

# Health and Environmental Services Committee

Tuesday, 2nd December, 2014

## MEETING OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Corr (Chairman);  
the High Sheriff (Alderman L. Patterson);  
Alderman Kingston;  
Councillors Austin, M. E. Campbell, Curran,  
Clarke, Garrett, Hussey, Jones, Keenan,  
Kyle, Magee, McCarthy, McKee,  
McNamee and Thompson.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Toland, Lead Operations Officer/  
Head of Environmental Health;  
Mr. T. Martin, Head of Building Control;  
Mr. S. Skimin, Head of Cleansing Services;  
Mr. T. Walker, Head of Waste Management;  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Miss. L. Francey, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey and Councillor Kelly.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 8th October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd November.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Directorate**

#### **Departmental Plan - Mid-Year Performance Report 2014/2015**

The Lead Operations Officer/Head of Environmental Health submitted for the Committee's consideration a report setting out the progress achieved during the first six months of the 2014/2015 Departmental Plan. She explained that the Plan was being delivered against a background of significant preparation in terms of Local Government Reform and that the Department had, in recent months, played a leading role in areas such as service convergence, future area working arrangements and the transfer of responsibility for off-street car parking and on some elements relating to housing and unfitness.

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She highlighted a list of achievements which had been attained over the six-month period and reviewed the progress in relation to the Department's twenty-three performance indicators and thirteen projects contained within the Plan.

After discussion the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Environmental Health**

**Update on the Introduction of the Food Hygiene Rating Bill**

The Committee was reminded that, in June 2011, the Council had adopted the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The rating scheme, which had been introduced by the Food Standards Agency, was regarded as being a key public health measure and an incentive for businesses to improve and maintain their compliance with food hygiene legislation. The Lead Operations Officer/Head of Environmental Health reported that, under the scheme, food hygiene ratings were published online and stickers for displaying that information on the windows of premises were provided by the Council. However, businesses were not required to display their rating, which limited the success of the scheme.

She explained that, on 4th November 2014, the Food Hygiene Rating Bill had been introduced to the Northern Ireland Assembly and that, should it be passed, it would be compulsory for all food businesses to display their hygiene rating in a prominent position and to provide their rating verbally if requested. The legislation proposed also that Fixed Penalty Notices be issued for the non-display of ratings, together with powers of prosecution. The Council had been invited by the Assembly's Health Social Services and Public Safety Committee to comment upon the Bill and officers were formulating a response for submission to that Committee by the deadline of 12th December.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that it would, at a future meeting, receive a copy of the response.

**M1/Westlink Air Quality Management Area PM10 Revocation Order 2014 and Air Quality Update**

The Committee deferred consideration of a report seeking approval for the revocation of the M1/ Westlink Corridor Air Quality Management Area to enable any Political Party who so wished to obtain a briefing in relation to air quality within the City generally.

**Community Oil Buying Clubs Pilot Project/Winter Warmth Packs**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 In June 2014, Members agreed to establish a pilot project to promote and support the creation of community oil buying**

clubs across the city. Developed by Health and Environmental Services, Community Services and the Public Health Agency, the project encourages local communities to set up their own club; offers practical advice as to how to go about it; and supports a number of existing council-funded Capacity Support organisations to provide local practical support if it is required.

- 1.2 The pilot was officially launched by the Lord Mayor and Chair of the Health and Environmental Services Committee at City Hall on Tuesday 28th October. This paper provides a short update on the current status of the project including information on the seven capacity groups that were awarded uplift funding to provide a support role to emerging clubs.
- 1.3 The report also provides an update to Members on work the Council and other partners are proposing in relation to the provision of Winter Warmth Packs for vulnerable households in the city.

## **2 Key Issues**

### **2.1 Oil Buying Clubs Update**

The estimated costs for the pilot programme were:

- Print production of the oil guide	£2,000
- September and February workshops	£3,000
- Capacity Support budget	£18,000
- Total budget	£24,000

- 2.2 The Health and Environmental Services Department contribution was £6,000 which was identified from within existing 2014/2015 Revenue Estimates to support the pilot. The Development Department also set aside £8,000 to support the scheme and the Public Health Agency contributed £10,000.
- 2.3 The following seven Capacity Support organisations applied for this uplift to their grant and are now in the process of setting up local oil clubs (or are available to offer practical support to groups in their local area):

Capacity Support funded organisation	Uplift grant
Ashton Community Trust	£1,000
Belfast South Community Resources	£1,000
East Belfast Community Development Assoc	£992
Greater Village Regeneration Trust	£1,000
Small Steps Adult Education	£980
South City Resource & Development	£1,000
Greater Shankill Community Council	£1,000

- 2.4 The total budget assigned for the oil club programme in 2014/2015 was £24,000. The total projected spend to date is £8,078 (which includes uplift grants to the Capacity Groups, the production of the toolkit and workshops). As not all Capacity Groups applied for an uplift grant it is now projected that £15,000 of this budget will possibly be under spent in this financial year.
- 2.5 The Public Health Agency, are therefore proposing to re-assign their funding (£10,000) to provide Winter Warmth packs for older people during the coming months. Further details are provided below. It is proposed that the remainder of the oil buying budget could be used to continue to support the pilot and other small scale poverty related initiatives.
- 2.6 In addition, subject to the outcome of an evaluation of the oil club pilot in April, the Public Health Agency (PHA) has offered to make a further £10,000 available to support the setup and maintenance of future oil buying clubs during 2015/2016.

#### Winter Warmth packs

- 2.7 Over the past two years the Council and the Public Health Agency have provided 2,749 winter warmth packs to vulnerable households in the city. This report provides an update to members for consideration on the plans for the provision of packs for the coming winter.
- 2.8 The original PHA contribution to the Oil Buying clubs will be redirected to purchase older people winter warmth packs. The PHA through the Health Aging Strategic Partnership (HASP) will link with 'Engage with Age' to procure and distribute packs to those most at risk across the city.
- 2.9 The PHA to fund (£10,000) and The Council to procure, on their behalf, Winter Warmth packs for children. The packs are to be distributed by the various local SureStart centres.
- 2.10 The Council to use its existing smaller stocks to support other vulnerable households and groups and to respond in the event of an exceptional emergency cold spell(s).

### 3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 Costs for the pilot and winter warmth packs proposals have been factored into the Departmental budget estimates for 2014/2015.

**4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

**4.1 There are no equality or good relations implications at this stage. However all new policy and strategy work detailed within the plan will be subject to equality screening in line with the Council's standard processes.**

**5 Recommendation**

**5.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- 1. note the capacity support uplift grant recipients;**
- 2. note the City Council's and PHA's plans for Winter Warmth Packs for the coming winter;**
- 3. consider and agree to Council's plans for Winter Warmth packs."**

After discussion, during which it was confirmed that Winter Warmth packs for children would be distributed through Sure Start centres, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Appointment of Public Analysts**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 4th June, it had been advised that the Chief Environmental Health Officers' Group, on behalf of all councils in Northern Ireland, had undertaken a procurement exercise for the provision in accordance with Article 27 of the Food Safety Order (Northern Ireland) 1991, of public analytical services. The contract had been awarded to Minton, Treharne and Davies Limited, Pentwyn, Cardiff and the Committee, at that meeting, had approved the appointment of four persons from that company to act as Public Analysts to the Council.

The Lead Operations Officer/Head of Environmental Health reported that the company had requested that Mr. A. Low and Ms. R. New be added to the list of Public Analysts for the Council and that Mr. P. Urwin be removed, since he had retired recently and she recommended accordingly.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation (Belfast)  
Order (Northern Ireland) 2015**

The Lead Operations Officer/Head of Environmental Health informed the Committee that the Council had the power, under Section 69 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2011, to make Traffic Regulation Orders and that a number of Orders had, in recent months, been made across the City in order to facilitate its ongoing alleygating process.

She reported that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Department for Social Development had expressed an interest in complementing the Council's current alleygating network in North Belfast by installing a further seven gates in the

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Glenbank and Ligoniel Road areas. Those would be funded through the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Areas at Risk Programme.

She reported further that the Department of Justice had installed an alleygate in the Strand Walk area of the Short Strand in order to address issues around the local interface and that it had been exploring also the feasibility of installing two alley gates within nearby Beechfield Street. The Department of Justice had requested that the Council adopt the three gates as part of its overall alley gating programme.

In addition, the Council's Community Safety Unit had been working with the British Home Stores company in order to address antisocial behaviour and other issues within the Castle Arcade. The company had voiced concern in relation to the level of repairs which were required to be undertaken on a regular basis to the exterior of its store and had sought the Council's assistance to restrict access to the arcade at night, through the installation of two alley gates, which would be operated by the company.

The Lead Operations Officer/Head of Environmental Health explained that the twelve additional gates, as outlined, would benefit around 118 households and 8 businesses and would be funded by the relevant organisations. However, in order to facilitate the installation process, the Council was required to make a Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation (Belfast) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 in order to prohibit the use by vehicles and pedestrians within the relevant streets and would fund the associated costs, which would be approximately £3,800, and would include, for example, advertising and installation. The addition of the proposed gates would bring the number of gates for which the Council was now responsible to 652. Accordingly, she sought the Committee's approval to initiate the process for the making of the Order in respect of the following streets:

- 1. To the rear of Nos. 125 – 135 Ligoniel Road and to the side of Nos. 135 and 137 Ligoniel Road**
- 2. To the rear of Nos. 2 – 24 Lavens Drive and to the side of 2 Lavens Drive**
- 3. To the rear of Nos. 1 – 49 Oakley Street and to the side of 1 Oakley Street**
- 4. To the rear of Nos. 856 – 866 Crumlin Road**
- 5. To the rear of Nos. 22 – 30 Leroy Street and to the side of No. 30 Leroy Street**
- 6. To the rear of Nos. 2 – 16 Glenbank Parade**
- 7. To the rear of Nos. 9 – 15 Legmail Street and to the side of Nos. 9 and 15 Legmail Street**
- 8. To the rear of Nos. 13 – 19 Tedburn Park**

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- 9. To the side of Nos. 33 and 34 Strand Walk**
- 10. To the rear of Nos. 59 – 77 Beechfield Street**
- 11. To the rear of Nos. 2 – 28 Beechfield Street and to the side of Nos. 2 and 28 Edgar Street**
- 12. To the rear of Nos. 39 – 61 Bryson Street**
- 13. To the rear of Nos. 122 – 134 Madrid Street**
- 14. To the rear of Nos. 2 – 30 Castle Place and to the side of No. 2 Castle Place**
- 15. To the rear of Nos. 3 – 29 Castle Arcade and to the side of No. 29 Castle Arcade**
- 16. To the rear of Nos. 3 – 9 Corn Market and to the side of No. 3 Corn Market**
- 17. To the side of No. 25 Castle Lane**

During discussion, a Member voiced concern regarding the proposal by British Home Stores to restrict access to the Castle Arcade. He stated that, whilst appreciating that there were issues around antisocial behaviour in that area which needed to be addressed, the arcade provided shelter for homeless people, particularly at night and the erection of gates would merely displace those people to other parts of the City. A further Member suggested that the Council should play a central role in addressing the increasing issue of homelessness across the City.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed:

1. to proceed with the making of a Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation (Belfast) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 in relation to those streets set out within 1-13 of the aforementioned list;
2. to defer consideration of streets 14-17 within the list, to enable discussions to take place with those organisations which provided support to homeless people; and
3. **that** a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee recommending that it consider ways in which the Council might alleviate homelessness within the City, including any measures which could be implemented in the short term.

**Comment [s1]:** I know this already agreed as the minute as per discussion at budget panel- my note refers to ' agreed to voice our concerns to sp and r as to the issue of homelessness

**Cleansing Services**

**Dog Licensing and Identification – Review of Coloured Collar Identification Tags for Dogs and Dog Licence Fee**

The Head of Cleansing Services informed the Committee that the Dogs (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2012, had introduced a dual identification system of coloured tags and micro chipping for licensed dogs. He reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 6th August 2014, it had been informed that the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development had undertaken a consultation exercise to determine whether there was a need to continue with the dual identification system beyond the implementation in April, 2015 of Local Government Reform.

The Department had, within its consultation, identified three options for the future identification of licensed dogs and had sought the Council's opinion around a review of the current dog licence fee.

The Committee had agreed to inform the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development that the current dual system for dogs should be retained until December, 2016 and that the review of dog licence fees should be deferred until such times as the revised Local Government structures were in place and any changes to benefit payments arising from the Welfare Reform Bill had been identified.

He reported that the aforementioned Department had now completed its consultation exercise and, having considered all of the responses, it had decided that dog licence tags would, from January 2015, be abolished and that compulsory micro chipping would be the sole method of identification. It would, however, remain a statutory requirement for an owner's details to be attached to a dog's collar. It had decided also to defer, until 2016, consideration of the review of dog licence fees to allow for the revised Local Government structures to be implemented.

After discussion, during which the Head of Cleansing Services undertook to forward to Members information on the number of dogs within the City which were micro chipped, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Street Cleanliness Index, Enforcement, Education Activities and Dog Warden Service**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The figures presented in this report cover the second quarter of the financial year i.e. the period from July to September, 2014. Monitoring figures were measured by Cleansing Services Quality Officers. Enforcement, Dog Warden and Education and Awareness information was supplied by the Customer Support Service, Dog Warden Service and the Community Awareness Section within Cleansing Services,**



who were responsible for these functions over the period concerned.

- 1.2 The monthly monitoring programme consists of a random 5% sample of streets throughout the city being inspected and graded. From the grading, a Street Cleanliness Index is calculated and plotted for the various areas of the city, and the city as a whole.
- 1.3 The index range is from 1 to 100; with a Cleanliness Index of 67 being regarded as an acceptable standard by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. The results show the trends on a month to month basis. To alleviate the influence of spurious results on the overall index, the results are averaged over the last 4 surveys. Spurious results may occur for reasons such as adverse weather conditions, seasonal problems etc.

## **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 The overall city wide cleanliness index for this quarter is 75. This is an increase compared to the score for the previous quarter's cleanliness index of 74. The index for the same period in the previous year was 74. A cleanliness index of 75 is above the target set and is considered an extremely good level of cleanliness.

- 2.2 The breakdown by individual area is as follows:

### **North**

- 2.3 The North Cleanliness Indices for July 2014 to September 2014 were 72, 71 and 71 respectively. This represents a similar score for July (72) and a decrease for August (down 1) and September (down 3), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 72, 72 and 74 respectively.

- 2.4 The area is however maintaining a good level of cleanliness.

### **South**

- 2.5 The South Cleanliness Indices for July 2014 to September 2014 were 75, 75 and 76 respectively. This represents an increase for July (up 1), and a decrease for August (down 2), and September (down 1) by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 74, 77 and 77 respectively.

- 2.6 The area is maintaining a very good level of cleanliness.

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**East**

- 2.7 The East Cleanliness Indices for July 2014 to September 2014 were 77, 79 and 78 respectively. This represents a similar score for July (77), and an increase for August (up 3), and September (up 4), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 77, 76 and 74 respectively.
- 2.8 The area is maintaining a very good level of cleanliness.

**West**

- 2.9 The West Cleanliness Indices for July 2014 to September 2014 were 73, 73 and 74 respectively. This represents an increase for July (up 3), August (up 1) and September (up 2), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 70, 72 and 72 respectively.
- 2.10 The area is maintaining a good level of cleanliness

**Central**

- 2.11 The Central Cleanliness Indices for July 2014 to September 2014 were 75, 73 and 74 respectively. This represents an increase for July (up 2), August (up 1) and September (up 2), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 73, 72 and 72 respectively.
- 2.12 The area is maintaining a good level of cleanliness

**Complaints / Enquiries**

- 2.13 There were 1474 enquiries regarding street cleansing during the quarter (by comparison to 1201 last quarter).
- 2.14 There were 16 Corporate Complaints (14 Stage One, and 2 Stage Two) during the quarter – three of which related to street cleansing (2 stage 1, and 1 stage 2).

**Enforcement**

- 2.15 There were 573 Fixed Penalty Notices issued under the Litter (NI) Order 1994, and 113 summonses issued. In addition 886 Article 20 Notices were issued requesting information.

**Community & Education Projects**

- 2.16 During the last quarter, Cleansing Services and Corporate Communications won a DANI award (Digital Advertising Northern Ireland) for Best use of Social Media for the very successful Belfast's Next Top Doggie competition. The team are currently running a series of workshops with 20 post-primary schools called 'Rubbish Acting' which uses drama to focus young people's attention on the issues around litter. The 'Scoop dog' and 'Litter pig' characters attended 26 events spreading the anti-litter and dog fouling message complimenting the advertising campaigns that are currently running across the city.
- 2.17 In the last quarter, the team facilitated 40 cleanups with 889 volunteers, attended or chaired 7 meetings and visited 20 schools, engaging 508 pupils to impart the anti-litter and dog fouling message. The team attended 2 Summer Scheme Play Days run by Belfast City Council with 81 groups and 2223 children attending.

**Dog Fouling**

- 2.18 The overall instances of dog fouling observed by Cleansing Services Quality Officers during the quarter were 207. There is a focus placed on dealing with dog fouling hotspots as a result of complaints and information from staff out on the ground. Cleansing Services and the Dog Warden Service continue to work together to address hot spots when identified.

**Dog Warden Information**

- 2.19 During the quarter the following was noted:
1. A total of 21 fixed penalty notices were issued for dog fouling (32 last quarter)
  2. A total of 242 dogs were seized for straying (267 last quarter)
  3. A total of 169 fixed penalty notices were issued for straying (202 last quarter)
- 2.20 The Dog Ward service continues to patrol proactively to ensure responsible behaviours by dog owners.

**3 Resource Implications**

- 3.1 **Financial**  
There are no financial implications in this report.

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**3.2 Human Resources**

**There are no human resources implications in this report.**

**3.3 Asset and Other Implications**

**There are no assets or other implications in this report.**

**4 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

**4.1 There are no relevant equality and good relations implications.**

**5 Recommendation**

**5.1 The Committee is requested to note the content of this report.”**

During discussion, the Head of Cleansing Services confirmed that work was ongoing across the Council on agreed boundaries for the delivery of services and, for example, area working from April 2015 onwards.

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Building Control**

**Applications for the Erection of Dual-Language Street Signs**

The Head of Building Control reported that the undernoted applications to erect additional street nameplates in a language other than English had been received by the Council:

<b>English Name</b>	<b>Non English name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
Bantry Street	Sráid Bheantraí	Off Cawnpore Street, BT12	Clonard Neighbourhood Development Partnership
Cairns Street	Sráid Uí Chiaráin	Off Leeson Street, BT12	Councillor Mac Giolla Mhín
Kashmir Road	Bóthar na Caismíre	Off Springfield Road, BT12	Clonard Neighbourhood Development Partnership
South Green	An Fhaiche Theas	Off Bearnagh Drive, BT11	Ms. R. McCorley

He explained that, in accordance with Council policy, a survey had been conducted which had ascertained that in excess of 66.6% of the residents of each street had been in favour of the above-mentioned second street nameplate. Accordingly, he recommended that the erection of the nameplates be authorised.

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The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Request for the Temporary Loan of Drawings  
from the Building Control Service's Archive**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 8th October, it had agreed to loan to the Ulster Museum, original drawings of the Museum which were stored within the Building Control Service's archive. The drawings were to be displayed at an exhibition which was taking place between 17th and 31st October, within the Museum.

The Museum had since requested that those drawings be once again loaned on a temporary basis for a similar exhibition which would be held from March to May, 2015 in the gallery of the Irish Architectural Archive in Merrion Square, Dublin.

The Head of Building Control confirmed that the Council's Records Manager was satisfied with the proposal, on the grounds that it would be a temporary loan to an accredited Museums body and that the necessary protocols for transporting and displaying such archive material would be followed. He pointed out that it had been suggested, during the ratification of the minutes of the Committee meeting of 8th October by the Council on 3rd November, that the Service should seek to display drawings from its archive at an appropriate location in view of their historical significance.

The Committee agreed that the original drawings of the Ulster Museum be loaned to the gallery of the Irish Architectural Archive in Merrion Square, Dublin, and authorised officers to explore the possibility of holding an exhibition displaying drawings from the Building Control Service's archive.

**Joint Working Arrangement between the Council  
and the Department of Finance and Personnel**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 2nd October 2013, it had granted approval for the Service to enter into discussions with the Department of Finance and Personnel's Construction Procurement Division around the establishment of a six-month pilot project in relation to the submission of Government Building Works for Building Regulation Approvals by the Council. The Head of Building Control reported that during those discussions a legal issue had been identified in relation to application and enforcement provisions within the proposed arrangement which were required. However, the issue had now been resolved.

He explained that, in order to ensure that the Council was protected within the arrangement, a Service Level Agreement had been drafted in conjunction with the Town Solicitor and had been approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel. The Agreement would apply to the design, alteration or construction of all Government buildings within the Council's boundary, as submitted by that Department, and the Council would undertake, in accordance with the Building Regulations, the full range of functions around plan assessment, site inspection and the issuing of certificates.

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Under the terms of the Agreement, the Council would have no liability in carrying out its activities, nor could it be included in any legal actions which might arise. Any enforcement activities relating to breaches of the Building Regulations would be undertaken by the Department of Finance and Personnel as, under Crown Immunity, the Council had no enforcement powers.

He pointed out that the Department of Finance and Personnel would pay the full plan and inspection fees for each application and, as those fees were set on a cost recovery basis, there would be no financial implications for the Council in implementing this process.

The Committee granted approval for the Council to enter into a Joint Working Agreement with the Department of Finance and Personnel, as outlined, and noted that it would receive regular reports on the progress of the pilot initiative.

Chairman