

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 12th September, 2017

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Sandford (Chairperson);
Aldermen Rodgers, McCoubrey and McKee; and
Councillors Armitage, Austin, Beattie, Copeland, Corr,
Garrett, Heading, Lyons, Magennis, McCabe, McCusker,
Newton, Milne, Nicholl and McReynolds.

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

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Corr Johnston.

Minutes

The minutes of the special meeting of 2nd August and the meeting of 8th August were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th September.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Item Withdrawn from Agenda - Partner Agreements Quarterly Update

The Committee noted that the above item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Presentation

Contact NI - Suicide Prevention Bill

The Chairperson advised the Members that representatives from Contact were in attendance to present to the Committee on the proposed Northern Ireland Suicide Prevention Bill. Mr. Fergus Cumiskey, Chief Executive, and Mrs. Sharon Curran, Head of Communications and Public Relations, were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Cumiskey commenced by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to present. He advised that Contact was a charity specialising in crisis counselling and suicide prevention. Its vision was to have a 'society free from suicide' and its mission was 'getting you through the most difficult times'. Mr Cumiskey then provided the Members with an overview of the work undertaken by Contact in respect of suicide prevention. He advised that Contact provided a free-phone regional Lifeline crisis response helpline and wraparound counselling service, which had been launched in 2006 after a spate of suicides amongst young people in north and west Belfast. This

was the first expenditure of the suicide prevention strategy for Northern Ireland and, to date, 50% of the budget had been used to fund the Lifeline service.

Mr. Cumiskey emphasised that suicide was an issue that impacted on the whole of Northern Ireland and not just specific areas and as such the work around suicide prevention needed to involve everyone from all sectors, including the statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors. He stated that the issue that he specifically wanted to highlight to the Committee was the proposed introduction of a NI Suicide Prevention Bill.

The representative outlined the following critical assumptions of the NI Suicide Prevention Bill:

- accepted that suicide was a preventable harm (World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Suicide Report 2014);
- regarded clinical engagement with patient family and friends as an essential protective safety factor for suicide prevention, in every case;
- following patient suicide, best practice lessons learned from critical incident review demonstrated family engagement as an important protective factor against future suicide; and
- all references to engage family included family and friends; references to clinician included clinician/team; patient, service user and client were all interchangeable terms.

Taking the above factors into consideration, Mr. Cumiskey then proceeded to outline the context of the proposal under the following headings:

- Individual Clinical Duty of Candour;
- Corporate Duty of Candour;
- Clinical Duty of Competence; and
- Duty to Cooperate.

The representative explained that he wished to use his attendance at this meeting to raise the profile for the need for a NI Suicide Prevention Bill and advised that further information on the work of Contact or on the Northern Ireland Suicide Prevention Bill was available by visiting the Contact website at www.contactni.com.

The representative then answered a number of queries, following which the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their invaluable work around suicide prevention throughout Northern Ireland and they left the meeting.

Matters referred back from Council/Notices of Motion

Notice of Motion - Dog-Friendly Badging Scheme

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of the Council on 3rd July, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McDonough-Brown and seconded by Councillor McVeigh, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council agree to develop and introduce an opt-in badging scheme which indicates which premises in Belfast are dog-friendly, so that customers can know where dogs are welcome in the City.”

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor McDonough-Brown addressed the Committee. He stated that he would welcome the introduction of a badging scheme that would indicate which premises in Belfast were dog-friendly establishments, this would be an opt in scheme, therefore, there would be no pressure on owners to participate if they did not wish to do so.

The Committee agreed to investigate the introduction of an opt-in badging scheme which would indicate which premises in Belfast were dog-friendly and noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting.

Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre - Proposed Possession

The Committee agreed to refer consideration of this matter to the North Area Working Group and noted that an update report would be submitted to a future meeting of the People and Communities Committee.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Waste Collection Update

The Committee considered the following report|:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To provide Members with a monthly update, on actions which have been introduced to improve the waste collection service, following the report presented to Members at 8 August 2017 Committee meeting.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- **The processes and actions which have been implemented to improve the performance of the waste**

collection service and additional planned activities to further enhance service performance.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Customer Call Handling and Management Interventions

3.1 It was evidenced in last month's report, that there had been a significant growth in calls coming into the Council's Customer Contact Centre regarding waste collections and whilst many of these were positive in nature, as they were related to the successful new '*No Food in Waste Bin*' initiative, the customer experience was not at the level we would have expected. To provide a context to this, from the 17 July to 25 August 2017, the Customer Contact Centre received 19,841 telephone calls and voice mails. A weekly breakdown of these calls and voice mails is available on Mod.gov - Customer Contact Centre Telephone Calls and Voice Mails 17 July 2017 to 25 August 2017.

3.2 Given the large volume of customer calls in relation to waste collection, being received by the Customer Contact Centre in July, several actions have been introduced to improve the waste collection service as follows:

- A review was undertaken to examine the processes involved in handling customer enquiries. This review considered the activities carried out from the call being received, the actions taken to deal with the customer enquiry, through to closure of the service request.
- This review allowed daily management information reports to be generated, which enabled targeted, timely operations to be put in place to deal with requests for service in relation to missed bins and missed assisted lifts.
- Following this, more detailed daily management information reports, by assistant manager and operational squad, were produced. This information clearly identified waste collection routes that were presenting issues following which accountability processes were introduced to improve communication between assistant managers and squads that has supported the resolution of ongoing difficulties.
- A supervisor log sheet was introduced, which identified all actions to be completed prior to the service request being closed down. This has allowed increased focus on performance of waste collection management and squads.
- The daily management information reports also highlighted access issues that had not previously been identified. As a result and in consultation with

residents, increased attention has been focused on dealing with access issues, some of which have been resolved, whilst other more complex accessibility problems remain work in progress, to achieve long term solutions.

- A regular communications process has been developed with the waste collection management team and trade unions to ensure that focus is directed at operational outcomes.

- 3.3 During week ending 21 July a high volume of calls was directed into the Customer Contact Centre and, due to the nature of the customer enquiries, call durations were of considerable length. This resulted in call operators being occupied for longer periods of time than normal and those calls which were unable to be answered were abandoned or diverted to the voice mail system. Unfortunately, given the substantial calls being diverted to voice mail a system failure occurred, resulting in the voice mail service crashing. In view of this, no voice mail data was recorded during this week however this technical issue was resolved within a few days as calls levels reduced.
- 3.4 During week ending 28 July, again a significant number of calls and abandoned calls were recorded however as the number of calls being diverted to voice mail was less than the previous week, the voice mail system was maintained and voice mail data was recorded during this period. At this point, immediate corrective action was taken and the Customer Contact Centre resources were realigned to support the increased demand in relation to call handling. This resulted in an instant improvement for customers in relation to call experience.
- 3.5 As a result of management intervention and correction actions taken, we now see that during the period 31 July to 25 August, the data illustrates a continuous downward trend in the number of calls received and the number of abandoned calls. At its highest level, the percentage of abandoned calls was 22.29% of all calls received during week ending 28 July. As at 25 August, the percentage of abandoned calls had reduced to 1.29% as a result of pre-emptive actions introduced. This downward trend is clearly demonstrated in the graph available of mod.gov. Furthermore, from 10 August, no calls were diverted to voice mail, further validating that waste collection calls for service

requests were reducing and processes and procedures introduced from 24 July 2017, to proactively improve performance, were having a positive impact.

- 3.6 Following trend analysis of the Customer Contact Centre call data, calls received into the Customer Contact Centre from 14 August onwards are comparable to typical call levels recorded in previous years.
- 3.7 It is recognised that, issues experienced as a result of the introduction of route optimisation, which would have been expected to bed in by now, however remain ongoing. In order to also provide an independent view on the impact of route optimisation, Resource Futures was contracted by Belfast City Council to review the council's waste collection services in spring 2017, in order to assess the potential causes of the crews being unable to complete their allocated rounds and identify potential solutions that could be implemented to resolve these issues. The study findings indicated that the route optimisation project had been successful in achieving the expected outcomes, that is, to design waste collection routes in the most efficient way. The study did however highlight that the level of success had been limited, primarily by three key areas of concern in relation to squad performance and productivity and performance management.
- 3.8 The report has identified recommendations which are currently being assessed in consultation with staff and trade unions. These include proposed minor adjustments to existing routes.
- 3.9 An Action Plan is in the process of being developed which will include the recommendations from the independent study together with processes and procedures to deal with productivity and performance issues. Council's AGRS has been asked to undertake an assessment of the waste collection service. The recommendations of this assessment will also be included in the Action Plan. The Action Plan will be presented to Committee in October's waste collection Committee update report.
- 3.10 In terms of waste treatment / disposal arising from introducing route optimization and the food waste campaign, in the first quarter the Council increased its recycling / composting rate by almost 1,500 tonnes. The majority of which can be linked to the food waste campaign which is

hoped will lead to a year end improvement in the recycling rate.

3.11 Financial & Resource Implications

At this time there are no financial or resource implications associated with this report. Any future route optimisation rebalancing exercises and asset implications arising from the implementation of the Waste Framework may however result in financial and resource implications at a future date.

3.12 Equality or Good Relations Implications

At this time there are no equality or good relations implications associated with this report. Any future route optimisation rebalancing exercises and asset implications arising from the implementation of the Waste Framework may however result in financial and resource implications at a future date.”

A Member welcomed the progress that had been made and asked that thanks be conveyed to the two members of staff who were overseeing the improvements to the service.

At the request of a Member, officers agreed to investigate whether there was a shortage of food waste bags and to update the Member directly.

The Committee noted the update provided.

Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group Minutes

The Director advised that, at the meetings of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group held on 3rd August and 6th September, the following key issues had been considered:

- update on the business case of the crematorium development;
- update on the study visit to crematoria in Scotland;
- update on the permanent memorial to mark Plot Z1 in the City Cemetery;
- City Cemetery - update on concerns regarding anti-social behaviour;
- update in relation to the provision of memorial trees at the Roselawn site;
- update on the implementation of the memorial management policy; and
- City of Belfast Crematorium – policy statement for infant cremation;

A Member advised that some of the recent meetings had been poorly attended and, given the importance of many of the issues being discussed, he encouraged greater cross Party attendance at the forthcoming meetings.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group held on 3rd August and 6th September.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Installation of Water Drinking Fountain - Ormeau Park

The Committee was advised that the Council had received a request from users of the Ormeau Park asking the Council to install an additional water drinking fountain (to include a low drinker to facilitate dogs). The Assistant Director advised that there was currently one functioning drinking fountain that was located near to the Ravenhill road end of the Ormeau Park but no drinking fountains were available at the Ormeau road end of the park.

The Assistant Director reminded the Committee that, in 2012, the Council had agreed to install water fountains within a number of parks throughout the City as part of a pilot scheme. The Green Flag standard encouraged the provision of drinking fountains near sports facilities and playgrounds and, in a wider context, they were being encouraged to try and reduce plastic water bottle consumption and the subsequent waste.

The officer detailed that the estimated cost of a drinking fountain and its installation, including connection to the mains water supply, would be £7,250.

Following a query, the officer confirmed that unit would be regularly maintained and it was estimated that this would annually cost in the region of £1000.

The Committee approved the installation of an additional drinking fountain in the Ormeau Park.

Suffolk FC proposal to erect a Spectators Stand

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Committee that the Council has received a request from Suffolk Football Club to seek permission to erect a modular 100 seat spectator stand within the Suffolk Playing Fields.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the report and to agree that the Council agree to a licence agreement with the Club, subject to approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, to permit to install the proposed stand, this will be**

subject to the club securing the necessary funding, securing the necessary statutory approval including planning consent and providing adequate insurance cover. The Licence will also run co-terminously with the existing Facilitates Management Agreement.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Suffolk Football Club currently operate under a 7 year Facilities Management Agreement as agreed by the former Parks and Leisure committee at its meeting on 11 April 2011. This agreement is scheduled to terminate in July 2019. Members will note that the club had secured funding to install drainage on the pitch and bring it back in to use.

3.2 The Club has aspirations to gain promotion to higher leagues and within this context have sought funding through the Alpha Programme to provide the 100 seat spectator stand which will upgrade the facility and improve the spectator experience. The Club has advised that:

- The cost of the proposed works is £40,500 (excluding VAT), the cost will be met through funding from the Alpha Programme and the Club;
- The preferred location was available on mod.gov;
- It will own the structure and will be responsible for its maintenance, upkeep, management and insurance cover;
- It will be responsible for securing planning consent and other statutory approvals as necessary and will undertake the project management of the installation.

3.3 The Club has asked that the Council consider granting consent, in the form of a licence to use, to enable the installation of the structure on Council land, subject to securing funding and securing the necessary statutory approvals including planning.

3.4 The proposed location of stand has no impact on the operation of the pitch and does not infringe on the enjoyment of the site. This is a piece of land which backs on to the former primary school site and is largely unused. The proposal has no cost implications for the Council and the Council has in the past looked sympathetically on proposals from Clubs seeking to invest in and enhance the facilities.

3.5 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no financial implications.

3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report and also agreed that a list of the Council's Football pitches, in each area of the City, would be submitted to the relevant Area Working Group. It was further agreed that any issues that might be preventing any of the pitches being used would be highlighted.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Financial Reporting - Quarter 1, 2017 -2018

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services summarised the contents of the report which presented a Quarter 1 financial position for the People and Communities Committee, including a forecast of the year end outturn. He advised that the detail included the Quarter 1 position for the Committee showed an under-spend of 561k. (2.8%), with the forecast year end position being an under-spend of £455k (0.6%) which was well within the acceptable variance limit of 3%.

The Committee noted the contents of the Quarter 1 financial update.

Operational Issues

Street Naming

The Committee approved the naming in respect of Montpelier Park, off Malone Road, BT9.

Support for Boxing Clubs

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 At the request of Alderman Kingston, the Council agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the People and Communities Committee outlining the level of support being provided within the Boxing Strategy to those clubs in the City which were affiliated to the Northern Ireland Boxing Association.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the content of the report.**

3.0 Main report

- 3.1** Belfast City Council agreed an Amateur Boxing Strategy for the city for the period 2012 – 2022. Council agreed a budget of £200,000 per annum across the first three years of strategy delivery. A steering group was established made up of representatives from Belfast City Council, County Antrim Boxing, Ulster Boxing Council, Irish Athletic Boxing Association (IABA) and Sport Northern Ireland.
- 3.2** The strategy action plan is structured with five thematic areas; coach education, club support, events, pathways and governance. To assist with the development of pathways into the sport for people under-represented in the sport, two Community Coaches were recruited to drive participation in schools and community settings. A Sports Development Officer was recruited to enhance the club support and governance themes by working directly with potential clubs, new clubs and existing clubs with governance and development planning. Specific budgets were allocated to provide established clubs with coach education and events.
- 3.3** Contact with boxing clubs for baseline assessments and access to support through the strategy are through the IABA's list of affiliated Belfast based clubs and Belfast City Council's sports groups' database. This ensures that newly formed groups which are not currently eligible for grant funding can avail of development support through a wide range of Council services including Sports Development Officers in areas such as governance, club development support and coach education.
- 3.4** During the period of the strategy a new representative body, titled the Northern Ireland Boxing Association (NIBA), has formed with a number of existing clubs shifting their affiliation to this body and new clubs formed. As a Governing Body of Sport it is not recognised by any of the Home Countries Sports Council's nor affiliated to the International Amateur Boxing Association (AIBA). The NIBA is not represented on the Belfast Boxing Strategy Steering Group. Clubs affiliated to governing bodies which are not currently recognised are ineligible for grant funding for training or competitions by Belfast City Council. Boxers who wish to represent either Ireland or Great Britain at the highest level have agreed protocols for their support and development through the four Home Countries boxing associations. NIBA clubs can access development support through the sports development officers.

3.5 Grant funding from the Belfast Boxing strategy has not been given to Belfast boxing clubs which are not affiliated to the IABA. Support for development activities such as development planning, budgeting, marketing etc. was offered to all 33 clubs on the Belfast City Council database, although no clubs affiliated to NIBA accepted. At the request of two Belfast based NIBA clubs, Belfast City Council has removed their details from the sports clubs database and it is not possible to directly contact these clubs to offer development support.

3.6 Financial Implications

Direct financial support for the boxing strategy ended on 31 March 2017. People and Communities Committee of 7 March 2017 approved an amount of up to £24,000 to be ring-fenced from the Support for Sport budget for delivery of a programme of events organised by the IABA. Council on 3 July 2017 approved an amount of £45,000 from Strategic Policy and Resources for a programme of work by the IABA to support ongoing delivery of the boxing strategy.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications

No implications.”

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

DAERA NI Consultation - Transposition of the Medium Combustion Plant Directive including the Regulation of Thermal Electricity Generators

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 Members will note that the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has recently consulted on the transposition of the Medium Combustion Plant (MCP) Directive into Northern Ireland legislation with a view to regulating emissions from this type of plant.

1.2 DAERA has proposed that the permitting of qualifying MCP installations will be via an amendment to the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations NI 2013. At present, the City Council regulate Part C industrial premises under this legislation whereas the

Northern Ireland Environment Agency regulates Part A & B industrial premises.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- Consider this report and to recommend the submission of the appended draft consultation response to DAERA.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Committee is advised that the DAERA MCP consultation commenced from 21st June 2017 and concluded on 16th August 2017. Given the tight turnaround time for submission the council's proposed consultation response was unable to be considered by the People and Communities Committee and by council ahead of the submission deadline. Officers did request an extension to allow for committee consideration of the draft response. However, DAERA was unable to grant an extension to the consultation deadline.**
- 3.2 Accordingly, in submitting a draft response to DAERA on 16th August 2017, the Department was advised that the council's consultation response would be considered by the People and Communities Committee at its next scheduled meeting on 12th September 2017 and then by council at its meeting on 2nd October 2017.**
- 3.3 For these reasons, DAERA was advised further that Belfast City Council's consultation response should be regarded as being in draft format and that the council would advise the Department of any revisions in due course.**
- 3.4 The transposition and implementation of the Directive will be achieved through the Pollution, Prevention and Control Regime. It is noted however, that no guidance has as yet been developed or issued by the Department with regard to the implementation of this legislation. Accordingly, the council's consultation response indicates that officers will seek to engage with DAERA regarding this matter and that the council has requested that appropriate training be provided to officers well in advance of the legislation being implemented.**
- 3.5 DAERA in its consultation has estimated that there may be up to 1,200 qualifying installations across Northern Ireland**

although the locations of these installations have not yet been established. In our response, we have therefore noted that no scoping of the locations of the installations has been undertaken as part of the consultation process or the accompanying regulatory impact assessment and that it is therefore impossible at this stage to know how many of these installations will be located within the Belfast City Council boundary. We have recommended therefore that DAERA engages fully with all councils in order to identify the numbers and locations of the various plants to be permitted and in the setting of permit fees in order to ensure that councils are not financially disadvantaged as a result of the introduction of this legislation.

- 3.6 As a further point, we have recommended to DAERA that costs should not relate only to the ongoing permitting process but they should also take into consideration local authority costs and resources associated with the introduction of this legislation. It is anticipated that there will be staff resources associated with identifying and permitting of qualifying plant and ensuring compliant abatement equipment is being used.
- 3.7 With no fee structure yet established, the income to council for this function is unknown. Accordingly, we have advised in our response that the council should not be financially disadvantaged though the introduction of this legislation.

3.8 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The introduction and implementation of these regulations would place an additional duty on to local Councils. It is important that the setting of fees are sufficient to ensure this new duty does not place a financial burden on Councils.

3.9 **Equality & Good Relations Implications**

It is considered that there are no relevant equality or good relations considerations associated with this report.”

The Committee endorsed the draft response to the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), available on the Council’s website [here](#), relating to regulating of emissions from Medium Combustion Plant and agreed that the draft document, which had already been submitted as a draft response, would now be confirmed as the Council’s final response, subject to Council ratification.

**Request for use of Alexandra Park -
North Belfast Magical Festival**

The Assistant Director advised that a request had been received for the free use of Alexandra Park to host the North Belfast Magical Festival. She explained that last year had been the first year that the event had been staged in Alexandra Park and it had been a great success. This event was a project of the Ashton Community Trust which had, for the past fourteen years, been managed by New Lodge Arts, a voluntary arts organisation across communities in North Belfast.

The Members were advised that this would be a family event with tickets costing £1.00 each and she outlined a brief itinerary of proposed events as follows:

- art workshops and street performances;
- an outdoor cinema;
- a lantern parade, that would make its way from Cliftonpark Avenue to Alexandra Park;
- a magical evening event that would include outdoor performances;
- stage entertainment; and
- a fireworks display to close the event.

The Assistant Director advised that this year it was proposed that the two-day festival would take place on Sunday 29th October from 11.30 a.m. – 8.00 p.m. and on Monday 30th October from 11.30 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

The Committee noted that the event organisers had confirmed that they would undertake to do the following in order to ensure delivery of a safe and successful event:

- employ a security firm to safeguard participants and equipment;
- employ reputable contractors to ensure a safe and professional event;
- ensure that a one-way system for the park was in place;
- ensure that local residents were informed about the event 7 days prior to the event and that there would be no inconvenience or nuisance caused to the residents on the day of the event; and
- work with the relevant Council departments to ensure the effective management of the park and event.

The Members also noted that, to assist with the setup, the organisers had requested that the park be closed to members of the public from 4.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m. on 30th October and that only members of the public with tickets would be permitted entry from 6.00 p.m. until the event had finished.

The Committee granted authority for the free use of Alexandra Park for the North Belfast Magical Festival on condition that the event organisers:

- liaise with Council officers and ensure that all health and safety requirements are met to the Council's satisfaction, including an event management plan and risk assessments; and

- complete an appropriate legal agreement and meet all statutory requirements, including entertainment and fireworks licensing.

Request for use of Cathedral Gardens

The Assistant Director advised that a request had been received from Rally for Choice seeking permission to hold a Rally for Choice Event at Cathedral Gardens from 1.00 p.m. – 5.00 p.m. on 14th October.

The officer advised that Rally for Choice was an organisation based in Northern Ireland that campaigned for free, safe and legal abortion. She reported that it was proposed that a small stage would be erected in Cathedral Gardens and a sound system would be used for the speeches, the event would also include a samba band performance and face painting. Organisers were expecting between 500 – 800 people to attend the rally and the closure of the park might be required. The officer also highlighted that as some might deem the event to be controversial, the PSNI had been informed and it was envisaged that a temporary street closure might also be necessary.

The Committee granted authority for the use of Cathedral Gardens on 14th October to hold a Rally for Choice event, subject to the completion of the appropriate event management plans and the following terms being satisfactorily agreed by the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services:

- the event organisers meet all statutory requirements, including public liability insurance cover, health and safety and licensing responsibilities; and
- the event organisers agree to consult with the adjoining public bodies, the local community and the PSNI as required.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Increased Provision for Tree Planting

In accordance with notice on the agenda Councillor Milne raised:

“Belfast residents and visitors have very well-provisioned green spaces, largely due to a knowledgeable and dedicated team who tend to over 60,000 + Park trees and 12,500 street trees within the Council boundary. However, there has been a decline of provision of resources directed specifically at tree planting, and around National Tree Week. I would therefore ask the Committee to consider:

- (a) assessing the feasibility of directing additional resources towards an appropriate tree planting program, whilst working in line with considerations and recommendations to improve and maintain local biodiversity and urban habitat and;*
- (b) assessing the feasibility of developing a programme of activities to tie into National Tree Week.”*

A Member requested that when considering this matter, officers would take into consideration the recent decision taken by the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group, at its meeting on 6th September, to proceed to implement

the Council's 2008 policy decision to end the process of providing memorial trees at Roselawn Cemetery.

The Committee agreed that a report on the matter be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

Request for funding from North Belfast Play Forum

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 present to Members a request from the North Belfast Play Forum for a contribution of £6,000 for the current financial year to sustain the club. A copy of the request from North Belfast Play Forum is available on mod.gov.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Committee is asked to

- Agree to support North Belfast Play Forum through payment of £6,000 to sustain the club and that payment is made through a variation of the existing Facility Management Agreement.
- Committee is also asked to agree that Sport Development staff work with the forum to review its programme and scope for income generation.

3.0 Main report

Background

3.1 The letter provides background information on the Forum and the good work it has been doing since the mid 1990's in this area. The Forum has had a relationship with the Council dating back to this time, initially through agreement to use of the land to construct a polymeric multi user games area and the subsequent facilities management agreement (FMA) which ran until 2013 when the forum secured funding to upgrade the polymeric surface to 3G. Members are asked to note that the Council also contributed £10,000 as a 3rd party funder to this project to meet the short fall in funding. At that time, at the request of the forum, they secured a lease agreement with the Council, this was in order to satisfy the requirements of the funding body. The lease arrangement

terminated the FMA which meant that the maintenance fee from the Council was no longer available, although a small fee in respect of the administrative building adjacent to the pitch remains subject to a FMA and a small monthly fee is currently payable. The Forum has therefore been in a position of having to effectively self-finance through income generation whether through charges or securing revenue funding.

- 3.2 The Forum has continued to provide a low cost affordable sports facility in this area however, it is experiencing a reducing balance. Applications have been made for revenue funding from both Sport Relief and from Children in Need. These are currently being assessed and no decision has yet been made.
- 3.3 The actual use of the facility is consistent with Council experience of artificial pitch use, i.e. consistent evening use Monday to Friday and morning to afternoon use at weekends. Day time use is limited.
- 3.4 A review of the current programme demonstrates that there is a significant element of free use. However, elements of this 'free' use includes intervention programmes for which the forum had received an income from a fund.
- 3.5 The Forum has previously sought and been granted similar support of approximately £22,000 in 2008 when the Council agreed to fund a post for 1 year.

Request for Support

- 3.6 The current request relates to a cash flow issue where funds are required to support immediate outgoings, i.e. to cover insurance, accounts and maintenance.
- 3.7 Council could consider an option of bringing the asset back under the management of Council however this would have significant operational and financial impact extending beyond the cost of £6,000.
- 3.8 Given the substantial work of the North Belfast Play Forum and its past performance Members are asked to consider payment of £6,000 to sustain the current delivery model.
- 3.9 It is further recommended that support is provided to the forum by Sports Development Officers to assess the programming of the facility and potential for additional income generation.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

If members agree to the recommendation Officers will accommodate the amount of £6,000 within existing budgets.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There has been no equality impact.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Chairperson