



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Media Report
<b>Date:</b>	15 April 2010
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Anne Donegan, Media Relations Officer

### Relevant Background Information

It was agreed by committee that a report on media coverage should come before them on a quarterly basis.

### Key Issues

#### Media report December – March

During this four month period Corporate Communications issued 18 releases and dealt with 50 enquiries directly related to the work of the department.

All but two releases received coverage in the media, most releases related to the work of leisure although parks received some coverage during the bad weather for gritting in parks and urging people to be careful when using them. They also received coverage of tree planting in Cooke Street to help residents discourage on street parking, parks photographic competition, the zoo website winning an award, and the parks grants scheme.

Leisure was very well represented in coverage with the final of the new Futsal game league at Ballysillan Leisure centres well covered by the media including television and newspaper coverage. New walking and running programmes established in leisure centres in conjunction with local clubs also received fairly good coverage, as did the primary schools cross country challenge, run in partnership with BELB.

The latest programme to get coverage including a short feature on BBC Newsline's Health spot was the healthy families' programme, which has successfully recruited 25 families with at least one obese member for a year long mentoring programme.

#### Belfast Zoo

During the same period Belfast Zoo generated significant positive media coverage via a range of events, including the popular Christmas event, the tour of the old zoo and a range of activities undertaken during the winter to improve

animal enclosures.

The annual stock take of animals was widely covered, as was the news that during 2009, the Zoo's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, the facility received a record 304,000 visitors. One of the Zoo's longest standing volunteers, who were given a special opportunity to meet the Zoo's new tiger, was featured widely in the press, as was a competition to name two new pygmy goats. The Zoo's closure in December and January due to snow was also covered.'

#### Other Coverage

This coverage which was not generated by Corporate Communications included the greylag geese in Victoria Park, red diesel dumped in the Waterworks Park; the archaeological dig at Cavehill; drinking in Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park; Support for Sport coverage generated by groups which had received funding.

#### Enquiries

Of the 50 enquiries received about department issues, the majority, 24 were answered by information provided by departmental officers, nine statements on behalf of the council were issued, six interviews by councillors or staff were arranged, the others involved photos requests, use of facility requests or the requests were withdrawn when it was explained the matter was not the responsibility of the council.

#### **Resource Implications**

None.

#### **Recommendations**

For noting.

#### **Key to Abbreviations**

BELB: Belfast Education and Library Board

#### **Documents Attached**

None.