

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor D. Baker (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff, Councillor Verner;
Alderman Rodgers;
Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain, de Faoite, Flynn,
Garrett, M. Kelly, Magee, McAteer, McReynolds, Mulholland,
Newton, Pankhurst and Smyth.

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

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McCusker and Councillors Michael Collins and Corr.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 3 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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

Installation of Panoramic Wheel in Botanic Gardens

The Committee considered a report which considered a request from G Force Amusements Ltd seeking to amend the date of its plans to install, promote and operate a 33 metre Panoramic Wheel in the lawn area adjacent to the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens to a four week period from 2nd September 2020.

The Committee:

- agreed to the change of date for the previously agreed request from G Force Amusements Ltd to install, promote and operate a 33 metre Panoramic Wheel in the lawn area adjacent to the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens during the period 2nd - 29th September 2020;
- noted that the promoters would continue to be bound by all the original conditions attached to the previous committee decision; and
- agreed that any future requests to change the planned dates of events, which had previously been agreed by the committee, would be approved

under the delegated authority of the Director of Neighbourhood Services providing the re-scheduled event remained largely the same as the agreed event other than the proposed change of date.

Micro Grant Funding and Reopening of Community Centres

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report, which provided an update for Members in respect of the current position concerning the £150,000 micro funding programme that had opened on 6th July.

The Committee was advised that, at its meeting on 31st July, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, had agreed to approve the current applications and to extend the programme until the end of October. The Committee had further agreed to delegate authority, under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, to the Director (Operational) of City and Neighbourhood Services for future authorisation of funding allocations and extensions to the proposed October deadline under this scheme, and that any future DfC funding through the Community Support Programme, in support of COVID recovery, could be allocated to this programme.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services also provided an update for the Members in respect of the planned phased reopening of BCC Community Centres that was anticipated would commence from 1st September 2020.

He outlined that the approach taken would be subject to the following key guiding principles:

- progress on re-opening would be dependent on controlling the rate of transmission;
- social distancing measures must be strictly adhered to;
- employers would have a duty to assess and manage risks in respect of safety in the workplace; and
- to be aware of the concerns of staff returning to work.

He advised that to ensure the protection of both staff and customers, each venue would have significant Covid-19 Health and Safety measures in place.

It was anticipated that centre staff would start to return to site from 10th August 2020 in a phased way to thoroughly prepare each venue, staff would assess and determine if and when centres could reopen their doors as part of the phased plan based on safety and health of the building for the users and the staff. Health and safety measures would be implemented which would include essential signage being assembled, one way systems identified and put in place where necessary, hand sanitizing stations installed, deep cleaning being carried out and all other arrangements as identified to ensure a suitable and safe reopening.

The Committee:

- noted the update provided in respect of the Micro Grant Funding; and
- noted that a further report on organisational recovery would be being submitted to the August meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, where more detail would be provided in respect of the phased approach and timelines for the reopening of the Community Centres.

Request for the hire of Boucher Road Playing Fields

The Committee considered a report which detailed a request from UP Productions who were seeking approval to hire the Boucher Playing Fields for the AVA Music Festival. The AVA Musical Festival was an Audio Visual Arts 2-day event with multi-stage electronic music, visual art installations which also included an outdoor art exhibition.

The Committee approved the request for the hire of Boucher Road Playing Fields from 22nd May – 2nd June 2021, subject to the following:

- the appropriate legal agreements including bond arrangements being prepared to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;
- the Director (Operational) of City and Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for use of the facility taking into account costs to the Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the city economy;
- the event organisers to meet all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, Food Safety and entertainment licensing responsibilities;
- the timely payment of the bond as required in the legal agreements;
- the event organisers to liaise with Council officers and meet all statutory, legal and Health and safety requirements;
- the event organisers to reinstate all Council property to its original condition after use. The organisers are to be reminded that the current ground conditions and location of the event might have to change due to adverse weather conditions which shall cover all aspects of management including health and safety, access and to ensure compliance with the current events policy.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Motion – Littering

The Committee was reminded that at the Council meeting on 1st July, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor Smyth, had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f) been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council recognises the blight that littering across our city presents and the significant cost to the Council in dealing with it.

We commit to doing all in our power to reduce the instances of littering, to ensure adequate resourcing is put into enforcement and to enhance opportunities for people to properly dispose of waste whether on street, in our parks or public spaces. This council will commit to providing recycling bins in parks and public spaces and where appropriate, provide additional general waste bins in communities.”

The seconder of the motion Councillor Smyth addressed the Committee and outlined the context of the motion and he made a number of suggestions and requests with a view to progressing the motion:

Following consideration, it was agreed that:

- a report would be submitted to the January 2020 committee which would detail how much the Council currently spends each year on cleansing, enforcement, marketing and landfill tax and include options for improved recycling bins on streets and in parks. It should also investigate the effectiveness of current enforcement procedures and staffing tactics and look at this within the context of international models of best practice;
- the Council proceed to investigate ways in which it could help facilitate the reduction of littering throughout the city; and
- that the Council write to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) seeking it to establish a Litter Strategy for Northern Ireland which would look at how it would work with communities and businesses in order to reduce litter.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Belfast Youth Forum 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 an update on the ongoing work of Belfast City Council’s Youth Forum (BYF) and the success of the campaigns;**
- **Seek agreement on the next date for the joint Committee and Youth Forum meeting;**
- **Seek permission to extend the term of the current Youth Forum membership for 1 year due to the impact of Covid-19 on the recruitment process.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the content of the report relating to the ongoing work and development of the Youth Forum;
- agree the date of the next joint Committee and Youth Forum meeting;
- agree to extend the current term of the 2018-20 cohort membership for 1 year.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Belfast Youth Forum

BYF is the main youth participation structure of BCC and acts as the voice of young people within local government in Belfast. BYF is made up of 40 young people aged 13-18 recruited from each of the DEA's across Belfast; members serve a two year term with the current cohort serving from September 2018- September 2020. Our BYF model is rights based and youth led, and every two years young people select campaign areas to work on and bring forward to decision makers within local and regional government.

3.2 Youth Forum Campaigns

- BYF members are currently working on the following campaigns:
- Mental Health (Elephant in the Room campaign);
- Relationship and sexual health education (Any Use campaign);
- Racism and diversity (HOME campaign).

Updates on each of the campaigns will follow in this paper.

3.3 Elephant in the Room (EITR)

The BYF continue to work on the two main strands of their EITR campaign:

3.4 Engaging and lobbying decision makers

In October 2018 young people from BYF and NI Youth Forum presented their report, its findings and its recommendations in Stormont. A number of senior officials from the departments, the Public Health Agency, the Health Trust and the Education Authority were also in attendance. At the meeting, young people led a discussion with officials on how they could work together to progress the recommendations. The report and work of our young people was well received and highly praised.

This research and subsequent lobbying by the Youth Forum has had significant impact on Government Departments. Chris Lyttle MLA, chair of the All Party Group on Children & Young People has asked the NI Executive to adopt the recommendations contained in the Youth Forum's research report. The young people involved in this research have been invited to present the findings to the full Assembly in late July 2020.

3.5 Mental Health Advocacy - Awareness raising campaign with young people:

Building on this work the BYF, NI Youth Forum and the Children's Commissioners Youth have been working together to create a mental health advocacy toolkit for young people titled 'Heads Up'. Work in this area has been ongoing and the toolkit was due to launch in March 2020, however due to COVID19 has been delayed slightly. It is hoped the toolkit will be published and launched in the very near future.

3.6 Relationship and sexual health education (RSE) – Any Use? Campaign

This campaign is a joint partnership between Belfast Youth Forum, Queens University Centre for Children's Rights and Common Youth to create a youth-led research project exploring young people's views on the standard of their current RSE in school which resulted in a report titled

'Any Use? Young people's opinions on relationship and sexuality education in Belfast 2019.'

The report launched in City Hall in November 2019.

A total of 771 young people from Belfast completed the survey and a number of recommendations were made as set out below:

i. Young people's recommendations

BYF members have analysed the findings and created the following RSE recommendations for Government:

- a) Adopt a right-based proactive approach to relationship and sexuality education.

- b) Work with young people to co-produce an RSE curriculum programme for schools.
- c) A curriculum programme should be taught by specialised, qualified and trained staff.

ii. Next Steps

Now that the report has launched, work will begin in three areas:

1. Awareness raising with young people: The BYF had planned to hold a number of young people's RSE vents throughout 2020 with the first expected to take place in City Hall in Spring 2020, however due to COVID19, these have had to be postponed. It is hoped that these can begin to take place in the latter part of 2020.
2. The BYF hope to present the findings of this report to the Education Committee in Stormont and present their recommendations to Ministers.
3. The South Eastern HSCT have expressed interest in replicating this research in the other parts on NI. This would include an identical questionnaire for young people in these other Council areas so that the results can be compared to establish how RSE differs in different parts of NI. Work with the Health Development Specialist – Sexual Health & Disability from the SE Trust and the Project Coordinator from CCEA has begun to establish the best way to engage young people in these areas.

3.7 Racism and diversity

BYF members have been working with Dr Jonny Byrne from Ulster University on a piece of research titled HOME which explores BAME young people's experiences of living in Belfast. Young people from the BYF will be conducting focus groups with 6 different ethnic youth groups across Belfast. These will take place in September 2020 either socially distanced (preferred option) or via Zoom.

Findings from these focus groups will then be analysed, a report presented and recommendations made on how Belfast can be a more culturally diverse city.

A short film will also be produced focusing more in-depth on some of the BAME young people's experiences.

3.8 COVID19 Youth Press Conference

NI Executive have invited BYF to be represented at a youth press conference focusing on COVID19. At this press conference, young people from a variety of youth organisations will have an opportunity to pose questions to the Ministers on a variety of issues which have affected young people during this time. This press conference is scheduled to take place in July/August 2020.

3.9 Formalising our youth participation structures

At committee in June 2019, Members agreed to establish a joint engagement between the BYF and P&C Committee by holding formalised meetings three times per annum. These meetings are to be recorded and ratified at Full Council. This is part of Councils work to build on and strengthen our current youth participation offer.

Permission is sought to approve the next meeting date of Tuesday 20th October 2020 at 5pm.

3.10 NI Youth Assembly

BYF received correspondence from the Speaker of the NI Assembly, Alex Maskey MLA, thanking the young people as stakeholders for their involvement in helping to shape the proposal for the NI Youth Assembly. The letter notes that the Youth Assembly will be forming shortly and will mirror the structure of the NI Assembly. This will be a great opportunity for our Youth Forum members to put themselves forward with our support to become members of the Youth Assembly. A further report will be brought to Committee when we know detail of the nomination and selection process.

3.11 Extending current Youth Forum membership

Recruitment and selection to our Youth Forum takes place every two years with members serving the full term. The process is robust involving the following elements and timeline:

- Engagement with young people, youth workers and community workers from February-March;
- Applications open via an 'expression of interest' form in April;
- April time online social media campaign to encourage applications;
- Letters are also be sent to all Belfast schools;
- Applications close in May and young people are invited to BYF taster sessions in City Hall;
- Interviews take place in June and 40 young people will be awarded places.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 we were not in a position to actively engage with young people, schools, and service providers during this time. As we move in to the recovery phase and more opportunities for engagement are developing, it is essential that we continue the valuable work being conducted by the Youth Forum members and the existing partnerships.

We are seeking approval to extend the current cohort of members' term for 1 year. This will enable us to;

- recruit and induct new members over a longer timeline incorporating a range of new methodologies that meet Covid-19 mitigation protocols.
- continue the high standard research, lobbying, development and capacity building of the Youth Forum as a collective voice of young people in the city.

3.12 Finance and Resource Implications

Financial Implications

All costs associated with the Youth Forum have been agreed in the budget setting process. This is subject to revision and Departmental priorities

Human Resource Implications

A dedicated Community Development Officer has been assigned to facilitate the Youth Forum

3.13 Equality Impact or Good Relations/ Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

A number of the Members commended the work of the Youth Forum and the contribution that it made as the collective voice of young people within local government in Belfast.

A Member referred to the requested delay in recruiting new members due to the impact of the Covid pandemic and she stated that, whilst she appreciated the need for the delay, she would like to see the recruitment process expanded further to encourage recruitment and to ensure a balanced membership of young people throughout all areas of the city going forward.

A further Member advised that she would like to see the profile of the Youth Forum being more prominent and visible on the Council's website.

The Committee agreed:

- that the next joint Committee and Youth Forum meeting would be held on Tuesday, 20th October at 5.15 p.m. and that this would be a remote meeting via teams;
- to extend the current term of the 2018-20 cohort membership for one year as a result of the current pandemic but agreed to also investigate expanding the recruitment process to ensure a balance membership going forward; and
- that officers would liaise with the Council's Corporate Communications section to develop and better showcase the work of the Youth Forum on the Council's website.

Request to place a memorial bench In Shankill Cemetery

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from a Trustee of the Greater Shankill Community Council seeking approval to install a memorial bench in Shankill Cemetery as a focal point for individuals and families who had experienced pregnancy and baby loss. The Committee noted that there was existing memorials for babies in both the City and Roselawn Cemeteries.

Baby Loss Awareness Week was held annually from 9th -15th October, it aimed to raise awareness about the key issues affecting those who had experienced pregnancy or baby loss. Now in its 16th year, Baby Loss Awareness Week sought tangible improvements in research, care and policy around bereavement support and highlighted the need for bereavement support and services being available for anyone affected by the death of a baby at any stage.

The bench would be designed, fabricated and installed in a fitting location in the cemetery, to be agreed by the Open Space and Streetscene Manager for the area. The total cost of the bench, fitting and installation would be paid for by members of the 1st Shankill Golf Society and it would be manufactured and fitted by Belfast Metalworks.

The Committee approved the installation of a memorial bench in Shankill Cemetery during Baby Loss Awareness Week in October.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Notice of Intention - Traffic Regulation Order 2020

The Committee was reminded that the Council had previously made available £700,000 from the Capital Programme to install alleygates across the City. The Members were advised that Phase 4 had been divided into 3 sub-phases, with Phase 4(a) having been completed in March 2018 and Phase 4(b) in October 2018 and 4(c) in October 2019.

The Committee noted that, at the end of this current phase, the Council had been approached by the Public Health Agency, Department for Communities and Department of Justice who had sought assistance with restricting access to challenging areas through the provision of gates, for which they would fund. At that late stage it had not been possible to include them within phase 4(c) and it had been explained to those agencies that the requests would take further time to progress. Following the necessary legal consultation process, legal services were now content that these additional gates could be advertised.

The Committee was advised that the required statutory and community consultation had been undertaken and formal approval was now being sought to proceed to advertise the Notice of Intention to enact the Traffic Regulation Order 2020 to enable gates to be installed in the following areas:

- To the rear of Nos. 371 – 393 Shankill Road
- To the rear of Nos. 14 - 34 Botanic Avenue and to the side of No. 34 Botanic Avenue.
- To the rear of Nos. 7 – 35 Cromwell Road, Nos. 1 – 5 Wolseley Street, Nos. 2 – 24 Ireton Street, Nos. 62 – 84 Botanic Ave and to the sides of No. 7 Cromwell Road, No.2 Ireton Street and No. 24 Ireton Street.

A number of Members referred to the success of the previous/current schemes and stated that they would like to see additional funding for additional schemes, however, it was noted that funding for any future Alleygating scheme would be determined by the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as part of the Council's capital budget setting process.

Following a further query in respect of future schemes and those streets that had previously been referred and were on a waiting list, it was noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would provide an update in respect of the scheme and also include detail in respect of unadopted alleyways. It was also agreed that this would include clarity in respect of the existing criteria.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that it pass a resolution to make the Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation Order 2020 for the locations as set out above, to be advertised as required by law.

Operational Issues

Horizon 2020

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 update Members on a funding application which has been submitted to the EU Horizon 2020 fund and has successfully passed stage one of the application process. The project is called Upsurge and focuses on testing nature based solutions in EU cities, with the aim of sharing learning and good practice. A detailed**

application is being developed for submission in stage 2 by the University of Maribor, Slovenia, on behalf of a consortium of EU cities with, a final submission date of 3rd September 2020. The project, if successful, would commence in 2021 with a 48-month duration. Belfast has been included as one of a number of partner cities within the proposal.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Approve the inclusion of Lower Botanic Gardens as the primary location for activity in the EU Horizon 2020 Upsurge project proposal, with an update to follow regarding the status of the application.
- Authorise the project team to scan additional BCC sites with the aim of identifying satellite sites that could be incorporated into the project.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The specific Horizon 2020 call focuses on nature-based solutions. The proposal is that Belfast will test nature-based solutions developed in the city of Maribor, Slovenia, to assess if they can be implemented successfully in another city. It is proposed that Belfast will develop a site into a community garden and learning facility, where soil enhancement, food production and testing can be undertaken. Belfast City Council officers and Queens University of Belfast staff are working on the detail of the Belfast contribution and have identified a proposed primary site with the potential for linked satellite sites across the city and in the city centre.

3.2 The preferred primary site is Lower Botanic Gardens, in the area between QUB PEC car park, and Ridgeway Street, bounded by Stranmillis Embankment (see image attached). The site has been selected due to the following: size requirement (5,000m²), proximity to partner assets (QUB), and proximity to a range of socio-economic stakeholders (QUB/UU students, minorities, Botanic Primary School, and neighbouring communities including Lower Ormeau, Ballynafeigh, and Holyland). The site facilitates vehicular access via Stranmillis Embankment and pedestrian access at Ridgeway Street. In addition, the site is in close proximity to BCC assets including the Bowling Pavilion and Botanic Gardens, with potential to utilise the project to enhance their use. Furthermore, this project is likely to support the ambitions of the local Friends of Botanic Gardens Group in developing this location.

- 3.3 The project will form a learning base with opportunities for digital testing of nature-based solutions, food production opportunities and educational programmes for schools, community, staff and university students.
- 3.4 While the focus is on the primary site at Botanic Gardens, we propose to examine the potential for satellite sites on BCC land across the city and in the city centre. This will support local community involvement in using nature-based solutions to improve local biodiversity, rewilding, and local food production.
- 3.5 The project aligns with the Belfast City Council aims of improving city and community resilience and aligns with the draft Belfast Resilience Strategy, emerging city and Council Climate Plans, Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan, Belfast Open Spaces Strategy, and Belfast Smart City goals.

3.6 Key Issues

The Upsurge project presents an opportunity to develop an underused area of land under Belfast City Council ownership, through a partnership with QUB, EU partners, and local community organisations. A project team has been established which includes Belfast City Council's Resilience Unit, Innovation Unit, City and Neighbourhood Services, Planning, in addition to QUB representatives. The project, if successful, will act as a hub, with the potential to support rewilding, enhanced local food production, stimulation of local circular economy, and to develop community education programmes in relation to climate, digital innovation, and community resilience.

3.7 Financial and Resource Implications

Up to 1 million euro of the project budget would be allocated to Belfast, subject to a successful application, from an overall project budget of up to 30 million euro. The funding would cover 100% project costs and overheads for project infrastructure, revenue and project management. No match funding is required. The project team will form a steering group to oversee, monitor and update on progress.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessments

None.”

Following a query from a Member the Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed that the progression of the initiative was being considered on a local level and within the context of the previous motion 'Rewilding our Wards' which had been agreed at the September 2019 meeting of the People and Communities Committee.

The Committee:

- approved the inclusion of Lower Botanic Gardens as the primary location for activity in the EU Horizon 2020 Upsurge project proposal, with an update to follow regarding the status of the application; and
- authorised the project team to scan additional Belfast City Council sites with the aim of identifying satellite sites that could be incorporated into the project and noted that this was being considered on a local level and within the context of the previous motion 'Rewilding our Wards' which had been agreed at the September 2019 meeting of the Committee.

Healthy Places - 'All the Colours' Initiative

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To bring members up to speed on the 'All the Colours' lamppost wrapping initiative that has been developed as a result of the work of the Healthy Places project led by Public Health Agency focussed on North Belfast. As outlined within the body of the report both Government departments and local community organisations and residents have been involved in developing the project, however in order for it to progress the Department for Infrastructure have requested that Council must request permission/licence as a 'competent authority'. Thus, PHA has approached us for our support in taking this forward.**
- 1.2 Council officers have since followed up with DfI for clarity who have explained their rationale as; 'in order to ensure any artwork on the Department's property has the full support of the local community, the only organisations we will consider granting permission to attach any materials to our property are local councils. In this way we are able to ensure that local councillors, who are the best contacts within local communities to manage any concerns from residents who may object to the materials, are involved.'**
- 1.3 Legal services have advised that whilst we can indicate our support for the project overall that Council shouldn't take on the role of 'competent authority' as requested by DfI given that we have no function or responsibility in relation to lampposts – they are the property of, and are maintained by the Department.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of this report by way of update.
- Discuss and decide whether they are supportive of the project.
- Consider Council support for the project and, if so, request Council officers to go back to relevant partners (namely DfI, PHA and USI) informing them that Council is supportive of the project but cannot act as the competent authority (as requested by DfI) given that we are not responsible for street lampposts.

3.0 Background

3.1 Bright Ideas is a programme developed through community engagement as part of the Healthy Places Project within the Ardoyne and Ballysillan areas of North Belfast. Healthy Places is a place based approach which aims to improve health, reduce inequalities and improved wellbeing and wider social outcomes (led by Public Health Agency, BCC is a partner in the initiative).

Despite being surrounded by large green spaces such as Clarendon Park and with great views of the surrounding hills, communities such as Ardoyne and Ballysillan often complain of a lack of access to green spaces. Whilst considerable investment has gone into improving active travel networks and development of parks, there remains a number of invisible barriers that prevent certain communities from feeling they belong in green spaces. There is an abundance of evidence to suggest that regular use of green spaces improves physical fitness and reduces depression, enhancing the health and wellbeing of people living and working in cities. Having more accessible, shared green spaces could also help to address anti-social behaviour by providing a space for diversionary activities.

To address this issue Public Health Agency have been working with local communities through Urban Scale Interventions to improve and promote the use of green spaces and engage communities within the Ardoyne and Ballysillan areas to come up with innovative and creative solutions to local issues.

Under the banner of 'Bright Ideas North Belfast' a series of community conversations, workshops and public events have taken place. These have helped to identify issues in the local area and develop possible solutions.

One of the key recurring themes was the need to brighten up the streets with colourful messaging and artwork as part of a place based approach to improving public spaces in North Belfast.

3.2 All the Colours initiative (lamppost wrapping)

A number of interventions have been co-designed with local community groups and residents, including a 'Bright Ideas Bird Box' for people to personalise and put up in their gardens to brighten them up and connect to nature, as well as an intergenerational shared meals programme. An additional project aims to bring colour to the streets by wrapping lampposts with artwork created by local illustrators and artists focused on the positive stories and themes that have been developed by the communities themselves as part of the project.

3.3 Implementation plan

1. USI have delivered 200 engagement kits through the collaboration of local representatives in order to be able to collect positive stories and ideas around the project themes.
2. 'Usfolk' will illustrate the engagement by citizens of the area into three themed artworks which will be used as lamp post wrappings (designs will be taken back to participants to approve for feedback)
3. Technical approval in principle by DFI has been approved providing the project is approved by Belfast City Council and their relevant procedures.

Subject to:

1. Full access to panels
2. Markings easily identifiable
3. Specifications, Rams and insurances provided
4. Content signed off (no commercial promotion in media)
4. The project will be installed for implementation (September 2020 - Date TBC subject to approvals)
5. Budget has been set aside for the removal of graphics if required however the materials used have a seven year life expectancy and are graded for outdoor application.

3.4 Locations

Approximately 60 lampposts are have been identified on streets across North Belfast, with a particular focus on Ardoyne and Ballysillan wards. Community groups have helped to create the idea and community leaders are supportive of the programme delivery. More than 30

community groups have been involved in the bright ideas process, with 250 online and offline conversations covering an inclusive age range (7 to 80 years old).

3.5 Art work

The artwork has been created by local Belfast illustrators 'UsFolk' focusing on themes of inclusion, intergenerational exchange and green space. Their previous artwork has been used on a range of public realm infrastructure including service boxes and telephone boxes.

Estimated date of installation: week commencing 14th September 2020 (covering 100 lampposts).

No road closures will be required as part of installation and all relevant insurances are in place.

Installer to ensure no interruption of access to lamp post cover, no markings will be wrapped. Material meets external environment standards, with a product lifespan of at least 7 years. The durability of material reduces anti-social behaviour, the product is removed professionally which reduces vandalism and requires no-maintenance.

3.6 Part of a wider approach

The lampposts will form a key part of a wider implementation to deliver the intervention in North Belfast which will include the material being applied to other city infrastructure objects we see in the area subject to additional approvals.

The approach is being seen as highly innovative and opportunities are arising in which lampposts could be reimagined in the City Centre (subject to approvals) as part of the COVID recovery process to support wayfinding, crowd flow and storytelling opportunities with Belfast City Council.

3.7 Outputs

Studies have shown that improving aesthetics of an area and adding colour to neighbourhoods can increase overall community wellbeing, demonstrate a sense of value to residents and reduce antisocial behaviour and crime. In a time of pandemic this project offers an opportunity to provide local responses in line with NI COVID regulations to improve the places we live, work and play.

The project has already been applying such methods through the use of pop ups with citizens and organisations.

This is a truly co-designed project with local community groups and provides the opportunity to increase community cohesion and public value through a simple action that can have significant neighbourhood benefits. Public perception research will be carried out before and after to show the value such a simple action can have in improving neighbourhood feel.

3.8 Key Departments involved in developing the project (project board reps)

- Public Health Agency
- Department of Justice
- Department of Health
- Department for Communities
- Department for Infrastructure
- PSNI Neighbourhood Policing team North & West Belfast

3.9 Community groups consulted in the project and in co-design as part of bright ideas North Belfast

- Artsekta
- Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership
- Ardoyne Youth Enterprise
- Ardoyne Youth Club
- Ashton Centre
- Ballysillan Primary School
- Bradley Manor Care Home
- Carezone
- Flax Trust Arts
- Belfast Healthy Cities
- Little explorers - Ardoyne Community Centre
- NBWISP - North Belfast Women's Initiative & Support Project
- North Belfast Friendship Club
- North Belfast Health Forum
- North Belfast Men's shed
- Our Lady of Mercy Primary School
- R City Belfast
- ROC - Redeem Our Community
- Twaddell and Woodvale Resident Association
- Urban Villages Initiative (supported the project)
- Women's tech
- YEHA

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

There are additional financial or resource implications contained within this report. Funding is in place (via PHA) to cover both implementation and de-installation costs.

**3.11 Equality or Good Relations implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained within this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

Departmental Priorities during Covid Recovery - Verbal Update

Both the Director of Neighbourhood and Director of City Services provided the Committee with a comprehensive overview of the Department’s priorities during the Covid pandemic and on the department’s areas of focus moving towards recovery.

The Committee was advised that during the Covid Pandemic the City and Neighbourhood Services Department had remained central in the delivery of critical Council services, including bereavement services, waste collection, parks and street cleansing and lead on the development and implementation of the community response hub. The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that maintaining these services during the response period had required the Council to amend some working practices, this had included the re-deployment of some staff in order to ensure service delivery, some functions had moved to working from home and some had to be stood down with some staff having to be placed on the government’s Furlough scheme.

The officer advised that, in line with the easing of restrictions from the Northern Ireland Executive, the Council was now working towards the recovery of its services. As a result it had been necessary to refocus the department’s priorities to enable officers to adequately resource the required work.

The Committee was advised that during the period of recovery the department priority areas of focus for the City and Neighbourhood Services Department were as follows:

- maintaining the delivery of the key critical services – bereavement services, waste management, parks and street cleansing and Community (Area) support;
- returning services to a new normal – which would include the creation of secure working environments in line with health and safety requirements and also taking into consideration the overall financial position of the Council;
- Brexit – temporary staff (externally funded) to be recruited to ensure the delivery of official controls on imported foods that might be required under the NI Protocol from 1st January 2020. These staff will be essential to meet the Council and UK Government’s legal responsibilities under the NI protocol, domestic and EU legislation;

- Community Recovery – building on the foundation of community response activity with the Council's community partners, the focus would involve engaging with communities, along with city partners on a co-design and inclusive process to develop area recovery priorities, build capacity and align resources and to maximise outcomes, and to improve community support infrastructure, community wealth and assets;
- Implementation of Open Space and Street Service – to continue to implement this service structure, as agreed pre Covid, to ensure stable area teams in the management of Council parks and open spaces and public streets in a more collaborative way;
- Supporting Governance – to ensure that decision making continued to be facilitated through the relevant committees and working groups; and
- Planning for a potential second wave.

A Member commended the hard work and dedication of all officers shown over the pandemic and requested that senior officers would e-mail or communicate via other internal communication mechanisms with all staff from the City and Neighbourhood Services Department thanking them for their hard work and contribution in maintaining the delivery of essential Council services during the Covid pandemic.

Several Members referred to the difficulties experienced over waste collection services during the pandemic. The Director of City Services outlined the practical and financial pressures that this service had and continued to face and it was agreed a report would be submitted to a future meeting detailing the ongoing challenges in respect of the waste collection service during the pandemic and which would give consideration as to how these could be addressed.

Several Members sought guidance and clarification as to when certain Council services, in particular household visits might be reinstated, the Director advised that recovery of Council services was being considered at the August meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and again reiterated the current pressures on the Department.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Cherryvale Playing Fields - Councillor de Faoite

The Member referred to the ongoing work at Cherryvale Playing Fields in respect of the update of the carpark, the removal of the one-way system and the possible addition of a second pedestrian entrance.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- agreed that a site visit would be undertaken to the location in order to enable the Members and officers to better acquaint themselves with the various user groups issues within the context of the park;

- noted that consultation was due to commence in respect of establishing an additional pedestrian entrance but that no funding had been secured for the proposal; and
- noted the ongoing implementation of the area allocations of parks and open spaces and agreed that Officers would seek further detail on any issues and, if necessary, seek advice and guidance from the Council's Human Resources Section.

Cemeteries - Alderman Rodgers

The Member commended and thanked all the Council's cemetery staff for their hard work and dedication in maintaining the service during the Covid pandemic.

He also suggested to officers that the Council should look at implementing a rolling maintenance programme throughout the city's cemeteries as many of them were falling into a state of disrepair.

The Committee noted the current financial pressures that the Council faced and noted the suggestion.

Alleyway Transformation - Councillor Kelly

Following a request from the Member it was agreed that, following the success of initiatives such as Wildflower Alley and similar projects across the city, that the Committee would write the Department for Communities, Department of Justice and Department for Infrastructure with a view to co-ordinating support and assistance for residents and groups who would like to transform and regenerate communal and open spaces throughout the city.

Pest Control Issues – Councillor Kelly

The Member outlined the difficulties that home owners were experiencing with pest control issues and sought clarity as to when domestic house calls might be able to resume.

The Committee was updated by the Director of City Services that, in line with the Council's health and safety responsibilities and creating COVID secure working environments and services, household pest control visits, were still unable to take place but that advice was being given to constituents via the telephone and sewer baiting had resumed to support communities. It was further noted that an update on organisational recovery and the reintroduction of services would be considered corporately by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Future Use of former Horticultural Training Site – Councillor Garrett

In response to a suggestion from the Member that the former Horticultural Training Site at Groveland's/Musgrave Park could potentially be regenerated and used for community outreach programmes, it was agreed that this would be considered further within the context of the Council's Open Spaces Strategy action plan development and further agreed that a site visit would be arranged in due course.

Odour Colin Area – Councillor Baker

In response to the Member's request, the Committee agreed to write to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) reiterating the need for it to further investigate and address the bad odour that members of the public who lived in the Colin area, around Dunmurry, Twinbrook and Lagmore had been subjected to for a number of years.

Chairperson