

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 6th August, 2024

MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Verner (Chairperson);
Councillors Abernethy, Bell, Bower,
Bunting, Canavan, M. Donnelly, R-M Donnelly,
Flynn, Garrett, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, McKeown,
I. McLaughlin and Ó Néill.

In attendance: Mr. D. Sales, Strategic Director City Operations;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mr. S. Leonard, Director OSSS and Resources and
Fleet;
Mr. J. Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Ms. C. Donnelly, Committee Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Also attended: Councillor de Faoite

Apologies

An apology was received from Councillor R. Brooks.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th June were taken as read and signed as correct.

It was reported that the minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July.

Declarations of Interest

The Chairperson, Councillor Verner, declared an interest in agenda item 3 (a) Community Support Programme 2024/25 in that she was an employee of the Greater Shankill Partnership (Spectrum Centre) that had made an application for funding through the Programme and she left the meeting whilst the matter was discussed.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following two 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 meeting during discussion of the following two items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Members were advised that content of 'restricted' reports and any discussion which takes place during closed session must be treated as 'confidential information' and no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

2023/2024 Year End Finance Update

The Committee was updated in respect of the financial position of the People and Communities Committee for Quarter 4, which confirmed an underspend of £1.286m (1.2%) of the £103.48m budget.

The main reasons for this were savings in employee budgets due to vacancies and waste contract cost reductions as well as additional income from events and grants.

The Committee was advised that a report outlining the year end position for the Council had been submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 21st June, together with the Quarter 4 finance report and year-end treasury position.

The Committee noted the year-end financial position.

UK Emissions Trading Scheme scope expansion: waste - consultation response

The Committee considered the draft Belfast City Council response to the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) Authority Consultation – UK Emissions Trading Scheme scope expansion: waste. The Director OSSS and Resources and Fleet explained that this consultation was seeking the Council's views on the proposals to expand the scheme to include energy from waste and waste incineration.

The Committee endorsed the draft response, as attached to the report, and agreed that it be submitted in draft form by the closing date of 2nd August, noting that it was subject to ratification at the September meeting of the Council.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Community Support Programme 2024/25

Following her declaration at the start of the meeting in relation to this agenda item, the Chairperson, Councillor Verner, left the meeting and the Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Garrett took the Chair.

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The main purpose of this report is to:

- inform Members that Council has received the Letter of Offer for the Community Support Programme 24/25 from the Department for Communities (DfC).
- advise Members that the Chief Executive has accepted the Letter of Offer, subject to Council approval and seek approval for him to accept subsequent Letters of Variance on behalf of the Council.
- seek Members’ approval to issue further payments to funded organisations upon their completion of monitoring and relevant administrative checks.
- seek agreement from Members on the option to allocate the additional funding provided, based on the detail provided in the report.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the funding allocation of £2,575,577.30 presented in the Letter of Offer from the DfC for the 2024/25 financial year.
- Note that the Chief Executive has accepted the Letter of Offer, subject to Council approval and seek approval for him to accept subsequent Letters of Variance on behalf of the Council.
- Agree their preferred option relating to the Community Support General additional funding.
- Agree the proposed additional funding allocation for; Community Support General, Advice Grant, Welfare Reform Mitigations Extension-Tribunal Representation, Welfare Reform Mitigations- Face to Face Advice and Social Supermarket
- Approve the progression of funding payments, where appropriate, following completion of due diligence requirements based on the proposals.

3.0 Main Report

Background

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the Department for Communities (DfC) provides an annual grant to Council through its Community Support Programme (CSP) Letter of Offer. This funding provides an element of the budget towards Capacity Building and Revenue for Community Building grants as well as Generalist Advice.**

3.2 The CSP also provides 100% funding for other elements of activity such as Social Supermarkets and Welfare Reform Mitigations.

3.3 At March Committee, Officers advised that the Community Support Programme (CSP) Letter of Offer for 24/25 had not yet been received by Council from DfC. Therefore, Members granted approval for officers to progress funding agreements and provide 50% payments for the Capacity Building, Revenue for Community Building grants and Generalist Advice.

3.4 Council received the CSP 2024/25 Letter of Offer from DfC on 3 July 2024. There is an increase to this year's funding across several elements. A breakdown of the allocation for 2024/25 in comparison to 2023/24 is attached at Appendix 1

Social Supermarket Funding

3.5 Members may be aware that Social Supermarket funding was considered at a Special SP&R meeting on 28th June 2024. Members were advised at this meeting that DfC had indicated that the total allocation for Social Supermarkets would be £672,687.77 in 24/25.

3.6 SP&R agreed to provide an additional council allocation to provide the maximum amount of funding recommended to successful applicants. Further detail is provided in Appendix 2. The figure in the LoO is slightly less than indicated, £672,650.06, but this will have no impact as it can be covered through existing budgets.

Additional Funding by CSP Heading

3.7 Table 1 illustrates the available budgets created under each heading by combining the additional allocation CSP increase and 5% Unrestricted Funding (Non-Recurrent).

3.8 Table 1

CSP Heading	Additional Funds 2024/25
1. Community Support General	£81,786.34
2. Advice Grant	£59,946.84
3. Welfare Reform Mitigations Extension Tribunal Representation- Appeals	£6,942.02
4. Welfare Reform Mitigations Extension Face to face Advice	£11,738.96

Proposed Allocation of Additional Funds

3.9 It is proposed that additional funding for elements 2-4 should be allocated using the agreed approaches. Further detail is provided in Appendix 3. Members are asked to agree the proposed allocations for the 3 elements i.e. Advice Grant, Welfare Reform Mitigations Extension Tribunal Representation- Appeals and Welfare Reform Mitigations Extension Face to face Advice.

3.10 Members are asked to consider and agree their preferred option for allocating the additional funding provided under the Community Support General heading (£81,786.34) as outlined in Table 2. Further detail on the organisations funded through Capacity and Revenue awards is provided in Appendix 4.

Table 2

Option	Description	Pro	Con
1	Allocate all the additional funding to the 87 Revenue Funded groups. Each group will receive a non-recurrent payment of £940.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue funding supports running costs in community buildings. Applicants have highlighted the impact of increased running costs which this award would help to address. • Revenue applicants receive an annual award of up to £20,000. This is a lower value than the award to Capacity applicants which is up to £50,000 and therefore Revenue applicants are more impacted by increased costs and this option would provide an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity funded organisations do not have access to these additional funds yet are also experiencing increased costs.

		additional award targeted at those who receive less funding.	
2	Allocate the funding to Revenue and Capacity funded groups. 130 organisations will receive a non-recurrent payment of £629	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue and Capacity organisations will receive additional funding to meet their running costs and provide services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option does not take into account the difference in the annual level of funding to both Revenue and Capacity applicants.

Financial Implications

3.11 All awards listed in Appendices 3 & 4 can be made in line with existing budgets for 24/25. Members should note that the Capacity and Revenue awards which are multi annual awards from 23/26 were enhanced with a £1.4 million additional Council allocation. As previously advised, this allocation will have to be provided in 24/25 and 25/26 financial years.

Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

3.12 This will be considered throughout, and any appropriate issues highlighted to Members. Any amendments to existing scheme or new scheme will be considered in the context of any equality/good relations and rural needs considerations.”

During discussion the Members agreed Option 2 as the preferred option and agreed to progress on this basis. Following a query, the Members noted that the allocation of revenue grants was currently being reviewed and that consideration of removing the £20,000.00 cap per organisation would be considered as part of the review.

The Committee:

- Noted the funding allocation of £2,575,577.30 presented in the Letter of Offer from the DfC for the 2024/25 financial year;
- Noted that the Chief Executive had accepted the Letter of Offer, subject to Council approval and granted approval for him to accept subsequent Letters of Variance on behalf of the Council;

- Agreed Option 2, as the preferred option relating to the Community Support General additional funding, to allocate funding to Revenue and Capacity funded groups with 130 organisations receiving a non-recurrent payment of £629.00;
- Agreed the proposed additional funding allocation for Community Support General, Advice Grant, Welfare Reform Mitigations Extension-Tribunal Representation, Welfare Reform Mitigations-Face to Face Advice and Social Supermarket; and
- Approved the progression of funding payments, where appropriate, following completion of due diligence requirements based on the proposals.

At this stage in proceedings, the Chairperson, Councillor Verner, returned to the Chair.

Notices of Motion Update

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services drew the Members' attention to a report which provided an update on the Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance which had previously been allocated to the People and Communities Committee. He advised that the report provided an overview of the progress on those Notice of Motions and Issues Raised in Advance which remained open following the December 2023 update, and those Motions and Issues which had since arisen.

The Members were reminded that, at its meeting held on 20th November 2020, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed that Notices of Motion could be closed for one of the following two reasons:

- Category 1 – Notices of Motion which contained an action that had been completed; and/or
- Category 2 – Notices of Motion have become Council Policy or been absorbed into a strategic programme of work.

Based on the aforementioned rationale, the Committee noted the respective updates as detailed in the report and agreed to the closure the following 10 Notices of Motion / Issues Raised in Advance:

- Play Facilities for Children with Disabilities (Ref 27);
- School Uniform Exchange (Ref 63);
- CCTV at CS Lewis Square (Ref 159);
- Fast Track Cities (Ref 357);
- XL Bully Restrictions (Ref 370);
- Request for Lagan Valley Regional Park and HED to address Committee regarding Giant's Ring (Ref 372);
- Renaming of Suffolk Community Garden (Ref 378);
- Request from Glentoran Football Club to address Committee (Ref 390);
- Belfast City Council Inclusive Play Parks (Ref 254); and
- Inclusive Leisure Services (Ref 287).

Operational Issues

Mutual Aid Across Councils - Emergency Planning Response

The Committee considered a report which provided an update regarding the District Council Mutual Aid Protocol.

The Director of City Services reported that Mutual Aid was defined as “an agreement between organisations, within the same sectors and across boundaries, to provide assistance and additional resources during an emergency or business continuity disruption which may go beyond the resources of an individual organisation”. She explained that Mutual Aid arrangements existed between all District Councils in relation to multi-agency responses, with the Protocol having previously been approved at a meeting of the People and Communities Committee held on Tuesday 13th June 2017.

The Protocol had been developed in recognition of the fact that mutual aid might be required between District Councils, and it was in line with the principals of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and Civil Contingencies Framework 2021. She advised that the Protocol was not a legally binding contract but rather a statement of intent which would act as a point of reference should such arrangements need to be invoked between two or more of the Councils.

She explained that each of the Councils would endeavour to assist in the form of provision of personnel and/or equipment if there was an excessive demand for a statutory service placed on a Council due to an unusual event. The Protocol would be activated following, or in anticipation of, an emergency as defined in the NI Civil Contingencies Framework: *“An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare, the environment or the security of Northern Ireland or the UK as a whole.”*

The Director reported that the MoU had recently been reviewed by the Civil Contingencies regional team and it had requested that the Councils update and sign the updated version.

The Committee agreed the working arrangements as defined in the Mutual Aid Protocol.

Playground Improvement Programme 2024/25

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the successful 2023-2024 Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) and outline plans for new playground refurbishments under the 2024-2025 programme.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee are asked to agree refurbishment works at the sites below as part of the Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) 2024-2025:

- Grampian Avenue playground
- Michelle Baird playground
- Balfour Avenue playground

3.0 Main report

Playground Improvement Programme

3.1 Since its inception in 2012, the Playground Refurbishment Programme continues to make a positive impact to the overall quality and play value of the city's playgrounds, providing new equipment, safety surfacing, boundary fencing, site furniture and landscaping works. Under last year's programme the following playgrounds were successfully refurbished (see Appendix 1):

- Loughside playground
- Northlink playground
- New Lodge playground

3.2 As agreed at P&C Committee in December 2023, independent consultants undertook an audit of play value and accessibility at all council-maintained playgrounds in April 2024. The audit template combined formats used by Play Scotland and Play England and in consultation with PlayBoard NI, Mae Murray Foundation and council's Play Development Officer. The independent audit allows council to identify playgrounds that, although good in terms of the quality and safety compliance of their equipment, would benefit from an enhanced range of play opportunities and accessible elements.

3.3 Play value is used to describe the value an environment, object or piece of equipment brings to a child's experience of play, with high play value indicating children can play in many different ways. Through play children learn and develop their cognitive skills, problem-solving, social skills, and their fine and gross motor skills. A range of play opportunities is crucial to a child's development and enjoyment of a playground.

3.4 The play value and accessibility audit was undertaken by Play Services Ireland (PSI) Ltd in addition to their annual suite of playground safety inspections. As agreed, scores from the play value and accessibility audit has informed site selection for PIP 2024-25 and will inform subsequent improvement programmes going forward. Total scores

allocated for each playground relate to existing features, elements within the playground that are not play equipment but do enhance users experience, and types of play opportunities available and their accessibility for a range of age groups and abilities (see Appendix 2).

- 3.5 All playgrounds were ranked in order of their total play value and accessibility score, helping to identify which facilities are in most need of improvement. If scores were tied sites were ranked using their combined play score; if these scores were also tied sites were then ranked in alphabetical order (see Appendix 3).
- 3.6 PSI Ltd. categorised all playgrounds as either Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) or Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP). Members should note that due to their scale, neighbourhood facilities have the potential to offer a wider range of accessible play opportunities than smaller local facilities, therefore neighbourhood facilities would cost more to refurbish than smaller, local facilities.
- 3.7 LEAPs and NEAPs are colour coded on the results table (Appendix 3) helping to identify their size and the potential scale of investment required. This will determine how many playground sites can be improved annually within the available capital budget.
- 3.8 In reference to the results table, members will note that Cathedral Gardens, received the second lowest score. It is recommended that this site is not considered for refurbishment under PIP 2024-25 as this is a temporary facility on a site to be redeveloped under the Capital Programme.
- 3.9 It is also recommended that Bridge End playground, the third lowest scoring playground, is also omitted from selection as this facility is due to be improved using a developer contribution under a Section 76 Planning Agreement.
- 3.10 Therefore, based on estimated costs to deliver improvements within the available capital budget, three playgrounds were selected for refurbishment this financial year, they are:
 - Grampian Avenue Playground (LEAP)
 - Michelle Baird Playground (LEAP)
 - Balfour Avenue Playground (NEAP)
- 3.11 Once improvement works are complete, or in the event of other capital investment in any playground, sites will be independently re-evaluated with the results table amended accordingly.

- 3.12 It is proposed to review the play value and accessibility audit process in five years to ensure it aligns with best practice guidance, with the option to seek approval to update and repeat the audit process if necessary.
- 3.13 Members should note that independent safety inspections, which informed site selection in previous years, will continue annually to identify essential repairs and ensure ongoing compliance with relevant safety standards. All repairs will be completed in parallel with improvement works under PIP.
- 3.14 The previous selection process focused on the quality and safety compliance of play equipment and did not consider play opportunities provided or how accessible they were.
- 3.15 The new audit and selection process provides an opportunity to enhance play value and improve accessibility at those facilities in most need, it also provides a useful tool that will inform future design decisions under PIP.
- 3.16 Members should also note that accessible parking and toilet provision was also assessed as part of the audit. Whilst delivery of these features would be outside the remit of PIP, findings from the audit will be used to inform future capital projects in our parks and open spaces. Subsequently, council officers have had discussions with the Mae Murray Foundation and Playboard NI around the development of concept designs for an exemplar, inclusive play space, with supporting infrastructure, that will meet the varying play needs of every child; initial discussions have aligned with key issues raised under the Notice of Motion, June 2022 – Inclusive Play Parks.
- 3.17 The December 2023 committee requested that a copy of the Annual Safety Inspection 2023 Playground Mean Quality scores were circulated. This is included in Appendix 4.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.18 All proposed playground improvement works will be funded through the Capital Programme within an allocated budget of £580,000. CNS Landscape Planning & Development Officers will continue to re-design play facilities and project manage all works associated with the delivery of PIP 2024-25.
- 3.19 As with previous years, CNS OSS Managers will continue to assist with the distribution of information relating to playground improvements to elected members, local communities, and user groups.

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

3.20 None.”

Following a query, the Director, OSSS and Resources and Fleet, advised that currently there was delays to necessary repair works due to appointed contractors struggling with turnaround times and he agreed to investigate if this could be expedited.

At the request of a Member, it was also agreed to add the Divis Backpath to the list of playgrounds to be audited.

The Committee agreed refurbishment works at the following playgrounds as part of the Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) 2024-2025:

- Grampian Avenue playground;
- Michelle Baird playground; and
- Balfour Avenue playground.

Update on Glass Collections and Small Vehicles Pilot

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress made to date in the planning and launch of three initiatives to improve the service delivery and recycling performance of Waste Collections within Resources and Fleet. These initiatives are

- **Small Streets Pilot with PSNI/DFI**
- **Introduction of Small Vehicles for Difficult to Access Streets**
- **Expansion of Separate Glass Collection Services.**

It will be seen that these initiatives have been progressed to such a stage that officers will provide regular progress reports to Committee going forward.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report, in particular

- **The status of the collaborative work with PSNI/DFI**
- **the phased introduction of small vehicle routes to difficult to access streets commencing 12th August 2024**

- the letter of offer from DAERA in relation to the BCC application to the DAERA Household Waste Collaborative Change Programme for match funding to procure equipment (containers and vehicles) for expanded glass collections

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Small Streets Pilot in collaboration with PSNI and DFI.

3.2 Members will be aware that this pilot was launched on 6th May 2024, with the first area identified as the side streets from the Stranmillis Road in the University area. The plan was envisaged to run as follows.

Area	Start Date
Stranmillis Rd Area	06/05/2024
Donegall Road / Village Area	03/06/2024
Cregagh/ Loopland Area	01/07/2024
Springfield Road Area	29/07/2024
Lower Ormeau Road/ Park Road Area	26/08/2024
'Iveagh' Area	23/09/2024

3.3 It was envisaged that in each area the timetable would be as follows:

Week 1 – BCC staff Letter Drop to residents addresses and social media postings

Week 2 – PSNI will patrol and letter windscreens of poorly parked vehicles with leaflets.

Weeks 3-6 – Increased presence of joint PSNI/DFI neighbourhood officers and traffic attendants

3.4 To date three areas have gone ahead as per the plan. Letter drops by BCC officers were carried out as planned, and DFI patrolling was carried out as agreed. Unfortunately, the PSNI have informed council officers that they have not been able to provide resources as planned due to other prioritised operational pressures during this period.

3.5 At the time of writing, two areas have gone through their first cycle and the third will end soon. Officers have started looking at the data from these areas, both before and after each cycle, and hope to bring in more detailed analysis and results to the September 2024 Committee meeting. Officers have asked if DFI can provide some relevant data but unfortunately, they have let it be known that their systems are not configured to report on a street by street basis. Therefore, data will be collected from BCC records only.

- 3.6 As a note, officers can confirm that at the request of a Member from the area, a small adjustment has been made to the streets proposed in the Springfield Road area, namely Rose Street has been removed and Waterford Gardens and Cavendish Street have been added.

Introduction of Small Vehicles for Difficult to Access Streets

- 3.7 The previous update to Committee in February 2024 outlined a proposed timeline of a launch of this initiative sometime in Q1 2024 (March – June) with actual dates to be confirmed. This was subject to timely procurement of suitable Refuse Collection Vehicles and the successful recruitment of staff to run or backfill for the duration of this trial.

In addition, officers reported that significant data analysis was ongoing in order to test the assumptions of the Consultant's report and findings and to create as effective and efficient routes as possible prior to operational launch.

- 3.8 Since then Waste Collection officers have been working on those outstanding actions. Good progress has been made:

- Two 18 tonnes Dennis Eagle Refuse Collection Vehicles have been leased for an initial period of 12 months; and
- Staff have been sourced to operate the proposed routes.

Since their arrival the collection vehicles have been utilised in some rigorous testing of the Consultant's report findings, to

- Verify access to defined streets;
- Test the numbers of bins presented, and the actual weight of waste being produced within the defined streets compared to the consultants report; and
- Carry out actual timings of travel times between streets and frequency and travel times to tip and the Waste Transfer Station.

The revised 'actual' information will be considered when preparing routing plans for the new vehicles.

- 3.9 From the testing it has been found that the figures in the consultant's report may be a little optimistic. This is due mainly to actual increased weights within bins vis a vis the estimates in the consultants report and the increased occurrence of more than one black bin being presented per household over and above the consultants expectation. Both of these factors have resulted in smaller route sizes

due to the necessity to tip fully laden vehicles at the Waste Transfer Station more often than envisaged.

- 3.10 Because of these variances, Waste Collections propose to introduce the small vehicles in a phased approach. This is to ensure that the service does not raise unachievable expectations and then have to reverse changes to routing which may prove problematic. This is also designed to minimise the number of changes to collection days for residents.

The planned phases are as follows:

Phase 1 – Aug 12th to Sept 30th

- One vehicle will be fully loaded with Black Bin collection routes and will be fully monitored to establish if the routes have spare capacity or are overloaded in practice. This will continue for 6 weeks giving each chosen street 3 collections (1 per fortnight). Any spare capacity or overloading issues will be quantified and streets added to / removed from routes as deemed appropriate; and
- The second vehicle will be used for on going route development and refinement. Further trials will take place for blue and brown bin collections to establish as accurate routes as possible.

Phase 2 – Sept 30th – Nov 4th

- Second period of 6 weeks(3 collection rounds);
- The first vehicle routes will be fully established and operational. Should there be surplus capacity this will be made available in the short term for Brown and Blue collections; and
- The second vehicle will onboard any additional black bin collections as required. Spare capacity will be allocated to begin roll out of brown and blue bin collections.

Phase 3 – Nov 4th onward

- Both vehicles will be given established routes for all collection; and
- Synergies will be explored with the current 18 tonnes vehicle which currently carries out recovery collections and some similar activities on a limited basis.

- 3.11 A list of streets being changed to smaller collection vehicle routes from 12th August had been attached to the report as a restricted item.
- 3.12 Please note that following agreement at the Lord Mayor's Cleanliness Task Force, streets that are part of the separate PSNI/DFI pilot are currently not included in this exercise, and since the consultant's report was commissioned, it is important to note that Waste Collections management have continued to resolve individual street collection issues. Additionally, where a satisfactory solution to a street's access issues has been put in place within the last 12-18 months resulting in consistent collections being established over an extended period of time, they have not been included in Phase 1 of the initiative, but all streets will remain under constant review.

Expansion of Separate Glass Collection Services

- 3.13 Following a feasibility study into the expansion of the kerbside collection of glass, Members approved revenue funding to deliver phase 1 of this project aimed at delivering the scheme to an additional 22,000 households in 24/25.
- 3.14 Resources and Fleet subsequently compiled and submitted an application to DAERA under the Household Waste Collaborative Change Programme for financial assistance with regard to capital funding for the project. After a series of clarifications from the regulator, officers can report that a Letter of Offer was received from DAERA on 25th July, outlining the scale and conditions of funding. Subject to the Council's approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concerning, amongst other things, capital funding on a 50/50 basis, the project will now progress to implementation mode.
- 3.15 The Implementation phase involves the recruitment of collection crews, procurement of containers (44 litre boxes & lids), initial leasing of vehicles prior to the procurement of new vehicles, communication of the scheme to the selected households, assessment of apartments (if any within the selected areas) and finally delivery of containers followed by first collections.
- 3.16 Given the lead times associated with a number of these activities, in particular the purchase and receipt of containers, and mindful of the potential clash with collections arrangements for the Xmas season, it is envisaged that the implementation phase will be completed in Q4 of the current financial year.

- 3.17 The Service will continue to keep Members apprised of the progress of the scheme through the Council's usual governance procedures.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.18 In relation to the expansion of glass collections, DAERA will 50/50 match fund the agreed capital requirements as agreed in their Letter of Offer, subject to the Memorandum of Understanding having been agreed by the Council.

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

- 3.19 None.”

During discussion, whilst the Members broadly welcomed the small vehicles pilot, it was noted that Councillors wished to be involved in any expansion of the scheme to ensure that other problem streets in their constituency areas were considered for inclusion and noted that the agreed streets should also have been considered by the People and Communities Committee and not just the Lord Mayor's Cleanliness Task Force.

Several of the Members welcomed the expansion of the separate glass collection services and noted it was long overdue in some areas.

The Committee noted:

- the status of the collaborative work with the PSNI and DfI;
- the phased introduction of small vehicle routes to difficult to access streets, commencing week beginning 12th August 2024; and
- the letter of offer from DAERA in relation to the BCC application to the DAERA Household Waste Collaborative Change Programme for match funding to procure equipment (containers and vehicles) for expanded glass collections.

**Investigation of Public Path Creation
Order at College Heights / Ailesbury Road**

The Committee considered a report which provided detail in regard to officers beginning the examination of a potential public path creation order from College Heights into the neighbouring Ballynafeigh area.

The Director, OSSS and Resources and Fleet, explained that under the Article 12 of the Access to the Countryside Order (NI) 1983 all Local Councils may enact compulsory powers for path creation where it appeared to a District Council that there was need for a public path. In 2006 a path through Annadale Grammar School had been brought to the Council's attention as a potential public right of way. In 2008 investigations had indicated this was not the case. The site had been redeveloped into a residential area with a path for use of its residents but not the public at large. In 2022 the Council began to investigate whether it was feasible to enter into a permissive path agreement or public path creation agreement with the landowner.

The Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 places a duty on District Councils to 'assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment any public right of way'. In 2008 the Legal Advice on the nature of the route pointed that being closed overnight meant that no public right of way existed. The site was developed into a residential area with a path retained for the enjoyment of residents in the development. It was locked by a gate and a management company maintained the landscaped areas of this development, including the pathway. In 2022 members of the public approached Elected Members requesting that the path be open to the general public for use. This would include active travel such as walking to and from school, going to the shops and general recreation. The Director explained that the alternative route involved a 30- minute walk to and another to return which parents and guardians were doing 2-3 times daily. At this stage, the Council wrote to the landowner and explained that it would be willing to explore the potential of a public path creation agreement. The landowner did not respond. The Council again approached the landowner about the potential of a permissive path agreement on a pilot basis whereby the path could be opened and closed during set times of the day for a set period. Once again, there had been no response from the landowner.

The Director explained that a Public Path Creation by Order was a complex matter. The Council needed to be satisfied that there was a need for the path and also be willing to meet certain undertakings regarding maintenance, liability, etc. The Council must also consult with statutory undertakers, including DAERA, to confirm that the path was required and would not adversely impact the landowner's enjoyment of the land.

During discussion the Members sought assurances that the Council would consult with local residents and also consider in detail the future usage (active travel) and Council undertakings re maintenance and liabilities. It was noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting for the Members consideration prior to any decision being taken.

The Committee granted permission to officers to examine the potential of a public path creation order.

Active Belfast - Approach for 2024/25

The Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for use of Belfast City Council's (BCC) allocation of £90,000 to support Active Belfast Partnership (ABP) in 2024/25 to deliver the programme of activity detailed in the report.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the use of the BCC allocation of £90,000 to support Active Belfast Partnership in 2024/25 to deliver the programme of activity detailed in the report.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Active Belfast Partnership (APB) is a multi-agency partnership supporting physical activity and healthy eating in Belfast. It is jointly funded by BCC (£90,000) and the Public Health Agency (PHA) (£157,189.25). Physical activity and healthy eating remain priority areas within the refreshed Belfast Agenda (Our People and Communities, Health Inequalities) as well as wider health-focussed strategic documents. ABP therefore, both as an approach and as a partnership, plays a vital role in facilitating collaboration with key partners to take forward relevant and novel approaches.

Proposed Active Belfast 24/25 Budget Profile

3.2 The table below lists the recommended allocation for 24/25 following discussions with partners in line with the agreed Community Plan. The rationale for supporting these projects is outlined below and Table 1 shows the budget breakdown.

Proposed expenditure 24/25.

- Development of a 3-year ABP action plan. The allocation would enhance the action-planning process by enabling the recruitment of independent technical support/facilitation.
- ‘Emotional Wellbeing/Get Active’ Participatory Budgeting (PB) - 24/25 delivery. The allocation would enable continued testing of participative and innovative methods of engaging citizens in programme delivery and will contribute directly to BCC’s performance improvement plan 2025 and Belfast Agenda. Successful projects will be designed to improve residents’ Mental Health and Emotional Well-being and physical activity levels, based around ‘Take 5 Steps to Well-being’.

ABP Innovation Projects.

- Whole-system approach (WSA) to Obesity Leadership Group - mapping the system (phase 3). The allocation would support the continued development of a WSA to Obesity in Belfast (following completion of phase 1 ‘set-up’ and 2 ‘building the local picture’).

- **WSA Test & Learn.** The allocation will enable stakeholders to prioritise areas to intervene in the local system in the form of collaborative and aligned actions designed to address obesity within Belfast (phase 4 ‘action’).

Business continuity.

- **Jog Belfast (£42,411.60 - 7 sites x 3) – Allocation of funding will support 7 sites across the City of Belfast, within North, South, West, and East to deliver 3 programmes across the year. A Task and Finish group will be established to review current model and funding of the initiative.**
- **AB PB Move More Phase 2 Delivery & Celebration Event.** The funding was ring-fenced as part of the Phase 2 of PB led by BCC Sports Development under the ‘Move, more, eat well to feel better’ brand.
- **Resources/Training/Evaluation.** The funding would enable purchasing of resources, training, and/or professional services (OBA development) to support the delivery of the ABP approach described. The approach includes PB and WSA to Obesity which aim to contribute to improving physical activity levels and healthy eating within Belfast.

Table 1 – Budget Breakdown

2024/25	BCC AB	PHA PAB21	Total
Income	£ 90,000.00	£ 157,189.25	£ 247,189.25
Uplift		£ 1,540.45	£ 1,540.45
Total Income	£ 90,000.00	£ 158,729.70	£ 248,729.70
Proposed Expenditure 2024/25			
Develop 3 year action plan + transition year	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 5,000.00
Emotional Wellbeing/Get Active PB - 24/25 delivery (80% or 90%)	£ 31,202.03	£ 49,323.93	£ 80,525.96
Partnership innovation projects			
WSA Test & Learn (community centres BCC)	£ 23,333.33	£ 46,666.67	£ 70,000.00
WSA Leadership Group - mapping the system	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 3,000.00
Business continuity			
Jog Belfast (£42,411.60 - 7 sites x 3)(uplifted)	£ 9,338.80	£ 33,072.80	£ 42,411.60
AB PB Move More Phase 2 Delivery & Celebration Event	£ 18,125.84	£ 18,125.85	£ 36,251.69
Resources/Training/ Evaluation	£ 4,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 10,000.00
Total expenditure	£ 90,000.00	£ 157,189.25	£ 247,189.25

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.3 All activity outlined in this report can be delivered within existing budgets.

Human Resources

- 3.4 Belfast Health Development Unit will continue to lead on this work. Oversight will be provided at organisational level by Nicola Lane within BCC and David Tumilty within PHA, as well as at a partnership/thematic level with the stakeholders involved in the ABP.

Asset and Other Implications

- 3.5 N/a.

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

- 3.6 The Participatory Budgeting programme has been equality screened and all other activity will be delivered with due regard to any equality/good relations and rural needs considerations.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation at paragraph 2.0 of the report.

Events in Parks

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 **Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to note that Council has received several requests from event organisers to host events across several city park locations in 2024, including:

- VC Glendale – Falling Leaves Irish National League Race – Falls Park
- Ulster University – School of Art 175 Anniversary Light Show – Cathedral Gardens

2.0 **Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to grant authority to the applicants for the proposed events on the dates noted; subject to the completion of the appropriate event management plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of City & Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the Event Organisers:

- I. resolves all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- II. meets all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities; and
- III. shall consult with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary.

2.2 Please note that the above recommendations are taken as a pre-policy position in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which is currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Councils Commercial team.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 If agreed, the event organiser or promoters will be required in advance of the event to submit an event management plan for approval by the Council and all relevant statutory bodies.

3.2 This will include an assessment of how the event will impact upon the surrounding area and measures to mitigate these impacts.

VC Glendale – Falling Leaves Irish National League Race – Falls Park - Saturday 5 & Sunday 6 October 2024

3.3 Belfast City Council has received a request from VC Glendale to host their annual Irish National League Cycling Race at Falls Park in October 2024. The falling leaves event has taken place at Falls Park for the last 8 years and has been supported by BCC during its time at the park. Due to the nature of the event, areas of the park will be required to be closed off to members of the public to allow the race to proceed safely and to ensure that no park users or participants are injured. There are expected to be around 500 people in attendance with participants and spectators attending from across the UK & Ireland.

3.4 Key dates for the event are:

- Set Up – TBC
- Main Event Day 1 – Saturday 5 October – 12pm to 3pm
- Main Event Day 2 – Sunday 6 October - 8am to 4.30pm
- De-Rig - TBC

- 3.5 The areas of the site the organisers plan to use are the grassed area beside the playground leading to the woodland area beside the cemetery; followed by the pathed area along the side of the Falls Road and across the bridge leading to the pitches. Participants will then cycle around the entirety of the parks pitched area.
- 3.6 The event organiser VC Glendale are a voluntary cycling club who are established as a cross community cycling club with members taking part in races across the UK & Ireland. The club have worked closely with Belfast City Council over the years to run this event with no issues occurring during this time.

Ulster University – School of Art 175 Anniversary Light Show – Cathedral Gardens – Monday 18 November 2024 to Wednesday 20 November 2024

- 3.7 Belfast City Council has received a request from Ulster Universities School of Art to use Cathedral Gardens as part of their three-night Light Show to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the School of Art. The event is designed to be a collaboration between local artists and communities to tell the story of Belfast's history ranging from the origins of the linen industry to moments during the troubles.
- 3.8 The event will be an animated light show projected onto buildings such as St Anne's Cathedral and the Belfast Campus of Ulster University. It will be a free ticketed event with pre-registration taking place on-line to ensure the site does not go over its capacity.
- 3.9 Key dates for the event are:
- Set Up – Monday 18th November at 9am
 - Main Event – Monday 18 November to Wednesday 20 November – 4.30pm to 9.30pm daily
 - De-Rig – Thursday 21st November

3.10 **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no known implications at this time.

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

There are no known implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations at paragraph 2.0 of the report.

Application for Dual Language Street Signage

The Committee agreed the erection of a second street nameplate in Irish at Kestrel Grange, Ophir Gardens, Antigua Street, Salisbury Avenue, Parkside Gardens, Mount Eagles Lane, Lagmore View Way, Finaghy Park North, Commedagh Drive, Corrib Avenue, Isadore Avenue, Hazelwood Avenue, Slievegallion Drive and Brooke Close.

Application for Naming of New Street

The Committee approved the applications for the naming of the following new streets in the city:

Proposed Name	Location	Applicant
Black Ridge Crescent	Off Monagh By Pass, BT11	Apex Housing Association
Black Ridge Road	Off Monagh By Pass, BT11	Apex Housing Association

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Knockbreda Road Crossing - Councillor Maghie to raise

At the request of Councillor Maghie, the Committee agreed to write to the Department for Infrastructure seeking an update as to when works would commence for the Knockbreda Road crossing and also agreed to ask DfI how it could expedite the public consultation process for further applications.

Chairperson