Health and Environmental Services Committee

Wednesday, 2nd April, 2014

MEETING OF HEALTH AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Corr (Chairman);
Alderman Stoker;
Councillors Austin, M. E. Campbell, Clarke, Curran, Garrett, Hussey, Keenan, Kelly, Kingston, Magee, McCarthy, McKee, McNamee and Thompson.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive Designate;
Mr. T. Martin, Head of Building Control;
Mr. S. Skimin, Head of Cleansing Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Head of Environmental Health;
Mr. T. Walker, Head of Waste Management; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of the High Sheriff (Councillor L. Patterson) and Councillor Jones.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th 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

No declarations of interest were reported.

Congratulations

The Chairman, on behalf of the Members, congratulated Mrs. S. Wylie on her recent appointment to the post of Chief Executive for the new Council and thanked her for the significant contribution which she had, over the years, made to the work of the Committee.

Mrs. Wylie thanked the Chairman for his kind remarks and the Committee for the support which it had provided to her during her term as Director of Health and Environmental Services.

Building Control

Consultation on Proposed New Delivery System for Achieving Affordable Warmth

The Committee considered the undernoted report and agreed that the accompanying comments be forwarded to the Department for Social Development as the Council's response to the consultation document, subject to the inclusion of an additional comment recommending that the scheme be extended to include sheltered accommodation:

"Relevant Background Information

1.1 The Department of Social Development's (DSD) primary method of tackling fuel poverty has been the Warm Homes Scheme, which commenced in 2001. A revised Fuel Poverty Strategy, 'Warmer Healthier Homes', published in March 2011 stated that there was a greater need for partnership working with local councils, together with a move to an area based approach of delivery to ensure improved targets and greater effectiveness of helping those most in need.

1.2 In order to test this as a concept the DSD have already carried out two Affordable Warmth pilot exercises with selected councils across the province. Belfast City Council was involved in the first pilot in 2012-2013, where the Building Control Service surveyed 360 properties in four areas across the city as part of the exercise. This resulted in approximately 120 homes receiving free insulation measures and/or boiler services. Additionally, data was collected and passed to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) enabling some of those houses to claim further grant aid under the boiler replacement scheme. Using the data from this project the second pilot was a more focussed exercise based on the emerging delivery model. Most councils were not involved in this pilot as the Minister agreed that the Mid Ulster cluster of councils and Newtownabbey Borough Council would undertake the work. Belfast was involved however in the Project and Review Group that managed the second pilot so that we could advise, input and learn from its operation.

1.3 In light of these two pilot exercises, the DSD now intends to introduce a new model for the delivery of the energy efficiency improvements to low income households. The new model will involve the DSD working in partnership with the University of Ulster (UUJ), NIHE and the interested councils. Due to the success of our work in the first pilot and the desire of Members that the Council be involved in tackling fuel poverty, Belfast has expressed an interest to participate in this scheme.

1.4 In February 2014, DSD issued a consultation document on the proposed new delivery model. The deadline for the submission of responses is Friday, 9th May. The consultation outlines the changes from the Warm Homes Scheme to the new Affordable Warmth model and invites comments in relation to seven proposals.

1.5 These seven proposals are:

1. **Targeting – DSD states that the outcomes of the pilots indicate that the benefits of financing and alleviating fuel poverty is by directly targeting those in greatest need. UUJ, using their computerised database, would be responsible for targeting those most in need.**

2. **Partnership working – DSD proposes to work in partnership with all interested councils, UUJ and NIHE to deliver the targeted approach.**

3. **Private rented – the initial Warm Homes Scheme included private rented properties. There is evidence that many landlords with large property portfolios benefitted from the scheme, which was not the intention. The new scheme will be open to tenants in the private rented sector but would require the landlord to be registered with the Departments Landlord Registration scheme and also contribute 50% towards the costs.**

4. **Eligibility – the Department proposes to change the method of addressing eligibility from using social security benefits to an income based approach. The income level would be set in line with other government programmes, such as the level of income for determining eligibility for free school meals (currently £16,190). Household make up would also be a factor to determine the level of income.**

5. **Energy Efficiency measures – the Department is proposing to maintain all the measures that were available as part of the Warm Homes Scheme and also introduce a number of new measures including:**

    - **Conversion of Economy 7 to a high efficiency storage heating system**
    - **Replacement boilers for people aged 65 with boilers over 15 years old**
    - **Replacing existing heating controls**

- **Replacing existing redundant radiators**
- **Replacing defective cavity wall insulation**
- **Draught proofing existing doors and windows**

6. **Self referrals – the proposal is for the scheme to primarily target those identified by UUJ. However views are sought on the option for self referrals outside the targeted areas.**

7. **Client contribution – the scheme is to fund improvement measures for low income households. However, where the costs for the range of measures that could be carried out are in excess of the allowable grant, the householder could be allowed to fund the additional measures.**

1.6 A copy of the draft response is attached.

<u>Key Issues</u>

2.1 The main changes are the delivery mechanism in the Affordable Warmth model where the DSD will work in partnership with UUJ and councils to deliver a more targeted approach to tackling fuel poverty. The outcomes of the pilots have shown this to be a more effective and efficient method of improving homes for those most in need. However, clarification is needed as to the target areas, the need for a three year plan, and communicating with those outside the areas who would like to be involved.

2.2 New qualification criteria are proposed for the scheme, including moving to an income based approach. More detail is required on the level of income and how household make up would affect eligibility before comment could be made.

2.3 Whilst landlord contributions could help to avoid disproportionate benefits for landlords it could also reduce the uptake from this sector where tenants fall within the criteria but landlords refuse to pay their contribution.

2.4 There are additional energy efficiency improvement measures being proposed by the DSD which would further improve the energy efficiency of properties and are welcomed.

3 Resource Implications

Financial

3.1 There are no financial implications regarding the consultation. All the home improvements proposed are financed by the DSD.

Human Resources

3.2 The proposals for partnership working include the roll out of the Affordable Warmth proposals once agreed. Officers are currently involved in discussions to implement the partnership arrangements.

Assets and Other Implications

3.3 None.

4 Equality Implications

4.1 The Department of Social Development will undertake its own Equality Impact Assessment of any proposed pilots.

5 Recommendation

5.1 The Committee is recommended to adopt, subject to ratification by the Council, the draft consultation response on the proposed changes to the current Warm Homes Scheme as outlined in the Achieving Affordable Warmth Scheme."

COUNCIL RESPONSE

Proposal 1 – Targeting

Northern Ireland's first independent review of Fuel Poverty reported that more than 33,000 homes in Northern Ireland needed to spend more than a quarter of their income on heating and lighting their homes. The Department believes that these homes need help most and should be targeted for help in the new Affordable Warmth Scheme.

The Department believes that the Affordable Warmth pilots have demonstrated that a more targeted approach works and brings assistance to those who need it most. The Department proposes to continue with this targeted approach in the new Affordable Warmth Scheme.

How much do you agree with this proposal? (please tick one option)

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☒

Unsure ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know ☐

Comments

The targeted approach is a good way of reaching those most at risk of being fuel poor, particularly in relation to older people. However more detail is required in terms of what areas will be targeted and the rationale for selection. Will a programme be devised over the three year project? The targeted approach could require more work to ensure that the uptake is sufficient to meet the targets as self referrals which would have been taken in the previous scheme may now be outside the scheme (see 6).

Proposal 2 – Partnership Working

The Department proposes to work in partnership with local councils to target households most at risk of fuel poverty and to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. Council staff will conduct an initial home visit to assess both the eligibility and requirements for the householders under the scheme. The Housing Executive's network of Grant Offices will work closely with the householder and a local installer of the householder's choice to deliver the energy efficiency improvement measures to the house.

How much do you agree with this proposal? (please tick one option)

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☒

Unsure ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know ☐

Comments

The partnership approach has proven to be a good way of co-ordinating the scheme. However, it is essential that the responsibilities for each partner including Key Performance Indicators are captured in a Service Level Agreement and monitored. Responsibility for communication is important, in terms of informing the households in targeted areas, dealing with queries and potential complaints of those outside the targeted areas. Over the three year period will there be changes to the NIHE which could affect their ability to deliver? The wider issues of co-ordination of all schemes needs to be considered.

Proposal 3 – Private Rented

The Warm Homes Scheme was open to applications from owner occupiers and private tenants. Private tenancies currently make up 17% of the housing sector and the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey 2011 reports that 49% of householders in "Privately rented and others" housing were in fuel poverty. Since 2001 the Warm Homes Scheme has improved the energy efficiency of over 19,000 privately rented homes. The Department is committed to continue to improve the energy efficiency of low income tenants who live in privately rented accommodation. However, the Department believes that private landlords have a responsibility to ensure that the properties they are letting have adequate heating systems and adequate insulation. There is evidence that the Warm Homes Scheme improved the energy efficiency of properties of some landlords with large portfolios, over 50 properties in some cases.

This was never the intention of the scheme. The Department proposes that where an application is made to the Affordable Warmth Scheme by a tenant living in a privately rented property that the landlord must have registered with the Department's Landlord Registration Scheme. The Department also proposes that landlords make a 50% contribution towards the cost of the work.

How much do you agree with the proposal? (please tick one option)

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☒

Unsure ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know ☐

Comments

To ensure that as many people as possible in fuel poverty are considered by the scheme this sector should be included, as the numbers of properties are significant. However, the 50% contribution could lead to a high drop-out rate if landlords do not want to pay their share. A sliding scale of contribution, based on the number of houses a landlord gets improved, could be investigated which could reduce the possibility of landlords disproportionately benefiting.

Proposal 4 – Eligibility

The Department proposes to change the method of assessing eligibility for the scheme by setting an income qualification threshold instead of using social security benefits as a passport. The University of Ulster's analysis of the first Affordable Warmth pilot "Tackling Fuel Poverty in Northern Ireland, An Area Based Approach to Finding Households Most in Need" (Liddell and McKenzie 2013) concluded that "people were on predominately low incomes, i.e. half of the households surveyed had an income less than £12,000 per annum and two thirds had an income of less than £16,000 per annum. The Department proposes that the household annual income level be set at a modest level which is in line with other Government programmes, such as the level of income for determining eligibility for free school medals (currently £16,190). The Department proposes that this amount may be adjusted depending on the make-up of the household.

How much do you agree with this proposal? (please tick one option)

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☒

Unsure ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know ☐

Comments

Moving to an income based approach is a positive change and would bring those just above the previous assessment for benefits into the scheme, such as older people. The proposed income threshold of £16,190 is quite low, however, a staggered threshold could be set based on household size and further detail is required on the adjustments suggested. It is important that there is a significant pool of households targeted to ensure that uptake of the scheme is high.

Proposal 5 – Energy Efficiency Measures

The Department proposes to maintain all of the energy efficiency measures available in the existing Warm Homes Scheme. The Department proposes to introduce some additional new measures (see Table 1). The Department proposes to prioritise the measures which most improve the energy efficiency of the home and deliver the highest priority measures within the grant limit.

How much do you agree with the introduction of the new measures on Table 1? (please tick one option)

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☒

Unsure ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know ☐

Comments

It is positive to have smaller measures such as heating controls and radiator replacement added to the scheme and to see the return of boiler replacements and draught-proofing.
We would suggest that boiler replacements be made available not only to those over the age of 65 but to all within the scheme (in particular families with children under the age of 16 and to those with a long-term illness or disability), who are unlikely to be a position to avail of the boiler replacement scheme.

Proposal 6 – Self Referrals

The Department proposes that the new scheme is primarily targeted at households identified by the University of Ulster as being most at risk of fuel poverty. The Department seeks views on whether the scheme should continue to include some element of self referral from households not in the areas targeted by councils.

How much do you agree with this proposal? (please tick option)

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☐

Unsure ☒

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know ☐

Comments

Self referral could be a good method of capturing a further pool of people who are fuel poor, although it is contradictory to a targeted approach. The management of these referrals would be important; how would they be assessed? Will they be in an area to be considered in the following year's targeted areas? Is there flexibility to add them to the scheme? What about possible complaints and who deals with the queries that arise from people not in targeted areas? The co-ordination of self referrals needs more detail.

Proposal 7 – Client Contribution

The Department proposes to set a grant limit which will deliver appropriate energy efficiency measures to low income households. However, there may be occasions when the installation of a range of energy efficiency improvement measures in a property will exceed the grant limit. This may include "Hard to Heat" properties with no capacity for cavity wall insulation. Where the cost of installing energy efficiency improvement measures exceeds the grant limit the Department proposes that the householder should be allowed to fund the excess amount.

How much do you agree with this proposal? (please tick one option)

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☒

Unsure ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know ☐

Comments

As the purpose of the scheme is to target low income households most at risk of fuel poverty, it is unlikely that householders will have surplus income or capital to enable them to contribute towards energy efficiency measures. Having found those most vulnerable to fuel poverty, it is important that the householders receive all the measures required. These may, on occasion, exceed the grant limit but this could be offset by other householders receiving small interventions.

Other Comments

Are there any additional comments or suggestions you wish to make on the proposals in the consultation document?

Comments

Those eligible for Warm Homes are referred to the SSA's "Make the Call". As many householders are hesitant about giving personal information to a Government agency, referring all households in the target area to the voluntary advice sector would ensure that they are offered a full, independent benefits check and that low income, one of the factors of fuel poverty, is addressed.

A degree of "hand-holding" may be required particularly with more vulnerable clients. There needs to be good links between Councils and NIHE Grants Offices; a tracking database would help to identify those who may require additional support to ensure that vulnerable clients do not drop out of the system.

Fuel poverty affects more than 40% of households in Northern Ireland. The proposed Affordable Warmth Scheme and its predecessor, Warm Homes, will play an important role in tackling fuel poverty. It is, therefore, vital that those who have an interest in the issue are given an opportunity to fully respond to this consultation. Limiting the word count on each of the proposals to 75 words means it is very difficult to make a full and informed response.

Affordable Warmth Pilot Scheme

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware of the pilot exercise carried out in partnership with the Department for Social Development (DSD) in 2012-2013 where improvements in insulation and other measures were delivered to targeted households.

1.2 The four predetermined areas of the city were pinpointed by the University of Ulster (UUJ) from their fuel poverty database. Eligible persons were offered grants to carry out works to their properties to enhance the energy efficiency of the dwelling and hence reduce their fuel bills. The Building Control Service surveyed 360 properties in four areas across the city as part of the exercise. This resulted in approximately 120 homes receiving free insulation measures and/or boiler services. Additionally data was collected and passed to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive enabling some of those houses to claim further grant aid under the boiler replacement scheme

1.3 As the improvement measures undertaken during the first pilot have proven to be successful, a further pilot has been carried out in 2 other areas of Northern Ireland; the Mid-Ulster cluster of councils (Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt) and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

1.4 The review of this second pilot is currently being finalised and discussions and workshops giving feedback to councils have been held by DSD. Based on the success of this second pilot exercise, the DSD have proposed that the revised scheme be rolled out to all Council areas for a three year programme.

1.5 The revised scheme is as follows:

- **UUJ will identify households which need to be targeted and surveyed and submit the areas and addresses though to each council**

- **The council will carry out these doorstep surveys and provide the information to the DSD and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to allow consideration of their application**
- **NIHE will carry out technical surveys of the properties and will decide which measures will be installed in the dwellings. They will inform the owner/occupier if their application is approved**
- **The householder will select a local installer to carry out the works.**

1.6 A Building Regulation application (if applicable) for the above mentioned works will be made by the NIHE once occupants have been deemed eligible for grant aid. NIHE will coordinate the works on site and these works will be inspected by the Building Control service in line with their statutory duty.

1.7 Upon receipt of approval of the works on site, the NIHE will make a payment to the installer or the householder. All works and processes will be audited and regular updates on the targets will be reported.

<u>Key Issues</u>

2.1 The project is based on partnership working between councils, DSD and NIHE, with clearly defined roles. The DSD are committed to tackling fuel poverty, and are seeking the assistance of councils on a local level. The scheme proposed is out for public consultation and has been considered as part of the previous committee report on the council's response to that consultation.

2.2 While UUJ will identify properties within the terms of the scheme and in light of the statistical work they have carried out, the council's input is to ensure that surveys are carried out in all areas of the city.

2.3 The targets set for the three year programme are:

2014-2015 – 800 properties improved
2015-2106 – 1000 properties improved
2016-2017 – 1000 properties improved

2.4 The current pilot exercise would indicate that the total number of completed surveys required would be at least 20% greater than the target for improved homes due to owner/occupiers dropping out after the survey has been processed. The number of surveys required to achieve sufficient properties improved for these yearly targets could be over 4000 over the three year period.

2.5 DSD is finalising a Service Level Agreement for the project, which will outline the roles of DSD, NIHE and councils. This has not been provided to councils at this stage, but will include the levels of service required and the targets to be met. Any Agreement will be given to Legal Services for assessment, but, given the timescales involved to get the project initiated, it is proposed that the Committee and the Council authorise the Director of Health and Environmental Services the delegated power to sign the agreement.

2.6 DSD has confirmed that they will provide funding for all staff as required by councils and additionally that all project set up costs would be fully funded. To ensure efficiency of data collection and transfer, DSD are also providing set up costs for councils which will include devices to collect data and a system to allow data to be transferred directly into the NIHE database.

2.7 This has been set at £158K, with the figure based upon the experience from the most recent pilot. Although councils will have flexibility in the staffing model used, the experience of a project manager with additional temporary site staff to carry out the door to door surveys has proved an efficient method of delivery.

3 <u>Resource Implications</u>

<u>Financial</u>

3.1 DSD provides all funding for the physical improvement works to be carried out to the properties. DSD will also provide funding for council's staffing needs, set up costs and IT systems to deliver their part of the project.

3.2 <u>Human Resources</u>

It is proposed to employ a team of temporary staff to help with the implementation of this project. The DSD will provide finance for this resource. Overall management of the project will be carried out within the current service management structure.

3.3 <u>Assets and Other Implications</u>

None

4 <u>Equality Implications</u>

4.1 The Department of Social Development will undertake its own Equality Impact Assessment of any proposed pilots.

5 Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is requested to agree:

a) that the Council enters into a three year Affordable Warmth project (2014-2017) in partnership with the DSD and permits officers to finalise the arrangements with officials from the DSD.

b) that the Director of Health and Environmental Services is given delegated authority to sign off the Service Level Agreement in consultation with Legal Services, based on the arrangements as outlined above and as agreed by Committee."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Naming of Street

The Committee approved an application relating to the realignment, as part of the Village Regeneration Scheme, of Broadway Parade, which connected Frenchpark Street and Kitchener Street, to which the Royal Mail had offered no objection.

Environmental Health

Addressing Anti-Social Behaviour

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The legal definition of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is 'acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one of more person(s) not of the same household as himself' (Anti-social Behaviour (Northern Ireland) Order 2004).

1.2 Although ASB is not classed as a criminal offence, it is widely accepted as having the potential to have a highly detrimental impact on the quality of life of communities and 36% of all recorded incidents/offences by the PSNI in 2012/2013 in Belfast were classed as anti-social behaviour.

1.3 Experience of ASB across agencies and communities has shown that it can be challenging to class particular types of incidents as ASB as the focus is very much on the perception of the victim(s).

2 Key Issues

2.1 Tackling ASB is not the sole responsibility of one agency; rather, successfully addressing ASB has been underpinned by effective partnership working between statutory agencies and the voluntary and community sector.

Belfast City Council invests significantly in tackling ASB in community safety, particularly in partnership with Belfast (D)PCSPs in the following ways:

Enforcement

2.2 Tackling a wide range of nuisance and ASB related issues is done through the enforcement of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011 and related legislation tackling litter, fly posting, graffiti, dogs, noise, statutory nuisance, nuisance alleyways, abandoned/nuisance vehicles and abandoned shopping trolleys. Significant resource is invested in responding and investigating the issues referred to Environmental Health from the public in relation to nuisance and ASB with 11,475 service requests to date in this financial year,

Council also undertakes enforcement of alcohol bye laws, particularly joint enforcement in partnership with the PSNI in communities and at key events with the following results to date in this financial year:

- **Enforcement/Joint Enforcement Operations – 201**
- **Unit of Alcohol Seized – 30,000**
- **Prosecutions taken/pending – 41**
- **Off licenses visited - 87**

ASB Forums

2.3 The Anti-social Behaviour (NI) Order 2004 provides for the sharing of information between councils, NIHE and PSNI when managing cases of ASB. This is managed through ASB Forums which exist on a North, South, East and West Belfast basis with officers from each of the component organisations sharing relevant information about perpetrators of ASB and taking collective responsibility for the management of those cases. A significant amount of time and effort is placed by those agencies at early identification of those at risk of becoming involved in ASB and putting in place interventions to reduce that risk.

2.4 The Department of Justice is currently undertaking a review of ASB Forums across Northern Ireland placing a particular emphasis on improving the partnership working between ASB Forums and Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.

Early Intervention/Prevention

2.5 Early intervention and prevention is widely accepted as the most effective way to reduce the likelihood of someone becoming involved in crime of ASB, indeed, the Northern Ireland Executive is investing significant monies as part of the 'Delivering Social Change Strategy' in projects across Northern Ireland which will intervene early with at-risk young people and families.

2.6 Belfast City Council has itself supported the principles of early intervention/prevention programmes by delivering the Youth Engagement Project (YEP) as part of the current PEACE III Programme. This programme has provided counselling, family support, training and employment support along with individual mentoring by community/voluntary organisations for 50 young people to date at risk of engaging in crime or ASB at interfaces. The programme recently received an extension from SEUPB up until end September 2014 to deliver further support for another 100 young people across the city. The YEP project provides for information sharing across a range of agencies i.e. BCC, PSNI, Youth Justice, Probation Board, Belfast Regeneration Office, BELB and NIHE. The overall value of service provision to at risk young people in Belfast through the YEP project up to end September 2014 is around £750,000

Supporting Communities and Local Delivery

2.7 It is recognised that the statutory agencies cannot tackle ASB effectively individually and that meaningful and supportive partnerships need to be in place with the community.

Staff Resources

2.8 The Council provides for this by providing an area based ASB Officer and Safer Neighbourhood Officer service. There are four ASB Officers working in North, South, East and West Belfast whose primary responsibility is to co-ordinate the practical support to communities in preventing ASB through projects or initiatives, as well as providing services to those who have been victims of ASB. The eight Safer Neighbourhood Officers support this service by providing a more focused service in ASB hotspot areas and supporting communities in resolving low level ASB as well as undertaking enforcement activity.

District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (D)PCSPs

2.9 The Council supports the provision of (D)PCSPs whose primary focus is to provide integrated service delivery in respect of

reducing crime, ASB and fear of crime as well as supporting confidence in policing.

2.10 Many of the projects and small grants administered by (D)PCSPs have focused on preventing ASB and to date in the 2013/2014 year (D)PCSP's have supported local communities in addressing ASB with around £300,000 of community led services delivery through small grants and procured locally delivered services.

Alleygates

2.11 Tackling ASB effectively can often mean a physical intervention needs to take place either instead of or as well as a project or initiative. The Council has strategically supported this in the form of its Alleygates Project since 2007 and, with the anticipated completion of Phase 3 at the end of April 2014, will have installed 607 alleygates.

Inter-departmental Working

2.12 Members will also be aware of the significant investment of the Council's Parks and Leisure Department in tackling ASB in our parks and open spaces through the Park Wardens Service. Health and Environmental Services Department officers work closely with officers from Parks and Leisure on events and specific projects.

Future ASB Service Delivery

Belfast City Council

2.13 In response to feedback from elected Members and the community, a cross-departmental review of ASB practice and service delivery with the following aims could be beneficial:

- **More co-ordinated and effective responses**
- **To further improve inter-departmental communication**
- **To explore the options for agreed inter-departmental service standards in relation to ASB**
- **To raise awareness among front line service delivery staff within Council of how to respond if they witness or are experiencing crime or ASB**
- **Collaborative responses to problem solving**

Belfast PCSP

2.14 Belfast PCSP also believes that there is a need for improvement in the service provided to communities in the cross agency management of ASB. It intends to commence this work with all

partners in the 2014/2015 year in the form of a strategic review of all work undertaken to tackle ASB across Belfast as well as integrating existing best practice to include the following elements:

- **Stronger focus on supporting victims of ASB**
- **More effective information sharing**
- **Development of cross agency service standards**
- **Focus on early intervention**
- **Collaborative case management to improve accountability and responsibility**
- **Restorative practices**
- **Stronger partnerships with the community sector**
- **Facilitating community led solutions to ASB**

3 <u>Resource Implications</u>

3.1 Within Health and Environmental Services, there is one ASB Officer and two Safer Neighbourhood Officer for each of North, South, East and West Belfast whose primary focus is addressing ASB in partnership with communities.

4 <u>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</u>

4.1 None at present

5 <u>Recommendations</u>

5.1 The Committee is requested to approve an internal review of ASB practice and service delivery within Belfast City Council in consultation with the Parks and Leisure Department.

5.2 The Committee is requested also to note the work of Belfast PCSP in developing an agreed citywide cross agency framework for the effective management of ASB to improve service provision and that further reports will be brought back to this committee updating members of progress."

During discussion, several Members welcomed the proposed reviews to be carried out by the Council and the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership around anti-social behaviour and stressed that the Council needed to work closely with other agencies to address the issue, particularly, in identified hot spots.

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that officers of the Cleansing Services Section be included in the Council's review group. It agreed also that two Members of each of the Political Parties be nominated to serve on that group.

Waste Management

Review of arc21 Waste Management Plan

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present to the Committee the recent review of the arc21 Waste Management Plan (WMP), including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for consideration and approval.

2 Background

2.1 The WMP, which included an update of the SEA, has just completed its public consultation phase and, taking account of submissions arising from this exercise, a final suite of documents has been drafted and approved by the Joint Committee. The documents are now being presented to the councils for their consideration before being submitted to the Department of the Environment (DOE).

3 Key Issues

3.1 Following publication of the DOE's '*Delivering Resource Efficiency*' waste strategy last year, arc21 and the other waste management groups had to promptly conduct a review of their WMPs. As a result, the WMP and associated SEA were reviewed and revised and the proposed format of the revised WMP remains largely unchanged, as has the main strategic aspects.

3.2 The revised WMP acknowledges and recognises the ongoing local government reform process. It is intended that the next review cycle will closely follow the installation and operation of the new councils at the appropriate juncture.

3.3 This revised WMP sets out the arrangement for the management of the following waste streams:

- **Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste (that is the waste collected by or on behalf of District Councils);**
- **Commercial and Industrial Wastes;**
- **Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste;**
- **Packaging Waste;**
- **Hazardous Waste;**
- **Agricultural Waste;**
- **Mining Waste;**
- **Healthcare Waste; and**
- **Priority and Other Waste Streams.**

3.4 In terms of municipal waste, the WMP has been updated to include the current and proposed collection and management regimes. It also reflects the current status of the Residual Waste Treatment Project (i.e. that it is still in procurement).

3.5 The draft revised Plan was advertised on 9th January, 2014 in the Belfast Telegraph and the Irish News, as well as on the arc21 website and Council websites. Interested stakeholders were invited to submit a response to a consultation survey or by letter or email. They were also afforded the opportunity to meet with arc21, should this have been considered more acceptable to them. The public consultation process closed on the 28th February, 2014.

3.6 A total of eleven formal responses were achieved by the following means:

- **Nine responses were submitted via the electronic survey questionnaire;**
- **One letter response; and**
- **One face to face meeting.**

3.7 Within the survey questionnaire, seven were responding as local residents, one was a representative of a participant in the waste industry and the final was recorded as other stakeholder (with no further details provided). The results of the survey were as follows:

- **All respondents agreed with the principle objectives of the Plan;**
- **All respondents supported the Waste Hierarchy as a priority for action in the review of the Plan;**
- **There were no suggestions for further specific actions which could be undertaken by Councils to encourage waste prevention by householders;**
- **All respondents believed that the actions outlined in the Plan can assist the Councils in meeting the proposed 60% recycling target;**
- **All respondents supported the principle to further reduce landfill by using waste that cannot be practically recycled as a resource to produce energy; and**
- **All respondents supported the overall approach in the accompanying Environmental Report.**

3.8 In terms of the face to face meeting, this was held with Glassdon Recycling on 5th February, 2014. The Glassdon representatives indicated that they were particularly focussed on the approach to the recycling of dry recyclables and glass in particular. They were of the view that a fully comingled system including glass should not be the collection system pursued within arc21 but they suggest an increased network of bring sites as they believe this to be the most cost effective system for the region.

3.9 The letter response received by arc21 was received from a resident residing in the vicinity of the proposed residual waste treatment facility and focussed on issues which are more relevant to a land-use planning application for the site.

3.10 In addition to the above, some observations were received from the DOE and comments were also received from the NIEA with respect to the SEA.

3.11 The various submissions have been considered and appropriate changes are being made to the WMP. These changes are relatively minor in substance with no significant strategic change being proposed.

3.12 However, comments from the NIEA suggested it would be prudent to undertake an appropriate process with a view to being able to transparently demonstrate compliance with the Habitats Directive with due reference to Habitats Regulations Assessments. An appropriate screening exercise has been undertaken and completed.

3.13 The WMP Executive Summary has been forwarded to Members and a full copy of the revised WMP and SEA is available upon request.

4 <u>Resource Implications</u>

<u>Financial Implications</u>

4.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report but, depending upon the outcome of the procurement exercise, there will be revenue costs. These will be factored into the Service's budgeting process should the project satisfactorily conclude.

<u>Human Resources</u>

4.2 There are no Human Resources implications associated with this report.

Asset and Other Implications

4.3 There are no other asset implications associated with this report.

5 Equality and Good Relations Implications

5.1 There are no equality or good relations issued associated with this report.

6 Recommendation

6.1 Following endorsement by arc21's Joint Committee, Members are recommended to approve the revised Waste Management Plan and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment for formal submission to DOE for their approval."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Chairman