



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Year-End Update – Parks & Leisure Departmental Plan 2011-12
Date:	09 August 2012
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1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide a year-end progress report on the 2011-12 departmental plan highlighting key achievements during this period and to ask for Members input into the development of the 2013-14 Departmental Plan.</p> <p>The Parks and Leisure departmental plan 2011-12 was approved by Committee on 9 June 2011 and a six month update report were presented to Committee in November 2011. The Draft Departmental Plan for 2012-13 was agreed at the June 2012 meeting of this Committee.</p>

2	Key Issues
	<p>The department plan describes how the Parks and Leisure Department's purpose, vision, values, objectives, activities and key performance indicators for the year 2011-12 complement those outlined in the Corporate plan.</p> <p>Project, Programme and Activity update 2011-12</p> <p>Lead officers were asked to provide updates on the status of their service/ unit projects, programmes and activities under each of the departmental objectives, providing commentary if necessary. As many of the department's projects involve land re-development, repair and improvement, a number of the projects continue to feature on an ongoing basis in the department's plan. A Departmental performance summary report for year end March 2012 is provided in Appendix 1. Progress and</p>

achievement against Departmental projects, programmes and activities are summarised under each of the corporate strategic themes below.

City leadership

In the Parks and Leisure Department this theme is about partnering and leading. The Parks and Leisure Department takes a strategic lead role on behalf of the council in working with a vast range of partners and agencies to deliver an active, healthy and vibrant city.

A range of strategic capital enhancement and programming projects have successfully progressed. A framework has been drafted for preparing to manage and maintain the **Connswater Greenway** as soon as the programme of work has been outlined and agreed. The funding application for the **Tropical Ravine** has successfully progressed. The round 1 application was awarded a pass by Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in March 2011, along with a development grant of £115,000. Revised project milestones are to be agreed with HLF. Work is underway on procuring services to assist with round 2 developments. The tender for **Mary Peters Track** has also been awarded and the upgrade and refurbishment commenced in April 2012. The final **Pitches Strategy** was agreed by Committee in February 2012. An application process and guidance is being developed for the allocation of the £750k fund for capital enhancements to educational pitches. An economic appraisal of the **Floral Hall** has been completed and is dependent on the allocation of external funding. The Department continues to manage a programme of work relating to strategic cemetery and cremation development.

Better care for Belfast's environment

In the Parks and Leisure Department this theme is about protecting and linking the city through its parks, open spaces and leisure centres. Throughout the year we have been committed to delivering a sustainable approach to service provision, contributing to a cleaner, greener and healthier environment. In 2011-12 the Department achieved 5 new Green Flags and retained 2 – bringing the total achievement to a record 7 by the year end. Three additional sites: Waterworks, Belmont and Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon were selected to go forward and have since achieved in 2012 Green Flag success.

Better opportunities for success across the city

In the Parks and Leisure Department this theme is about physical regeneration in local neighbourhoods and the department playing a key role in the local economy. The department continues to develop ways of using our facilities and open spaces; to enrich the city's cultural, tourism and heritage offering including flagship city park events such as Rose Week and heritage trails.

Local area programmes have also been developed and implemented in Dunville and Woodvale Park in partnership with local communities and partners who will deliver a range of local outcomes and benefits following completion of the capital enhancement works.

Discussions are currently ongoing with local community representatives to

discuss future management arrangements.

Better support for people and communities

In the Parks and Leisure Department this theme is about participation and lifestyles. The Department will continue to provide programmes and services to make people feel safer and encourage people to lead healthier and more active lifestyles.

The Presence in Parks Pilot is in the process of redevelopment as the initial approach proved not to be practicable. The pilot has been renamed the **Park Warden Pilot**, a new plan has been produced and was formally launched in April 2012.

The Department is working on improvements around dog control in Parks and is actively participating in the Dog Fouling Campaign and Working Group with Health and Environmental Services. A campaign was successfully launched across the city which included sessions on responsible dog ownership as part of wider events in our parks.

A range of Olympic activities were held including 'try it' days with primary schools and senior games. An event was held at Ormeau Park with an Olympic theme based on the 'one year to go' date. The Bridges Urban Sports Park was officially opened in July 2011 and to date 846 people have participated in a range of organised programmes. A total of £215,000 has been provided in Sports grants to help clubs and organisations and support the participation of an estimated 20,000 people into sport.

We have managed and maintained 10 leisure centres and delivered a range of health and wellbeing programmes and activities across the city.

Participation levels include:

- 17,500 Active Communities (9,000 hrs coaching)
- 15,000 children registered on the summer scheme programmes
- 1,000 patients referred to the Healthwise scheme
- 800 children and 40 schools took part in the cross country run;
- 120 patients completed phase 4 of the Cardiac Rehabilitation programme;
- 1,000 children attended the Make a Splash scheme
- 200 Young people took part in Teenage Kicks 2011, including 50 young people with disabilities;
- Delivered coach education training to over 100 coaches and volunteers
- 110 people received free Boost membership as part of a pilot programme rolled out for areas of high deprivation.

A draft Growing Communities strategy has been developed in partnership with the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Healthy Cities and the Belfast Health Development Unit (BH DU), launched in June 2012 and currently out for consultation.

Better Services

In the Parks and Leisure Department this theme is about delivering a proficient service and listening to our customers. The Department will continue to deliver service improvements right across the department. Operational reviews identifying and delivering improvements and

efficiencies in both Parks and Leisure Services are currently underway.

As part of the departmental improvement programme a customer charter was developed and launched in March 2012 and the programme of customer care training has been rolled out across the department. Further work is ongoing to develop customer standards and targets for the department.

Better value for money

In the Parks and Leisure Department this theme is about reviewing and improving our processes and creating a learning organisation. The Department will continue to invest in and support our people by improving employee capacity and capabilities.

Human Resources

The corporate approach to personal development planning has been implemented throughout the Department. This has facilitated the planning and prioritisation of training needs and more efficient procurement with external training providers. The department successfully contributed towards the corporate achievement of liP and is currently implementing and reviewing a detailed action plan to support the ongoing delivery of this.

Finance

The Department continues to identify opportunities and implement initiatives to maximise income most notably through the completion of a review of the Boost membership programme and pricing scheme with recommendations being presented to committee in December 2011. The Department continues to secure and manage funding from external sources with a number of external grants sourced including securing funding under Phase II of the Belfast Peace III Plan for delivery of the City of Neighbourhoods and the Health and Wellbeing project Respect through Sport which commenced in January 2012.

Policy, Planning and Performance

The Department progressed the development of the playing pitches strategy and proceeds with work on the associated action plans. In line with the improvement programme, the Department continues to develop its business planning and performance management processes according to the corporate priorities.

Communication and Engagement

As part of the improvement programme we continue to prioritise online transactions within available budgets and system functionality. Key online transactions have been identified, notably in relation to leisure, cemeteries' and grant schemes and these are being progressed as part of specific projects. The Department participated in the council wide video project which produced promotional and information videos that are hosted on the council website.

The department now has 11 short videos showcasing our venues and services.

Internal communications have been completed in relation to liP requirements, the departmental Customer Charter, staff road shows, the development of the

content for the change programme newsletter and the departmental team brief.

Key Performance Indicators update 2011-12

A snapshot has been provided illustrating the Department's performance below. The KPIs illustrate the value that Parks and Leisure deliver for the city of Belfast. A Departmental performance summary report for year end March 2012 is provided in Appendix 1.

Quality Up

The Department has successfully achieved 7 Green Flags making it the best performing local authority in Northern Ireland. Green Flags are a measure of high standards of quality, management and community engagement in our parks and open spaces.

Provided and maintained quality standards for the public at 135 sport pitches, 74 playgrounds, 12 bowling pavilions, 3 cemeteries and a crematorium, a golf course and an adventure playground.

The Zoo was recognised at the NI Tourism Awards 2012 as Winner in the Marketing and Sales Excellence Category, and highly commended in the Visitor inspired category.

Visits Up

The Department has provided services to more than 35,000 'Boost' members at our leisure centres. We have attracted over 300,000 visitors to Belfast Zoo and almost 150,000 people have participated in events organised by our parks. Provided a service for almost 2 million indoor leisure facilities users. 185,837 people participated in outreach and health programmes, delivered by the Department throughout Belfast.

Accessibility Up

The accessibility of high quality parks and open spaces has improved with 58% of Belfast residents living within 1000m of a green flag accredited park or open space.

Members should also be aware that we have made some minor changes to the existing performance indicators for 2012-13 and we are holding a workshop in August/September to define a departmental outcome evaluation framework and develop new and more relevant outcome/impact measures for 2013-14. An update report on progress in doing this will be brought to the Committee in September 2013.

Planning for 2013-14

Work has commenced on the development of a draft departmental plan for 2013-14. It is proposed that a draft will be presented to the Committee in March 2013. Key priorities for action will include:

- progressing the actions within the playing pitches strategy;
- continuing with the improvement programme to modernise service delivery in line with customer expectations;
- implementation of the "Growing Communities" strategy;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retaining our 10 green flags and attaining 3 additional in 2013; • ongoing development and regeneration of our parks and open spaces; • agile local programme development and diversionary provision to deal with anti-social behaviour in and around our sites; • active development of friends groups in a number of sites; and • ongoing development of health and activity programmes – with key connections to the emerging Active Belfast agenda and the Active Communities programme. <p>This list is in no way exhaustive and input from Members would be Welcome.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> The year-end financial position is the subject of a separate report to Committee at this meeting.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Delivery of most of the programmes, projects and activities have required dedicated officer time which was recorded and reflected within annual service plans, area plans and separate unit/centre level plans.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> Many of the projects, programmes and activities listed in the plan refer to the physical regeneration of the department's assets and physical improvements to our facilities.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	Where necessary all projects, programmes and activities contained within the plan have been subject to equality screening in line with the Council's processes.

5	Recommendations
	Members are asked to note this update report for the 2011-12 period and advise if there is anything they feel should be addressed in the draft departmental plan for 2013-14.

6	Decision Tracking
	An update report on the progress on the development of new performance indicators will be provided to Members in September 2012 by the Policy and Business Development Manager.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Departmental Performance Summary report for 2011-12 year end.