

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 11th October, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Bunting (Deputy Chairperson) (in the Chair);
Alderman McCoubrey;
Councillors Bower, Canavan, Cobain,
Michael Collins, Corr, Donnelly, de Faoite,
Flynn, Garrett, Magee, Maghie, Murray, McAteer,
McMullan, Newton, O'Hara and Verner.

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

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 6th and 22nd September were taken as read and signed as correct.

It was reported that the minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd October, subject to the following amendments:

Cherryvale Gate Anti-Social Behaviour Measures Consultation

Local residents would also be invited to attend the meeting of Elected Members from the Lisnasharragh DEA to be held to agree the final remedial measures to mitigate against any anti-social behaviour arising from the reopening of the gate at Cherryvale and that this meeting be convened as a matter of urgency.

Request for the Renaming of Moltke Street Playground

The decision to name the playground the Ruby Murray Park be amended to name it the Ruby Murray Village Green instead.

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**Update on Cemeteries and Crematorium
Working Group**

The Chief Executive to raise the delay in obtaining planning permission for the new crematorium with the Chief Executive of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council.

Declarations of Interest

The Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Bunting, and Councillors Corr, Donnelly, O'Hara and Verner declared an interest in item 4 (a) Community Provision Funding – Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2023 – 2026 Update, in that they either worked for or were associated with an organisation that had in the past applied for funding. The Deputy Chairperson, who was chairing the meeting, along with the other Members, left the meeting whilst the matter was being considered.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports 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 2 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.

**Pitch Partner Agreement –
Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park**

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

**Community Asset Management Framework –
Pilot Community Benefit Sites**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided the Members with an update regarding the pilot scheme currently being progressed to help to identify the future management models at the following sites:

- Clarendon Playing Fields;
- Ulidia Playing Fields;
- Hammer Pitch, changing rooms & community space;
- Willowbank Multi Sports Facility;
- Tullycarnet Park Boxing Club; and
- Former Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre.

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The Director reminded the Members that the pilot was testing the decision-making value of a draft Community Management Assessment Framework and toolkit previously developed for Council by Development Trusts NI (DTNI).

He advised that the sites at Ulidia and Clarendon had both been assessed by DTNI and he proceeded to take the Members through the recommendations for these sites. The Members noted that assessment of the other sites was ongoing and that reports would be submitted to Committee in due course.

He reported that DTNI had been asked to work with the two community organisations to assess their capacity to undertake the future management of the site and to determine the benefit to the community in doing so. In both cases the applicants had proposed that their long-term management of the site would have a greater community benefit than a reversion to council management at the termination point of the current legal agreement. They had also identified opportunities for capital development at both sites using external investment but neither had the security of tenure required to be successful in a funding application.

The Director reported that, given the similarity in scale and functionality of the sites and the shared aspirations of the applications, the same recommendation was being made for both, in that the existing Clarendon Development Association and a newly formed Rosario Development Company would each enter a long-term lease with the Council. Both organisations had requested the lease rent free to support a sustainable financial model focused on the delivery of sporting programmes and community provision at the sites. He reported that DfC approval would have to be sought for this on the grounds of an evidence base of ongoing community benefit.

The Director provided the Members with a detailed breakdown of the current financial arrangements at both sites, along with the proposed new arrangements and noted that the proposed new lease terms would be subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Committee agreed to support the recommendations made by DTNI in relation to the future management of Clarendon and Ulidia Playing Fields by the community and further agreed:

- to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that approval be sought to seek the consent of the Department for Communities (DfC) to the grant of a lease for a term of 25 years at a nominal rent at each site; and
- that should DfC approval be received, an award of £20,000 per annum be made to each lessee, subject to periodic review against the projections of the business case, with the review period to be negotiated as part of the lease.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Notice of Motion: Support for Parents

The Committee was advised that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 27th September, had referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Smyth, to the People and Communities Committee for consideration:

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“To support parents, the Council commits to providing a list of existing initiatives which it delivers, with a view to working with the voluntary and community sector, as well as other partners, to explore if such initiatives may be improved, as well as seeking to bring forward new programmes during the cost-of-living crisis. The Council also commits to seeking parents’ views on any further support it will provide to families to ensure that parent voice is a significant factor in the design and implementation of new initiatives that will help tackle the cost-of-living crisis for parents.”

Councillor Bower, on behalf of the proposer and seconder who were both unable to attend the meeting, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the motion.

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting.

Committee/Strategic Issues

**Community Provision Funding- Capacity
Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community
Buildings 2023-2026 Update**

(Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager, attended in connection with this agenda item.)

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to:

- **Provide members with an update on the Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings,**
- **Advise members of timescale and available budgets for micro/medium small grants in 23/24.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is asked to:

- **note the number of applications received and the total funding requested for the Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings as opposed to total budget available.**
- **note the limited budget available for micro/medium small grants in 23/24 and the impact this might have in relation to what can be funded next financial year.**

3.0 Main report

Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings

3.1 Members will recall that at April Committee they approved the implementation of the large grant funding provided through Community Provision for activity from April 2023 – March 2026. The two funding streams are:

Capacity Building Grant

3.2 Designed to support community development organisations, that:

- support other lower capacity or smaller organisations to ensure good practice in governance, application of appropriate policies and financial management,
- advocate the interests of the communities they serve, and
- ensure communities can be engaged to influence or take decisions/ action about issues that matter to them and affect their lives.

Revenue Grants for Community Buildings

3.3 Designed to support organisations which address the needs of their community by delivering a broad-base programme from their building. The building may be used by a geographic based community, or the community may be a community of interest with members from across the whole city.

These grants contribute to the running costs of community buildings in recognition that the community development activity inside allows communities to be engaged to:

- Influence or take decisions about issues that matter to them and affect their lives,
- Define needs, issues and solutions for their community, and
- Take action to help themselves and make a difference.

3.4 The application process for these grants opened on the 30 June 2022 for ten weeks and closed on 9 September 2022. A series of information sessions were held – three on-line via Teams, and two in person at City Hall. A total of 94 organisations attended the sessions.

3.5 There has been a good spread of applications from across the different areas of the city and applications have also been received from organisations representing communities of interest. At the

close of the process Council has received the following level of applications:

- 43 applications for the Capacity Building Grant, with total funding requests of:
 - £1,852,912.29 in year 1- 2023/24
 - £1,850,103.46 in year 2- 2024/25
 - £1,871,638.39 in year 3- 2025/26

- 89 applications for the Revenue Grant for Community Buildings, with total funding requests of:
 - £1,701,309.74 in year 1- 2023/24
 - £1,737,147.73 in year 2- 2024/25
 - £1,775,446.36 in year 3- 2025/26

3.6 These requests are in excess of the available budget for both funding programmes. Officers will score applications and provide a further report on the outcome of that process in December 22. In order to support quality applications a quality threshold will be applied in line with other funding programmes and options on allocations will be included in the P&C Committee December paper.

Micro/Medium small grants 23/24

3.7 Applications for a range of council small grants, including micro/medium small grants, will be advertised in Autumn 22 for delivery from April – September 23, through the online funding platform. Members may recall that in 22/23 a significant allocation of £631,360 was taken from the Covid reserve to create a larger budget for micro/medium grants.

3.8 In 23/24 the budget will return to normal levels. This funding budget was previously used to support summer scheme programmes which are a priority for council. Guidance for applicants to the micro/medium grant programme will advise that given budget challenges summer scheme programmes may be prioritized over other activity. In the interim, officers are seeking additional funds in order to be able to enhance the micro/medium grant budget through both internal and external mechanisms.

Financial Implications

3.9 Micro/Medium

Currently the projected 23/24 funding available for the micro/medium grants scheme equates to £201,000. Historically, there was an allocation of £170,000 for summer scheme delivery

which therefore only leaves £31,000 available for groups to apply for under the broader micro/medium criteria options (NB micro grants are up to £1,500 and medium up to £5,000). The level ringfenced for summer schemes will depend on the number of applications received but members should note the impact on available budgets for broader programmes.

3.10 Capacity and Revenue

Members will be aware that in addition to Council funding a portion of the Department for Communities (DfC) Community Support Programme budget is allocated to provide funding for the Capacity and Revenue grant streams. For 23/24, this allocation is as below:

Grant	CSP funding (DfC)	BCC	Total
Capacity	£436,028	£399,796	£835,824
Revenue	£298,329	£757,967	£1,056,296

- 3.11 These funding programmes are both awarded on a 3-year basis. Council is in receipt of a Letter of Offer for 22/23 and 23/24 but officers do not have confirmation that DfC funding will remain as is for 24/25 and 25/26. Awards will be made based on the notional available budget for the 3-year time period, however, members should note that any reduction in the level of Community Support Programme funding in 24/25 or 25/26 could require an increased allocation from council.

Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.12 **No issues have been identified at present. Any implications will be considered throughout and highlighted to Members.”**

The Members discussed with concern the lack of budget available for the grants and the potential gaps in what could be funded next year, highlighting that this was even more concerning during the current cost of living crisis when small voluntary community groups would rely heavily on such funding streams to provide vital services.

A further Member raised the ongoing issue of those groups who lacked the capacity to successfully avail of funding and discussion ensued as to how they could be assisted. During discussion it was agreed that a report would be submitted to the November meeting looking at potential solutions and that it would also include a breakdown in relation to communities of interest/targeting of section 75 groups.

Another Member raised the issue of the delay in the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Pilots. The Neighbourhood Services Manager confirmed the reason for the delay and advised that the November update report would contain more information in this regard.

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The Committee:

- noted the number of applications received, and the total funding requested for the Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings as opposed to total budget available;
- noted the limited budget available for micro/medium small grants in 2023/24 and the impact that this might have in relation to what could be funded next financial year;
- highlighted the previous request for a report to be submitted to the Committee providing an analysis of how capacity and revenue grants had been allocated on a geographic basis previously and identifying capacity issues and potential solutions to this in terms of enhancing/increasing capacity to apply for and be successful in availing of funding. It was agreed that this report would be submitted to the November meeting and that it would also include a further breakdown in relation to communities of interest/targeting of section 75 groups; and
- noted that there had been a delay in the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Pilots meaning that the 2-year funding allocation would need to be reaffirmed and that a more detailed report would be submitted to the November meeting. It was requested that the report should articulate the reason for the delay and detail a plan for implementation at pace, given the issues with capacity.

**Update on operational review and refresh of
the 'Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign'**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To provide Members of the People and Communities Committee with an update in relation to an operational review and refresh of the 'Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign'. This report provides details of the work already undertaken and of activities that have been programmed for the future.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the contents of the report.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 In February 2022 it was moved by Councillor Garrett, seconded by Councillor Verner and unanimously agreed that an operational review and refresh of the 'Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign' be undertaken by officers that, along with other areas that might

be identified, should include Education, Enforcement and Cleansing, with the findings to be submitted in due course to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration.

Marketing and Communications Update

3.2 There are 3 key strands within responsible dog ownership that are the focus of our new Marketing & Communications Campaign for Responsible Dog Ownership for 2022/2023: Education, Enforcement and Cleansing.

3.3 Education – Our messaging has been reviewed and the new imagery is more visual and impactful.

Enforcement – We have reviewed our reporting mechanisms and messaging and are encouraging reporting. We are working closely with Elected Members, colleagues in Parks, colleagues who monitor social media and the public to target fouling hotspot areas.

Cleansing – We are working more closely with colleagues in OSS to ensure Dog Wardens are aware of hotspot areas and that they are cleaned promptly.

3.4 We want to encourage reporting of dog fouling, ensuring that our message is clear and mechanisms are in place both online and offline. Operationally we need to stand over what we are communicating to ensure the user journey is seamless.

3.5 Whilst we recognise that the enforcement message is an important one the message needs to be more than the fine. We want the message and the advertising creative to appeal to their 'better self'.

3.6 The overarching campaign message is #YourdogYourJob. This message allows us to support communication across the key areas of education, enforcement and cleansing in all our marketing and communication channels in a consistent way.

3.7 We benchmarked by looking at what other councils in NI, ROI and further afield do in relation to dog fouling.

3.8 The activity will include -

- A fully integrated advertising activity that will run for 3 weeks from 10 October 2022 to coincide with the darker evenings.
- Tactical outdoor advertising on buses and adshells that will target known hotspot areas and main arterial routes. (See examples of artwork in 4.0)
- Radio and online activity.

- Paid for social media.

3.9 There will be supporting communications to coincide with the advertising (outdoor/radio/digital) and to support all year round communications around the campaign #YourdogYourjob for example:

- Press release and PR pictures
- Social media – This will also give us the opportunity to capture live feedback
- Website – We will ensure our website content is up to date and the ‘back office’ side of the operation is in place to support the campaigns call to action
- City Matters – We plan placement of editorials around the campaign

Evaluation of the Campaign

3.10 We will evaluate the campaign by obtaining statistics of the number of clicks, plays etc.; determining how many people have viewed the posters; assessment of public awareness of the campaign messages and assessing the cleanliness of hotspot area streets before and after the campaign.

Outreach Update

3.11 Engagement with Schools

Our Environmental Education and Outreach Team (formerly CAT) will be running a Billboard Challenge for Schools in January 2023. We will visit schools to educate pupils and then invite them to take part in a competition to design a billboard. In each school, the winning design will appear on a billboard close to the school.

3.12 Stenciling in our Parks

Our Environmental Education and Outreach Team have provided stencils to OSS colleagues in several parks.

Operational Update

3.13 Proactive Fouling Patrols

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the Council was only operating critical services and our pro-active dog fouling patrols were therefore temporarily suspended. These were reintroduced as the pandemic restrictions eased and regular programmed proactive patrols are taking place across the city. Our Dog Wardens interact with dog owners and the general public and

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continue to receive positive feedback. Patrol locations are adapted to take account of current hotspot areas.

3.14 At the meeting on 8 February 2022 Members asked for consideration of a Dog Warden

Team in each quarter of the city. We have 12 Dog Wardens and 2 Supervisors. They work 12 hours shifts (8 am to 8 pm) 7 days a week. There are four teams with 3 Dog Wardens in each and on any shift there are always two teams working. We have the city split into 2 areas North / South and East / West. Two of the teams always work in N/S and the other two teams always work in E/W. From an operational point of view this allows the Dog Wardens to get to know the areas but gives us more flexibility to cover leave and absence than we could achieve with individual teams in separate areas.

3.15 Finance and Resource Implications

The advertising campaign costs have been absorbed within the marketing and communications business as usual budget.

3.16 Asset and Other Implications

None

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

None.”

The Committee thanked the Director for the update report and discussed the ongoing issues with dog fouling throughout the City. During discussion the following issues were highlighted:

- Liaison with Corporate Communications to discuss the possibility of localising and enhancing the dog foul media campaign in terms of relevance to each District Electoral Area, including liaison with the Elected Members of these areas;
- developing further a stencilling campaign throughout the city (to include liaison with the Dfl in this regard);
- increasing the use of no dog foul signage throughout the city but particularly at ‘hotspot areas’;
- consideration of the use of the Customer Hub in identifying ‘hotspots’ and directly linking directly with the Elected Members for these areas;

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- the provision of free dog foul bags in problem areas (like had been done on the Comber Greenway by local children) and ensuring adequate bins for disposal were available; and
- the development of responsible dog ownership campaigns in the Council's parks and playing field locations.

The Committee agreed that a follow up report would be submitted to a future meeting which would consider the issues/potential opportunities as discussed.

Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To provide Members with an update on development of a Belfast City Council Sports Development and Physical Activity Strategy (The Strategy).

To provide a revised timeline for development and completion of the Strategy.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note progress to date and to agree to the new proposed timetable for the development of the Strategy.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 It was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 5th January 2018 that a Belfast City Council Sports Development Strategy and associated work plan would be developed. This Strategy was to provide a framework for future decision making. At that time the committee agreed this would, among other things, steer future decisions on directly supporting National Governing Bodies of Sport to deliver programmes in Belfast which enhance sporting opportunities for Belfast's sporting organisations and individuals.

3.2 People and Communities Committee of 5th June 2018 agreed a proposed Terms of Reference and proposed timeline. Since that date the Departmental Change Programme has prompted consideration of wider opportunities to clarify and align the links between sports development and Council's strategic funding and

programming decisions in the areas of asset development, health improvement and community development.

- 3.3 At the People and Communities meeting of 10 November 2020, it was further agreed that the Terms of Reference be extended to include the following:**
- In line with the Belfast Agenda the outcomes are extended to 2035
 - Physical activity programming is considered as part of the pathway into organised sport
 - Considered and aligned with our Leisure Transformation Programme.
 - Identification of alternative sources of financing/partner opportunities.
 - Facility/asset utilisation and management is maximised through collaborative partnership approaches
 - Facility/asset planning and development is considered taking account of local, citywide and regional need.
 - Sport’s contribution to improvement of whole health is considered in the context of partnership working through the work of the Belfast Community Planning Partnership and associated Boards – particularly the Living Here Board
 - Sport’s contribution to community development is considered in the context of City & Neighbourhood’s Departmental approach to area working and neighbourhood regeneration
 - The strategy ‘working title’ to be ‘Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy’
- 3.4 The aim of the Strategy is to review Council’s current physical activity and sports development systems and operations, and subsequently develop a Strategy that identifies, nurtures and develops opportunities for improving health through participation in physical activity and sport.**
- 3.5 The purpose of the development of the strategy is to provide a clear statement of the Council’s Physical Activity and Sports Development aims, objectives and priorities for the future. It will demonstrate how Council plans to enable and deliver a range of physical activity and sports development activities to specific groups, to meet the overall objectives outlined in the Belfast Agenda.**
- 3.6 The Strategy will have two primary themes plus two associated themes and will support two existing themes.**

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THEME	POTENTIAL INCLUSIONS
Sport Development Primary 1	Traditional SD continuum
	Sustainability and support exit strategy
	Priority sports?
	Programme support grant funding
	Athlete support grant funding
	Support programme delivery (Capacity development).
Physical Activity Primary 2	Health related activity promotion
	Community programme support (non-financial)
	Community programme grant funding
	Coach/leader provision
	PARS including HealthWise, Cardiac, Cancer, etc.
	Pathways to citywide programmes, clubs and NGBs.
	Sustainability and support exit strategy
	Linking to broader utilisation (pathways) to maximise the impact of existing leisure centre and community centre programmes
Facility/Asset Planning Associated 1	Mapping existing facility provision
	Future sports facility development planning
	Footprint and facility mix
	Location and community coverage
	Citywide analysis to avoid duplication (Area Planning)
	Demand analysis, business case and sustainability
	Ownership and management
	Cross agency collaboration
	Cross agency collaboration

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Facility/Asset Access and Utilisation Associated 2	Programming priorities and booking systems
	BCC/GLL facility programming allocations and funding
	Community asset transfers and associated possibilities
	Citywide analysis to avoid duplication (Area Planning)
	Facilities Management Agreements
	Partner Agreements and other contracts which are in existence and which could be implemented to support the direction of the strategy eg. leases
	Health Promotion (Supported existing theme rather than included in strategic document)
Physical activity promotions	
Obesity and nutritional health	
Alcohol and substance abuse interventions	
PHA and BHDU programme support	
Mental health intervention support	
Sustainability and support exit strategy	
Access to expert advisory group support	
Community Engagement and Neighbourhood Development (Supported existing theme rather than included in strategic document)	Developing capacity
	Developing local ownership and autonomy
	Sport and physical activity programme support
	Theme/pathway alignment
	Programme grant funding
	Capital grant funding
	Citywide programme and capital development analysis to avoid duplication
	Sustainability and support exit strategies

- 3.7 As part of the process, it is anticipated that a mapping exercise will be carried out across the Council area. This exercise will be identifying current provision, instances of duplication and**

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opportunities for partnership investment and partnership delivery in physical activity and sport.

- 3.8 Due to Covid the development of this strategy was delayed. However, in July 2022, following a quotation exercise, Strategic Leisure Limited was appointed to support council in the production of the Strategy.
- 3.9 Since the appointment of Strategic Leisure Council officers have been working directly with them providing relevant background and stakeholder mapping. On the 27 September 2022 a delivery board meeting was held followed by a series of meetings involving a range of specialist Council Officers, key delivery partners and stakeholders.

Proposed Draft Timeline Subject to committee's approval

- 3.10 While ambitious, officers are working to the following timeline for presentation of the draft strategy to committee. Consultation will be a key element of the development of the Strategy including consultation and engagement with elected members.

Background review of documentation policies and strategies	September 2022 - (Completed)
Establish Board and structures for developing strategy	September 2022 - October 2022
Initial face to face consultation with key stakeholders and schools	September 2022 - October 2022
Review and Mapping	September 2022 - October 2022
Focus groups established and face to face meetings to take place	October 2022 - December 2022
Wider public consultation to take place online using 'Your Say Belfast'	October 2022 - December 2022
Analysis of key issues identified with a focus on internal consultation and external feedback	November 2022 - December 2022

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Draft Strategy produced and presented to elected members	December 2022 - January 2023
Review of draft strategy with focus groups and through both internal and external consultation	January 2023 - March 2023
Final Document to be completed and presented to elected members	April 2023 - May 2023
Strategy Launch	June 2023

Financial Implications

- 3.11 Cost associated with the development of the new strategy and engagement of external partners will be met within existing departmental resources. Members are advised that no capital finance is in place to support the sports development strategy at this stage. This will need to be considered as the strategy is developed and related needs become clearer.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.12 The draft strategy will be equality screened in line with the Council's agreed process."**

At the request of a Member, the Director of Neighbourhood Services undertook to ensure that the final strategy was inclusive to both disabled and older people.

The Committee noted the progress and agreed to the new proposed timetable for the development of the Strategy.

Correspondence from Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Mr Edwin Poots, MLA, re Clean Air Strategy

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it had agreed to write to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to seek an update on the overall position regarding the development of Northern Ireland's first Clean Air Strategy.

The Director of City Services advised that a response had been received. This detailed that the work continued to progress well with the development of the Strategy, advising that the Department had published the synopsis of consultation responses to the Clean Air Strategy Discussion Document in June 2022 and copy of which was available to view [here](#)

The Minister had reported that a Clean Air Strategy Inter Departmental Steering Group had been established, comprising of officials from DAERA, the Department for Infrastructure, the Department for the Economy and the Department for Health. He detailed that he

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recognised that other Departments and stakeholders might need to be involved depending on the final agreed scope of the strategy, however, the group would, in the interim, continue to meet regularly over the coming months to agree input to the overall Clean Air Strategy.

In addition, a public consultation on the draft Northern Ireland Clean Air Strategy was planned for the end of December 2022, with the results and progression to be ratified by the Northern Ireland Executive.

A Member expressed disappointment at the slow progress being made with the development of the Strategy and stated that he would welcome an update report on the detailed assessment in the Autumn.

Following an issue raised by a Member in relation to an increase in air pollution complaints in the BT17 area, the Director of City Services advised that DAERA was responsible for complaints but undertook to ask a Council officer to liaise with the Member directly to discuss his concerns.

A further Member highlighted the need for additional air quality monitoring stations around schools.

The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Agriculture and expressed disappointment at the slow progress being made in the development of Northern Ireland's first Clean Air Strategy.

**Correspondence from Minister of Finance,
Mr Conor Murphy MLA, re Shared Prosperity Fund**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it had agreed to write to the Communities, Economy and Finance Ministers seeking them to engage with the British Government as a matter of urgency to release details around the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), how it would work and to establish whether the available funding would be an adequate substitute for the European Social Fund.

The Committee was asked to note that, as the Minister of Finance led on this area of work on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive, he had replied directly on behalf of all the Ministers.

In the correspondence he noted that the SPF was a regular topic for discussion in his engagement with British and Devolved Government Ministers. He stated that he continued to raise his concerns regarding SPF and to seek clarity and information on this fund directly with British Ministers.

The Minister outlined that the North's allocation from the Shared Prosperity Fund was just under £127m over three years - £19m in year one, £33m in year two and £74m in year three. Under the 2014-2020 EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework, an average of £64m per year had been received from equivalent EU funds, generating a minimum loss of close to £65m over the three-year period before factoring in inflation.

He continued that this significantly lower level of funding lacked any flexibility and was not being provided to the Assembly or Executive to support those activities previously funded

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through the European Social Fund (ESF) but would be delivered directly by Whitehall risking a significantly reduced impact.

He advised that the DLUHC had established a Partnership Group, which included a representative from Belfast City Council, for the development of a local investment plan for the SPF. He stated that the Executive Departments had been unable to participate in these structures as no decision-making role had been provided for the Executive and Assembly.

He concluded by advising that he would not stand in the way of funding flowing and undertook to continue to seek information on the SPF and to represent the concerns of those who had previously benefited from EU Funding to British Ministers. He stated that he had also instructed his officials to continue to engage with the DLUHC to seek detail on this fund and to try to find a path that would maximise the benefit for citizens here.

The Committee noted the correspondence and agreed that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting which would identify the organisations that currently benefited from the match funding relationships with Belfast City Council and the European Social Fund.

**Correspondence from Lisburn and Castlereagh
City Council re Blaris Cemetery Fees and Response
from DfC re review of burial ground regulations in
relation to fees**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it had agreed to write to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council re Blaris Cemetery Fees and the Department for Communities re review of burial ground regulations in relation to fees.

The Committee was referred to responses that had been received from LCCC's Head of Service and from the Director, Local Government and Housing Regulation Division.

In the response from LCCC, the officer detailed that as a result of Local Government Reform, the Council boundary had changed which had resulted in certain areas of the former Lisburn City Council (and former Castlereagh Borough Council) transferring to the Belfast City Council area, which included the Collin Area. In recognising the potential financial impact of this on former ratepayers, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (L&CCC) had agreed to offer a time bound 3-year subsidy to those former ratepayers making use of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council cemeteries. This subsidy had been supported from April 2015 until March 2018 and matched the overall regional rates convergence scheme which had been implemented by Central Government for household rates. Both schemes had ended on 31st March 2018 and at the conclusion of this subsidy the council had been consistent in its approach.

He reported that from April 2015 there had been several requests around the same subject. Officers had maintained a consistent approach and complied with the policy and any previous queries/complaints of this nature had not been upheld. Furthermore, the Council had also been reviewed by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) on a similar challenge and had been supported in the decision making and consistency of approach concerning this matter.

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He also drew reference to the position of former Castlereagh ratepayers who had existing graves within Knockbreda Cemetery, highlighting that many of the former Castlereagh Borough Council ratepayers within the newly formed L&CCC had graves within Knockbreda.

He concluded by advising that the Council reviewed its charging scheme annually and this included charges associated with cemetery provision.

In the DfC response regarding fees for burials, the Director had advised that the Burial Grounds Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 were made under section 181 of the Public Health Ireland Act 1878 Act (the 1878 Act). Explaining that this section did not provide the Department with the power to make regulations regarding burial fees. He advised that the Department had no role in the settling of burial fees which was the sole responsibility of Councils.

The Members discussed both responses and, to try and progress the matter, it was agreed that Council officers from both Councils should meet to discuss the issue further. It was also suggested that the Chief Executive be asked to raise the matter through SOLACE.

The Committee noted the correspondence and agreed:

- that officers from BCC would arrange to discuss the cemetery fees further with their counterparts in LCCC and that the Committee would be further briefed in due course on these discussions;
- to write to the DfC seeking it to undertake a broader strategic review of the Burial Grounds Regulations, regarding the power to make regulations concerning burial fees; and
- to ask the Chief Executive to raise the differential in burial fees across Council boundaries at the next meeting of SOLACE.

**Belfast Healthy Cities - BCC representation
at annual conference (Copenhagen) and BHC/BCC
engagement proposal**

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:

- **Advise members of an invite from Belfast Healthy Cities for either the Chair or Vice Chair of People and Communities committee to attend the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference 22–24 November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark.**

- Seek feedback on a proposed engagement mechanism between elected members and Belfast Healthy Cities.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the invitation and advise whether Council will be represented at the conference, and in what capacity, and by whom. Committee is also asked to provide feedback in relation to the proposed mechanism for more regular engagement between elected members and Belfast Healthy Cities.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 Belfast's membership to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network is facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC), an independent partnership organisation. In May 2021 the City of Belfast was successful in its application to re-designate as a WHO Healthy City and participate in Phase VII of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network until April 2026.

WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Conference

- 3.2 Belfast Healthy Cities has extended an invitation to Council for the Chair or Vice Chair of People and Communities committee (or their nominee) to attend the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference 22–24 November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The theme is Healthy Cities Leading by Example: One Planet, One People, One Health.
- 3.3 This will be the first hybrid meeting in Phase VII (2019–2025) of the WHO European Network, and the organisers look forward to many participants from member cities attending in person. These meetings bring together both political representatives and technical focal points from the WHO flagship cities and the national networks. The WHO European Healthy Cities Network comprises more than 1300 cities and municipalities as members in total. Belfast City Council last sent a political representative to a WHO Healthy Cities conference in 2015.
- 3.4 Public sector organisations cover the costs of a member attending. Only one political representative from Belfast is asked to attend, three BHC staff and a BHC board member will also attend. Costs for attending the meeting in person are £1,200/£1,500 – this includes return flight to Copenhagen; 4 nights'

accommodation and an allowance for each day. Members should advise if they want council represented in person or virtually.

- 3.5 The Conference website is now online and can be accessed at: [2022 WHO Healthy Cities Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference](#). As the conference approaches the website will be updated with more detailed information on the programme, site visits and side events.

Engagement mechanism between elected members and Belfast Healthy Cities

- 3.6 Issues of health and wellbeing are a key consideration for the citizens of Belfast and the reduction of health inequalities is identified as a continuing priority in the emerging Belfast Agenda refresh.
- 3.7 Belfast Healthy Cities has approached council to consider how their engagement with elected members could be enhanced and more formalised going forward so that there is an agreed process and structure for clear communication on local priorities as well as the WHO initiatives and what best practice can be shared across the Network. Belfast Healthy Cities is a key partner in addressing health inequalities and in June of this year council agreed to further 3 year funding for Belfast Healthy Cities.
- 3.8 In addition, the Living Here Board of the Belfast Community Planning Partnership has recommended for approval the establishment of a Health Inequalities Strategic Reference Group (HISRG) which will act as the oversight body for allocating resources to, and agreeing and reviewing action(s) undertaken in support of, health inequalities work in the city under community planning (to be considered/ratified at the next BCPP meeting). Belfast Healthy Cities will have representation on this group.
- 3.9 One potential model to support increased communication and co-operation between councillors, officers and Belfast Healthy Cities would be for nominated 'Health Champions' to be brought together 2-3 times a year and to act as a contact point for BHC on key issues of consideration. Each political party within council would nominate one representative who would take a leadership role in working and engaging with Belfast Healthy Cities – and potentially also with the Health Inequalities Strategic Reference Group or broader Living Here Board under BCPP (as appropriate) – on issues and/or motions which relate to relevant issues.

3.10 A similar approach has recently been approved for engagement with Belfast Youth Council through the nomination of Youth Champions by each of the political parties.

3.11 Members are asked to consider this proposed engagement mechanism and if content, officers from Community Provision will contact each party to nominate a health champion and to agree Terms of Reference etc.

3.12 Financial and Resource Implications

Council are one of four core funders to Belfast Healthy Cities, along with the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) and Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Annual funding amounts to over 300k of which BCC contributes £81,294 per annum, which has been committed for a further 3-year period to align with the Phase VII and Community Plan timeframes – to 31 March 2026.

3.13 Reference the conference invitation, as public sector organisations cover the cost of political members attendance, this cost will have to be taken from departmental budgets. There is no cost for a political representative to attend online.

All other activity outlined in the paper can be covered from existing resources.

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

3.14 None identified at this stage but kept under continuous review. It should be noted that much of the work undertaken by BHC is to address, or promote awareness of, health inequalities and best practice whole population or targeted approaches to mitigate or prevent these.”

The Committee agreed:

- that the Chairperson would represent the Council remotely at the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference scheduled to be held from 22nd – 24th November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark; and
- the proposed mechanism, as outlined in the report, for more regular engagement between Elected Members and Belfast Healthy Cities and noted that officers from Community Provision would contact each Political Party to seek its nominee for a Health Champion and to agree the Terms of Reference

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Operational Issues

Proposal for naming new streets

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

Proposed Name	Location	Applicant
Kings Hall Road	Off Lisburn Road, BT9	Todd Architects, Ltd

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund - Councillor Flynn to raise

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Bins not being removed from Street – Councillor Maghie

Councillor Maghie, on behalf of Councillor Murray, raised the issue of residents not bringing their bins back into their properties after they had been emptied which was causing accessibility issues for wheelchair and pram users.

The Committee agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would consider a targeted educational campaign aimed at encouraging residents to return their bins to their property after waste had been collected.

Chairperson