

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 8th January, 2019

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor McCusker (Chairperson);
Aldermen Copeland, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Baker, Black, Corr, Corr Johnston, Heading,
Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McAllister, McReynolds,
Newton and Pankhurst.

Also attended: Councillors Boyle, Craig, O'Hara and Mullan.

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

Apologies

An apology was recorded on behalf of Councillor Nicholl.

Minutes

It was reported that the minutes of the meeting of 4th December had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 7th January, subject to officers seeking clarity regarding the spelling of one of the street names that had been agreed at the December Committee Meeting under Street Naming. The Committee was advised that the developer had submitted an incorrect spelling in his application. He had since been contacted and had confirmed, via e-mail, that he wished to amend the spelling from Napoleans Gate to Napoleons Gate.

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were reported.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following three 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 these items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of

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exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2019/2020

(Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources, attended in connection with this item).

The Committee considered a report, which had been prepared by the Director of Finance and Resources, in relation to the establishment of the District Rate and the compilation of the Estimates of Revenue Expenditure for the year 2019/2020.

The Director outlined that the paper would not be subject to call-in as it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council and the public's interest in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2019.

He referred to the cash limit for the People and Communities Committee for 2019/2020, as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 14th December, and outlined the next steps in the rate setting process leading to the setting of the district rate by Council at its meeting in February, 2019.

The Director highlighted to the Members that the cash limits included an increase of financial funding to Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP) amounting to £25,000 to assist with its core costs.

A Member advised that, at a previous meeting of the Committee, she had raised the removal of the entrance fee charge to the Adventure Playground at Cavehill and she had understood that consideration was to be given to this during the budget setting process and she queried why it had not been progressed.

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services confirmed that, whilst this matter had not been included in this year's budget, officers were considering the various options available for the future operation of the facility.

During discussion, the Member requested that a report be submitted to the February meeting of the Committee, which would provide clarity around the request and the future operation of the Adventure Playground, to enable the Members to consider it in more detail.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- agreed that the report would not be subject to call-in, given that it would cause an unreasonable delay and would be prejudicial to both the Council and the public's interests in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2019;
- agreed a cash limit for the People and Communities Committee for 2019/20 of £80,614,500 and the individual service cash limits;
- noted that the cash limits included an increase of financial funding to Lagan Valley Regional Park amounting to £25,000;
- noted the next steps in the rate setting process; and

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- agreed that a report would be submitted to the February meeting of the Committee which would give consideration to the possible removal of the current entrance fee and future operation of the Adventure Playground.

**Community Development Grants Programme
2019/2020 Proposed Allocation**

The Committee considered a report which detailed the proposed Community Development Grant Allocation for 2019/20 to each recipient group. This included the level of grant funding to each group as per the current allocation for Generalist Advice, Capacity Support and Community Building Revenue Grants. It also included the allocation of non-grant revenue community support contracts.

Several Members expressed concern at the allocations to their respective electoral areas and undertook to discuss the matter in further detail with the officers.

The Committee noted the report.

**Assertion of Two Public Rights of Way at Pineview Park
and Pineview Road to the Antrim Road**

The Committee considered a report seeking its approval to assert two Public Rights of Way as per the Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983.

The Committee agreed to the assertion of two Public Rights of Way from Pineview Road to Antrim Road and from Pineview Park to Antrim Road, over which the only public right of passage, is on foot, under the duties of Article 3 of the Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983.

Presentation

**Belfast Youth Forum - Mental Health
Research Report Findings**

The Committee was reminded that, at its last meeting, it had agreed to invite the Belfast Youth Forum to present its mental health research report findings and recommendations: 'Elephant in the Room: Exploring young people's awareness of mental health in Northern Ireland' to the Committee.

Accordingly, Miss. N. Mallaghan and Miss. B. Vance, representing the Belfast Youth Forum, were welcomed to the meeting by the Chairperson.

The representatives commenced by advising that, in July 2016, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child had recommended that the Northern Ireland Assembly should invest heavily in children and young people's mental health services. Subsequently, at a follow up event in October 2016, organised by the Belfast Youth Forum, NI Youth Forum and youth@clc, over one hundred young people had expressed their frustration at the lack

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of mental health education and support services in Northern Ireland (NI). At that meeting, they had called for the UN's recommendations to be fully implemented by the NI Assembly.

The Committee was advised that the Youth Forum, with the assistance of a local researcher, undertook a research report which was entitled 'Elephant in the Room'. The project had been completed in partnership with young people from the NI Youth Forum and the Children's Law Centre. They had conducted surveys and participated in focus groups that had engaged almost 1,300 young people NI wide. The data collected had then been used to create a research report and to make recommendations to the Assembly about the future of mental health advice and support for young people. This report had been launched on 4th October, 2018 in Stormont Buildings.

The representatives advised that the key findings could be broken down into three broad themes:

- Stigma - young people had reported that there was a huge negative stigma attached to mental health which in turn often led to a culture of silence, where young people were afraid to talk about mental health;
- Safe Spaces – 76% of those surveyed stated that young people were afraid to talk about mental health and the lack of safe spaces available to talk about it. Young people in the focus groups had stated that they felt that online was a good place to access mental health information. However, it was also noted that all of the young people who had taken part also felt that social media was responsible for increasing the negative stigma; and
- Schools and information – the young people had stated that the three most common places they would source information about mental health were online (59%), a family member (48%) and friends (45%). However, it was noted that the quality of this information was often inconsistent and often framed in a negative way.

The representatives explained that a key part of the youth led focus groups had involved asking the young people what solutions they would like to give the Government in the campaign to promote positive mental health and wellbeing. The following recommendations for Government had been compiled:

- Stigma – to support the creation of a youth led mental health campaign challenging the culture of silence and negative stigma. Working with young people to create a new and positive language around mental health by creating a mental health dictionary;
- Safe Spaces – to engage with young people to create and fund safe digital solutions to receive mental health information and support. The solutions would be designed by young people for young people; and
- Schools – to create a compulsory curriculum programme for all schools and colleges on mental health and wellbeing that would help to raise awareness and to challenge the stigma and one that enables young people to access consistent mental health information. This would be a long-term programme and be embedded in schools.

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The representatives addressed a number of questions and concluded by advising that, following the launch of the report, the Youth Forum, along with its partner organisations, had commenced work to raise awareness of the campaign with young people and would be engaging with decision makers around the report's recommendations, hence the reason for their attendance at Committee.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, commended the Youth Forum representatives for their enthusiasm and for the role that the Youth Forum had played in the delivery of the report and promotion of mental health awareness.

Noted.

Matters referred Back from Council/ Motions

Inter-Generational Loneliness

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 7th January, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Mullan and seconded by Alderman Spence, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

"This Council notes with concern the impact that inter-generational loneliness and social isolation is having across the City.

The Council recognises the good work already being done in the Council to address these problems but acknowledges that more needs to be done. Other agencies, such as Age NI, the Red Cross and the Campaign to End Loneliness are also recognising loneliness as a significant emerging issue.

Due to the Northern Ireland Assembly not currently functioning, we are now falling behind other administrations in addressing these problems at an Executive level.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to consider how best it can develop an inter-agency approach to address the problems, including working with partner agencies in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors."

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor Mullan addressed the Committee and outlined her concern regarding the widespread problems associated with inter-generational loneliness and social isolation. She stated that, whilst she commended the good work already being undertaken by the Council, she urged it to develop this work further by developing an interagency approach to help address this emerging issue.

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting which would give consideration as to how the Council could develop its current partnership working to further support the problems associated with inter-generational loneliness and social isolation.

Robinson Centre

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of the Council on 7th January, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor O'Hara and seconded by Councillor Nic Biorna, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

"This Council opposes the naming of the new Council leisure facility on the land at Montgomery Road as "The Robinson Centre" and agrees that this facility be renamed in accordance with Council policy.

The naming of any Council facility must be inclusive and welcoming to all. The previous centre on this land was named "The Robinson Centre" and was within the Castlereagh Borough Council area before the changes in council boundaries when councils reduced in number from twenty-six to eleven. This is a new facility and must come under existing Council policy.

Belfast City Council's policy is clear. A person must be deceased for at least five years before any park or leisure facility can be named after them."

Councillor O'Hara, the proposer of the motion, addressed the Committee and outlined her reasons as to why she felt that the facility should be given a new name. She explained that, as it was a new facility, it should be named in line with the Council's Naming Policy to ensure it was a unique, inclusive and welcoming space for all.

A number of the Members disputed that this was a new centre and stated that it was instead a replacement facility, therefore, there was no justification or need for it to be renamed. A Member stated that the centre had been referred to as the Robinson Centre in all promotional material throughout the Leisure Transformation Programme.

Another Member suggested that the proposal to rename the facility was politically motivated.

The City Solicitor referred to the Council's Naming Policy (2008) and stated that the provisions for naming and renaming of a facility were contained within the same appendix. He advised that they were broadly the same, however, where there was to be a renaming, consideration would have to be given to the historical context of the original name before seeking to change it. He confirmed that, from a legal position, the Council had absolute discretion in regard to the naming/renaming of any of its facilities, subject to consultation and to an equality assessment.

A number of Members referred to Belfast City Council's naming policy and highlighted that it stated that 'a person must be deceased for at least five years before any park or leisure facility can be named after them', therefore, in their opinion, the current name did not comply with the Policy. They also highlighted that it had repeatedly been referred to as a new facility on the Council's website.

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Following a further query, the City Solicitor clarified that, if the Council was to proceed with a public consultation, it would take into consideration the public's comments and recommendations but, ultimately, the final naming would be a Council decision.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Lyons,
Seconded by Councillor Heading,

That the wording of the motion be amended with the replacement of the final sentence with the following:

“Mindful of Belfast City Council’s Naming Policy in regard to naming its facilities and the criteria as stipulated within it”.

The Committee agreed to the motion as amended.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Magennis,
Seconded by Councillor Magee,

“That a City-wide consultation would be undertaken to enable ratepayers to have an input into the naming of the facility.”

On a recorded vote, eleven Members voted for the proposal and seven against, and it was declared carried.

<u>For 11</u>	<u>Against 7</u>
Councillors Baker, Black, Corr, Heading, Lyons, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCusker, McReynolds and Magee.	Aldermen Copeland, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and Councillors Corr, Johnston, Newton and Pankhurst.

After discussion it was further agreed that, prior to the consultation, a report would be submitted to the Committee which would outline the detail of the consultation exercise to be undertaken.

Committee/Strategic Issues

**Minutes of the Strategic Cemeteries & Crematorium
Development Working Group**

The Committee was advised that, at the meeting of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Working Group held on 19th December, the following key items had been considered:

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- update on the Headstone Foundation Policy;
- update in respect of the National Association of Funeral Directors. The Committee was advised the President of the N. I. Federation of National Association of Funeral Directors had been invited to attend the next Strategic Cemeteries Working Group to discuss the Federation's concerns regarding the current legislation relating to all aspects of bereavement. All Members of the People and Communities Committee would receive an invitation to attend; and
- update on the capital works associated with the new crematorium facility at Roselawn.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group held on 19th December 2018.

Update on the Reference Group on Older People

The Committee was advised that a meeting of the Reference Group on Older People had been held on 12th December and the Director of City Services had provided a brief overview of the items that had been considered, which included:

- Walking Football - Danderball;
- Age-friendly Belfast Convention and launch of the Age-friendly Belfast Plan;
- Korber Foundation Symposium on Demographic Change;
- Welcome Meeting Room;
- UK Network of Age-Friendly Communities Steering Group;
- Age-Friendly Belfast Communities Steering Group;
- Age-friendly Belfast Positive Ageing Month 2018;
- Age-friendly Belfast Older Volunteer Awards; and
- Age-friendly Belfast Events;

The Director advised that members of the Greater Belfast Seniors' Forum had requested the use of a City centre meeting area to be used as a discussion platform and as a means to coordinate its work and to help combat isolation. The group had asked officers to explore the possibility of a room in the City Hall.

The Committee was advised that the Reference Group had suggested that the Welcome Room in the City Hall might be a suitable location but this idea needed to be further explored.

The Committee:

- approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Reference Group on Older People held on 12th December 2018; and
- agreed that a detailed proposal be developed to pilot the use of the Welcome Room in the City Hall as a drop-in space for older people on two days per week, which would then be submitted to the relevant Committee for its consideration.

Physical Programme/Asset Management

Partner Agreement - Ulidia Playing Fields

(Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources, attended in connection with this item).

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To advise committee of additional challenges faced by the Partner Agreement holder following development of the site, to seek permission to revise the current Partner Agreement at Ulidia Playing Fields for the duration of the Agreement and to advise committee that Rosario YC intends to seek an alternative management model in the form of a long term lease.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Committee is asked to consider the requested additional support by Rosario YC and the two options as outlined below and:

- to agree to option 2 based on the budgetary impact outlined at 3.8
- to note Rosario YC’s desire to submit a detailed proposal to Council describing their proposed Management model based on a long term lease. A proposal will be brought to a future committee.

Option 1

2.2 Revise the terms within the existing Partner Agreement at Ulidia Playing Fields to include an additional financial payment of up to £2,000 per month for staff costs subject to vouching of fully evidenced expenditure or

Option 2

2.3 Revise the terms within the existing Partner Agreement at Ulidia Playing Fields to review keyholding requirements and provide additional facility management through Mobile Facilities Attendants

3.0 Main report

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- 3.1 Ulidia Playing Fields is subject to a Partner Agreement with Rosario YC. The Agreement is for a term of five years to the last day of August 2020 with an option to extend for a further two years. The Partner Agreement requires the Club to deliver sports development outcomes based on the Club's annual plan and to assume responsibility for day to day operation of the site including key holding, cleaning, security, health and safety duties etc. Council supports the Club in the form of four quarterly payments of £5,000 based on satisfactory delivery of the sports development plan and compliance with operational requirements.**
- 3.2 Over the last number of months the site has been closed and Rosario YC's development programmes have been displaced to other venues. This closure was to facilitate Council's redevelopment of the site with the installation of a floodlit synthetic pitch which, subject to completion of planned works, will be available for use in January 2019.**
- 3.3 A meeting was held at the beginning of December 2018, attended by political representatives, club representatives and officers. Rosario YC made a presentation highlighting the scale and scope of the Club's activities, how their activities support the Belfast Agenda and other relevant strategies, their vision for further development of the site in the future and their ambition to assume full responsibility for running the site.**
- 3.4 The Club highlighted their concerns that the development of the site to include the synthetic floodlit pitch will now require them to operate well beyond their original commitment due to the intensified hourly use, extended opening hours and the move from seasonal to yearlong programming. They further identified additional risks to site users in particular control of parking due to higher volumes of traffic with concurrent bookings at evenings, weekends and outside daylight hours.**
- 3.5 The Club has requested that Council provide an additional monthly amount of £2,000 to support them in creating part-time posts to operate the site to Council's standards for the term of the Partner Agreement. These duties are currently carried out by Club volunteers as such costs are not eligible as part of the Sports Plan budget.**
- 3.6 An alternative solution would be for Council to review the Club's keyholding requirement and provide additional requirements through our Mobile Facilities Attendants. The table below indicates the current typical usage levels and the anticipated usage levels from the redeveloped facility.**

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	No. of weeks per annum	No. of hours per week (per year)	No. of vehicle movements per week (per year)
Current	36	14 (504)	150 (5,400)
Anticipated	52	60 (3,120)	1,500 (78,000)
Additional	16	46 (2,392)	1,350 (70,200)

- 3.7** The Club's presentation described their vision for the site to include a new changing pavilion and meeting rooms. They requested that Council permits a long term lease which would allow them to access significant external funding to deliver their vision. They further stated that they have secured commitment for a loan in the amount of £250,000 from the Ulster Community Investment Trust and that through their own prudent financial management have accumulated reserves of £100,000 which they will contribute to this development.
- 3.8** Based on this, the Club has advised Council of their intention to develop a detailed long term business plan for Ulidia Playing Fields with a view to them, subject to the necessary approvals, taking a long term lease of the site from January 2020. A further report will be brought to committee with a detailed proposal.
- 3.9** Financial Implications
- Option 1 - An amount of £24,000 per annum will be required to support this request, there is no allowance for this within existing estimates.
- Option 2 - The cost of providing Mobile Facility Attendant cover is within existing Parks budgets.
- 3.11** The financial impact of offering a lease of the site will be determined following assessment of the Club's proposal and detailed business plan
- 3.12** Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no additional impacts related to this report."

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided the Committee with an update report in respect of the Council's current Partner Agreement with Rosario Youth Football Club for Ulidia Playing Fields. She referred to the request from Rosario Youth Football Club to revise the current arrangements that had arisen as a direct result of the recently completed redevelopment works, which had included the installation of a floodlit synthetic pitch. She detailed that, during recent discussion, the Club had advised that the redeveloped site would now require greater operational responsibility that was beyond those agreed in the original partner agreement.

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The Director referred the Members to the two proposed options as outlined in the report. She highlighted that no budget existed within the estimates for Option 1 and that an amount of £24,000 per annum would be required to support this option. She further advised the Members that it was Rosario's intention to develop and submit to the Council a detailed long term business plan for Ulidia Playing fields with a view to the Club, subject to the necessary approval, taking on a long term lease of the site from January 2020, therefore, any decision taken currently would be an interim measure.

The Director of Finance and Resources reiterated that this expenditure had not been included within the proposed estimates for 2019/20 therefore option 2 was the only viable option.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillors Boyle and Craig addressed the Committee and outlined their support for Option 1.

Detailed discussion ensued, during which a number of the Members voiced their support for Option 1. Whilst the Members recognised that no allowance had been made in the current estimates for the increased expenditure, it was suggested that, given that this would be an interim measure, the required expenditure could be met from in-year departmental budgets.

The Committee agreed:

- to revise the terms within the existing Partner Agreement at Ulidia Playing Fields to include an additional financial payment of up to £2,000 per month for staff costs for the period 2019/20 to be met from in-year departmental budgets;
- that the funding would be subject to vouching of fully evidenced expenditure;
- that all future funding (post 2019/20) would be considered within the context of the rate setting process; and
- noted that Rosario Youth Football Club had agreed to submit a detailed proposal describing its proposed Management model based on a long term lease and that this would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

Operational Issues

Proposal for Naming New Streets

The Committee approved the naming in respect of Hawthornden Grange, off Hawthornden Road, BT4 and Belmore Way, off Shore Road, BT14.

Dual Language

A Member suggested that a standalone dual language street naming policy be introduced for the Gaeltacht Quarter and asked officers to investigate this further.

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The Building Control Manager undertook to discuss the legalities of a standalone policy for this area with Legal Services and the Equality and Diversity Unit and to provide an update to the Committee in due course.

The Committee further approved the applications to erect second nameplates in Irish at Hawthorn Hill, Shanlieve Road, Benraw Green, Benraw Terrace, Benraw Road, Glen Manor, Glencourt and Brooke Manor.

Responsible Dog Ownership

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Dog fouling remains a persistent problem in parts of the city and the purpose of this report is to provide the update required by Members at the August 2018 meeting on the work that is carried out by the Community Awareness Team and the Dog Warden Service to tackle the issue of dog fouling.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Note the contents of the report.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Dog fouling can impact neighbourhoods and whilst the majority of dog owners exercise responsible dog management there are a small number of owners who do not and this can have a detrimental impact on areas of the city. Dog fouling requires on going resources to address in terms of its removal from the streets, as well as providing a wide range of education and awareness programmes together with the use of fines where infringements are detected.

The Dog Warden Service deploy routine monitoring patrols, to detect dog fouling incidents, however, it is widely recognised that the problem of dog fouling cannot be addressed solely by enforcement intervention. To encourage a change in behaviour, a wider programme supporting responsible dog ownership is an essential element of the Council’s approach to reducing levels of dog fouling throughout the city. This report summarises the activities undertaken by the Community Awareness Team and the Dog Warden Service to address the issue of dog fouling.

3.2 Community awareness

The Community Awareness Team has a project plan detailing a range of activities through educational, promotional and community based programmes scheduled throughout the course of each year, which aims to highlight the problems of dog fouling and includes the following.

3.3 Dog fouling advertising campaign

The advertising associated with the dog-fouling element of the council's anti-litter campaign for this year commenced in July and will run in cycles through until 31 March 2019. A budget of £74,120 has been allocated to marketing the anti-dog fouling message. The campaign utilises general activity throughout the whole of the council area, e.g. bus T sides, commuter cards and radio. In addition, a targeted blitz was organised in four geographical areas, north, south, east and west, consisting of newspaper adverts, adshels, 48 sheets for billboards, etc. with the message 'Dog Wardens are patrolling in (e.g. south) Belfast'.

Targeted area based activity was undertaken during the following dates:

South Monday 24th Sept – Sat 6th Oct 2018
West Monday 8th Oct – Sat 20th Oct 2018
North Monday 22nd Oct – Sat 3rd Nov 2018
East Monday 5th Nov – Sat 17th Nov 2018

In addition, all cleansing vehicles have been branded with the current campaign graphics reinforcing the fine for dog fouling; this allows for a consistent campaign message to be delivered into neighbourhoods throughout the year.

3.4 Community outreach activities

The Community Awareness Team has attended 38 events throughout the summer months, in our parks and open spaces, reinforcing the anti-fouling message, this has included the use of our animated characters 'Captain Clean Up' and 'Scoop Dog' which have been very successful at engaging the community and encouraging responsible dog ownership.

The Community Awareness team deliver a supply of bags to all our community centres routinely throughout the year and direct requests for bags to the centres for local collection. In addition, dog bags can be collected from the Cecil Ward Building.

We have provision to supply dog bags to specific community groups – e.g. Half Moon Lake requested bags for users of the park; we are able to extend provision of bags to other interested groups on request.

The team undertake a number of planned community targeted programmes throughout the year. ‘The Bill Board Challenge’ is scheduled for early 2019, this encourages groups to design a billboard highlighting environmental issues which impact on their local area. In doing so the community takes ownership of their local area and as the winning designs are placed in the group’s own area they are given an opportunity to change behaviour in their neighbourhood. From previous projects, we anticipate that communities will use this opportunity to challenge their neighbours to be responsible dog owners.

3.5 Education provision

The risks and consequences of dog fouling is included in all our school’s workshops and specific projects. Last year the Team undertook 268 school visits.

3.6 Targeted enforcement by the Dog Warden Service

The Dog Warden Service operates from 08.00 hours to 20.00 hours seven days a week and undertakes a range of legislative duties relating to dog control including stray dogs, dog attack investigations, dangerous dogs and dog fouling. The Team is organised on a geographical area basis to ensure that resources are targeted efficiently and effectively. This approach enhances Dog Wardens’ local geographical knowledge of hot spot and problematic areas that can be targeted on a proactive basis, thus increasing opportunities to issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling. In order to enhance the patrols undertaken by the Dog Wardens, the following operational arrangements have been introduced:

- The Dog Control Manager and the Dog Wardens liaise with the area cleansing management teams and other enforcement staff in their respective areas to discuss priority areas and hotspots.
- A structured area-working plan was implemented earlier this year to optimise resources to assist in improving targeted performance management. This involves a dedicated dog fouling patrol for the duration of each shift as well as other patrols in the mornings and evenings where resources permit.
- There has been an increased focus on signage throughout the city with all of the signage being updated

and located in areas where dog-fouling hotspots are identified by the Cleansing Management teams.

3.7 Dog fouling campaign evaluation

Independent research undertaken by Kantar Millward Brown in March 2017 to evaluate the impact and awareness of the dog fouling campaign reported a very low incidence of individuals admitting to have allowed their dog to foul in the previous six months. In terms of awareness of advertising on the subject of dog fouling 72% of dog owners said they had heard or seen something. The key themes recalled were features of the recent campaign, in particular, pick up or pay up / £80 fine, demonstrating a strong cut through in current messaging. Recall of the correct fine amount was improved compared to that seen in previous evaluation undertaken in 2014 (45%, compared with 38%) and three-fifths (63%) said they thought the campaign was effective, again an increase from previous research. The success of the campaign and the increased awareness of the level of fines and the risk associated with dog fouling through our education provision appears to be having a positive impact on the increased level of responsible dog ownership observed by our officers. This is further evidenced by the reducing number of complaints of fouling received per month by the Dog Warden Service over the period of the campaign as set out in the table below.

Table 1: Number of complaints of dog fouling per month (average) received by Dog Warden Service since April 2016.

2016/2017	2017/2018	2018 (until Nov)
120	109	84

3.8 Dog control in parks and cemeteries

Members will be aware that dog fouling in our parks and cemeteries is also an issue and a phased approach to dealing with this was set out in a report to Committee in August of this year. Planning for Phase 1 is ongoing and the anticipated timeframe is spring 2019. It will incorporate the following elements:

- An education and awareness campaign targeted at hotspots, emphasising that our parks are shared spaces and that dogs need to be kept on leads
- That off lead dog enclosures are piloted in Falls, Orangefield and Clement Wilson Parks

- An enforcement campaign in City Cemetery to combat dog fouling and to raise awareness that dogs are not permitted in cemeteries.

3.9 Additional proposed community project for 2019

The Green Dog Walkers scheme is a UK wide community-based campaign to change attitudes about dog fouling. The Community Awareness Team are researching the scheme with a proposed launch date in early 2019. Dog owners and dog walkers support the scheme by signing a pledge to clean up after their pets. They support other owners to do the same by giving dog bags on request. Participants in the schemes are identified by a tag or lead indicating that they are responsible dog owners demonstrating the importance of cleaning up dog fouling. Although this will be a city wide scheme it will tie in with the education and awareness campaign being planned for parks and cemeteries.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no additional financial implications associated with the programme of work already planned in the revenue budget aimed at reducing levels of dog fouling through behavioural change and enforcement. The financial implications in relation to the development of dogs off lead enclosures will, as far as possible, be met within existing resources.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no implications associated with this report.”

The Committee noted the report.

Listening Post re: 'Home for Insects and Memories' at Botanic Gardens & Waterworks

The Committee considered a report which sought permission to site a temporary listening post as part of the 'Home for Insects and Memories' project at both Botanic Gardens and the Waterworks Park.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that, as part of the Council's bid for City of Culture 2022, the Council had commissioned a number of projects, one of which included a 'Homes for insects and memories' project. She explained that the project worked with older people across the City and supported them in sharing their stories and memoirs of nature past and present.

**People and Communities,
Tuesday, 8th January, 2019**

Working with local artists, participants had developed their stories to be included on ten interactive listening points across the City area. Each would provide access for the public to listen to participant's experiences of growing up in and around the nature of the City.

The Committee authorised the temporary installation of two listening stations over a five day period during February 2019, to coincide with Science Week, within Botanic Gardens and the Waterworks Park.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Bin Collections over Christmas Period – Councillor Lyons to Raise

The Committee was provided with an overview of a situation that had arisen prior to Christmas which had given rise to some missed bin collections over the festive period.

Following a query, the Strategic Director of Neighbourhood Services provided a brief overview and confirmed that management were due to commence discussions with the Trade Unions to try to resolve any outstanding issues.

The Members asked that the Committee's thanks be recorded to the staff who had worked extremely hard in attempting to resume the waste collections as quickly as possible.

Noted.

Chairperson