

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 7th November, 2017

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Sandford (Chairperson);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland);
Aldermen Rodgers, McCoubrey and McKee; and
Councillors Armitage, Beattie, Corr, Corr Johnston, Garrett,
Heading, Magennis, Milne, McCabe, McCusker, Newton,
Nicholl and Nic Biorna.

Also attended: Councillor Boyle.

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

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor McReynolds.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th October and the special meeting of 18th October 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 November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were reported.

New Member of Council

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Orla Nic Biorna, who had replaced former Councillor Austin, to her first meeting.

Schedule of meetings 2018

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for the People and Communities Committee during 2018, subject to a new date being identified for the special meeting to consider housing issues during January 2018:

Special Meeting (Housing Issues) – new date during January 2018 to be confirmed
Tuesday, 9th January
Tuesday, 6th February
Tuesday, 6th March

Tuesday, 10th April

Special Meeting (Housing Issues) – Monday 16th April (to which all Members are invited)

Tuesday, 8th May

Tuesday, 5th June

No meeting in July

Special Meeting (Housing Issues) – Wednesday 1st August (to which all Members are invited)

Tuesday, 7th August

Tuesday, 4th September

Tuesday, 9th October

Tuesday, 6th November

Special Meeting (Housing Issues) – Monday 12th November (at 12.30 p.m.) (to which all Members are to be invited)

Tuesday, 4th December

All meetings would commence at 4.30 p.m. apart from the special meeting of 12th November which would be at 12.30 p.m.

Request to Present - Boxing

The Committee noted that a request had been received from County Antrim Boxing seeking permission to present a proposal on behalf of the Belfast Clubs' regarding progressing the Council's Boxing Strategy.

The Committee agreed that representatives from County Antrim Boxing would be invited to present at the December meeting.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Committee Plan Update

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 a mid-year update on the People and Communities Committee Plan 2017/18 outlining progress on key actions, achievement and risks.

1.2 The People and Communities Committee Plan 2017/18 was approved by Committee on the 13 June 2017, following a planning workshop with members on the 15 February 2017 and a follow up Committee Planning feedback report noted at the People and Communities Committee on the 7 March 2017.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

Note the progress to date against the agreed actions within the Committee Plan.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The Committee is currently working to an ambitious Committee Plan which describes how its purpose, objectives and activities contributes to the strategic direction of the Council's Corporate Plan and the achievement of the city's long term vision and priorities detailed within the Belfast Agenda. The Committee Plan was created after discussion with Members and Senior Management Team about the role of the Committee and its priorities for the City and local neighbourhoods. While the Committee contributes to the delivery of all four Belfast Agenda priorities, City Development, Growing the Economy and Living Here are the main focus of this Committee, particularly the latter priority.

Committee Plan Update

3.2 Over the last six months Committee have developed and implemented a range of strategies, policies, programmes and projects aimed at improving the quality of life at the local level, working with partner organisations and communities to realise the City's full potential. Lead officers provided status and progress updates against Committee Plan projects, programmes and activities. A detailed update is outlined in Appendix 1 and some key highlights are summarised below against the relevant priorities of the Belfast Agenda.

3.3 Living Here – Improve Neighbourhoods highlights:

- We are working on the development of a neighbourhood regeneration framework to include a range of key workstreams identified in the Belfast Agenda e.g. employability and skills, health and well-being, community safety, good relations and are currently sharing and learning good practice with Officers from Bradford City Council.
- We have established contacts with the Family Support Hubs to raise awareness of our outreach play service and made links with Barnardo's and the Red Cross to deliver a play programme for Syrian families. We continue to deliver programmes to the Belfast Islamic Centre, Traveller children and reach out to new groups across the city.
- We continue to deliver the Belfast (D)PCSP strategic plan, using an outcomes based approach to monitor performance. We are maximising our resources by

integrating internal working between SNO's, Parks Wardens and AEO staff and by liaising weekly with the PSNI and carrying out joint operations. We are currently finalising an information sharing agreement on drug and alcohol issues and supporting vulnerable people in partnership with the statutory, community and voluntary sector.

- We have a grand total of 17 green flags, by successfully retaining our 15 and achieving accreditation for 2 additional spaces - Tullycarnet Park and Dunmurry Village.
- We have reached a major milestone with the opening of the final section of the transformative Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) project. In total the CCG has developed 16km of new foot and cycle paths, improved green spaces, introduced 23 new or improved bridges, created 5km of flood walls and embankments, introduced 6 new tourism and heritage trails as well as the C.S. Lewis Square. We will ensure that the use of this valuable asset is maximised, via sustainable programming.
- We have developed a social innovation challenge programme framework and process. Inner East and Whiterock have completed an accelerator programme, with 3 projects pitching to receive funding i.e. New Lodge, Belvoir and Milltown.

3.4 Living Here – Improve the city living experience highlights:

- As part of the delivery of the Playing Pitches Strategy, work at Falls Park is underway and will be complete by March 2018. Work on the new pitch at Cherryvale will commence October and finish by March 2018. We will continue to ensure that the capital investment in our neighbourhood assets is maximised, through usage and programming.
- As part of the Amateur Boxing Strategy, we have worked with the IABA to develop and resource an agreed boxing action plan up until March 2018.
- As part of the C&NS Departmental Change Programme, a draft City Centre Streetscape Strategy and Action Plan has been developed to support inter-departmental working and help secure commitment and contribution from external partners.
- We successfully organised and delivered the Spring Fair, Rose Week and Autumn Fair, with a high average of 95% satisfaction rating.

3.5 Living Here – Improve community relations highlights:

- An integrated Good Relations action plan is currently being delivered including the allocation of Tranche 1 grant aid funding, Decade of Centenaries programme, Interfaces programme and commissioned work in relation to racism in schools.
- Work is continuing on the development of projects under the Peace IV themes of Children and Young People, Shared Spaces & Services and Building Positive Relations and we are currently fulfilling some conditions required prior to the receipt of a letter of offer.

3.6 Living Here – Reduce life inequalities highlights:

- We continue to work with our Belfast Strategic Partners (BSP - BCC, PHA and BHSCT) and have agreed priority areas for action going forward. Some collaborative pieces of work completed include; the launch of the 'Take 5' Toolkit and training programme and 'Have your say' emotional wellbeing survey, attended by 120 people, Emotional Resilience action plan, Get Active Belfast pledges and the Learning City plan for Belfast.
- We are also working collaboratively with our partners to pilot crisis de-escalation (Community and Voluntary and Statutory Services) and street triage services (NIAS and PSNI services).
- We continue to deliver a wide range of sports development initiatives including Clubmark Club accreditation scheme, Everybody Active 2020 Programme, Support for Sport funding programme to include a ring-fenced boxing events fund and the Belfast Sports Award.
- We continue to manage the strategic partnership with GLL and a new Active Belfast Limited business plan (2017-2020) was approved by Committee in May 2017. Performance measures and health outputs are built around the strategic partnership outcomes of getting: 'more people, more active, more often'.

3.7 Living Here – Enable active, healthy and empowered citizens highlights:

- An action plan for implementing the volunteering policy has been developed in partnership with Volunteer Now and a steering group will be appointed to take this forward. The Volunteer management process has been piloted and is now being reviewed.

- We are currently developing a phase 2 Growing Communities action plan aligned to the Belfast Agenda and the C&NS Change Programme principles, which will be presented to DMT in Autumn and Committee shortly after.

3.8 Living Here – Provide fit-for-purpose city services highlights:

- We continue to work on the workstreams and projects as part of the C&NS Change Programme, in relation to service integration, structural change and efficiency. Committee have agreed the Tier-3 management structure, which we are now seeking to recruit by April 2018. Work is ongoing to develop the JDs and agree the recruitment process for filling the posts. We have commissioned Deloitte to support our work on the development of a customer model and corporate approach to customer focus.
- We continue to develop our approach to area planning and model for area working with the Director of C&NS taking over as lead Chief Officer of the AWGs. Initial thinking around area planning and working is that it is linked to Peace IV and compliments other pieces of new and existing capital and programming work. Over the coming months there will be engagement through Party Group briefings and Area Working Groups.
- Work is continuing on the bereavement improvement programme including the development of various options and financial models and ongoing discussions with neighbouring councils about joint working opportunities in relation to crematoria and cemetery development. We continue to engage with grave owners and memorial sculptors during the implementation of the memorial management policy.

3.9 Living Here – Support young and older people highlights:

- The Age Friendly Belfast 2017 event took place in June and work is ongoing on the development of a Age Friendly action plan.
- We regularly engage with 40 young people from across Belfast as part of the youth forum. In May 2017 young people launched their research 'Poverty; It's not a choice' and have been actively engaging key decision makers within Council on the recommendations. The youth forum have also been working with NI Youth Forum and Children's Law Centre to plan a new youth led mental health campaign called 'The elephant in the room'.

3.10 City Development – Protect and enhance our environment and built heritage highlights:

- We continue to work with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to develop an Open Spaces Strategy and local biodiversity action plan to ensure we take a sustainable approach to protecting and maximising the benefits of the city's natural and built environment to achieve better outcomes for Belfast.
- The Waste Framework was ratified by Council in July 2017 and the collections options appraisal completed in August 2017. Consultation research is currently being conducted to inform the public consultation phase due early next year. We successfully completed the 'No Food Waste' campaign phase 1 in September 2017 and the next step is to report to oversight board for capital projects outlining the capital cost implications arising from the waste framework.
- We continue to develop the circular economy framework - Resourceful Belfast including key actions for implementation.
- Together with Project and Projects, we continue to support and progress HLF funding applications to restore and animate city assets, including the £3.7million upgrade of the Tropical Ravine, City Cemetery and Templemore.

Corporate Risk Actions Update

- 3.11** There has been good progress in relation to the two corporate risk actions, a detailed risk action update is outlined in Appendix 2. The risks are being assessed, plans are in place and are regularly monitored. In summary the four actions under the Waste Management risk have made significant progress, as three actions are now agreed/ fully implemented with the development of a strategic plan encompassing collections arrangements and target attainment complete and a strategic action plan signed off. One action remains partially completed as still awaiting the outcome of the PAC in relation to Arc 21, current contract arrangement is suffice as a contingency arrangement. The Safeguarding All Ages risk is progressing well at this stage with good progress being made. It is anticipated that the draft policy framework for safeguarding all ages will be presented to SP&R Committee at the beginning of next year and following that a communication and training programme will be rolled out.

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

The Committee Plan 2017-18 has been developed and delivered in the context of the resources available to Committee.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications

Where necessary all projects, programmes and activities contained within the Committee Plan have and will be subject to equality screening in line with the Council's processes."

Following a query from a Member, the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services undertook to clarify the officer who was now responsible for progressing the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and to update the Member directly.

The Committee noted the update provided.

Waste Collection Update

The Director provided the Committee with an update in respect of the waste collection service which included a detailed update in respect of the following key areas:

- customer call handling and management interventions; and
- the waste collection improvement plan.

The Assistant Director advised the Committee that the Council had just recently been shortlisted for a Sustainable Ireland Award. The Committee agreed that, in the event that the Council be awarded a Sustainable Ireland Award, to authorise the attendance of the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson at the Awards Ceremony on 27th November.

It was agreed further that, given the progress made to date in terms of improving the efficiency of the waste collection service, the submission of officer update reports could move to bimonthly, commencing January 2018.

Proposed Study visit to Covanta Poolbeg

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised that it was proposed that a site visit would be organised for Members of the Committee to visit the Covanta Energy from Waste (EfW) plant in Poolbeg, Dublin.

Several Members stated that the site visit was not required and it was unanimously agreed that it would not take place.

A further Member requested an update in respect of Arc21.

The Committee was advised that the minutes of the Arc 21 meetings were available for viewing online. Following discussion, it was agreed that officers would

submit an update report in respect of Arc21 to a future meeting and the three Council Member representatives on Arc 21 would be invited to attend the Committee meeting.

Area Planning

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 initial thoughts around developing our approach to area planning, in the first instance using Peace IV as a catalyst to develop this work.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

Note the contents of this report which was taken to SP&R on 20th October resulting in ongoing Party Group briefings.

3.0 Main report

Area Planning

3.1 The Belfast Agenda is the city’s first community plan which sets out our joint vision and long-term ambitions for Belfast’s future, as well as outlining our priorities for action over the next four years.

3.2 In the Belfast Agenda we identify the four key areas we want to focus on in the next 4 years (the period of the Community Plan). One of the four key priorities identified is ‘Living Here’, for this area of focus we have described the difference we want to make, the stretch goals or targets we want to achieve and the population indicators that we think this work will impact.

3.3 Some of these targets over the next four years include;

- delivering £1billion of physical investment in neighbourhoods;**
- improve how safe people feel within our neighbourhoods;**
- supporting communities to make progress towards reducing the number of physical barriers at interface sites.**

- 3.4 It is also worth noting that one of the key workstreams contained within the 'Living Here' priority is to 'Design an integrated, inter-agency approach to neighbourhood regeneration and maximise the impact of local assets and investment'.
- 3.5 Despite significant capital and revenue investment in local areas across Belfast, it is the case that sometimes we are not maximising the opportunities and resources available to us in a coordinated way as effectively as we would like. However, through our community planning process we now have an opportunity to start to integrate a range of programmes and services at an area level in order to improve outcomes for our residents, and visitors.
- 3.6 To help achieve our goals identified in the Belfast Agenda we need to harness some of the opportunities that currently exist through current and planned investment in specific areas. Where there are current investment opportunities and resources available, the Council have the potential to lead on developing an emerging area planning model for delivering against the priorities identified in the Belfast Agenda by integrating a range of programmes and services and associated staff resources.

Peace IV

- 3.7 One of the opportunities we have to test this area planning approach exists through Peace IV. Council officers have been working closely with SEUPB over the past number of months to submit an action plan for Belfast which, if successful will provide significant investment both capital and revenue to deliver a number of projects under the themes of Children and Young People, Shared Spaces & Services and Building Positive Relations. We have received positive feedback from the SEUPB steering committee and are hopeful that we will be successful in our application for funding.
- 3.8 The Shared Spaces and Service theme that was submitted as part of this plan focused on delivery along the Springfield Road area. This area has a number of interfaces including the longest physical barrier in the city. In the Peace IV submission a number of sites are proposed along this corridor as possible physical regeneration projects with significant programming opportunities also forming part of the submission.
- 3.9 The proposed initiatives under, Peace IV presents a unique opportunity to be a catalyst for social and economic regeneration, peace building and reconciliation through improved connectivity and greater

emphasis on shared space. The Peace IV plan should not be delivered in isolation. Importantly, existing and potential new programmes of work within the area could also be aligned to build on the potential to improve outcomes for residents in this area.

Complimentary Work

- 3.10 As well as the potential work included in the Peace IV bid there are a number of complementing existing and possible new investment opportunities in this area, both capital and programming, which include approaches from the Council and other statutory partners and other investors.
- 3.11 The capital investment opportunities range from potential housing developments, community projects, Belfast City Council capital projects (including those we are delivering under Building Successful Communities), DFC capital programmes and potential developments of the Invest NI site. Recent major investment in the area also includes the Innovation factory and E3 campus.
- 3.12 There are also opportunities to align programming work of both the council and partners in a more integrated way and contribute to key policy priorities for the city through this area planning approach such as employability and skills, health and wellbeing, community safety and others and start to shape how we do things better at an area level.

Fresh Start

- 3.13 Members will be aware that an Executive Action Plan on ‘*Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime*’ was published in July 2016. Recommendation (Action B4) states that:

The Executive should establish a fund to support ambitious initiatives aimed at building capacity in communities in transition, including through developing partnerships across civil society and across community divisions.

In order to progress this recommendation it was decided to take an area based approach, with the following areas identified within Belfast:

- 1) New Lodge and Greater Ardoyne.
- 2) Lower Falls, Twinbrook, Poleglass, Upper Springfield, Turf Lodge and Ballymurphy.
- 3) Shankill (upper and lower, and includes the Woodvale).

4) The Mount (1) (2) and Ballymacarrett (2) and (3) in East Belfast.

- 3.14** Following a procurement process Co-operation Ireland have been appointed as a Strategic Partner to support TEO in the delivery of Action B4, and their role will be to develop Area Transition Plans in respect of each of the identified areas by the New Year.
- 3.15** TEO have made clear as part of the process that the Strategic Partner must engage and consult with Council in order to identify relevant priorities and ongoing work to ensure a co-ordinated and collaborative approach is taken.
- 3.16** Members will note that the areas identified at sub point 2 above fall within the Springfield Road corridor identified within the PEACE IV Shared Space theme. Early engagement with the Strategic Partner has already taken place to explore and exploit potential synergies and opportunities to maximise outcomes through this area based approach.
- 3.17** With regards to these investment opportunities there are a number of significant links and potential synergies which could be brought together in terms of understanding the whole narrative of what can be achieved in this area through investment both physical and revenue.

Further Opportunities for Area Planning across the City

- 3.18** We are aware that we need to develop our area planning approach in other areas across the city; To align both the work of the Council, and that of partners, including the community and voluntary sector in a meaningful way is complicated and will require significant development over a number of years.
- 3.19** However, through work we are undertaking as part of our change programme within the Council in terms of how we improve service delivery at a local level we have an opportunity to realign current resources alongside new investment to see how we can maximise current opportunities and test and develop how we do this.
- 3.20** There are opportunities to develop similar area planning approaches in other parts of the city, for example we have been testing and learning how we might do this work through our locality planning work in four areas across the city. Initial learning from this and other integrated work programmes can inform how we develop a coordinated area planning approach.

Next steps

3.21 Following discussion on this subject at SP&R in October Chief officers are currently undertaking party group briefings to receive more detailed feedback from members on the development of an area planning approach. Once briefings are complete, further engagement with members will take place at Area Working groups on how this work will be taken forward, which will include potential opportunity areas to develop similar models.

3.22 **Financial & Resource Implications**

Financial: Council has already submitted a bid to SEUPB with regards to the delivery of the Belfast Action Plan; all delivery costs will be included in this bid.

With regards to the development of an area plan, further work is required to develop this including any potential costs.

Staff: Staffing costs are included in the Peace IV action plan.

Further staff resources to work up any future area plans will be allocated from current resource with alignment to the development of our approach to area working being undertaken through the change programme.

3.23 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

Any future model on area planning will be screened for equality and good relations implications.”

The Committee noted the report.

Anti-Social behaviour in Parks/Open Spaces

The Committee considered the following report:

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

1.1 Further to discussion at the special People and Communities Committee meeting on 18 October 2017 Members requested that a report be submitted which would consider the implementation of additional preventative measures to the Council’s Parks, including the feasibility of staffing resources. The report would include projected expenditure, resource requirements and detail any financial impact on the Council’s existing budgets.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

Consider the contents of the report and endorse the strategic direction and allocation of resources as outlined.

3.0 **Key Issues**

Additional Preventative Measures

3.1 Members will be aware that anti-social behaviour is challenging to resolve, not just in parks/open spaces but across Belfast generally. It is a complex issue and is, in most circumstances, the manifestation of wider community and societal vulnerabilities which require holistic strategic planning and investment with statutory, community and voluntary partners.

3.2 Effectively and sustainably addressing these vulnerabilities can take time, and it is important to recognise the detrimental impact on the quality of life of individuals, families and communities affected by anti-social behaviour in the present. It is therefore incumbent on all partners (including the Council) to do whatever it can operationally to minimise anti-social behaviour in the present. Weekend nights and school holidays are usually most problematic.

Operational Preventative Measures

3.3 Council provides a range of existing services the purpose of which is to address anti-social behaviour. These services are outlined below:

Mobile CCTV

3.4 **Existing Provision** – One mobile CCTV van follows a pre-set route each weekend based on parks/open spaces hot spots. Cover is provided on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights up to end March 2018

Existing Provision Cost – The cost of existing provision up to end March is approximately £42,000 per year and this is budgeted for within existing revenue budgets. A procurement exercise is scheduled for early 2018 as the existing contract runs out.

Additional Provision – The existing contractor has only one mobile CCTV van. In the short term, an additional supplier would be required and availability is not guaranteed.

Additional Provision Cost – The approximate cost of an additional vehicle is £700 per night. To provide an additional vehicle on each Friday, Saturday and Sunday night up to end March 2018 would cost an additional £40,000.

Safer Neighbourhood Officers (SNO's)/Park Wardens

- 3.5 **Existing Provision** – 4 SNO's are on normal shift from 4.30pm – Midnight on Friday and Saturday nights. SNO's do not normally work on Sundays. Park Wardens work annualised hours in line with the seasonal opening/closing times of parks. Park Wardens are not on normal shift after approximately 6.30pm, however, practically they are not available from 5.30pm as they have locking up duties during the last hour of their shifts.

Existing Provision Cost – The existing provision as outlined below is part of normal Council service delivery and as such is budgeted for within existing revenue budgets.

Additional Provision – Additional overtime hours could be provided by offering voluntary overtime (minimum team of four for health and safety reasons) to provide an additional team on Friday and Saturday nights and to put one team on Sunday nights where there is no provision currently.

Additional Provision Cost – The approximate cost of one additional team of four on voluntary overtime on each Friday and Saturday night would be £950 per night (8 hour shift). The approximate cost of providing one team of four on voluntary overtime on Sunday night would be £1,250 per night. The approximate total cost of increasing provision to this level would be £65,000 up to end March 2018.

Alcohol Enforcement Officers (AEO's)

- 3.6 **Existing Provision** – Alcohol Enforcement Officers are a casual pool of Officers trained to undertake alcohol enforcement duties and deal with low level anti-social behaviour. They have other jobs within Council and are only available to undertake work outside their core working hours. AEO's are currently being used each

weekend and during half term week to work alongside SNO's with the overall provision being one team of four dedicated to Falls Park/City Cemetery and a mobile team covering other hot spot parks/open spaces.

Existing Provision Cost – A small budget exists for AEO's during spring/summer months and at key events and times, however, this is full committed for the remainder of the year. Additional AEO provision after the Halloween half term week will require additional budget of £450.00 for each team of four per night (6 hour shift). This approximate total cost of increasing AEO provision to this level would be £27,000 up to end March 2018.

Summary and Budget Implications

- 3.7 Three front line job roles exist currently within Council whose responsibility it is to deal with low level anti-social and nuisance behaviour, namely Safer Neighbourhood Officers, Park Wardens and Alcohol Enforcement Officers. No front line job role exists whose responsibility it is to deal with serious anti-social behaviour or criminality and the current Mobile Attendant job role does not provide for any role in dealing with low level anti-social and nuisance behaviour.
- 3.8 Those three front line job roles are spending the majority of their time at present working to address the issues around parks and open spaces.
- 3.9 If additional provision is required in the form of more CCTV provision, staff voluntary overtime or additional casual AEO's hours, no budget is available at present for this work.
- 3.10 Some available budget may be available within the Parks ASB Budget to assist with additional operational provision, however, this would reduce the monies available within this budget to support positive animation and community led diversionary work around parks/open spaces.

Integrated Planning in Neighbourhoods

- 3.11 Members will recall that whilst anti-social behaviour can be a concern at a range of parks/open spaces across the city, it is most persistent and prevalent in a smaller number.
- 3.12 Members may wish to consider how our convening role in community planning and the learning from the locality planning pilots can provide a platform for a more

integrated, holistic and sustainable approach to addressing concerns around the most challenging parks/open spaces as part of an area model.

- 3.13 This approach would consider how anti-social behaviour in these parks/open space is the manifestation of a range of other pressures and vulnerabilities within the surrounding communities.
- 3.14 The approach would also use the park/open space as its core 'place', but would work with statutory, community and voluntary partners in the surrounding neighbourhoods to explore key connections and dependencies, working with other community, voluntary and statutory partners. For example in some of the areas there is significant investment in other services provide by statutory partners and local youth groups.
- 3.15 The purpose of the approach would be to identify the key pressures and vulnerabilities in the connected neighbourhoods which could be contributing to the issues in the park/open space and also to identify earlier and more sustainable opportunities to intervene to prevent the anti-social behaviour from starting in the first place. This may entail aligning some of our resources at a number of parks and open spaces and using a more coordinated approach to get better results where there is work currently being undertaken.
- 3.16 Such an approach may take longer to bed in (depending on current structures and relationships already in place), however we could develop an integrated approach that deals with immediate issues, while developing longer term and more sustainable was of working better at a local level. The work being developed in open spaces and parks could be part of an overall integrated plan for the area
- 3.17 Key Elements of the Approach would be:
- Community centred to ensure the community voices are heard and are part of co-designing solutions to problems
 - Sustainability to ensure meaningful and long term change is the focus
 - Opportunities for community led social innovation
 - Early intervention and prevention to include opportunities to tackle associated drugs/alcohol, mental health, education and employment challenges
 - Evidence based (community evidence as well as statistical evidence)

- Improvements in the integrated service offer to communities (both internally for Council and as a wider group of statutory, community and voluntary service providers) to improve community confidence
- Reduce duplication and identify opportunities for more efficient use of Council resources
- Identification of key community assets in the areas and how to support the development of these
- Physical measures which could assist in the core park/open space and opportunities to attract wider physical investment in the connected neighbourhoods
- Opportunities to work with local partners to develop animation programmes to change
- Risk of displacement would be considered and contingency plans would be developed to minimise that
- Role of schools, parents and youth providers in the area, including how the Education Authority Local Advisory Group plays its part in meeting the needs of young people in parks/open spaces
- Connecting other associated agenda's and partnerships and ensuring they are harnessed and channelled for maximum benefit to the park/open space and its connected neighbourhoods e.g. Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, PEACE, Fresh Start, Urban Villages, Belfast Strategic Partnership, Local Advisory Groups (LAG's)
- Regular reporting to Area Working Group's on progress and direction

3.18 Financial & Resource Implications

Staff Resources

Whilst the benefits of partnership working are acknowledged and evident, the above approach will still require significant changes in ways of working both internally and externally.

It is therefore suggested that Members would consider this approach around Falls Park/City Cemetery and Orangefield/Avoniel Park in the first tranche and at a later date consider inclusion of other parks/open spaces.

3.19 Financial Resources

The financial implications of providing additional operational preventative measures are outlined above. No revenue budget is available at present to facilitate an

increase in operational preventative measures without a consequential reduction in monies available to support positive animation and community led diversionary events in these parks/open spaces.

3.20 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no equality or Good Relations implication at present.”

A Member highlighted the ongoing problems with antisocial behaviour at the Marrowbone Park.

There was general agreement that antisocial behaviour and vandalism was a Citywide problem and therefore any potential solutions needed to consider all of the parks and open spaces within the City and not just one specific area.

Following discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed that officers would submit a further report to a future meeting that would:

- detail proposals as to how the City’s parks and open spaces could be better animated which might help act as deterrent to vandalism; and
- look at the Best Practice of other Local Authorities and include potential budget options.

Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group Minutes

The Assistant Director advised that, at the meeting of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Working Group held on 2nd November, the following key items had been considered.

- update on the CCTV cost options for the Falls Parks and the City Cemetery;
- update on the City of Belfast Crematorium – joint initial guidance and coffin accreditation schemes;
- update on respect of the permanent memorial to mark Plot Z1 in the City Cemetery;
- update on the implementation of the Memorial Management Policy; and
- update on the economic appraisal of future cremation facilities.

A Member once again reiterated that recent meetings of the Working Group had been poorly attended. He stressed the importance of some of the issues currently under consideration and encouraged greater cross Party attendance at the forthcoming meetings. He noted that the Council protocol did allow for the attendance of other representatives and he encouraged the Members to nominate another Member to attend should they be unable to make the meeting.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group held on 2nd November 2017, subject to the date of the next meeting being amended from Thursday, 4th December to Thursday, 7th December.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Building Successful Communities - Divis Back Path

The Committee was reminded that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting held on 21st October 2016, had agreed in principle to accept the transfer of assets and the associated liability subject to certain conditions being met which had included securing a minimum of three years' maintenance from the Department for Communities (DfC).

Included within the general consent were two projects under Building Successful Communities, these related to regeneration projects in the Divis and Lower Shankill areas. The Members were asked to note that, whilst this update related specifically to the proposals for the Divis Back Path, the project was linked with a similar proposal, the Bullring, and design work on this project was ongoing.

The Director drew the Members' attention to the proposed concept plan options. He reported that Council officers had been involved in discussions regarding the plans. The design was quite innovative and not something that the Council would normally provide. He advised that it incorporated a significant sports area that would facilitate sprinting, 'bag' workouts, among other items of equipment. The proposal had emerged following a consultation exercise undertaken on behalf of the DfC.

The Director advised that the Council was satisfied that a maintenance regime could be put in place to undertake routine inspection of the facility, to open and close it and undertake general routine operational maintenance of the facility. The DfC had agreed to provide three years' maintenance costs, outside of any defects liability period. The facility, once completed, would be included on the Council's Insurance schedule.

The Committee was asked to note the concept plans with the understanding that more detailed designs would be developed and a planning application submitted in due course. The DfC had indicated that it was under financial pressures to incur spend by the end of March 2018. The Members were also asked to note the reference in the drawing to a memorial garden, the Director advised that, whilst there was no firm proposal as to the nature of the memorial, it was officers understanding that it would be a memorial to victims of suicide.

The Director then provided the Committee with detail in respect of the future management of the facility and highlighted that it was anticipated that the facility would be able to support both casual and programmed use. He advised that the community were open to conversation regarding involvement in the future management of the asset.

The Committee:

- noted the drawings for the proposal were being brought forward to design stage; and

- agreed that officers would engage with the Community and other partners regarding the resourcing of the facility post completion within the context of the ongoing work on Area Planning.

Proposal to mark out a temporary pitch at Stranmillis Embankment

The Committee was advised that works at Cherryvale Playing Fields, as previously agreed by the Council as part of the Pitches Strategy, had commenced and were scheduled to be completed by March/April 2018, subject to the weather conditions and any other potential unforeseen technical issues. The Assistant Director reported that it was unlikely that the new pitch would be available for use until late 2018/ early 2019.

The officer reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 12th September, it had agreed to consider whether the Council would erect Gaelic posts and mark out an area of Botanic Gardens at the rear of Queens Sport adjacent to Ridgeway Street/Stranmillis Embankment to provide a temporary pitch to address the issue of displacement.

The Assistant Director advised that officers had inspected the site and concluded that a full size GAA pitch (140m x 90m including run off, could not be accommodated, however, it might be possible to provide an area of approximately 130m x 80m including run off). The pitch would be bordered by a pedestrian path and a perimeter fence, behind which was a small area comprising of trees and hedging.

The Members noted the following points:

- the Council had not previously provided temporary playing field facilities to offset displacement and the Committee was asked to be mindful of a precedent being set should approval be granted;
- the cost of establishing the pitch, including the erection of the goal posts, was estimated to be in the region of £5,000.00. This would need to be found from within existing budgets;
- the site had natural drainage and retained rainwater, particularly during the autumn and winter months, this appeared to be most evident where there was run off at the edges. As a consequence, grass cutting might not be possible and usage might be limited;
- all pitches needed to be rested and, if the facility was used in the autumn and winter, it might not be available for use over the spring / summer;
- owing to the site conditions and operational difficulties, it was unlikely that other sports would be able to be accommodated on this site, although it was noted that no formal requests had been received from other sports;
- unauthorised use might be an issue;
- this was an area of open space which was used casually by dog walkers and other casual users and there had been no consultation undertaken with other users of the facility. The South Area Working Group had requested that the Stranmillis Residents Association and the Friends of Botanic be consulted. The use would be temporary and limited to weekends and it was noted that consultation would delay the marking out of the pitch;

- there was no Council car parking or changing facilities available on the site. The Clubs were aware of this and had advised that they would use either the car parking at Queens or at Shaftesbury Recreation Centre; and
- a charge would be levied for use of the facility.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor Boyle addressed the Committee. He requested that the Committee agree to the request from the local GAA clubs for the use of the area of land, given the number of teams which they needed to accommodate and the fact that they might be unable to use the Cherryvale Playing Fields to its full potential until the spring at the earliest.

The Committee agreed:

- 'in principle', to mark out the pitch, subject to discussion with the local Residents Association and the Friends of Botanic Gardens, for the period up to the end of September 2018 and subject also to favourable site conditions to be determined by the Community Park Manager;
- that the cost would be met by the Council from existing budgets, if available; and
- to a key holding agreement with the 2 GACs to allow access to the woodland area for ball retrieval as necessary.

Operational Issues

Street Naming

The Committee approved the naming in respect of Mill Valley Gardens, Off Mill Valley Road, BT14.

Proposal for a Dual Language Street Sign

The Committee approved the erection of a second street nameplate in Irish at Conway Square, Conway Place, Devenish Court, Conway Link and David Street.

Update on the Affordable Warmth Scheme

(Mr. I. Harper, Building Control Manager, was in attendance for this item).

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 Members will be aware that Belfast City Council is engaged in a partnership with the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) in the delivery of the Affordable Warmth Scheme. The scheme aims to address fuel poverty for the most vulnerable households in the city.**

1.2 This report provides an update on the scheme based upon further confirmation from DfC on funding for the remainder of the 2017-18 financial year.

1.3 The report also outlines the requests from DfC for councils to consider options such as shared service delivery of the scheme and the potential for councils to contribute financially towards the administration of the scheme.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

Note the contents of the report and in relation to DfC requests for consideration of a shared service model and the potential for council funding, it is recommended that:

1. The Council continues to participate in the delivery of the Affordable Warmth Scheme on the basis of the current 11 council model.
2. The Council confirms the position that all costs associated with the administration of the scheme are provided from within the scheme budget and requests that the DfC increases the levels of funding to councils to ensure adequate staffing levels for effective delivery of the scheme.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 As previously brought to committee, correspondence issued from DfC to Councils on 29th March 2017, confirmed the reduction in the number of referrals to 25 per month be provided in Q1 (17-18), reduced from 46 per month in 16-17. The associated funding to councils was also reduced.

3.2 DfC convened a workshop on 8th June 2017 and confirmed at the meeting that funding of £15.5m was being allocated to the Affordable Warmth Scheme for 17-18. They subsequently confirmed (Appendix 1) that this would result in further changes to the target number of referrals and the associated funding per council. The number of referrals for 17-18 are shown in the table below.

Period	Number of Referrals	Total Referrals
April to June	25 per month	75
July to September	40 per month	120
October to December	40 per month	120
January to March	30 per month	90
Total		405

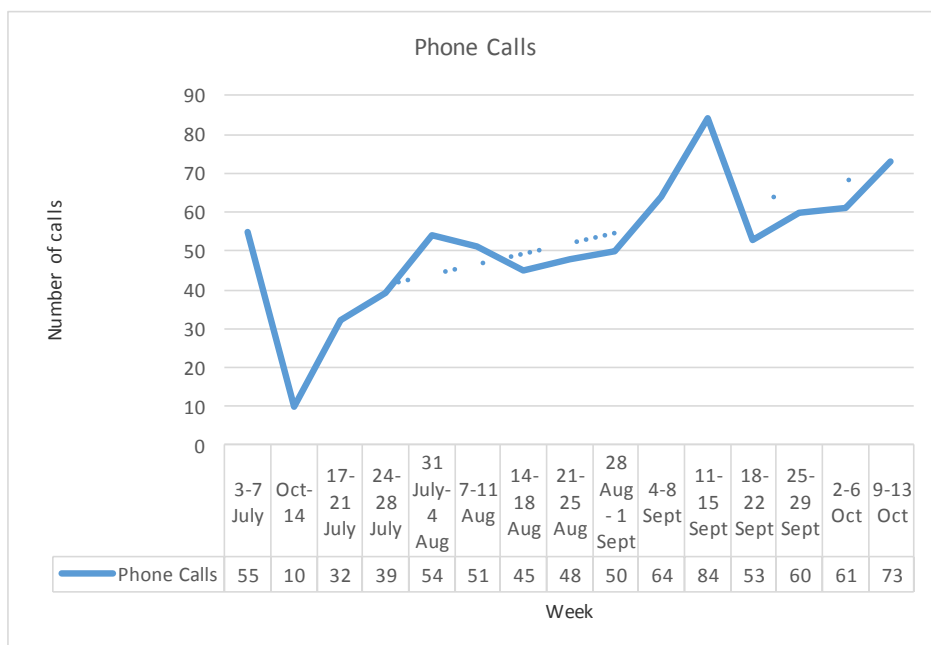
- 3.4 While confirmation of the funding was welcome to allow planning for the full year, the overall funding to each council for 17-18 is £73,305 for the total 405 referrals, over the year is a reduction from the £107,250 per council for 16-17.
- 3.5 It should be noted that the level of funding provided is based on a unit cost of £181 per referral. Following a partnership meeting in June 2017, a Council subgroup was tasked with a review of delivery costs and to establish an average cost per referral from Councils to the NIHE. It was established that although each Council delivers their function differently, the average cost per referral was at least £212 to provide the number of referrals, dealing with all the enquiries and contact we receive and continuing with the level of assistance to vulnerable householders through the scheme. This figure also reflects the impact of additional duties previously carried out by NIHE and are now carried out by councils.
- 3.6 The reduction in funding has led to a further reduction in staffing over the last 6 months. We have worked closely with both HR and Finance to ensure that we can provide the required level of staffing across the remainder of the year to ensure continuity of service, especially as want to retain trained and experienced staff where possible. However one member has been released (June 17), another has been reduced to part time (Oct 17) and the working patterns changed to ensure that we can provide the service required. Therefore there are currently only 1.5 staff members within the Affordable Warmth team made up of a full time co-ordinator and one part time site staff member. Note that the co-ordinator has taken on additional site duties.
- 3.7 To assist with the provision of referrals DfC have relaxed the requirement for 80% of referrals to be from the targeted list, which allows us to draw from our substantial list of self-referrals across the city. We continue to triage the referrals to ensure those most in need are referred first.
- 3.8 However the reduction in staff has meant that the target number of referrals has not been met over recent months.

3.9 Table of referrals for 2017-2018

	Target	Actual
April	25	25
May	25	25
June	25	25
July	40	40
August	40	27
September	40	36*
October	40	25

***Note: in official figures 13 surveys from September are included in October as they were transferred on Monday 3rd October.**

3.10 This is partly due to the amount of interest that there is in the scheme and the number of phone calls that are received on a daily basis, which have been increasing as we have moved toward the winter months. Figures in relation calls received are shown in the graph below:



3.11 With the reduction in funding for business support resources, the additional calls is impacting on the existing business support teams. Measures are being introduced to assist in streamlines calls to alleviate the situation. This may have a knock on impact on existing service delivery for the wider Building Control Service.

Given the interest and number of calls, we are having to manage customer expectations in terms of timeframe for response as we balance this with the ability to carry out site visits.

Future of the scheme

- 3.12 DfC have confirmed that they will be bidding for further in year funding from the monitoring rounds, but no confirmation of additional funding has been provided at this stage.
- 3.13 The DfC have also confirmed that they are preparing a business case which would propose funding for the scheme of £125m over five years. No confirmation of funding for 2018-2019 has been received to date.
- 3.14 DfC has also asked Councils to consider ways of reducing their costs by reviewing and considering how savings can be made through the different delivery models. These include shared services or by seeking costs from other bodies which benefit from Council's involvement in the Scheme. A shared service model could involve one council coordinating the scheme for a group of councils, with site staff working across council boundaries. There are concerns that while there would be some rationalisation in staffing costs with this approach, there are risks that engagement on a local level may be more difficult. There is potential loss of local accountability and there are would be considerable initial and ongoing engagement required to run a shared service model. In addition many of the added value benefits on a local level built up across the council and other agencies could be lost.
- 3.15 DfC have also requested that Councils make a contribution towards Scheme costs. Currently BCC already make contributions to the scheme through absorbing management, office and utility provision and business support costs.
- 3.16 **Financial & Resource Implications**

DfC have confirmed funding of £16,290 per quarter from Q2-Q4 with the possibility of additional funding being provided from future monitoring rounds. The Services HR and finance teams continue to ensure that we optimise our resources to provide the best service delivery and continuity of staffing for the scheme moving forward within the funding constraints.

3.17 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no equality or good relations issues.”

The Building Control Manager addressed a number of queries in connection with the scheme and the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Provision of temporary transport –
Andersonstown Leisure Centre**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report is to inform Committee of an option to provide temporary transport and associated costs to shuttle users affected by the closure of Andersonstown Leisure Centre to alternative leisure centres at Whiterock Leisure Centre and/or Falls Leisure Centre.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

Consider the proposal and recommend whether or not it wishes officers to implement provision of transport on a pilot basis as outlined.

Overview

3.1 Andersonstown LC closed for redevelopment under the LTP on 28 May 2017. At the time it was suggested that temporary shuttle transport should be considered to take users affected by the closure to alternative centres.

3.2 A large percentage of users/members and user groups were retained after the Andersonstown closure as alternative accommodation and access were made available at other BCC centres. Mostly Brook, Whiterock, Falls and Olympia.

3.3 Having reviewed user trends at Andersonstown LC and Whiterock LC peak usage times for fitness suite throughput, swimming pool use and casual activities has been established.

3.4 It is extremely difficult to establish convenient transport services for all eventualities as by its nature ‘casual use’ is sporadic and spread throughout the day. The provision of an extensive service throughout the day would be cost prohibitive and unlikely to be justified by

demand. Similar service provision was put in place following closure of the Robinson Centre in 2016 but withdrawn after a trial period as demand proved to be virtually non-existent. However, it should be accepted that local conditions, user patterns and the location of alternative centres may result in a different response in West Belfast.

Proposal

- 3.5 It is proposed that a shuttle bus service is established to take users from the Andersonstown site to Whiterock and/or Falls could be provided based on the following nine runs per week:

Morning

8.30am - 9.30am Tuesday and Thursday

Lunch Time- Adult only swim lanes

12.00pm - 1.00pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Evening

7.00pm - 8.00pm Wednesday

7.00pm - 8.00pm Friday

Weekend

12.00pm - 1.30pm Saturday

2.00pm - 3.30pm Sunday

The route will be established with a number of pick up/set down points.

- 3.6 As actual demand will be unknown until evidence from a trial period is available it is proposed that a service should be considered on a temporary basis with monthly review points at which future provision can be assessed and revised.

Closure Dates

- 3.7 Andersonstown LC will be closed during the new build programme for a period of 2 years up to the anticipated opening of the new centre in late 2019.

- 3.8 **Finance and Resource Implications**

The estimated cost of providing a shuttle bus service based on the above schedule is set out in Table 1 below. Costs are provided for three different bus capacities and are per single return run, weekly cost and total two-year

cost based on 2 X 48 week years (96 weeks) for routes from Andersonstown to Whiterock and separately from Andersonstown to Falls.

- 3.9 The current budget established within the mobilisation budget is £15,000 to cover three years. As the budget would only sustain the services for a few months, the review after the first month will be used to inform the budgetary position going forward.

Table 1:

	16 seat bus	24 seat bus	33 seat bus
£ per run	WROC £68.74	WROC £79.18	WROC £79.37
	FALLS £71.12	FALLS £81.84	FALLS £82.13
£ per week (9 runs per week)	WROC £618.66	WROC £712.62	WROC £714.33
	FALLS £640.08	FALLS £736.56	FALLS £739.17
£ for 2 years (48 weeks per year)	WROC £59,391.36	WROC £68,411.52	WROC £68,575.68
	FALLS £61,447.68	FALLS £70,709.76	FALLS £70,960.32

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The temporary transport service is aimed at improving accessibility to local leisure services by addressing gaps caused by the closure of Andersonstown Leisure centre. There are no known equality or good relations implications.”

The Committee agreed to implement the provision of transport to shuttle users affected by the closure of the Andersonstown Leisure Centre to alternative leisure centres at Whiterock Leisure Centre and /or Falls Leisure Centre. This would be on a pilot basis throughout the month of January 2018 with an update report to be considered at the February meeting.

Increased provision for Tree Planting

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th September, following a request from Councillor Milne, it had agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting regarding the potential for the Council to direct additional resources towards an appropriate tree planting programme throughout

the City. Councillor Milne had also requested that the Council would assess the feasibility of it developing a programme of activities to tie in with National Tree Week which was held annually from the end of November through to early December.

The Assistant Director explained that the Council was responsible for the management of £12,500 street trees on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure and it also managed over 60,000 park trees throughout the City. She reported that, as part of the Council's Park tree management programme, health and condition tree inspections were undertaken on a cyclical basis of all the semi-mature, mature and over mature Park trees and remedial tree surgery works were carried out to include the removal of dead, diseased and dying trees. The officer explained that, when carrying out the survey, the Council's woodland officers had also identified locations within Council Parks for replacement/new tree planting schemes but unfortunately this tree planting had not taken place in recent years due to a lack of dedicated resources.

The Committee noted that £20,000 had been allocated from within existing budgets to enable the Council to undertake all outstanding replacement tree planting as well as planting new additional trees. This year's National Tree Week (NTW) theme was 'Tree Value' which was scheduled to run between 25th November and 3rd December. The Committee was advised that the Council's Parks outreach officers would be organising various trees planting and educational activities to promote the value of trees as part of the NTW at the following locations:

- Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park
- Grovelands
- Half Moon Lake
- Cherryvale
- Cregagh Green
- Loopriver
- Glenbank
- Cavehill
- Water Works

Noted.

Request for use of Alexandra Park - Lark in the Dark Event

The Assistant Director advised that a request had been received for the use of Alexandra Park on Sunday, 17th December from 4.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. to stage a 'Lark in the Dark' event. She advised that this would be the third year that the event would be held with approximately 100 children and parents attending. The event was aimed at young people from both communities and would consist of a Christmas trail with the participants in fancy dress. The trail would follow the paths in the lower part of the park and stop at the Peace gates. At this point there would be a photo booth and the participants would meet Santa and have their picture taken.

The Committee granted free use of Alexandra Park for the 'Lark In The Dark Event', on condition that the event organisers:

- meet all statutory requirements, including Health and Safety responsibilities; and

- ensure that an event management plan and risk assessment are undertaken to the Council's satisfaction.

Request for the use of Botanic Gardens – Belfast Children's Festival 2018

The Assistant Director advised that a request had been received for the use of Botanic Gardens from 9th to 11th March 2018 to stage the 2018 Belfast Children's Festival.

The Committee granted permission for the use of Botanic Gardens for the 20th Belfast Children's Festival, subject to satisfactory terms being agreed with the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and on condition that:

- the event organiser resolves all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- an appropriate legal agreement is completed; and
- an event management plan is developed to the Council's satisfaction and the organiser meets all statutory requirements of the Building Control Service, including the terms and conditions of the Parks Entertainments Licence.

Update on the Sustrans One Path Initiative

The Assistant Director provided the Members with an update on the outcomes of the One Path Initiative which included proposals in respect of progressing the initiative.

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th January 2016, it had agreed to Belfast City Council's participation in the One Path initiative. The officer advised that Sustrans had since piloted a scheme and had used the Comber Greenway to help develop a code of conduct for the use of greenways. The officer advised that the scheme included guidance for pedestrians and cyclists and focused on areas with particularly high traffic/usage.

The Members were reminded that the Comber Greenway was not owned by the Council but was under the management and operation of the Department for Regional Development (DRD). She advised that the Comber Greenway intersected with the Connswater Community Greenway in East Belfast, therefore there was an interest in developing principles for behaviours and use of greenways that could potentially be adopted, in line with Council's bye-laws, for pathways in parks and open spaces.

The Committee granted authority for Council staff to continue to work in partnership with Sustrans and the other Partners to develop and progress the scheme. It was agreed further that staff should also explore with the other Partners how the principles could be applied initially to the greenway and potentially longer term to other parks and open spaces in Belfast.

Row on Row event at Shankill Memorial Garden

The Committee noted that, as a late request had been received from the Old Park/ Cavehill Royal British Legion, the Director had used his delegated

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authority for the organisers to hold a commemoration event, Row and Row, each evening from Monday, 6th to Friday, November, except Thursday, 10th at the Shankill Memorial Garden.

A Member suggested that groups who regularly applied for the use of Council parks/facilities should be reminded of the protocol and deadlines for the submission of requests to enable them to be considered by the Committee.

Fields in Trust (Verbal Update)

The Assistant Director advised the Committee that she had just been advised earlier in the day that Cregagh Green had been shortlisted for an award from Fields in Trust.

The Committee granted authority for the Chairperson (or his nominee) and an officer to attend the Awards Ceremony, in London, on 28th November.

Chairperson