response, available on the Council’s website [here](#), to the Department for Communities relating to the Review of the Regulation of the Private Rented Sector.

**Request for the use of Barnett’s Demesne –
County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast**

The Assistant Director reported that the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast had written to the Council regarding the use of the Barnett’s Demesne for its Belfast demonstrations on 12th July, 2017.

The Committee agreed to accede to the request from the County Grand Lodge for the use of Barnett Demesne on the 12th July 2017, subject to an appropriate legal agreement to be prepared by Legal Services.

Fields in Trust Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main issues

- 1.1 Fields in Trust (FIT), in partnership with a national funder, is launching a new programme in spring 2017 to protect and activate outdoor recreation spaces across the UK. The programme will deliver activity programmes on designated spaces in communities where there is a need to tackle physical inactivity and encourage more people to become more physically active.**
- 1.2 The designated sites would be protected in perpetuity through a legal Deed of Dedication between the Council and Fields in Trust.**
- 1.3 Fields in Trust has approached the Council with a view to protecting six or seven sites across the region. Following discussions between officers and FIT, it is proposed that Cregagh Green would be ideal for this Programme. This is based on the view that the site has a unique association with George Best and as such the site should be preserved. It was felt that given this association the site lends itself to promoting physical activity combined with encouraging young people in particular to improve their outlook through sport.**
- 1.4 This report seeks Committee approval for the Council to submit an application to the programme with the understanding that if successful the Council may enter into a legal non-charitable Deed of Dedication affording protection to Cregagh Green subject to Council’s title.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to;**
 - Agree that Cregagh Green is submitted through an application process to participate in this programme. If successful Cregagh Green would obtain ‘protected status’ through a deed of dedication between the Council and Fields in Trust and be subject to the**

constraints of a deed of dedication as referred to below.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 In May 2017, Fields in Trust (the operating name of the National Playing Fields Association) is launching a new programme to encourage more people to become more physically active on green spaces in their communities.

3.2 The UK Chief Medical Officers state that adults should aim to take part in at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more, according to physical activity guidelines for adults from the UK Chief Medical Officers'. See https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213740/dh_128145.pdf

'Promoting active lifestyles can help us address some of the important challenges facing the UK today. Increasing physical activity has the potential to improve the physical and mental health of the nation, reduce all-cause mortality and improve life expectancy. It can also save money by significantly easing the burden of chronic disease on the health and social care services'. (Start Active, Stay Active – A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers 2016 (updated)).

3.3 Access to green spaces is an essential element of active lifestyles, community cohesion and mental wellbeing. Delivery of local and diverse activity programmes on these community spaces will aim to increase entry level activity amongst inactive people of all ages.

3.4 The programme, which is funded by a national charity, will combine protection of spaces with revenue funding to engage physically inactive people on those green spaces. Each space will be offered delivery of a physical activity project(s) to the value of £5,000 to serve local needs and benefit target groups as appropriate. A programme activation resource pack will be provided to promote and support an event to help promote the physical activity project and engage community participation.

3.5 Each space will also be able to apply for a larger capital grant of £25,000 to enable continued sustained physical activity on sites protected through the programme.

The programme sets out a number of objectives:

- To increase participation in physical activity amongst the inactive from groups including (but not limited to):
 - Disabled people
 - Women and girls
 - People from lower socio-economic groups
 - Those at risk from long-term health conditions
 - People from particular ethnic groups
 - Older people
- Provide a catalyst to deliver sustainable physical activity opportunities
- Raise the profile of local green spaces as important to health and well-being
- Secure local green spaces for continued and increased participation in a diverse range of physical and community activities
- Improve community cohesion, mental and physical health through participation in physical activity.

Impact on the Asset

- 3.7 A few of the Council's properties have already been gifted to the Council with restrictive use clauses contained within the title deeds to those properties which effectively create a trust which the Council is required to adhere to.
- 3.8 There are a few other Council properties held under deeds of dedication with the Millennium Commission (signed in 2000 for a period of 99 years) and with Fields in Trust and it appears that these could not be nominated for the proposed Fields in Trust Programme.
- 3.9 If the Council chooses to nominate this site, the title would first need to be examined to ensure that the property is not already subject to a deed of dedication, or to alienation provisions within the title (i.e. restrictions on assignment, or parting with possession) or certain use covenants).
- 3.10 The deeds of dedication issued by the Fields in Trust and which the Council may be required to sign are stringent and constrain what the Council can do in terms of disposal or any building works/changes of use affecting any nominated property. A burden is required to be registered against the title of the nominated property. Any dealings with the property or works to same in the future would require the

consent of Fields in Trust, and once successfully nominated this remains the case in perpetuity and such a deed of dedication remains in perpetuity.

Timescales

- 3.11 If approved, the Field in trust require the Deed of Dedication to be signed within four months of submitting the application; this will be subject to title and potentially other factors such as officer resources. Upon completion of the proposed Deed of Dedication the activation project will commence with the opportunity for an activation event to launch the programme on the site and to promote its designated status.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.12 This programme provides an opportunity to avail of up to £30k to deliver programming and capital development of the site to increase participation in healthy activity (£5k to take part in the programme if application is successful and an option to apply for a further £25k, the latter is not guaranteed).

Human Resources

- 3.13 The costs of participating in the programme will include Officer time and in particular Legal advice to agree the Deed of Dedication.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 3.14 There are no known Equality or Good Relations implications.

Asset and Other Implications

- 3.15 Parks and green spaces are highly valued by local residents. The Cregagh Green site has been identified as being an important community facility and as a valuable asset in addressing physical inactivity and building community cohesion. This programme will benefit residents and park users and contribute to improving the quality of life and help address health inequalities.
- 3.16 By taking part in this programme we will positively raise the profile of Cregagh Green and the Council through a high profile national programme, as well as contributing towards our aims of encouraging healthier and more active lifestyles within the community.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Future Provision of Dog off Lead Facilities

The Assistant Director informed the Committee that the Clean Neighbourhoods Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which had come into effect in April, 2012, provided councils with additional powers to deal with, amongst other things, dogs related issues. The Council had, subsequently, introduced two of four Dog Control Orders, prohibiting dog fouling and limiting to four the number of dogs which a person could be in control of at any time. Following feedback from a City-wide consultation exercise in 2012, the implementation of the two remaining orders, namely, making it an offence to allow dogs off their lead in designated areas and excluding dogs from designated areas, had been delayed, to allow for further consultation and a wider analysis of users' needs.

She reported that the additional consultation had highlighted a requirement for facilities to be made available in parks to allow for dogs to be exercised off-lead. As a result, a pilot exercise had been operating for over two years within the Grove Playing Fields, which had provided an enclosure specifically for that purpose. She pointed out that the continued consultation process around the pilot initiative had provided Council officers with a greater understanding of the issues which needed to be addressed. As part of that process, she was seeking permission for officers to work up a consultation and engagement framework, including a communications plan to assist Council officers to consult with dog owners and park users to seek an appropriate option for each park.

The officer reported that, through research, three options had been identified as operationally feasible.

1. the Introduction of dog enclosures in various parks across the city. These enclosures would be similar to the enclosure that had been piloted in Grove Park and would be most suitable for parks that had large sections dedicated to sports pitches, playgrounds and community vegetable gardens. The fenced enclosure would leave no doubt or confusion with regards to where dogs should be allowed off leads in that particular park;
2. "Off lead Areas" in various parks across the city – these areas would have adequate signage in order to clearly demarcate the area that dogs were allowed to run free. This option would be best suited to larger parks with no football pitches where natural features, for example: hedges, tree lines, rivers or fence lines and pathways could be used as boundaries; and
3. time zoning system – a system that would permit dogs to be off their lead in the entire park but only at certain times of the day. This system would be best suited to small parks and open spaces where it would be difficult to erect a dog enclosure or operate off lead zones.

It was noted that in all dog off lead options the controls for dog fouling would apply.

The Committee:

- noted that work was progressing to establish dog off lead facilities in Parks and Open Spaces;

- agreed to support an engagement process through the Area Working Groups to determine local area needs;
- agreed that a consultation and engagement exercise would be conducted across each area facilitated; and
- granted permission for officers to work up a consultation and engagement framework which would include a communications plan, to assist Council officers consulting with dog owners and park users to seek an appropriate option for each park.

Request for the use of the Girdwood Site

The Assistant Director advised that a request had been received from Mr. Stephen Nolan's Independent Production Company seeking permission to broadcast a youth debate programme from the Girdwood site in North Belfast.

She explained that the objective of the programme would be to engage more young people in politics, debate and current affairs and it was proposed that a panel of politicians' would take part in the debate to discuss issues raised by the young people that affected the community in which they lived.

The Committee approved the use of the Girdwood site to broadcast a BBC youth debate programme on a date yet to be determined, during May 2017, providing all the relevant paperwork and statutory approvals were in place prior to the broadcast.

Chairperson