

# People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 8th December, 2020

## MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Baker (In the Chair);  
Alderman Rodgers;  
The High Sheriff, Councillor Verner; and  
Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain, Michael Collins,  
de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, M. Kelly, Magee, McAteer,  
McReynolds, Mulholland, Newton, Pankhurst and Smyth

In attendance: Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;  
Ms. J. Wilson, Business Manager;  
Mr. S. Leonard, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Also In attendance: Councillors Heading, McLaughlin and O'Hara.

### **Apologies**

No apologies were recorded.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 10th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December with the following amendment - "that the Council write to the Department for Infrastructure to request that it prioritises design, funding and completion of its public consultation regarding the installation of lighting on the Comber Greenway, and engage in discussion with the Council regarding future ownership and management of the Greenway."

### **Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

### **Presentation (Restricted)**

#### **Collaborative Circular Economy Network**

The Committee was advised that, at the November meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had been agreed to support an invitation being extended to the Collaborative Circular Economy Network, which represented businesses in Northern Ireland which utilise recycled products collected by councils, to make a presentation, to a future meeting of the People and Communities Committee and that an invitation would be extended to all Members to attend. Accordingly, Ms. H. Kinney from Kappa Consulting was welcomed to the meeting.

Ms. Kinney provided a comprehensive overview of the Collaborative Circular Economy Network 2, she explained that five reprocessors had come together namely; Cherry Plastics Group, Encirc Glass, Huhtamaki, Natural World Products and AgriAD to recycle plastics, glass, paper and food waste respectively. She advised that recyclate supplies were fundamental to all of these businesses but they were often having import materials from outside of Northern Ireland to supply their business, whilst tens of thousands of tonnes of recyclables were being exported for recycling outside of NI. Working together provided an opportunity for the NI supply chain to align to:

- ensure that more recyclate generated in NI could be reprocessed locally;
- support an expansion of the reprocessing sector;
- develop a more resilient circular economy approach in optimising value from waste resource; and
- contribute to achieving future recycling targets in quantity and quality.

The Committee noted that scoping study had been conducted by the Collaborative Circular Economy Network, funded by Invest NI, as part of its Collaborative Networks Programme. This found that the reprocessors were major contributors to the local economy with:

- Over 800 employees;
- Strong exports;
- Supporting the local supply chain; and
- Committed investment.

She provided a comprehensive overview of each of the five businesses, each which had a growing a demand for recyclate. The Committee noted that importing material added costs, had an environmental impact and inhibited business growth plans, all of the business had a preference to source recyclate locally, where possible.

In conclusion she detailed that the Network wished to collaborate with local authorities to:

- ensure that as much as possible of the recyclate collected/available in Northern Ireland could be reprocessed locally;
- that there was alignment and mutual understanding of the local reprocessing and waste management sectors;
- expand the Network to grow the reprocessing sector so that there was added value outlets for as much of the recyclate collected locally as possible;
- maximize and add value to waste recovered from NI households; and
- build economic resilience and move to a circular economy.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for her informative presentation and she left the meeting.

**Restricted**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following 3 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 the following 5 items as, due to their nature, 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.

**Finance Update**

The Committee was reminded that the Strategic Policy and Resources, at its meeting on 31st July, had received an update on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council's financial position and a strategy to address the forecast deficit and the mitigation measures, which had and would be taken as the situation evolved. It had agreed to continue to provide Members with a monthly update on the financial position and that the same report would be presented to the subsequent standing Committees for noting and to provide further information on ongoing work.

The Committee noted the November 2020 financial update.

**White City and Carrick Hill Community Centres – Update Report**

The Committee considered two individual requests from White City Community Development Association (WCDA) and Carrick Hill Residents Associations in relation to future management arrangements and financial support for the two community centres, both of which were independently operated by the community organisations, on land owned by Belfast City Council.

The Members noted that the request from White City Community Development Association was seeking the Council to take over the ownership, operation and management of the facility as a result of ongoing community capacity challenges.

The request from Carrick Hill was to consider how the Council could better support the ongoing maintenance responsibilities of Carrick Hill Community Centre as well as assisting Carrick Hill Resident Group address outstanding necessary repairs as identified by a Condition Survey report completed in 2017.

The Committee was reminded that both these request had previously been considered by the Committee at its meeting in March 2020 and this update report was to outline the latest position, to outline progress made in relation to each of the previous recommendations, and to seek approval from the Members for the new recommendations.

Following detailed consideration of the report and the updates provided in regard to both the facilities, the Committee agreed to:

- recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that, as part of the rate setting process for 2021/22, the Council agree to take on ownership of White City Community Centre as a directly owned and operated community centre, subject to the relevant input of the Council's Legal Services and Estates; and
- grant approval to officers to continue to liaise with Carrick Hill Residents Association, with a view to agreeing the terms of a lease agreement which would allow for the transfer of ownership of the building to the Council and enable Carrick Hill Community Centre to become a fully-fledged Independently Managed Community Centre (with the option then to review financial contribution).

### **Council Strategic Waste Management Arrangements – Update**

The Committee considered a comprehensive report and update in relation to progress being made in terms of Joint Working between Councils in relation to Waste Management. The report outlined the proposed process in regard to progressing to the next stage of the process as it was felt that the existing arrangements were not sustainable in the medium to long term.

The Committee noted that the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives NI (SOLACE) had requested, through the Technical Advisors Group NI structure, that the Councils would review the current set up with a view to making proposals for the future arrangements. The timing was appropriate as reviews of Councils' Waste Plans and DAERA's "Delivering Resource Efficiency - Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy" were both also scheduled for the near future. Organisational changes within the waste management groups also reinforced the need for a strategic review of current arrangements.

A Member highlighted that whilst he was content to proceed with the recommendation he wished to make it clear that this was not a formal endorsement by the Committee of future strategy on waste management plans, he added that the Social Investment Board needed to understand the Governance arrangements and the role of the Elected Members. He added that any procurement opportunities needed to take account and consider the social added value of the procurement contract.

The Director of City Services agreed to feed these comments back.

The Committee endorsed the actions of Officers and the Society of local Authority Chief Executives NI (SOLACE) to date and:

- noted that further updates would be submitted in due course; and
- agreed to commence to the next stage of the process with the Strategic Investment Board proceeding to carry out an Economical Appraisal, subject to agreement of all eleven Councils at a cost of £3,600 per Council.

**Southcity Resource and Development Centre:  
Bridging Support**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the request from Southcity Resource and Development Centre seeking revenue support for St. Simons Hall to enable up-to-date information to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee and to ensure that a precedent was not being set.

**Update Report 'Wild Lights' Show**

The Members considered a report which provided an update in regard to a previous request from Wonderland Productions Ltd. seeking permission to hold a Wild Lights type event in Botanic Gardens, Belfast in 2020. The Committee was reminded that this request had originally been approved at the June meeting of the Committee but, at the July meeting of Council, it had been agreed that the decision be amended to allow for an environmental assessment to be carried out.

The Committee was advised that the applicant had since advised that the request created potential operational and contractual difficulties and as a result had cancelled the 2020 event. The Committee noted that the Promoter was still minded to run the event in future years but felt that a light impact assessment survey was unnecessary.

A Member sought specific clarity as to whether there was a presence of bats in Botanic Park. During discussion it was agreed that it would be helpful to have an understanding of the current legislation that existed around habitats, including bats and any environmental assessments that might be required. The Members agreed that once they had this information, the Council might wish to adopt a future policy position for all its parks and open spaces rather than just this one specific request.

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report to enable a briefing paper on the legislation that exists around the impact of habitats, including bats, and the environmental assessments required in relation to this to be submitted to a future meeting.

**Committee/Strategic Issues**

**Update on the New Crematorium Capital Project/ Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries Working Group**

The Committee was advised that at the meeting of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Working Group, held on 25th November 2020, a detailed update had been given in regard to the New Crematorium Capital Project.

The Committee was advised that an Integrated Design Team had been appointed for the new crematorium development and representatives from this Team had attended the Working Group meeting where they had presented options for the proposed design development.

The following key items had been considered:

- Chapel size and design – three options had been presented and after consideration option 3: mezzanine provision of 160 ground floor seat capacity and 40 seat mezzanine had been agreed as the preferred option; and
- Function Room – it was agreed to remove the function room from the design of the new crematorium building and to explore the option to re-use parts of the existing crematorium as a place where functions could be held.

The Working Group had also been advised that a pre-application discussion (PAD) had taken place with the Planners from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) and statutory consultees. That meeting had been followed by another meeting with LCCC to discuss the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The Director of City Services detailed that the next stage in the planning process would require a request to be submitted to LCCC to formally determine the requirement for an Environmental Statement, in order to try to save time it had been agreed that preparation of the document would commence at this stage.

Following a query from a Member who sought clarity in regard to ensuring the proposal would meet future demand, the Director of City Services advised that an Economic Appraisal had been undertaken previously and she undertook to liaise with Property and Projects and to feed the results of this back into the Working Group for information purposes.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group meeting held on 25th November 2020.

### **Proposed Alleyway Transformation Programme**

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to give the committee an update on progress to date in response to:**

- **Motion proposed by Councillor Dorrian and Seconded by Councillor Newton (September 2018): ‘This Council will engage with relevant agencies to develop protocols in respect to addressing issues around unadopted alleyways across the City, recognising health and safety and public hygiene concerns. All efforts should be also made to identify legal owners and compel them to meet their obligations.’**

- A request from Cllr Kelly (August 2020): ‘following the success of initiatives such as Wildflower Alley and similar projects across the city, that the Committee would write the Department for Communities, Department of Justice and Department for Infrastructure with a view to co-ordinating support and assistance for residents and groups who would like to transform and regenerate communal and open spaces throughout the city.’
- Minute action from February 2020: Members will recall at the Feb 2020 People and communities Committee, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of appointing an external alleygate review, to enable a further report to be submitted on the possibility of the evaluation being undertaken in-house or options to reduce costs associated with an external evaluation.
- The Motion which had been moved by Councillor McKeown and seconded by Councillor de Faote (September 2020, People & Communities Committee): ‘Determines that a new funded alleygating programme is included as part of Council’s Recovery Plan, recognising the intrinsic benefit and popularity of existing alleygating programmes. Agrees that this new alleygating programme, when determining eligible streets, should give equal consideration and scoring to the efforts of communities to develop and maintain their alleyways as is currently given to crime-reduction and anti-social behaviour concerns.’

1.2 In response to this motion, the September meeting of the People & Communities Committee agreed that a comprehensive report on Alleygates and Alleyways would be submitted to a future meeting, which would consider previous Motions along with the financial resources available and reference any potential external funding opportunities.

## 2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is asked to:

- Note the work carried out to date in response to the un-adopted alleyways Notice of Motion,
- Note the update on alleyway transformation in particular the follow up meetings with the Department of Infrastructure and Department for Justice

2.2 The committee is also asked to note that following consideration by officers it is not in a position to undertake an in-house evaluation of the phases 1-4 of the alleygating scheme. Members are therefore asked to agree that the Council procure an external consultant to complete this evaluation and that this evaluation is carried out in accordance with the criteria listed in paragraph 3:30 of this report.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 It is acknowledged that there is different levels of support required from different Council departments to deal with issues presented by alleyways across the city. This level of support can vary according to:

- the condition of alleyway,
- the ownership (privately owned, adopted / un-adopted)
- the level of anti-social behaviour in the area
- the current level of community engagement and/or community capacity to support any interventions in their areas.

3.2 This report updates members on work officers have been carrying out in respect of un-adopted alleyways, alley transformation and sourcing financial support for alleyway transformation schemes. It also reports back to members on a request from this committee to explore the feasibility of carrying out a review of the alley-gating scheme internally.

3.3 Officers have since went back and looked at the option of carrying out an 'in house' review and have concluded that this is not a feasible option, as they do not have the required expertise or resources in house to do so.

3.4 Officers are still recommending that an external contractor is appointed to conduct the alleygate review and have developed a specification framework to guide the successful consultant through the evaluation process. The specification has incorporated consideration to issues raised by councillors in the fore-mentioned notice of motions. It is hoped the outcome of the review can help to:

- recommend long-term solutions for unadopted alleyways,
- provide options for transformation/regeneration of alleyways,



- as well as reviewing current alleygate criteria, taking into account the potential amendment to include consideration of community effort in maintaining their alleyways, in addition to the use of anti-social behaviour statistics.

**3.5 Adoption/Ownership of Alleyways:**

**Un-Adopted Alleyways**

- 3.6** Un-adopted alleyways are an issue of particular concern for Belfast City Council. Many of these areas have poor, uneven surfaces; are overgrown with vegetation; often have surface water accumulations and are generally in a very poor state of repair. Generally, they are not maintained by anyone. This creates difficulties for residents in terms of their ability to leave bins for collection and for Council staff in moving bins within these areas. Given the dangerous nature of some un-adopted back alleyways, it is difficult, and in some instances prohibitive, for Council staff to collect bins, litter pick or remove bulky items. Councils believe that this position is not acceptable or sustainable and previously have written to the NI Assembly requesting that due consideration is given to how un-adopted alleyways are kept maintained and fit-for-purpose.
- 3.7** Our Regulatory Services team receive regular complaints in relation to illegal dumping, pest infestations etc. Despite interventions by them and our Open Space & Streetscene teams these problems continue to recur
- 3.8** If an alleyway is 'adopted DFI will manage and maintain it'. If it is not adopted the responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance is the responsibility of those properties that frontage these alleyways. Unfortunately none of the un-adopted alleyways are in a good state of repair and the Department will not consider adopting them unless they are brought up to the required standard. In most cases the costs of upgrading can be beyond the means of residents that frontage these areas. In the absence of adoption the only option available to statutory authorities is to identify if there is an owner of the land which could determine liability. In response to the Notice Of Motion
- 3.9** An interdepartmental approach has been taken and a working group set up involving the council environmental health, legal and estates departments. This group have identified the top 20 most problematic unadopted alleyways. This was based on the alleyways that had the most recorded complaints in relation to pest control, cleansing and public health nuisance.

- 3.10 Currently the council estates team are trying to identify ownership of the top 20 alleyways based on local knowledge. If owners are identified via this method, the council enforcement team will use their statutory power to compel the owners to meet their obligations and address sub-standard conditions.
- 3.11 In the case where no legal owners can be identified, officers are proposing to adopt a pilot project, whereby the council legal team will seek to identify the ownership of four unadopted alleyways, one from each area of the city: North, South, East and West. The aim of this pilot is to:
- firstly identify ownership of the top 4 alleyways
  - Secondly, to refine a process whereby ownership can be identified, including approximate cost and time resources required, to apply a phased approach identifying ownership of the remaining top 16 alleyways over the next 2 - 3 years.
- 3.12 Parallel to this work officers from Regulatory Services and Building Control will audit the alleyways. The availability of owner information will assist officers with any subsequent enforcement work. DFI are aware of the working group and the work carried out to date and have committed to supporting the work where they can.

#### Transformation / Regeneration

- 3.13 It is recognised that the COVID-19 crisis has allowed local communities to develop a greater appreciation of open and green spaces throughout the city. Some communities have shown capacity and have independently taken an active role in improving their communal spaces, providing an opportunity for their community to enjoy fresh air, activity and socially distanced interaction during the difficult months of lockdown.
- 3.14 The council currently offer support to empower communities to improve their own communal spaces. This includes support to develop community gardens, set-up parklets and the regeneration of communal alleyways and open spaces. Support from council parks and community development teams includes: educational support and skill development, assistance with grant applications and as well as gifting communities with small items such as planters, plants, seeds etc.

- 3.15 Feedback from officers involved in supporting these programmes suggest that the most successful and sustainable programmes are those which are community led. Officers will continue to work within communities to support such endeavours, in consultation with local community groups and councillors.

**Partnership with DOJ and DFI**

- 3.16 In response to People and Communities request in August 2020, City and Neighbourhood services wrote the Department for Communities, Department of Justice and Department for Infrastructure with a view to co-ordinating support and assistance for residents and groups who would like to transform and regenerate communal and open spaces throughout the city.
- 3.17 To date meetings have taken place with Department of Justice and Department for Infrastructure. As yet there has been no response from Department of Communities and a follow up letter has been issued.
- 3.18 Attached is letter of support from Department of Justice. A subsequent meeting with DOJ officer indicated that it may be possible to provide some financial support for alleyway transformation in interface areas via PCSP funding. Reference was also made to the possibility of accessing funding from Assets Recovery Funding and Police Property Fund.

The logistics of this is to be explored further and DOJ are to provide an update on whether this funding could be accessed by the council. DOJ have also agreed in principle to support the development of a 'How to guide', to empower communities, providing a useful tool to support community led open space regeneration programmes. Officers are currently pursuing this with DOJ. Officers are also progressing the Justice Minister's suggestion to apply for PCSP funding.

- 3.19 The meeting held with Dfi was positive. Dfi are currently consulting with their Active Travel team and have agreed to come back to confirm whether alleyway transformation support can be obtained via strategic opportunities like the Belfast Urban Greenway monies.

**Alleygate Background:**

- 3.20 Phases 1 – 4 of the alleygating project have now been completed.
- 3.2.1 Councillors may be aware that the initial phase (phase 1) of Alleygating was carried out in 2005-2007 as a pilot. This enabled 200 gates to be erected with a further 20 gates being installed through the Renewing the Routes programme in Lower Ormeau.
- 3.22 In February 2009, phase 2 commenced, when the council allocated £500K of capital funding to the project, with £125,000 being equally distributed to each area North, South, East and West. A ranked list was then approved by committee and a further 174 Alleygates were then installed within the pilot project areas with further areas identified using the prioritised list (Ardoyne, Avoniel, Ballygomartin Road, Glenbank, La Salle, Whiterock).
- 3.23 In February 2012, phase 3 commenced. £700,000 was made available for further alleygating interventions throughout Belfast. The lists of streets were prioritised against the agreed criteria and 60 streets were identified for gating (148 gates) on equal basis across North, South, East and West.
- 3.24 Phase 4 commenced in 2016, when £700K of capital monies was made available to the Area Working Groups (South £140k, North 140k, East £210k and West £210k). Statistical analysis was brought to each Area Working Group to inform Members and the final gate locations were selected by elected members by using their local knowledge.
- 3.25 This current phase (phase 4) is completed and added an additional 362 gates to the existing stock of 712, meaning a total of 1074 Alleygates is currently being managed by City & Neighbourhood Services.

**Alleygate Evaluation**

- 3.26 The council are continuing to receive requests for gates, especially in areas where gates have been installed and as a consequence, dispersed issues to surrounding streets. However, there has not been an evaluation since the pilot project was completed in 2007. Therefore officers recommend that an evaluation is necessary before continuing with a proposed phase 5.

- 3.27 There is some concern that new proposed locations are not suitable for alleygates, are not alleyways (as only an alleyway by definition of DfI can be gated) and the legal threshold for installation can be difficult to meet given the low consultation responses.
- 3.28 A request to appoint external contractor to review the Alleygate Programme, was brought to People & Communities Committee on 3 February 2020. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the matter to enable a further report to be submitted on the possibility of the evaluation being undertaken in-house or options to reduce costs associated with an external evaluation.
- 3.29 Officers have since went back and looked at the option of carrying out an 'in house' review and have concluded that this is not a feasible option, as they do not have the required expertise or resources in house to do so.
- 3.30 It is therefore recommended, that Council engage a suitably qualified contractor to under a review of the Alleygates Programme to date, specifically exploring the following:
- the benefits of the scheme within neighbourhoods and how the overall scheme performs against CIPTED principles
  - to review the current selection process and identify potential future options for selection of alleygate locations taking in to account what has worked well and what could be improved to date.
  - To consider the merit in amending the current eligibility criteria to give equal consideration and scoring to the efforts of communities to develop and maintain their alleyways as is currently given to crime-reduction and anti-social behaviour concerns
  - to examine if there has been any reduction in crime / return for investment in areas where there has been intense alleygate installation
  - to examine whether there have been any long-term impacts or reduction in crime within gated areas in general
  - to identify opportunities to maximise the benefits of alleygating by working closer with other partners in the context of wider neighbourhood regeneration
  - to make recommendations about how to maximise the benefits and opportunities from the Alleygate Project, taking into consideration other Council work streams and external strategies

- to consider the longer-term impact of the continuous alleygating investment (Phase 1 to Phase 4) to date in the city
- Consideration of alternative interventions to alleygating like Alleyway Transformation schemes and funding to improve the standard and condition of un-adopted alleyways. Linking with other partners to secure funding for both etc.

**3.3.1** The completion of the evaluation and its findings will be used to inform the scoping of any future alleygating schemes and alleyway transformation initiatives.

#### **Financial & Resource Implications**

**3.22** The pilot proposed in respect of un-adopted alleyways is covered within existing revenue estimates. The cost will be considered again once the four pilot sites have been completed.

**3.23** The approximate cost of the evaluation of the alleygating scheme would be £10K–15K with a significant level of in house support from the Alleygating team which would be from within existing budgets.

**3.24** At present there is no capital financing to deliver a future alleygating programme, however a growth proposal of £500k is being considered as part of the estimates process for 21/22.

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

**3.25** There are no known Equality, Good Relations or Rural needs implications.”

A number of Members welcomed the comprehensive update and the proposed external review. Discussion ensued in regard to the popularity of the scheme, particularly over lockdown, and Members reiterated the fact that so many of the community wished to be involved in progressing schemes in their own individual areas and the need for the community to be assisted in progressing community led open space regeneration programmes. A Member welcomed the proposed ‘How to guide’ which she felt would be a useful tool in supporting local communities with their proposals.

The following issues were also highlighted by the Members:

- the need to identify ownership of unadopted alleyways;
- the need for the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), Department of Justice (DoJ) and Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to be involved/consulted;

- concern was expressed in regard to a particular emphasis being given to the Holylands as it was a unique situation with many ongoing issues and problems but these were not representative of successful schemes and opportunities that existed throughout the rest of the City;
- glad to see that consideration would be given in regard to the existing criteria;
- keen to see the community and residents groups being consulted and engaged as part of the review in regard to their proposals for community led initiatives;
- keen to see the proposed review being progressed in a timely manner; and
- keen to ensure the evaluation process review would initially be taken through the Area Working Groups.

The Committee welcomed the review agreed that an external consultant be procured to complete the evaluation, which would be carried out in accordance with the criteria as set out in paragraph 3:30 of the report.

### **Physical Programme and Asset Management**

#### **Partner Agreements Update**

The Committee noted the quarterly progress report in relation to Partner Agreements at seven sites and that all Partners had been compliant on reporting matters and financial checks for July – September 2020.

#### **Operational Issues**

#### **Proposal for naming a new street and the continuation and realignment of existing streets**

The Committee approved an application for naming a new street and the continuation of two existing streets in the City, as set out below:

<b>Proposed Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
Galgani Crescent	Off Ardilea Avenue, BT14	The Boyd Partnership

<b>Proposed Continuation of Existing Street</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
Hopewell Crescent	Off Hopewell Avenue, BT13	Hall, Black, Douglas Architects
Hopewell Square	Off Hopewell Crescent, BT13	Hall, Black, Douglas Architects

**Street food events in Lower Crescent Open Space**  
**April 2021 – September 2021**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of the report is to obtain permission from Members for a series of weekend street food events to be held in Lower Crescent Open space over period April 2021 – September 2021.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- 1. Grant authority to Night Cap Event Group Ltd for a series of street food events to be held in Lower Crescent Open space over period April 2021 – September 2021, subject to Coronavirus pandemic restrictions and compliance required by Council.**
- 2. Grant authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services subject to satisfactory terms being agreed and on condition that:**
  - The promoter resolves all operational issues to the councils' satisfaction**
  - An appropriate legal agreement is completed, to be prepared by the City Solicitor; and**
  - the promoter meets all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence**
  - Grant authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for use of Lower Crescent Open Space taking into account costs to the Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the city economy.**
  - To write to the promoters and advise that a social levy will also be charged in accordance with Council policy.**
  - The event company will also be required to reimburse any ancillary costs for services provided by the Council at the event.**
  - Agree that Event Organisers shall consult with public bodies and local communities as necessary.**



**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1** 'Night Market' is an original project that supports local jobs, training and enterprise. The intention is to bring an exciting and unique outdoor street food dining experience to Belfast. In an ever changing and challenging climate the aim is to provide a safe open air space for socializing whilst enjoying all that's good about NI local food.
- 3.2** Hosted by the Nightcap Event Group Ltd, an innovative drinks led hospitality company which focuses on providing consultancy and mobile bar services across Northern Ireland with over 20 years industry experience. The company is keen to involve the local hospitality sector by organizing this bespoke event. In addition they seek to support the NI events sector as a whole that have been arguably hardest hit during this year's pandemic by creating jobs and giving suppliers a direct route to market.
- 3.3** 'Night Market' has the aim of being the street food event to transform Belfast's food landscape by turning a lost suburb into a vibrant street food destination. The aim of Night Market is to provide a platform for the best street food traders in the province to cook quality, locally-sourced and honest food to the people of Northern Ireland in a safe open air venue.
- 3.4** Considerable consultation will be required with local house holders and businesses in the surrounding area. Alcohol will be on sale as part of the events along with food and music. It is anticipated the events will finish at 10.00pm with Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday being the primary days the street food festival will be open.
- 3.5** The requestor will prepare a full event management plan and risk assessment. And if applicable apply for an entertainment licence if that is required.
- 3.6** The Belfast Agenda sets out our joint city vision and long term ambitions and outcomes for Belfast's future, as well as outlining our priorities for action every four years. The development of a 'Transformational Places' approach across the city offers a real opportunity to make a sustained impact in the Botanic, Wider University and Lower Ormeau area, particularly given it's close proximity to the South Corridor. This event has the potential to support this and support local businesses in this part of the city at a key time for retail.

- 3.7 The event is being planned on the basis that live events will be permitted in April 2021 with respect to Covid 19 restrictions. An ongoing review of the situation will be required and the event organiser will provide updates to Belfast City Council.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

- 3.8 A fee will be charged for the use of the facility. A bond of intent will be paid to the Council which would be retained in the event of the event being cancelled. The requestor will also be required to pay a social clause. The fee charged will also meet any additional staff costs.
- 3.9 Permission for the use of the facility is subject to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for use of the facility taking into account costs to the Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the city economy.

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

- 3.10 There are no known Equality, Good Relations or Rural needs implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Mapping exercise of 3g and 4g Pitches - Councillor Cobain**

Agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting listing the Council's 3g and 4g pitch facilities which would include information about the services available at each of the locations (for example lighting).

Chairperson