

# People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 10th September, 2019

## MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Collins (Chairperson);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds;  
Alderman McCoubrey; and  
Councillors D. Baker, Black, Bunting,  
Cobain, Corr, de Faoite, Donnelly, M. Kelly,  
Kyle, Magee, McLaughlin, Newton,  
Smyth and Verner.

Also Attended: Councillor Nicholl.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City  
and Neighbourhood Services;  
Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors McMullan and Mulholland.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th August were taken as read and signed as correct.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

### Restricted Item

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

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

### **Fossil Fuels**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 6th August, it had considered an item in relation to fossil fuel extraction planning applications.

The Committee noted the legal advice which had been provided by the City Solicitor, where he had outlined that the Council could not adopt a policy in relation to planning applications as proposed as the Planning Committee had a duty to consider each application on its own merits, against the relevant planning policies and legislation.

In response to a request from a Member, it was agreed that the Operational Director would consult with the City Solicitor and the Director of Planning and Building Control to provide the Member with further information regarding the Council's approach towards the use of fossil fuels and towards carbon reduction within the Local Development Plan, as well as giving consideration to what other Councils were doing in relation to the issues raised.

### **Request for use of Council Facilities**

The Committee was provided with the details of four requests which had been received for the use of the Council's Parks.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Committee that approval was sought for the events on the basis that the event organisers would:

- resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- meet all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities; and
- consult with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of a request for "Boucher Road – Music Festival" for one month to allow further information to be provided.

The Committee granted approval for the use of the below Parks for the following events, in accordance with the details in the report:

- The Falls Park - Draíocht Children's Festival;
- Alexandra Park – North Belfast Magical Festival and Lantern Parade; and
- Boucher Road Playing Fields – Planet Fun

**Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

**Homelessness Status - Response from Northern Ireland Housing Executive**

The Committee noted that a response had been received from the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), Mr. C. Bailie, in response to a motion which the Council had passed on 1st July in relation to Homelessness.

The Committee noted the response and that a representative from the NIHE would be attending the Special Housing Meeting on 16th September, and that Homelessness would be added to the agenda, subject to the relevant NIHE officers being available to attend.

The Chairperson explained that he had received a request from the Practice and the Participation of Rights (PPR Project), who wished to present to the Committee on the #FDANoDelay campaign at a future meeting.

The Committee agreed that the PPR Project be invited to present to a future meeting.

**Motion - Rewilding our Wards**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of the Council on 2nd September, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Garrett and seconded by Councillor Canavan, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“We commend this Council for the work and projects it undertakes across the city to enhance biodiversity and increase environmental protection.

Rewilding spaces in the heart of our communities not only enhances and adds to the good work already undertaken to protect the environment; but also confirms our commitment as a Council to challenge the climate emergency we have already recognised is upon us.

We call on this Council in each of our city’s 60 electoral wards to rewild, as a minimum, 1 extra space each year outside of what is already planned or programmed.

We further call on this Council to promote this initiative and working alongside members in each ward to identify achievable and appropriate sites, where working with the community we create rewilded spaces that local communities can feel part of challenging climate change.”

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. to adopt the motion;
2. that it should be considered in conjunction with the previously agreed motion regarding the “Greening of derelict sites”;

3. that it should be considered in conjunction with the ongoing work of the Working Group on the Climate Crisis; and
4. that a report on the issues raised would be submitted to a future meeting.

### **Motion - Play Facilities for Children with Disabilities**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 2nd September, the following motion, which had been proposed by Alderman McCoubrey and seconded by Councillor Smyth, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council recognises the need to improve play facilities for those children with disabilities, and undertakes to engage with those in the sector who can best advise on making play facilities more accessible.

An audit should be undertaken of current facilities across the city and opportunities for disability improvements identified, work to be completed through the course of the current council term.”

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. to adopt the motion;
2. that the audit should include consultation with the parents of, and the children and young people with disabilities; and
3. that consideration be given to children with sensory disabilities, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as well as to those with physical disabilities.

### **Motion - Desecration of Graves**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 2nd September, the following motion, which had been proposed by Alderman Copeland and seconded by Alderman Rodgers, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“That this Council:

Notes with grave concern and mounting anger the recent desecration of graves within Belfast City Cemetery, and resolves to renew and redouble its efforts to upgrade the facilities at the cemetery and to work with other partner agencies to ensure that such wanton rampage of destruction is never repeated, and that those responsible are brought before the courts.

This facility is for everyone, and we as a Council need to look after the needs of all the communities who are buried, visit and are bereaved.”

During discussion, a Member stated that the upcoming Heritage Lottery Funding would be a major boost for the Cemetery and that work was ongoing to tackle the antisocial behaviour in the Cemetery.

The Committee adopted the motion.

**Motion - Citywide Multi-Agency Task Force on Mental Health and Suicide**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 2nd September, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor D. Baker and seconded by Councillor Magennis, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council notes with serious concern the growing number of people who have taken their own life over recent times and extends its deepest sympathy to all those effected. We call on the Lord Mayor to convene a citywide multi-agency task force to respond to the serious concerns regarding mental health and suicide in our City.

The task force, using all their collective resources, should map out an action plan of front facing initiatives such as the successful Multi agency ‘road safe road show’ to engage schools, youth organisations, businesses and citizens on our response to resilience, emotional well-being and positive mental health.

This Council needs to use every partner, every power and every strategy at its disposal to reach out to our citizens, let them know we care and we are there for them and that is ok not to be ok.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the motion and agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting.

**Motion - Climate Strikes**

The Committee was reminded that the Council agreed, at its meeting on 2nd September, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Matt Collins, seconded by Councillor Smyth:

“This Council notes the global call made by young people, workers, environmental organisations and concerned citizens to mobilise “climate strikes”, beginning on 20th September, 2019.

The Council wishes to see a transition to the end of fossil fuels and the implementation of urgent action to avoid climate breakdown and catastrophe.

Belfast City Council supports the climate strikes taking place in this city on 20th September, and pledges to help publicise, facilitate and lend practical support to climate activists taking to the streets on this historic day.”

At that meeting, the Council further agreed to the addition of the following paragraph, which was proposed by Councillor D. Baker, which would be referred to the People and Communities Committee for its consideration:

“This Council aims to be a leader on tackling climate change and, therefore, will carry out a scoping exercise to identify both Council and public land which would be suited towards the planting of trees and reforestation of our City and furthermore commits to making our own Council fleet carbon neutral by 2030, which is in line with our statutory agencies’ ambitions.”

The Committee agreed:

1. to adopt the additional paragraph of the motion;
2. noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on the ongoing and planned reinvestment in the Council’s fleet; and
3. noted that, in relation to the Climate Strikes taking place on 20th September 2019, Corporate Communications and Human Resources would be issuing advice to Council staff.

### **Motion – Community Impact of Needle Finds**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 2nd September, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McLaughlin and seconded by Councillor Donnelly, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council notes with alarm the increased volume of needles found on streets in inner city surrounding communities, both used and otherwise. The safety ramifications for families who reside in such areas are extensive and obvious.

This Council has a duty of care to the citizens of Belfast including assisting them in fulfilling their ambitions and striving towards the goals of the Belfast Agenda.

Urban inner city surrounding communities are lived in neighbourhoods, not fully part of the City Centre but neither are they suburbs. Such localities face problems associated to air pollution, high volumes of commuter car parking, dense housing developments, fractured infrastructure and historical failings associated to place and space planning.

One contemporary impact of such failings resides in limited usable green and natural safe play sites.

The evidenced needle finds across urban inner city surrounding communities are ordinarily in sites of overgrown shrubbery, vacant green sites, beside hedge rows and alongside well used play and walking areas.

This Council cannot and should not accept increased street needle finds as a natural and inevitable consequence of a growing City. Such an acceptance is a direct contradiction to the aims and visions of the Belfast Agenda. This neither supports those at risk of addiction or resident families.

Whilst we recognise the massive value of the work undertaken by the Council's Community Safety structures and the Sharp Removal Programme, this motion seeks a report focused on the immediate areas surrounding the city centre in the contemporary context, detailing the volume of finds, associated costs of removal, correlations if and where they exist, site contexts and recommendations moving forward based on good practice elsewhere."

The Committee agreed:

1. to adopt the motion; and
2. that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on the issues raised, including details of any action that the Department of Health was taking in relation to diversionary services for drug misuse.

### **Committee/Strategic Issues**

#### **Pre consultation to seek views on the successor strategy to the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2**

The Committee was advised that the Department of Health had agreed to the Committee's request to extend the pre-consultation period on the successor strategy to the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2.

The Committee considered the Council's draft response to the consultation document which was available [here](#).

At the request of a Member, the Committee agreed that the following comments be submitted in relation to the consultation document itself:

- that it was misleading to say that drug misuse amongst young people had fallen significantly – this was based on unreliable statistics as they themselves admitted, as the question changed in 2016. It may have fallen for Queen's, but it had not within East Belfast;
- the document was somewhat complacent – it stated that the majority of the 141 outcomes were on track for achievement, however, this was misleading. There was increased public concern, increased drug and alcohol related deaths, increased admissions for alcohol related conditions, and increased instances of Hepatitis B and HIV.

The Committee also agreed, at the request of the Member, to the following amendments to the Council's consultation response:

- that the Member was absolutely opposed to the legal reclassification of drugs (answer 14);

- that the Portuguese model in relation to Drug-use was widely misrepresented – it did not produce the abundant outcomes which were often reported. (The Portuguese system was about decriminalisation, not legalisation, and that they were very different things);
- there was extensive evidence that Minimum Unit Pricing had been the most effective way of targeting alcoholism;
- that an update needed to be sought on the Crisis De-Escalation Centres;
- that there should be street-level, walk-in clinics to provide immediate help for those with drug addictions; and
- that referral pathways for medical professionals were unclear and that they should be much more easily accessible.

**Council Response to Draft Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2021**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

- 1.1 The Council recently received an invitation from the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), to participate in the consultation on the draft Northern Ireland Children and Young People’s Plan 2019-2021, a copy of which is provided at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Full details of the consultation are available at the following link [Consultation: Draft Northern Ireland Children and Young People’s Plan 2019-2021](#) Members should note that although the consultation closed on 30 August 2019, Council has been granted an extension to this date, to allow members to consider and agree the Council’s response.
- 1.3 The aim of the consultation is to seek views on what the CYCSP should be addressing to improve outcomes for children and young people across Northern Ireland.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to:
- inform Members of the CYCSP consultation exercise; and
  - seek approval of the proposed consultation response from Council, which is attached at Appendix 2.
- 1.5 Subject to approval by this Committee, it is proposed that a final consultation response is submitted to the CYPSP, with the proviso that, the response is subject to full Council approval at its meeting on 1 October 2019.



**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to**

- Consider the proposed consultation response to the draft Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan and endorse the response to the CYPSP.

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1 The CYPSP is a multiagency strategic partnership, comprising senior leaders from all key agencies across statutory, voluntary and community sectors that have responsibility for improving outcomes for all children and young people in NI.**
- 3.2 The CYPSP has been developed and supported by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to support the Children's Services Planning process.**
- 3.3 The draft Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2021 is the third CYPSP Children and Young People's Plan. The initial CYPSP plan covered the period 2011-2014, the second plan covered the period 2014-2017 following which it was reviewed and extended annually, to cover the period up to March 2019.**
- 3.4 In line with the Children's Services Planning Guidance the CYPSP had agreed to move its planning cycle to align with the Programme for Government (PfG) and Comprehensive Spending Review.**
- 3.5 The Children (1995 Order) (Amendment) (Children's Services Planning) Order (Northern Ireland) 1998 allows for either a modification of an existing plan (2(b)(i)) or a new plan (2(b)(ii)). This is a new plan and it is intended to sit within the context of the Programme for Government, the new Children and Young People's Strategy and refreshed Families Matter.**
- 3.6 The overall work of the CYPSP is encapsulated in this plan and the supporting plans produced by the Outcomes, Locality and Regional Planning Groups. Full versions of these plans are all available on the CYPSP website ([www.cypsp.org](http://www.cypsp.org)).**
- 3.7 The draft consultation response is attached at Appendix 2 for Members' consideration.**

**3.8 Financial & Resource Implications**

**There are no financial or resource implications associated in responding to the consultation.**

**3.9 Equality or Good Relations Implications**

**There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications in responding to the consultation.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**Quarter 1 Finance Report 2019/20**

(Ms. J. Wilson, Business Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The Business Manager summarised the contents of the report which presented a Quarter 1 financial position for the People and Communities Committee, including a forecast of the year end outturn. She explained that the Quarter 1 position for the Committee showed an under-spend of 329k (1.5%), with the forecast year-end position being an over-spend of £206k (0.25%) which was well within the acceptable variance limit of 3%.

The Committee was advised that the reasons for the Quarter 1 underspend were due to vacant posts across a number of services, the receipt of additional income and the timing of grants and programmes.

The Committee noted the contents of the Quarter 1 financial update.

**Physical Programme/Asset Management**

**Partner Agreements Update**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to enter into Partner Agreements at seven sites and he then provided an update on the progress in relation to the Agreements for April – June 2019.

He advised that regular checks on the necessary Insurance, Health and Safety and Governance had been undertaken and that all sites had been fully compliant.

The Director reminded the Committee that funding of up to £20,000 per annum was available for each partner for the delivery of a programme (supporting the Sports Development Plan). He reported that letters of offer had been sent to all partners based on approved sports development plans in the current financial year and added that full payments had been made to all Partners in this Quarter.

He 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 he advised that so far the programme delivery had led to significant positive achievements across the seven sites. He drew the Members' attention to a table which indicated the outputs at the sites as reported by the partners up to the end of June 2019.

The Members were advised that the Rosario Football Club committee was finalising its proposal for a revised management model based on a long term lease of Ulidia Playing Field and that it intended to submit it to the Council for consideration within the next few months.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **IFA Intermediate Football League Restructuring and Ground Criteria**

The Committee considered a detailed report on proposals from the Irish Football Association (IFA) in relation to restructuring Intermediate League Football in Northern Ireland and associated changes to pitch criteria.

During discussion, a number of Members expressed concerns with the proposals, particularly given the potential cost implications and queried whether the IFA had consulted with local football clubs.

The Committee agreed to invite the IFA to a future Special meeting, to discuss its proposals to restructure Intermediate League Football in Northern Ireland, including the potential impacts for the Council and clubs, and particularly whether an equality impact assessment had been carried out on the proposals.

### **Operational Issues**

#### **Proposal for naming new streets and the continuation of an existing street**

The Committee agreed to the naming of Hazel Heights, off Hazel Drive, BT17, and to the proposed continuation of an existing street, namely Mill Valley Way, off Mill Valley Road, BT14.

#### **Recent Government consultations on New Model Licence Conditions for Caravan Sites and Design Guide for Travellers' Sites in NI**

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 inform Members of two recent consultations, the first issued by the Department for Communities (DfC), 'Design Guide for Travellers' Sites in Northern Ireland' (Appendix 1) and the second issued by the**

Department for Infrastructure (DfI), 'New Model Licence Conditions for Caravan Sites' (Appendix 2). Both responses were due by 30th July 2019. At present there are no licensed caravan sites in Belfast but there is potential for applications to be made in the future and both consultations impact on Traveller sites.

- 1.2 This consultation is timely considering the publication of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission report (NIHRC) 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Travellers' Accommodation in NI' published in March 2018. The report recommended that the Department for Infrastructure review the legal and policy framework concerning site licences, including the development of a model site licence setting out the minimum standard of provision and safety requirements for each type of Travellers site in NI and including with enforcement powers for any breach.

2.0 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to

- Note the key comments from Belfast City Council highlighted in both consultation responses.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues:

- 3.1 The Department for Infrastructure has taken the opportunity to amalgamate the current Model Licence Conditions for holiday caravan sites as well as residential caravans into one document, in an attempt to create greater clarity and ease of reference for all.

These model conditions will replace the existing model conditions which were introduced in 1994.

- 3.2 The updating of the existing design guide for Traveller' sites by DfC is also timely given that the existing design guide was issued in 1997. However, concerns have been raised regarding the compatibility of the new design guide with other publications.
- 3.3 Council officers were involved in a working group organised by NILGA and had an opportunity to inform the response to both consultations.

**Department for Communities consultation on a Design Guide for Travellers' Sites in NI**

- 3.4 The response highlighted the importance of collaborative working between the Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that policy and enforcement is consistent for Traveller accommodation.
- 3.5 The response seeks clarification regarding the implementation schedule of these proposals, particularly for existing sites and whether the design guide is statutory guidance or a best practice document and how it would be viewed by authorities such as the Planning Appeals Commission.
- 3.6 It was suggested in the response that there needs to be consistency between the DFC draft Design Guide and the DFI draft Model Licence Conditions, particularly in respect of the three different types of sites outlined in the Design Guide.
- 3.7 In the response, it has also been requested that the Fire Safety requirements be examined as a priority, given that they are inconsistent with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators (Appendix 3).
- 3.8 Some inconsistencies were noted between the 2 documents for location of sites on areas prone to flooding, road widths, distance between caravans, garage shed provision and storage space.
- 3.9 References in the consultation to the Travelling Communities culture of, working activity on the sites, are welcomed, however the design guide appears to discourage working from sites therefore this issue requires clarification from the Department. There is also a reference to water metering which requires clarification from the Department.

**Department for Infrastructure consultation on New Model Licence Conditions for Caravan Sites:**

- 3.10 In the consultation, the Department for Infrastructure states that the new conditions should be considered when:
- Applying licence conditions to new sites
  - Applying license conditions to sites that have been substantially redeveloped
  - Renewal or review of a current licence

- 3.11 Belfast City Council does not currently have any licensed caravan sites so these conditions would only apply to any new applications.
- 3.12 The Department requests that Councils should also consider Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators (Appendix 3) and the Department for Communities (DFC) Guide for Travellers when applying conditions on a site licence. NILGA has requested greater clarity as to the relationships between the 3 documents to enable Councils to apply them appropriately.
- 3.13 Greater clarity from DFI and DFC is required in relation to the implementation time and the statutory significance of these conditions for Council licensing and planning officers.
- 3.14 In relation to Travellers sites, it has been suggested that there should be a separate section of the model licence condition to adequately and appropriately cover the three types of travellers' sites (Serviced Site, Transit Site and Emergency Halting Site) given the specific needs and culturally sensitive accommodation required for travellers' sites. The proposed model conditions do not adequately address these issues and e.g.: communal buildings, individual/private amenities, space for work and animals etc.
- 3.15 The absence of disabled person's condition has been noted. Clarification of equality screening or equality impact assessment findings would need to be provided.
- 3.16 There is reference to Council's undertaking risk assessment in relation to legal proceedings. It has been requested that reference must be made to Council's enforcement policies.
- 3.17 Copies of the response made by NILGA are attached in Appendix 4 and 5 for information.
- 3.18 **Financial & Resource Implications**
- There are no financial implications associated with the report
- 3.19 **Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment**
- There are no equality or Good Relations implications associated with this report for Belfast City Council."

A Member requested that the Council's response be sent to the Belfast Inter-Agency Forum on Travellers for its reference.

The Committee:

1. noted and endorsed the key comments from Belfast City Council highlighted in both consultation responses; and
2. agreed that a copy of the Council's response would be sent to the Belfast Inter-Agency Forum on Travellers.

**Request for the hire of Botanic Gardens for a series of music events**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 Members are reminded that on 4th June 2019 a formal request was received by Aiken Promotions to host a series of music events during the month of June in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 in Botanic Gardens**

**1.2 Members agreed to defer a decision and await a report concerning the music events in Botanic Gardens in June 2019.**

**1.3 Members received a report on 6th August 2019 concerning the recent music events held in June 2019 in Botanic Gardens. Members agreed to defer a decision and requested confirmation concerning a number of issues;**

- **Impact of underage drinking**
- **Social clauses in License Agreements to support youth services**
- **Charges for use of Council Services to Promoters during music events.**
- **Option of reviewing 3 year contract on an annual basis.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

**1. Grant authority to Aiken Promotion request:**

- **for use of the great lawn at Botanic Gardens for a series of music events with attendances under 5,000 persons in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022; and**
- **to include set up and take down.**

2. Grant authority to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services, subject to satisfactory terms being agreed and on condition that:

- the promoter resolves all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- an appropriate legal agreement is completed, to be prepared by the City Solicitor; and
- the promoter meets all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence

To address concerns raised by Members, Officers will ensure that the license agreement includes clauses that requires the promoter to;

- Consider the genre of music as suitable for the urban environment.
- Provide a plan which seeks to address and provides adequate welfare support, including links with other service providers, to deal with any potential underage drinking, should this be relevant to the event.

The licence agreement will also include a review clause which allows for consideration of any issues both during the event and prior to any authorisation for the future year.

3. Grant authority to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for the use of the facility taking into account the costs to Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the City economy.

### Key Issues

3.1 In November 2018 this committee approved five music events in Botanic Gardens over the period 21st-28th June 2019, hosted by Aiken Promotions. This was subject to

- the promoter resolving all operational issues to the satisfaction of the Council,
- an appropriate legal agreement was put in place between the Council and the promoter and,
- the promoter met all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms & conditions of the Parks Entertainment licence.



- 3.2 All of the above were completed to the satisfaction of the Council and the promoter complied with all aspects of the legal agreement and the Entertainment licence.
- 3.3 Approximately 20,000 people attended Botanic Gardens over the five days. There were six noise complaints received in total before, during and after; one pre-event enquiry.
- 3.4 Only one complaint relating to music noise levels was received on the first day during sound checking. Officers monitored levels at front of house and spot checks were carried out at locations close to the venue. The noise conditions included in the licence agreement were adhered to throughout the event.
- 3.5 There was one corporate complaint regarding closure of the park during preparation for the music event.
- 3.6 The complaint was responded to by email and after satisfactory resolution the case is now closed.
- 3.7 Social media feedback suggested there was concern from regular users of the Botanic Gardens in relation to the Gardens being closed for set up during each event, the number of events and the timeframe of engagement.
- 3.8 A public meeting was held on 28th May 2019 in which the Promoters met with various residential community groups to provide an update on the events taking place. In addition, approximately 1000 letters were sent to households in the surrounding area providing details of the upcoming music events. (See Appendix A).
- 3.9 The Gardens were closed to the public at 3.00pm to allow for preparation for each music event.
- 3.10 The Gardens were cleaned of litter every evening and were open to the public every morning at 7.30am, including the lawn area where the music events were taking place. Lower Botanic Gardens was not affected by the events and remained opened throughout the period.
- 3.11 Positive elements of written feedback included better use of the park for everyone across the City to enjoy, good 'buzz' about Botanic Avenue and fabulous venue.
- 3.12 There were no incidences reported by the PSNI over the course of the events in Botanic Gardens.

**3.13 Financial & Resource Implications**

**The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for the use of the facility taking into account the costs to Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the City economy. The Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services will authorise the relevant level of the necessary bond of intent and reinstatement bond**

**3.14 Equality, Rural proofing or Good Relations Implications**

**There are no equality, rural proofing or good relations issues associated with this report.”**

A number of Members expressed concerns with the proposed three year contract with the promotions company and suggested that an annual review would be more suitable.

In response to a Member’s question, the Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed to the Committee that a review meeting took place between Council officers and the promoter after each event to discuss any issues.

A further Member suggested that the agency which provided the welfare support at an event should be included in the post-event review meeting.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. agreed to grant authority to Aiken Promotions’ request for the use of the great lawn at Botanic Gardens for a series of music events with attendances under 5,000 persons in the year 2020, to include set up and take down;
2. agreed to grant authority to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services, subject to satisfactory terms being agreed, as outlined within the report;
3. noted that, to address concerns raised by Members, Officers would ensure that the license agreement included clauses that required the promoter to;
  - Consider the genre of music as suitable for the urban environment.
  - Provide a plan which sought to address and provide adequate welfare support, including links with other service providers, to deal with any potential underage drinking, should this be relevant to the event.
  - The licence agreement would also include a review clause which would allow for the consideration of any issues both during the event and prior to any authorisation for the future year.
4. granted authority to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for the use

of the facility taking into account the costs to Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the City economy; and

5. further agreed that those agencies which were involved in providing the welfare support in relation to such events would be invited to be involved in the event debrief with officers.

### **Issue Raised in Advance by a Member**

#### **Bin Collections in Belvoir – Councillor Nicholl to Raise**

The Chairperson invited Councillor Nicholl to address the Committee. She explained that a number of residents in the Belvoir area had contacted her in relation to ongoing issues with bin collections, largely due to parked cars.

A number of Members stated that they had similar issues in the areas which they represented.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting on waste collections, to include information on:

- the key issues which prevented bins being emptied;
- the cost to the Council of adding missed streets to the next day's route;
- the upcoming waste pilot in the Castle DEA;
- the acquisition of narrow-bodied bin lorries;
- how the Council could best work with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in relation to recurrent access issues for certain streets; and
- consideration of technological solutions which were used by other Local Authorities.

The Committee further agreed to pass on its thanks to the hard working staff within the waste management section who went above and beyond to rectify missed bin collections on a regular basis.

Chairperson