

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 13th April, 2021

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Baker (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain, Corr,
de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, Magee, McAteer,
McCusker, McReynolds, Mulholland,
Pankhurst, Smyth and Verner.

Also attended: Councillor O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were recorded on behalf of Councillors Michael Collins and Michelle Kelly.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9th March 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 April.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Black declared an interest in respect of item 2 (c) in relation to the Update on the Community Provision Grant Funding Approach 2021/22, on the basis that she managed the Grosvenor Community Centre. Councillor Verner also declared an interest in that she was an employee of the Greater Shankill Partnership. Both Members left the meeting whilst the items were under consideration.

Councillor McAteer declared an interest in item 5 (b) Lagan Gateway Update in that she was the Belfast City Council representative on the Lagan Navigation Trust.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 2 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 3 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.

Promoter Hire Requests - Boucher Road Playing Fields and Botanic Gardens

The Committee considered a number of requests from promoters seeking permission to use the Boucher Road Playing Fields and the Botanic Gardens to hold various events during specific dates throughout 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (i) granted authority for UP Productions to use the Boucher Road Playing Fields for the AVA Music Festival during September 2022, 2023 and 2024;
- (ii) granted authority for Aiken Promotions to use the Boucher Road Playing Fields for a number of agreed events during July 2022 and 2023 and for events during May, June and July 2024 and 2025;
- (iii) granted authority for Aiken to use the Botanic Gardens for a number of agreed events during May and June 2023 and 2024, 2025;
- (iv) delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate:
 - an appropriate fee which would take into consideration the costs to Council, aim to minimise any negative impact on the immediate area and take account of the potential wider benefit to the City economy, in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Manager;
 - satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement to be prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to;
 - the promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
 - the promoter meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service, including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence; and
 - a review clause, which would allow for consideration of any issues during the previous events, prior to any authorisation for future years.
- (v) noted that the above recommendations were taken as a pre-policy position, in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being progressed in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Team.

Request to film using a drone at Mary Peters Track

The Committee considered a request seeking permission to film using a SUA (Small Unmanned Aircraft/Drone) at the Mary Peters Track.

The Committee was advised that, in the absence of the Council having an agreed Drone Policy, this request required Committee approval.

The Committee approved the request from Greg Campbell, Civil Engineering Ltd Skytask Aerial Imaging to film the Belfast Milers Meet (Athletics Event) using a SUA at the Mary Peters Track on 29th May, 2021 from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm, subject to the completion of the appropriate Event Management Plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the event organisers:

- resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- meet all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities; and
- adhere to Government Covid19 Regulations in place at the time of the event.

Community Provision Grant Funding Approach 2021/22

The Committee considered a detailed report which provided an update in regard to the proposed Community Grant Funding Approach for 2021/22. The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided a comprehensive update in respect of each of the following areas of funding, along with proposed funding approach and key objectives of each of the specific community funds:

- Community Capacity and Community Buildings Revenue Grants;
- Advice Grants;
- Project/Activity Grants - COVID-19 Community Support Funding Stream (Micro and Medium Grants);
- Independently Managed Community Centres and Service Level Agreements;
- Strategic Area Based and Strategic Thematic Grant Funding; and
- Department for Communities Food and Essential Supplies Transition Fund.

Several Members expressed concern at the lack of capacity within certain communities which were deemed to have a weak community infrastructure and sought an assurance that assistance would be provided to these communities. The Director advised that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting which would give consideration in regard to future capacity building within communities.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (i) agreed that six month Letters of Offer for 2021/22 be issued to all existing recipients of the Council's Community Capacity and Community Buildings Revenue Grants at an approximate value of 50% of their 2020/21 grant allocation;
- (ii) agreed that six month Letters of Offer for 2021/22 be issued to each of the five Advice Consortia at an approximate value of 50% of their 2020/21 grant allocation;
- (iii) approved the Micro and Medium Grant Scheme 2021/22 grant approach, initially at the budgets specified;
- (iv) agreed that six month Letters of Offer for 2021/22 be issued to each of the Independently Managed Centres and SLA's at an approximate value of 50% of their 2020/21 grant allocation; and
- (v) delegated authority to the Director (Operational) City and Neighbourhood Services to:

- accept additional funding and, subject to demand and criteria of external funders, extend the indicative budgets/list of grant priorities;
- pause and re-open the micro grant programme as needed, based on demand and available budget; and
- issue Letters of Offer for all micro/medium grants under the existing scheme of delegation.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Response from the Minister for Communities
Re: draft Departmental Budget for 2021-22 in
relation to the future funding for advice services

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th February, it had been agreed that the Council would write to the Communities Minister to highlight the Committee's concern in relation to the future funding for advice services. She drew the Members' attention to the response that had been received on behalf of Minister Hargey.

The response advised that the Department allocated more than £6.4m annually to support Advice Services, including debt advice and help with benefit appeals. Most of this funding was allocated to Councils through the Community Support Fund. It went on to state that the draft 2021/22 budget presented very significant challenges for the Executive and across all departments. That said the Minister had a very clear public commitment to the work of the independent advice sector and the need to continue these services, particularly for those who were going through welfare changes.

It concluded by stating that the Minister had advised the Assembly that she would find the required funding in the budget in the new financial year.

The Committee noted the response and agreed to write a further letter to the Department for Communities to seek an update on the Council's allocation under the Community Support Programme for the current financial year.

Responses Re: Motion- Application fees
in the private rented sectors

The Democratic Services Officer reminded the Members that, at its meeting on 9th March, it had agreed that it would write to the Department for Communities and Department of Finance regarding the motion passed by the Council to outline concerns in regard to application fees in the private rented sector and to pledge the Council's support for regulation of the sector which had been proposed by Councillor Flynn and seconded by Councillor Kyle. She drew the Members' attention to the responses that had been received.

The Department for Communities (DfC) had advised that the court ruling referred to was based on Department of Finance legislation - The Commission on Disposals of Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. This legislation prohibited letting agents from charging a tenant any fee for a service that should be paid by the landlord. It stated that the Department welcomes the protection this provides to private tenants, and advises that steps had been taken to advise those living in the sector of their rights under the Department of Finance legislation.

The correspondence also referred to the 2017 Review of the Role and Regulation of the Private Rented Sector which had examined the broader issue of introducing a regulatory framework for all letting agents. It stated that the Minister had recently recommitted to this work and that the Department would pursue this objective in the longer term.

The Finance Minister had advised that his Department had responsibility for substantive land law matters and in the absence of specific legislation relating to letting agent fees, tenants had been able to rely on the provisions of the Commission on Disposals of Land (NI) Order 1986. He detailed that those provisions highlighted a general rule of land law that the buyer (or tenant) was not liable to fees that should be paid for by the seller (or landlord). With this in my mind, he advised that he, along with the Communities Minister, had issued correspondence to remind such agents of the law in relation to such fees. He stated that he was disappointed that there was evidence of continuing practice by agents in charging fees that have been ruled unlawful by the courts.

He noted that further targeted action might be required, including steps to regulate letting agents, and advised that Department of Finance officials would liaise further with officials in the Communities Department in the context of that Department's remit over the private rented sector.

Councillor Flynn asked for his disappointment in the responses to be noted.

Noted.

**Response from Department for Communities –
Affordable Warmth Update**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th March, it had agreed that the Council write to the Communities Minister to request that any underspend in funding for the Affordable Warmth Scheme (AWS) in 2020-2021 be ring-fenced for the use of the scheme and carried over into the next financial year.

The Democratic Services Officer drew the Members' attention to a response that had been received on behalf of Minister Hargey.

The correspondence advised that, under current budgeting rules, the Department did not have year-end flexibility and therefore any funding not used before the end of March 2020 would be lost to the Department. It went on to state that the Department would, however, aim to minimise any reduced requirements and seek to use these elsewhere within the Department, where budget rules permitted.

The Committee was also advised that Mr. David Polley, Director Housing Supply Policy, had agreed to attend a future meeting of the People and Communities Committee to further discuss the AWS, following an invitation extended to him after the February meeting of the Committee.

Noted.

Governance

Notices of Motion - Quarterly Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To update Committee on the agreement at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that all Standing Committees will receive a quarterly update on the Notices of Motion they are responsible for and to provide the first quarterly update for People and Communities Committee.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the People and Communities Committee:

- Notes the process for reporting Notices of Motion through Standing Committees agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and outlined in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3;
- Notes the updates to all Notices of Motion that P&C Committee is responsible for as referenced in the Appendix 1 which is attached to the report; and
- Agree to the closure of 24 Notices of Motion, noted in paragraph 3.7 below.

3.0 Main report

3.0 Background

- 3.1 At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 25th October 2019, the following Notice of Motion was agreed:

‘That this Council notes that other Councils produce a monthly status report in relation to Notices of Motion; and agrees Belfast City Council adopts a similar practice and produces a monthly Notice of Motion Update which will be brought to each full Council Meeting, detailing the following:

1. Date received
2. Notice of motion title
3. Submitted by which Councillor
4. Council meeting date
5. Committee motion is referred to
6. Outcome of committee where Notice of Motion will be debated
7. Month it will be reported back to committee
8. Other action to be taken.’

- 3.2 As a first step, officers undertook a review of existing Notices of Motion to ensure any that had been completed could be reported to Committee as closed before commencing the live database. This review was undertaken in 2020 and recommendations were brought to the November Strategic Policy and Resources Committee Committee to close 69 Notices of Motion.
- 3.3 The remaining Notices of motion were added to a new database alongside all subsequent Notices of Motion to enable quarterly reporting to the relevant Standing Committee. This is the first of the quarterly updates for People and Communities Committee showing 52 currently active Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance which this Committee is responsible for.

Notice of Motion Updates

- 3.4 People and Communities Committee is asked to note that, given the current pressures in responding to the pandemic, it has been difficult to afford the usual time towards progressing Notices of Motion. Nevertheless, there has been progress on a number of Notices of Motion.
- 3.5 Likewise, given the nature of remote working at present, it has proven more difficult than usual to coordinate the updates across all departments. Members will note that estimated completion dates and Next Steps require further updates – these will be progressed and reported back at the next quarterly update.

Closure of Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance

- 3.6 At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee Committee on 20th November, it was agreed that Notices of Motion could be closed for one of two reasons:
- Category 1 - Notices of Motion which contained an action that has been completed. All Notices of Motion within this category contained a specific task that has since been complete. It is worth noting that, when Committee agree to action a Notice of Motion, there are sometimes additional actions agreed alongside the Notice of Motion. As these are not technically part of the Notice of Motion, they are taken forward through normal committee decision making processes. The Notice of Motion can therefore be closed, but additional actions related to it will continue to be progressed and reported to the committee. These additional actions are not contained in this report, but will be noted in the live database moving forward.
 - Category 2 - Notices of Motion have become Council policy or absorbed in to a strategic programme of work. These Notices of Motion did not contain a

specific task that could be complete. Instead, they were more strategic in nature and required changes in Council policy and/ or strategy for long term outcomes. Those listed within this category have all been agreed by Committee and are now either Council policy or are currently being implemented through a Council strategy that is managed by a Standing Committee through the corporate planning process.

3.7 The Committee are asked to agree that the following 24 Notices of Motion are now closed:

Category 1 Recommended Closures:

- **Unadopted Alleyways (Ref number 8).** Update report presented to People and Communities December 20 addressing motion. Further relevant report on Alleygating Phase 5 programme approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee March 21.
- **Domestic Violence (Ref number 21).** Safe City Status accreditation in place which we must work to retain every year. The Notice of Motion is closed as the specific tasks have been completed.
- **Alley-gating Programme (Ref number 31).** Alleygating Phase 5 report presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in March 21 with agreement to take forward recommendations.
- **Purple Air (Ref number 37).** Members have been updated on relevant air quality issues including the Air Quality workshop and the Air Quality Action Plan over several reports since this issue was raised. We are undertaking a detailed assessment for the city area that will employ a combination of additional ambient air quality monitoring alongside detailed atmospheric dispersion monitoring. This is therefore closed as the specific tasks have been completed.
- **Girdwood (Ref number 41).** Update provided to North AWG in January 2020 as requested.
- **Compass Counselling (Ref number 64).** Funding of £20k provided.
- **Dunmurry Manor Care Home (Ref number 65).** NoM noted with no specific actions required.
- **DNA Testing of Dog Fouling (Ref number 66).** Update report presented to People and Communities March 21.
- **Breathe Life WHO Campaign (Ref number 69).** Recommend to close as development of our new Action Plan must follow strict UK government guidance and templates and the Breathe Life Campaign would not naturally form part of that technical development process. We have limited resources and it is important that they are directed to the development and management of the city's AQ Action Plan and the PM2.5 assessment. A lot of the work associated with the Breathe Life Campaign is already addressed through the UK legislative

framework for local air quality management and there would be limited additional value in substantially replicating this work via the Breathe Life framework.

- **Potential Opening of an entrance into Cherryvale Park from Knockbreda Road (Ref number 70).** Consultation process complete - pending Council ratification in April, officers will progress actions agreed by People and Communities March Committee relevant to this issue.
- **Cemeteries (Ref number 85).** As there are no revenue budgets available for rolling maintenance of the boundary fencing, railings, gates, etc. to the Council's cemeteries, it is recommended that this matter is referred to Physical Programmes for consideration in future planning, and therefore considered closed in terms of issues for People and Communities.
- **Cherryvale Playing Fields (Ref number 86).** This motion referred to extending the consultation, which was agreed and incorporated into the consultation process.
- **Alleyway Transformation (Ref number 87).** Action undertaken to write to DfC, DoJ and DfI regarding support and assistance for transforming alleyways. Update report presented to December 2020 People and Communities Committee. Pilot project delayed due to Covid but will be picked up when possible. Engagement with DfI re funding for greening alleyways ongoing. Report to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee/AWG's regarding Phase 5 of the Alleygating Programme in March 21. Recommend close as action specific to this issue has been addressed.
- **Pest Control Issues (Ref number 88).** Updated provided by Director of City Services in regard to provision of pest control operations in the context of Covid at August People and Communities. A further update on Environmental Health Services was presented to People and Communities in October 2020, with ongoing updates provided to Members at Strategic Policy and Resources Committee within Organisational Recovery reports.
- **Odour Colin Area (Ref number 90).** People and Communities February 21 - the Committee agreed to write to the DAERA Minister seeking the Department take immediate action to eradicate the invasive smell coming from the Mullaghglass site. Director of City Services issued letter on 3rd March to Minister. Recommendation to close as specific action taken and issue currently being addressed by Legal Services.
- **Alleygating Programme (Ref number 95).** The Member's comments were noted and included in the December People and Communities update report. Report on Phase 5 of Alleygating Programme

presented to March 21 Strategic Policy and Resources Committee with agreement to take forward.

- Residents Parking Schemes (Ref number 96). CNS confirmed on 18/02/21 this is closed.
- Recycling Centre (Ref number 106). Members were updated on response from LCCC on the use of the Cutts, and advised that any further review of a new facility in this area would need to be considered as part of a capital project.
- Gates at Cherryvale (Ref number 107). Consultation extended as agreed - responses presented to People and Communities at March 21 meeting.
- Review of Permission to Belfast City Airport to enter Victoria Park for the Management of Un-hatched Eggs under Licence from the NIEA (Ref number 110). Resolved at February 21 People and Communities when the Committee granted the requested permissions to enter Victoria Park to facilitate the continuation of pricking of un-hatched greylag goose eggs under licence issued by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and noted that the intervention to control birds in the flight path to the airport was a requirement of the airport's Civil Aviation Authority licence; and granted officers authority to liaise with legal services to issue a relevant licence for a period of 3 years which would be subject to annual review in advance of renewal.
- Roselawn Crematorium (Ref number 116). Maintenance of the gates at Roselawn Cemetery is underway, with temporary wooden gates in place.
- Urgent action to address invasive odour in Collin (Ref number 154). People and Communities February 21 - the Committee agreed write to the DAERA Minister seeking the Department take immediate action to eradicate the invasive smell coming from the Mullaghglass site. Director of City Services issued letter on 3rd March to Minister. Currently being addressed by Legal Services - recommendation to close.

3.8 Category 2 Recommended Closures:

- Action on Avoidable Winter Deaths (Ref number 121). Motion adopted at November 20 People and Communities - officers continue to work with the Council's statutory, community and voluntary partners, via Community Planning and the Living Here Board, to implement a multi-sectoral targeted Avoidable Winter Deaths Programme for the winter of 2020/21 with the aim of delivering the Belfast Warm and Well Project.
- Mental Health Awareness and Support Campaign (Ref number 122). Following discussion at November People and Communities, officers have followed up with the Chair of the Belfast Protect Life Implementation Group regarding the issues raised in

the NOM - PHA are due to attend People and Communities in Spring 2021 to update on available Mental Health, Drugs & Alcohol and Crisis Intervention services. Officers also continue to take forward mental health and drug and alcohol focussed actions referred to in this motion via Community Planning and the Living Here Board.

- 3.9 Additional information in relation to these Notices of motion and Issues Raised in Advance are available in Appendix 1 which is attached to the main report.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 There are no additional financial implications required to implement these recommendations.

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

- 3.11 There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Committee/Strategic Issues

**Consultation response for Provision of access
for outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland to DAERA**

The Committee was advised that Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) was currently undertaking a consultation exercise on the ‘Provision of access for outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland’. The closing date for responses was 29th March, but the Council had obtained an extension from DAERA to enable the draft response to be considered by the Committee.

He advised that the consultation provided an opportunity for the Council to highlight its position on the following three pieces of legislation:

- The Access to the Countryside Order (Northern Ireland) 1983;
- The Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985; and
- The Recreation and Youth Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1986

The Director advised that the input on the draft response had been sought from relevant officers who had considered current provision, current legislation along with future potential opportunities and he drew the Members’ attention to the final document which was available [here](#)

Following a query from a Member, the Director confirmed that the consultation was not considering the overall 'Right to Roam'.

The Committee endorsed the draft consultation response in relation to the Provision of access for outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland to DAERA.

Lagan Gateway Update

The Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues"

- 1.1 To update Members about the Lagan Gateway project and particularly about future management arrangements of the navigation lock and artwork on the bridge piers combined with UK Youth for Nature campaign.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- agree to explore the option of entering a Service Level Agreement or similar with the Lagan Navigation Trust to operate and manage the navigation lock and associated areas after completion of the project
- agree to develop an art piece on the bridge piers as part of the UK Youth for Nature high-profile national campaign (involving more than 10 UK cities)

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Background

The Lagan Gateway project proposes a number of structural improvements and development works at Stranmillis including the development of a navigation lock, an iconic foot and cycle bridge, the refurbishment of the existing weir and high quality landscaping with associated path connections. The project will create a connection both on the water and on land by building a navigation lock and a pedestrian/cycle bridge.

The key objectives identified for the Lagan Gateway are:

- improve the navigation of the Lagan and create a gateway to Lagan Valley Regional Park and beyond
- improve the access, safety and quality of green and open space around the Lagan
- increase the pedestrian and cycle facilities and links into Belvoir Forest Park

- improve health and well-being through providing a better living environment and enhanced exercise and recreation opportunities, accessible by all
- realise the potential of the Lagan and its surroundings as an asset for current and future generations

The project will result in improving connectivity and linkages in the area and improve biodiversity and natural habitats (removal of contaminated soil and invasive species etc). The area is partly a heritage site and the project will aim to educate and inform visitors of its significant economic and environmental history. The proposed Greenway connection will ease the pressure on the existing towpath on the Stranmillis side; the new Greenway connection will take a high number of users from the towpath and bring them onto the other side of the Lagan and into Belvoir Forest Park, which is underused.

The total investment in the project is £5.2m, with £2.15m coming from the Council's Belfast Investment Fund. Other partners are Ulster Garden Villages, Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure Rivers, the Department for Infrastructure and the Lagan Navigation Trust. Other partners are Ulster Garden Villages, Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure Rivers, the Department for Infrastructure and the Lagan Navigation Trust.

Phase 1 of the project is nearing its completion; the first section of the bridge has been lifted into place in February and the installation of the last bridge sections are planned for April 2021. The navigation lock will be completed in summer this year.

3.2 Operation/maintenance of the navigation lock

Once the navigation lock is completed it will become a Council asset and need to be operated and maintained. It is part of a wider programme that the Lagan Navigation Trust is pursuing – to open the whole navigation from Belfast to Lough Neagh and create a working waterway, which serves collaborations and local businesses playing a role in the economic and social regeneration of this heritage asset along 27 miles of the Navigation. It is the first lock re-opened in the Belfast area and will set a precedence for the further development of navigation locks. The Lagan Navigation Trust, as the custodians of the Lagan navigation expressed an interest to operate and maintain the lock and surrounding area as they aim at opening all 27 locks along 27 miles in three local government areas (Belfast City Council, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Armagh City, Banbridge, Craigavon Borough Council). The Trust's remit is geographically specific - the Lagan Navigation and its stated purpose is to reopen the Navigation. They have civil

engineers and waterways users on their Board with expertise in education, major charitable investment and Local Government expertise at both Director and elected member levels. To support their work, the Trust established a new charity, The Waterways Community, specifically to work with waterways in terms of animation, health and wellbeing, educational and cultural services related to those waterways. This is the driver for delivery of a working waterway on the Lagan. Council officers are currently working with the Chief Officer and Board (BCC has representatives on the Board) of the Lagan Navigation Trust on an appropriate agreement (Service Level Agreement or similar) to ensure that the navigation lock of the Lagan Gateway project is being operated and maintained expertly. Specifically the management will be looking at the following:

- how to address security concerns
- how to prevent inundations during surges
- potential role of a lockkeeper in operating and maintaining the lock and carrying out works such as opening and closing the gates, providing assistance with launching /tying up boats at the site, ensuring that there is free-flow of water and removal of debris such as branches, cleaning of the gates and management of stop logs

Currently the Council contributes to the core funding of the LNT – one potential mechanism being considered is ‘divert’ this into project funding i.e. the operation of the navigation lock on behalf of the Council.

3.3 Art piece on bridge piers as part of UK Youth for Nature campaign

The piers of the bridge at Stranmillis have been covered in graffiti a number of times. Though anti-graffiti paint has been applied to the piers, it is a laborious (and costly) task to remove the graffiti by the contractor. A number of longer term solutions have been explored and options have been assessed. A number of options have been ruled out including planting and the installation of panels as the bridge will require regular inspection. It is therefore recommended that artwork/murals are progressed and a number of ideas where proposed including nature murals reflecting the natural surroundings or maritime theme reflecting the river or a combination.

At the same time, UK Youth for Nature, the UK’s leading youth-led network calling on the politicians and governments of the UK to take urgent action and tackle the loss of nature, approached the Council. To draw a link between COP15 and COP26, they are aiming to create a connected pathway of wildlife murals from London to Glasgow (2+ per city) that highlight biodiversity decline and the impacts of climate change on nature. Priority locations (at this time) are: London, Exeter, Bristol/Bath, Cardiff, Birmingham, Norwich,

Nottingham, Liverpool, Belfast, Manchester, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. The UK Youth for Nature team will work with local partners to identify appropriate walls and contact and secure local artists. The topic of the design will be on biodiversity - any key habitats or species that are iconic that are disappearing from the area, to evoke people's imaginations.

They have approached the Council about the potential of using the bridge piers for the Belfast part of the campaign. The work will be carried out by a local Belfast artist/collective of young artists. Members are asked to agree that the Council works with UK Youth for Nature Team on taking forward this proposal. In agreeing this Members are asked to note that the Council will have the opportunity to agree the artists involved and so quality assure this aspect of the work. Officers from the PP Department have recently taken forward the delivery of the Entries projects in the city centre which have included a number of high quality murals and a similar approach to choosing the artist(s) will be undertaken for this project.

In addition if the proposal is agreed then Members are asked to note that the Council will need to make a financial contribution towards the costs of the project to cover the costs of paint/materials and artists costs. These costs would be taken from the existing project budget.

Benefits for the project and city as a whole:

- Reputation as supporting a green youth movement
- Environmental credentials
- Community involvement
- Low-cost quality art piece
- Positive media attention
- Potential to cooperate with other biodiversity groups/organisations
- Be part of a wider UK network
- International recognition (UN climate conference in Glasgow in 2021)

Members are asked to agree the proposal of developing an art piece on the bridge piers as part of the UK Youth for Nature high-profile national campaign (involving more than 10 UK cities).

3.5 Other

Members are asked to note that other issues have been raised in relation to ASB in the area. Members are asked to note that the Council's community safety team are aware of this and additional patrols are being carried out on the area. In addition we have installed mobile CCTV to monitor the bridge which will alert the contractor if there are any issues. Officers are also looking at longer term mitigation measures including the installation of permanent CCTV and are

working with DFI on this. We have also had a request in terms of looking at the installation of night time gates on the Bridge. Members are asked to note that gates on the bridge were not part of the original design/scope and would not be in keeping with the ethos of the Bridge which was to open up access to the area. Given this at this stage we are not looking at the installation of these as there is no evidence that these are required as the Bridge has not yet opened. This will be kept under review.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.6 Additional financial or resource allocations for the operation/management of the navigation lock are being explored at the moment; once these are being established a report will be brought back to committee.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.7 None.”

The Committee:

- agreed to explore the option of entering a Service Level Agreement, or similar, with the Lagan Navigation Trust to operate and manage the navigation lock and associated areas after completion of the project; and
- agreed to develop an art piece on the bridge piers as part of the UK Youth for Nature high-profile national campaign (involving more than ten UK cities).

Naming of Parks and Bridges

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Members to consider the naming process for the new park in Colin, being developed under the Urban Villages Programme and a naming process for the new bridge installed at Springfield Dam as part of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway, developed under the Peace IV Shared Spaces theme and the new bridge currently being installed as part of the Lagan Gateway Project.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Approve the naming process, in line with current Council policy, for

- a. New Park in Colin
- b. New bridge - Springfield Dam
- c. New bridge - Lagan Gateway Project

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members are advised that the former Parks & Leisure Committee, at its meeting in August 2008 agreed a policy framework for managing requests to name parks.

3.2 The policy has also previously been used to (re)name a bridge on the Connswater Community Greenway, and follows a 4 stage process;

1. Engagement with key stakeholders to develop a long list of new park names, which reflect;

- ❖ a sense of place, reflecting the geographic location, community, neighbourhood or street where the park, facility or amenity is located.
- ❖ the historical significance of the area or reflects unique characteristics of the site (unique flora / fauna).

2. Shortlisted names based on stakeholder feedback and assessed against the policy criteria as outlined above;

3. Community consultation on the agreed shortlisted names;

4. Recommendation to People & Communities Committee to reflect preferred name identified via the community consultation.

3.3 Names will not be considered which:

- Cause confusion due to duplication or names sounding similar to existing named facilities/locations within the City.
- Unlawfully discriminate within the meaning and scope of the provisions of
- Section 75, the Good Relations Plan (2007) and the Shared Future agenda.
- Are party-political in intention or use.

3.4 Members will be aware that a number of new facilities / structures are due to be operationalised over the next number of months, which required to be named or were we have received representation that naming should be considered, these sites / structures are;

- New Park in Colin
- New Bridge at Springfield Dam
- New Bridge – Lagan Gateway Project

- 3.5 As each project is at different stages in their development and operate under different governance arrangements, mainly as a result of how the projects are funded, the consideration of naming are at different stages.
- 3.6 Below for Members consideration is the proposed approach, in line with the agreed policy, for the 3 sites / structures detailed above;

New Park in Colin

Background

- 3.7 The Council are currently working in partnership with the Urban Villages Initiative to develop a large scale 'destination' park in the Colin area of the city. The new park, which represents an investment of over £4m in the area, will include a new play park, pump track, education zone and extensive new pathways.
- 3.8 Work on the park is currently well underway and completion is planned for June/July this year. As this is a new facility it is now appropriate to name the park.

Naming Process

- 3.9 An initial engagement exercise was carried out with key local stakeholders to develop several options for a name for the new park. The initial, agreed options were:
1. Páirc Nua Colin
 2. Leap of Faith Park
 3. Sherwood Park
 4. Colin New Park
- 3.10 Following some additional discussion with the Council's Irish Language Officer, it was agreed to look at adding a further option to this list:
5. Páirc Nua Chollan
- 3.11 This option represents the 'full' Irish translation of the name 'Colin New Park', rather than the English/Irish hybrid version represented by option 1 above. It was agreed that offering the
- 3.12 English version of the name alongside an English/Irish hybrid option, whilst not offering a full Irish option, would not represent best practice and could leave the Council open to challenge. The spelling of the name Colin as 'Chollan' is also in line with the spelling used in many place names in the Colin area.

- 3.13 The addition of this fifth option has received support from all the key stakeholders initially engaged to develop the original four options.
- 3.14 In line with the Council's naming policy, Committee approval is now being sought to carry out a full public consultation around these five naming options. The results of this consultation will then be brought back to Committee seeking approval to select the final name for the park prior to opening

Springfield Dam Bridge

Background

- 3.15 Springfield Dam Park opened to the public in December 2020 following the completion of a major refurbishment which included the installation of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the dam, new walking and cycling pathways, and the creation of a new event space.

An outdoor classroom for schools and community groups was also created, as well as viewing platforms, additional lighting and planting.

- 3.16 Belfast City Council delivered the £1.2 million project with funding from the EU's PEACE IV Programme, as well as Department for Communities who also provided 10 acres of land, including a former cooling dam, for the scheme.
- 3.17 Springfield Dam forms a key milestone in the cross-community Forth Meadow Community Greenway project, a 12 km long greenway which will link communities from North Belfast through the West, into the city centre.

Naming Process

- 3.18 The park itself is known as Springfield Dam Park. However, interest has been expressed in naming the new bridge which has been built across the dam. There are number of workstrands under the Forth Meadow Community Greenway Project which would offer opportunities for local engagement taking forward stage 1 of the (re)naming process. Following on from this the proposed long list will be brought back to Committee for consideration before going out to public consultation to enable the final name to be agreed.

Lagan Gateway Bridge

- 3.19 The Lagan Gateway project proposes a number of structural improvements and development works at Stranmillis including the development of a navigation lock, an iconic

foot and cycle bridge, the refurbishment of the existing weir and high quality landscaping with associated path connections. The project will create a connection both on the water and on land by building a navigation lock and a pedestrian/cycle bridge.

Members will have already noted in the previous update report that the new pedestrian and cycle bridge will be fully installed later in Spring. The first section of the bridge has been lifted into place with huge interest of media and general public in February. The Council already received a number of queries regarding the potential naming of the bridge and we would like to give stakeholders an opportunity to suggest a name for this new asset in the area.

The naming process will follow the four stage process as outlined above and include

- 2 week consultation period during which stakeholders will have the opportunity to submit ideas for the name of the bridge
- Following this, a panel of judges will meet to consider the submissions and shortlist a number of potential names against the criteria in the naming policy. It is proposed that the Panel is made up of Council officers again with Project Board members which will include funding partners
- Public will then have an opportunity to vote on the shortlisted options. The final bridge name will be determined by the majority vote and will be brought back to Committee to be considered for agreement within context of BCC's naming policy.

- 3.20 As with previous naming processes, communication and advertising will be used to engage and inform the public about the naming process and to ensure that people are aware of the opportunity to submit naming ideas etc.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.21 All costs associated with the naming / signage requirements will be picked as part of the overall capital costs associated with each site.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.2.1 The naming process followed will be in line with the Council's naming policy and the chosen name will be screened in line with the Council's equality process."

The Committee approved the naming process, in line with current Council policy, for the new park in Colin and new bridges at the Springfield Dam and the Lagan Gateway Project.

**Update on Progress with Development of a new
Air Quality Action Plan and concerning the
Detailed Assessment for Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5})
and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) for Belfast City**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The Committee will be aware that Council Air Quality staff have been working with Competent Authorities and other partner organisations within the city to develop a new 5-year Air Quality Action Plan for Belfast covering the period 2021-2026.**
- 1.2 A paper was presented to the remote Committee meeting of 9th February 2021 detailing a list of proposed actions that the Council and our partner organisations are proposing to implement throughout the duration of the new Action Plan in order to address the few remaining nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) hotspots within our Air Quality Management Areas and to improve ambient air quality generally for the city.**
- 1.3 Since that remote Committee meeting, Air Quality staff and our partners have continued development of the new Air Quality Action Plan, including arrangements for consultation and engagement on the requirements of the new plan.**
- 1.4 Members may recall that following a previous air quality update report, presented to the Committee meeting on Tuesday 8th September 2020 (agenda item 7a), the Committee agreed consultation and engagement in respect of the new Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan and noted the comments to include engagement with communities and business interests and specifically the West Belfast Taxi Consortium.**
- 1.5 This report serves therefore to present final proposals for consultation and engagement on the new Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 for Members consideration and approval.**
- 1.6 This report additionally serves to provide, from paragraph 3.1 onwards, a brief update to Committee on progress with the Detailed Assessment for Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and concerning the ambient monitoring component of this project.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee are invited to;

- Consider and approve the proposals for consultation and engagement on the new Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026.
- Identify any additional specific groups to be included within the proposed consultation and engagement process.
- Agree that a report will be provided to the 11th May 2021 remote meeting of the Committee concerning ambient monitoring aspects of the Detailed Assessment project and that Council Air Quality staff and representatives from AECOM, the appointed consultant, will attend that meeting in order to answer Member questions or queries concerning the ambient monitoring proposals.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues.

3.1 Proposals for consultation and engagement on the new Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026.

Part III of the Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002 establishes statutory requirements for Northern Ireland district councils to periodically review and assess ambient air quality within their districts, for the designation of Air Quality Management Areas when health based air quality objectives are not being achieved, and for the development and consultation on Air Quality Action Plans.

3.2 ‘Schedule 2 Air Quality: Supplemental Provisions’ of the Order advises in relation to consultation requirements that a district council, in carrying out its functions in relation to the preparation of an Action Plan shall consult the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA); each district council whose district is contiguous to the council’s district; such competent authorities exercising functions in, or in the vicinity of, the council’s district as the council may consider appropriate; such bodies or persons appearing to the council to be representative of persons with business interests in the district to which the action plan relates as the council may consider appropriate and; such other bodies or persons as the council may consider appropriate.

- 3.3 Moreover, the Defra template being employed for development of the new Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 contains a section for reporting on the outworkings of any consultation process and stakeholder engagement. As part of the template, councils are required to provide a summary of their engagement activities, including for example, websites used, articles in local newspapers and examples of any questionnaires distributed to households. In addition, the final Action Plan must include a section summarising responses to any consultation or stakeholder engagement, together with an explanation of the reasons for not pursuing action plan measures, taking account of stakeholder views or comments.
- 3.4 Considering the above-mentioned statutory consultation requirements, it is proposed that Belfast City Council will schedule a 12-week consultation and engagement exercise on the Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026, to include completion of an associated Equality Screening and Rural Needs Assessment. It is anticipated that the consultation and engagement exercise will run from 10th May 2021 until 30th July 2021.
- 3.5 As part of the consultation and engagement exercise, the Council will consult directly with DAERA and relevant Competent Authorities concerning the new Air Quality Action Plan. It should be noted however that the Competent Authorities are represented on the Air Quality Action Planning Steering Group that developed the new Action Plan and that they have contributed the majority of the Action Plan measures. It should also be noted that some Competent Authorities will themselves be required to undertake separate consultation exercises on the measures that they have proposed. Consultation and engagement on the Air Quality Action Plan will therefore be undertaken in a manner so as not to replicate any consultation exercises being undertaken by partner organisations. We will however encourage our partner organisations to publicise the Council's consultation and engagement exercise through their various fora.
- 3.6 In addition, Belfast City Council will provide copies of the Air Quality Action Plan to Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Ards and North Down Borough Council in order to obtain their views.
- 3.7 In respect of bodies or persons appearing to the Council to be representative of persons with business interests in the district to which Action Plan relates, the Committee has already identified the West Belfast Taxi Consortium. The Committee is invited however to identify any further business interests that should be specifically consulted and engaged concerning the new Air Quality Action Plan.

- 3.8 Whilst not identified as a specific consultee within Schedule 2 of the Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002, the Council intends to seek the views of the general public in Belfast on the new Air Quality Action Plan in order to address the Committee requirement for community engagement. It is proposed that public consultation and engagement will be facilitated via an article in the June 2021 edition of City Matters, via a tailored social media campaign and through an online consultation and engagement exercise delivered via the Council's '*Your Say Belfast*' engagement hub.
- 3.9 Air Quality staff have already received requests from some Councillors for engagement with specific Community Groups as part of the Action Plan consultation and engagement process. In view of likely continuing Covid-19 restrictions, it is anticipated that engagement of this nature could be achieved through the use of online meeting tools such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom or equivalent. Accordingly, the Committee is invited to identify any additional Community or other groups to be included within this aspect of the proposed public consultation and engagement exercise.
- 3.10 At the conclusion of the consultation and engagement exercise, Air Quality staff will analyse the findings of the various surveys and submissions, provide feedback to our partners and agree any necessary final revisions to the Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026. The completed Action Plan will then be submitted to Defra for technical appraisal, ahead of formal adoption and implementation. A further progress report will be provided to Committee at this time.
- 3.11 Update on Progress with the Detailed Assessment for Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂).
- By way of a brief update on progress concerning the detailed assessment for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), Members may recall from the, '*Update on Local Air Quality Management Matters*' paper (agenda item 8b) presented to the 12th January 2021 remote Committee meeting, that a tender exercise was underway with a view to appointing a contractor to deliver the detailed assessment project from early 2021. The Committee is advised that as a result of the competitive tender exercise, AECOM has since been appointed to deliver the detailed assessment project.
- 3.12 Members may additionally recall that the detailed assessment project comprises three principal technical components; additional ambient monitoring across the city for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), development of an emissions inventory to characterise significant emission sources of these pollutants within the

city area and atmospheric dispersion modelling for the city area in order to generate spatial and temporal predictions for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) concentrations that can be compared with national and European air quality standards and World Health Organisation air quality guideline values.

- 3.13 Having now concluded initial contractual arrangements with AECOM, Council Air Quality staff have recently commenced preliminary discussions with AECOM representatives in order to determine suitable locations for installation of the additional ambient monitoring equipment. The monitors are to be installed, having regard to the relevant public exposure requirements outlined within the government's local air quality management technical guidance document (LAQM.TG(16)). However, in order to afford Committee with an opportunity to consider the monitoring locations currently proposed by AECOM and to provide input into final locations, it is proposed that a report concerning ambient monitoring proposals will be presented to the 11th May 2021 remote Committee meeting. It is additionally proposed that AECOM and Council Air Quality staff will attend the remote meeting in order to respond to any questions or queries that Members may have.

Financial and Resource Implications.

- 3.14 Development and delivery of the proposed consultation and engagement exercise is to be undertaken by Air Quality and Business Research and Development staff from within existing resources.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications /
Rural Needs Assessments.**

- 3.15 An Equality Screening and a Rural Needs Assessment are to be undertaken as components of the consultation and engagement exercise on the Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026."

The Committee:

- approved the proposals for consultation and engagement in respect of the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026;
- agreed that the following additional specific groups would be included within the proposed consultation and engagement process: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast Metropolitan College, Belfast Chamber of Commerce. In addition, locality organisations in areas where breaches had been identified, Friends of the Earth, British Heart Foundation, British Lung Foundation, Trade Unions and the Public Health Agency; and

- agreed that a report would be submitted to the May meeting of the Committee in regard to ambient monitoring aspects of the detailed assessment project and that Council Air Quality staff and representatives from AECOM, the appointed consultant, would attend the meeting to answer Members questions concerning the ambient monitoring proposals.

Chairperson