

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 2nd April, 2019

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Nicholl (Chairperson);
Aldermen Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Baker, Black, Corr, Corr Johnston,
Magee, Magennis, McReynolds and Pankhurst.

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

Apologies were recorded on behalf of Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey and Councillors McAteer, Newton and O'Neill.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th March were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Black declared an interest in respect of agenda item 5 (a), Community Development Grants Update, in that she was employed by Rose Street Development Community Association that had applied for grants under the community developments grants programme, and she removed herself from the room while the matter was under consideration.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the report associated with the following item 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 item as, due to the nature of the item, 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.

Request for the Use of Boucher Road

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the use of the Boucher Road Playing fields for a number of events over the summer period.

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The Committee granted approval for the following events in Boucher Road Playing Fields:

- a request from AVA festival for the use and hire of the facilities for a two day music festival from 24th May – 7th June 2019; and
- Aiken Promotion's application for the use and hire of the facilities for a two day music festival from late May to early June 2020, with the setup commencing early May 2020 and take down by late June 2020.

Permission for each event was granted subject to the following terms and conditions:

- completion of an appropriate Event Management Plan;
- all operational issues being resolved to the Council's satisfaction;
- all statutory requirements being met which included Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, licensing responsibilities;
- consultation taking place with adjoining public bodies and local communities;
- completion of an appropriate legal agreement, to be prepared by the City Solicitor;
- the use of the site on these dates would be subject to licence, which was the responsibility of the Council's Licensing Committee;
- ensuring that all statutory requirements of the Building Control Service, including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence were met;
- an appropriate fee for use of Boucher Playing Fields being negotiated which would take into account costs to the Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area and the potential wider benefit to the city economy; and
- a Social Clause being applied.

Committee/Strategic Issues

**Minutes of Strategic Cemeteries and
Crematorium Development Working Group**

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

- a presentation from the Department of Health in respect of the Death Certification process in Northern Ireland;
- update in respect of Future Burial Provision; and
- update on the Plot Z1 City Cemetery.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group held on 19th March 2019.

Draft Belfast Open Spaces Strategy

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 update Members on the progress of the draft Belfast Open Spaces Strategy (BOSS) and to note that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 22 March 2019 agreed to consult on the draft strategy.

1.2 The People and Communities Committee agreed the proposed approach to the development of the BOSS at its meeting in October 2016 and since then Belfast City Council appointed external consultants AECOM to support this work. The draft BOSS is a city level strategy and is the product of a collaborative working relationship with officers from the planning department and numerous engagement sessions with a range of internal and external partners and stakeholders at each stage of the strategy development process.

1.3 The BOSS and the audit of open spaces will be important for planning purposes and will help inform the Local Development Plan (LDP), deliver the outcomes of the Belfast Agenda, align to the Green and Blue Infrastructure plan (GBIP), inform area working and future area/ neighbourhood based plans and approaches and secure development contributions for investment in open spaces.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- the draft BOSS attached to this report;
- the publication of the draft BOSS for a period of 12 weeks public consultation from May – July 2019;
- the final draft of the Strategy will be provided to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval in September 2019.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 The Belfast Open Spaces Strategy (BOSS) is an update of the previous Open Spaces Strategy – ‘Your City, Your Space’ completed in 2005, which led to many improvements and successes; through this strategy we:

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- invested £150m in our open spaces network;
- achieved 19 Green Flag Awards;
- attracted funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and European streams;
- increased numbers and participation levels at local events and outreach programmes;
- constructed and developed the Connswater Community Greenway;
- increased the number of friend's groups within our open spaces; and
- delivered a range of physical improvements across our open spaces network in partnership with the statutory, community and voluntary sector.

3.2 Belfast City Council appointed AECOM to help prepare a new BOSS for the Council Area. The new Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP) requires an updated open spaces strategy as part of its evidence base. The draft BOSS has evolved as a strategic document pitched at a city level. To help us produce this strategy we established a Strategy Advisory Group which was made up of external partners and stakeholders (statutory, community and voluntary organisations). We also set up an internal Strategy Oversight Steering group made up of officers from across the council to provide oversight and guidance. These groups created a long-term vision for the future of Belfast's open spaces in line with the aspirations of the Belfast Agenda and the LDP. Our vision, is that by 2035.

Belfast will have a well-connected network of high-quality open spaces recognised for the value and benefits they provide to everyone who lives in, works in and visits our city.

3.3 In 2018, we carried out an open space audit which assessed open space provision, park and play area accessibility and future actions based on the city's growth strategy. Open spaces were mapped and classified across the city, which will also be used in the future to help us focus on areas of under provision or poor accessibility at a local/ neighbourhood level.

3.4 To make sure that existing and new open spaces are fit for the future, we established a suite of seven guiding strategic principles (SP), providing the roadmap and identifying opportunities for achieving the vision. Belfast's open spaces will:

- **SP1: Provide welcoming shared spaces**
- **SP2: Improve connectivity**
- **SP3: Improve health and well-being**
- **SP4: Support place-making and enhance the built environment**

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- **SP5: Increase resilience to climate change**
- **SP6: Protect and enhance the natural environment**
- **SP7: Be celebrated and support learning**

3.5 We have identified a range of opportunities and headline actions that are currently underway or planned for our open space network across the city, over the next five years, which are aligned to the seven strategic principles above. The delivery of the headline actions will rely on existing budgets or sourcing external and partner funding over the life of the strategy. To help realise our vision, strategic principles and opportunities and deliver the headline actions, we will continue to work closely with our partners and stakeholders. We will regularly review progress of the delivery plan, complete a full review of the strategy in 2024 and agree the next phase of actions.

3.6 The current draft of the strategy is available on Modern.gov. It is intended to use this as the basis for public consultation from May to July 2019. Any comments received during the public consultation period will be taken into account in finalising the BOSS and during this time officers are happy to make themselves available to meet with members if required.

3.7 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The delivery of the BOSS will rely on existing budget, working collaboratively with partners and stakeholders and sourcing external/ partner funding over the life of the strategy.

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

The review of the BOSS identifies positive minor equality and good relations impacts and mitigating actions for some S75 groups. There are no rural needs implications arising directly from this report.”

The Committee noted the update provided.

Physical Programme/Asset Management

Playground Improvement Programme 2019-2020

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 update Members on the successful 2018/19 Playground Improvement Programme and outline plans for playground refurbishments in 2019/20.

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2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the refurbishment of playground sites below under the Playground Improvement Programme which has an allocation budget of £580,000 Under the Capital Programme for financial year 2019/20.**

Table 1
1.Ormeau Park Lower
2.McClure Street
3.Blackmountian
4.Geeragh (Finaghy Community centre)

3.0 Main report

3.1 Playground Refurbishment Programme

Since its inception in 2012, the Playground Refurbishment Programme continues to make a significant and positive impact to the overall quality and play value of the city's playgrounds; this has greatly improved accessibility, providing more inclusive equipment, safety surfacing, boundary fencing, site furniture and landscaping works.

3.2 With continued investment over the last seven years, the Council is achieving the desired improvements at each of its sites. The Council's newest refurbished playground facilities below which are nearing completion are now more inviting, inclusive and exciting places for children and parents to visit; moving their quality scores to the desired higher standard.

1. Duncairn – part funded by the Department for Communities
2. Glenbank – part funded by the Department for Communities
3. Barnett's Demesne
4. Fullerton
5. Orangefield – part funded by the Department for Communities

3.3 Members are asked to note that the Hammer Playground was also extensively refurbished in 2018/19. The refurbishment was funded from monies received from the transfer of land from NIHE at Tudor Place. DFC also match funded the refurbishment.

3.4 Members are asked to note that Play Services Ireland Ltd undertook independent playground inspections on behalf of the Council. The 'quality score' allocated for each playground

is based on compliance with the BSEN European safety standards - BS EN 1176 & BS EN 1177.

3.5 The independent playground inspection report identifies and prioritises repairs to existing playground equipment. The Council's Facilities Management and Playground Inspectors continue to undertake these repairs. Each playground is individually categorised, giving a combined 'quality score'. Geeragh playground for example was allocated an overall quality score of 5.

3.6 Quality scores:

Score 9 – 10 Excellent
Score 8 – 9 Very Good
Score 7 – 8 Good
Score 6 – 7 Fairly Good
Score 5 – 6 Sufficient
Score 4 – 5 Fair
Score 3 – 4 Insufficient
Score 2 – 3 Poor
Score 1 – 2 Very Poor
Score 0 – 1 Extremely Poor

3.7 Following the independent inspection assessments of all 101 playgrounds across the city, it is proposed the sites listed in Table 1 above are refurbished under this year's Playground Improvement Programme, which has an allocation budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme.

3.8 The playgrounds recommended for refurbishment are the ones with the lowest quality scores. Because of the proposed refurbishment works, these playgrounds will move from sufficient/fair to the higher classification of 'Excellent' – quality score 9 – 10 when reinspected.

3.9 Members are asked to note that the Twinbrook/Brook Activity playground will be rebuilt and moved to a new location close to the existing site as part of the Leisure Transformation programme.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

The proposed playground refurbishment works will be funded through the Capital Programme and a budget of £580,000 has been allocated to this. Staff from the Landscape, Planning and Development unit will continue to deliver the Playground Improvement Programme. As in previous years, the Community Park Managers and Outreach officers will continue to assist with the distribution of information relating to playground improvements to members of the local communities.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

A Member raised a query in respect of the Grosvenor Playground and the Director of Neighbourhood Services undertook to investigate the matter and to update him directly.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations as set out under section 2.1.

LORAG – Transfer of Land

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that the Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG) was a community development organisation that had been founded in 1987. It currently operated the Shaftesbury Community and Recreation Centre on a 25 year lease and delivered services in line with an Independently Managed Centre model. The Council had granted a lease in 2009 to support LORAG’s successful application for funding. In addition, as a result of the funding, an additional 997 square foot of space had been built to facilitate the delivery of programmes and activities from the location, which included a dance studio, fitness suite, changing rooms, reception area and a 3G pitch.

The Committee was advised that in 2017 LORAG had purchased the John Murray lock house, a detached residence within 100 metres of the existing Shaftesbury Recreation Centre, with a view to creating a community living hub. The overall project site comprised of the John Murray lock house, existing Belfast City Council owned green space, a site owned by NI Water, a pedestrian walkway/tow-path owned by the Department for Communities (DfC), the former McConnell Weir and associated scheduled monument structures, which were also owned by the DfC.

A delegation from LORAG had outlined the organisation’s plans for the development of the John Murray lock house on the Lagan Walkway at a meeting of the South Area Working Group held on 22nd January, 2018. LORAG had subsequently written to the Council formally seeking the transfer of the Council owned green space to assist with the progression of the project.

The Committee:

- agreed ‘in principle’ to transfer a piece of land between the Lock House and the former NI Water Pumping Station to LORAG to assist it in progressing the development of the Lock House as a community facility; and
- noted that the transfer was subject to officers engaging with LORAG and a report being submitted to a future meeting that would detail the estates related aspects of the transfer.

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Wilmont House

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Committee that the Council held Wilmont House and Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park on title that required the Council to use the premises for the greatest good of the citizens of Belfast.

She provided the Members with a brief background to the Grade 1 listed building which had considerable architectural and historical significance. Unfortunately, the building was now in a very poor state of repair internally and it was unsafe to enter. The Council had been contacted by a number of parties who were keen to explore the potential of refurbishing the building.

The Director advised that, in order to ensure that any potential development opportunity was exposed to the market, and to assist the Council in achieving the best terms, it was proposed that the marketing of the property would commence by way of an Expression of Interest process.

The Committee granted permission to advertise for Expressions of Interest for the physical restoration and regeneration of Wilmont House, Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, Belfast, subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and terms being agreed by the Estates Manager and the City Solicitor.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Community Development Grants Update

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 update Committee on the proposed approach to community development grant funded programmes for 2020/21 as the grants review will not be fully implemented to meet the required timescales.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the contents of the report**
- **Agree the proposed approach for 2020/21**
- **Commission further work to review ways of working, Central Grants Unit role and location, governance structures and evaluation frameworks.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Recently consultants have been commissioned to carry out a strategic review of the Council’s grant programmes that:

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- critically appraises the underpinning rationale, strategic fit and operational design of current programmes (both individually and as a whole); and,
 - makes recommendations on the 'suite' of programmes that should be offered in the future and how these programmes should be operated.
- 3.2 The objective is to ensure that the investment in grants can support the delivery of priority objectives set out in the Belfast Agenda. This is reflected in the Design Principles. A consultation exercise with relevant internal and external stakeholders is in progress and an internal officers working group has been established.
- 3.3 The early activities to help improve the programme in the short term are underway such as:
- ensure all grants streams are assessed by the Central Grants unit (CGU) and are included in the Grant Management System to ensure consistency;
 - improve administration processes including formalising the principle of proportionality.
- 3.4 Work is still to commence in the coming months on the following:
- Communicate the outcomes based approach – education and raise awareness.
- 3.5 Members will also be aware that we have recently commissioned a consultant to begin work on the review of our community provision. It will be important that as this work progresses, we align any revised grant scheme with any proposed new approach.
- 3.6 Transitioning of Changes: The internal officers working group reconvened in February to discuss the interim arrangements required for 2020/21 to allow time for promotion, application and assessment processes, and reporting to Committee.
- 3.7 Development work is under way on a new Cultural Strategy and a draft has been presented to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in March 2019. Subject to ratification, detailed implementation and funding plans will be brought to Committee in September 2019, with a view to be operational from April 2020.
- 3.8 The People and Communities Committee on 4th December agreed to extend the existing contracts on the Community Development Grant Programme subject to the level of DfC funding being confirmed for 2019/20. However to facilitate the transitioning period from then to the end of March 2021,

an open call on large grants will need to start mid 2019 (as per the draft timetable).

3.9 Members are advised that the level of funding commitment from the DfC under the Community Support Programme for the 2020 /2021 financial year was unknown at the time of writing the report. Members are advised that as a result the above approach will be opened on an ‘at risk’ basis and may be subject to re-alignment with any changes/amendments to the Departments approach to Community Support. Officers will continue to work with our colleagues at the Department.

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

The Council’s expenditure on Grants in 2017/18 was £5.7m with some of the funding coming from external partners such as Sport NI and DfC. Having a more outcomes focused approach to grants will help ensure that we get the maximum impact from this expenditure and meet the Belfast Agenda outcomes.

3.11 Equality / Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications

The consultation and engagement process referred to above will allow for consideration of any equality, good relations or rural needs implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Cavehill Adventurous Playground

The Committee considered a report which, as previously requested, considered the potential revenue impact of removing the entrance fee for the Adventurous Playground at Cavehill. The Committee noted the budgeted expenditure and the income that had been included in the 2019/2020 estimates as well as information pertaining to visitor numbers for the period April 2017 – February 2019.

The Committee was reminded that it had previously sought further information in respect of the following two options and also options as to where the loss of income associated with the two options could be found:

1. Option 3 – to reduce the entrance cost to £1.00 (budget to be found £13,500); and
2. Option 4 – to remove the entrance cost (budget to be found £22,500).

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised that, in order to limit the impact of income reduction on the agreed 2019/2020 budgets, it was suggested that, should the Committee choose to proceed with either of these options, any potential loss would be met from a reduction of budget from the supplies and services in the Parks Area North budget which covered the following areas:

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Parks	Playing Fields
Cavehill County	Ballysillan
Glenbank	Clarendon
Ligoniel	Cliftonville
Marrowbone	Grove
Waterworks	Mallusk
Woodvale	Miscellaneous open spaces

The Committee was advised that the current budget of £170,000 covered expenditure on equipment/tools, uniforms, operating materials hire and contracted services.

Following a query from a Member, the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services confirmed that the current staffing complement would be maintained.

The Committee agreed:

- to remove the entrance fee for the Adventurous Playground at Belfast Castle; and
- that the budgeted net loss of £22.5k would be met from a reduction of budget from supplies and services in the Parks Area North budget.

Operational Issues

Park Run City Wide

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided the Members with an update in respect of the progress and success of Parkrun.

She reminded the Members that the Parkrun had started in Belfast in 2010 with the introduction of the parkrun at the Waterworks. Belfast Parks currently hosted parkrun events at the following venues: Falls, Musgrave, Orangefield, Ormeau and Victoria Park. Events were also located at the following other Belfast Park venues: Colin Glen Forest Park, Queens Sports Complex, Stranmillis University College and Stormont Estate. The events consisted of a Saturday 5km or Sunday junior 2K timed walk, jog or run which was open to all ages and free of charge. The event had grown in success and participation figures now exceed 1500 walkers/runners weekly.

The Director advised that a number of requests had been made to the Council, via the various parkrun event organisers, which sought free use of community facilities within parks and also the Council's assistance to ensure the effective delivery of the events. The Parkrun was a free event run entirely by volunteers, therefore, the request was for free use of facilities.

The Director reported that Council officers had been working with Parkrun organisers and volunteers and had identified a number of key areas for improvement. The staff were keen to work in partnership with the various parkrun organisers to support the successful delivery of the events.

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The Committee was advised that currently more than 700 GP practices across the UK, including six in Belfast, had registered to become Parkrun practices, meaning that they partnered with their local Parkrun event to signpost patients and staff to take part in Parkrun to help treat a host of health conditions and improve physical and mental health. The Parkrun events were therefore helping to contribute to the delivery of the Belfast Agenda by supporting the outcome that 'Everyone in Belfast will experience good health and wellbeing'.

Further to a query from a Member, the Director undertook to investigate whether it was the intention of some of the parkrun organisers to start charging a membership fee.

The Committee:

- authorised free use of the parks facilities until such time as the event organisers might be able to secure funding to contribute to facility hire;
- agreed that Council officers would work with each of the event organisers to provide support and to draft a capacity building programme to address the need; and
- requested that the Director of Neighbourhood Services investigate whether the Park Run Organisers intended to commence a membership scheme.

Boxing Strategy Quarterly Update

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to provide £200,000 in funding to the Irish Athletic Boxing Association Ulster Branch (IABA) in the current financial year for delivery of an agreed action plan which supported the Belfast Boxing Strategy and she then provided an update on the progress in relation to the agreement up to the end of quarter 3.

She explained that, in line with the Council's objectives, the Belfast Boxing Strategy Steering Group had met quarterly. The Steering Group was chaired by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and attended by Council officers, IABA officers and officials and Co. Antrim officials.

The Committee was reminded that the Council had previously agreed a total of 37 Indicators with the IABA to monitor delivery of the programmes. The Director reported that the IABA had been compliant with all the reporting matters.

The Committee noted the quarterly progress update report regarding the IABA.

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Council Partnership

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek permission for the council to sign up as a Partner to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- agree for the council to sign up as a Partner to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. The Council is already undertaking significant work to support and protect our local pollinators in particular through the sensitive management of biodiversity rich sites. Agreeing to become a Plan Partner will recognise and promote our existing work and commitment.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Members are reminded that Council endorsed the All Ireland Pollinator Plan in September 2015 and was listed in the document as supporting the final Plan.

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020 was developed by stakeholders from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It is a shared plan of action supported by more than 90 governmental and non-governmental organisations. The Plan aims to take steps to reverse pollinator losses and help restore populations to healthy levels.

The plan has five objectives:

- Pollinator friendly habitat - To take action on farmland, public land & private land, to create a joined-up network of diverse and flower-rich habitats to support pollinators.
- Raising awareness of pollinators and how to protect them - To increase awareness of the importance of pollinators and the resources they need to survive.
- Managed pollinators – supporting beekeepers & growers - To achieve healthy, sustainable populations of managed pollinators that can play a full role in delivering pollination service.
- Expanding our knowledge on pollinators and pollination service - To address gaps in knowledge through research and to develop an evidence base on the best and most cost-effective ways to protect pollinators.
- Collecting evidence to track change and measure success - To build up knowledge on where pollinators occur and how they are changing, including in response to management actions.

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3.2 Council has now been invited to become a more formal Plan Partner.

3.3 Should Council decide to become a Plan Partner the Council would be agreeing:

- 1. That the Council supports the ethos of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and will consider the Plan in policies, plans, and management decisions where possible.**
- 2. To consider the evidence-based actions in the guideline document *Councils: Actions to help Pollinators*, and to carry out one pollinator-friendly action in the first year of signing up and plan to carry out at least three more within the following five years. The guideline document lists 30 possible actions, many of which are low cost or cost-neutral.**
- 3. To update the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Team (within the National Biodiversity Data Centre) on the positive pollinator actions planned, implemented or maintained at the end of each year, when contacted, to help this promote our work.**

3.4 The proposed actions align with our existing biodiversity work programme and not least our own pollinator project, Bee-licious. The Council is already contributing to the objectives of the Plan through our land management, for example meadow management at Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park and key elements of the City Cemetery project which focus on pollinators. The loss of natural and semi-natural habitats has been a key driver in pollinator declines and BCC owns and manages a number of significant sites including Cave Hill, Barnetts Demesne and Lagan Meadows.

3.5 The Biodiversity Officer was involved in the development of the guidance document for Councils and is confident the Council is well placed to demonstrate significant work in supporting pollinators. The guidance document can be found at: <http://www.pollinators.ie/councils/>

3.6 Should the Council agree to become a Plan Partner it will be acknowledged as a Partner on the website and in the annual report.

3.7 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications other than Officer time.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

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The Committee granted permission for the Council to sign up as a Partner to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

**CIWM National Conference – 12th to 13th June 2019
And Consultation Responses for Packaging Waste**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) is holding its annual, national conference in June in London again this year.

1.2 In light of the Council’s ongoing work implementing the Waste Framework, developing its approach to the Circular Economy (Resourceful Belfast), the present national consultations on packaging waste, the Blue Planet effect, changes to the international marketplace for the sale of recyclables, Members are asked to approve the attendance Members at this event. It is noted that senior officers will also attend.

1.3 Members’ attention is also brought to the three consultations currently underway and approval is sought to agree a response in principle subject to the Chair being satisfied with the Council’s final submission.

2.0 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to approve:

- The Chair and Deputy Chair (or their nominees) to attend this event
- Members’ approval is also sought to agree a response in principle subject to the Chair being satisfied with the Council’s submission, the response will be tabled for information at the June 2019 meeting.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Members may recall that each year the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management holds an annual conference in London in June, called ‘Resourcing the Future’ (RTF 2019).

3.2 This year, the conference is being held on 12-13 June 2019, as with previous years, the partners hosting this event include the CIWM, the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP), the Environmental Services Association and the Resources Association.

3.3 This conference brings together waste and resource management professionals, thought leaders, Government ministers and policy experts. This year, there will be debate and consideration about the key recommendations arising from the Resources and Waste Strategy for England, launched in December.

3.4 The conference will be packed full of discussion points and, centering on the new strategy, its recommendations and implementation. Experts will also consider the Circular Economy, single-use plastics (SUP) bans and taxes, secondary material markets, recycling targets and food waste. It is also likely to consider implications and impacts which could arise from the recently produced consultations on Reforming the UK Packaging Responsibility Scheme, Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and a Plastic Packaging Tax which are likely to profoundly affect waste management practices in the UK in the coming years^[1]

3.5 In relation to these consultations, a conference was held in Belfast Metropolitan College, Titanic Quarter on 12 March to introduce these topics and highlight that responses are due on Citizens Space by 13 May 2019. At over 300 pages and around 100 questions, these are detailed and technical and require some time to consider and address, with answers from one having a bearing upon another. In terms of the Council working with Arc21 and other professional organisations to submit a response, Members' are asked to approve a technical response in principle subject to the Chair being satisfied with the Council's final submission.

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

As the Council is a CIWM affiliated organisation, the rate for attending the two-day conference is £449 + VAT per person.

The travel and subsistence costs associated with this conference are likely to be in the region of £500 per person, which can be met from the Service's revenue budget.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no relevant equality, good relations or rural need assessment issues associated with this report."

[1] The fourth live consultation on Consistency in Household and Business Recycling Collections only applies to England

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The Committee:

- authorised the attendance of the incoming Chairperson and the incoming Deputy Chairperson (or their nominees), to attend the Chartered Institute of Waste Management (CIWM) National Conference, in London from 12th – 13th June; and
- agreed that, given that there would be no further meetings of the Committee in advance of the Local Government Elections, a technical response in respect of the three consultations in relation to Packaging Waste would be prepared by officers and submitted by the 13th May deadline. The response would subsequently be submitted to the June 2019 meeting of the Committee for information.

National Recycling Awards 2019

The Committee was advised that the Council's Un-Eat-en sustainable recipe book had been compiled using recipes submitted by some of Belfast's top chefs with the aim of helping to minimise food waste. A copy of the recipe book was available for download [here](#)

The recipe book had been shortlisted for an award in the Best Campaign up to £10,000 in the National Recycling Awards and approval was sought for the Council to be represented at the awards ceremony.

The Committee authorised the attendance of the incoming Chairperson (or their nominee) along with a nominated officer from the City and Neighbourhood Services Department to attend the National Recycling Awards, in London on 27th June.

Chairperson