

# Health and Environmental Services Committee

Wednesday, 6th August, 2014

## MEETING OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Corr (Chairman);  
Aldermen Kingston and McCoubrey;  
Councillors Austin, M. E. Campbell, Clarke, Garrett,  
Hussey, Jones, Keenan, Kelly, Magee, McCarthy,  
McKee and Thompson.

In attendance: Mr. C. McCarthy, Interim Strategic Director;  
Mr. T. Martin, Head of Building Control;  
Mr. S. Skimin, Head of Cleansing Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Head of Environmental Health;  
Mr. M. McAtackney, Departmental Business and  
Resources Manager;  
Mr. B. Murray, Waste Manager, Service Planning  
and Delivery; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of the High Sheriff (Alderman L. Patterson), Alderman Stoker and Councillors Curran, Kyle and McNamee.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 4th June 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 July.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Directorate**

#### **Appointment of Interim Strategic Director/ Role of Head of Environmental Health**

The Committee was reminded that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 25th April, had considered a report on the organisational development and design of the Council. The Committee had agreed, amongst other things, that, given the complex nature of the post of Director of Health and Environmental Services, the level of organisational change taking place across the Council and the scale of Local Government Reform, the duties associated with that

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post, which had become vacant following the appointment of Mrs. S. Wylie to the role of Chief Executive, should be divided into two distinct functions.

The Interim Strategic Director reported that he had since been appointed to progress work around, for example, change management, community planning, strategic waste and the transfer of functions and services arising from Local Government Reform. The Head of Environmental Health would oversee and co-ordinate the operation of the four Services within the Health and Environmental Services Department. He explained that, to enable the Head of Environmental Health to take all action necessary for the effective management, administration and supervision of the Department, it would be necessary to transfer to her the authority which had been delegated previously under Section 6, Part 3 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation to the Director of Health and Environmental Services and he sought the Committee's approval in that regard.

The Committee granted the approval sought and wished the Interim Strategic Director and the Head of Environmental Health success in their new roles.

**Building Control**

**Street Naming Policy -  
Dual-Language Street Signs**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 15th January, it had been advised that, following an unsuccessful application for the erection of dual-language street signs in Ballymurphy Drive, a legal representative had written to the Council on behalf of a resident of that street in order to raise a number of issues relating to the application and to the Council's policy for the erection of such signs. The Committee had been advised that the Town Solicitor had issued on behalf of the Council a detailed response addressing those issues and that Senior Counsel, whose opinion had been sought as part of an ongoing review of the dual-language street naming policy, had confirmed that the policy appeared to be lawful.

The Head of Building Control informed the Members that the resident had subsequently sought a Judicial Review of the Council's policy and that it had been listed for hearing in the High Court on 20th October.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that it would in due course be advised of the outcome of the Judicial Review.

**Application for the Erection of Dual-Language Street Signs**

The Head of Building Control reported that the undernoted application to erect additional street nameplates in a language other than English had been received by the Council:

<b><u>Street Name</u></b>	<b><u>Second Street Name</u></b>	<b><u>Language</u></b>
Hillhead Heights	Arda an Mhullaigh	Irish

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He explained that, in accordance with Council policy, a survey of the street had been conducted which had determined that in excess of 66.6% of residents had been in favour of the additional nameplates. Accordingly, he sought approval for their erection.

The Committee granted the approval sought.

**Naming of Streets**

The Committee approved the undernoted applications for the naming of new streets and the continuation of existing streets to which the Royal Mail had offered no objection:

**New Streets**

<b><u>Proposed Name</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Applicant</u></b>
Ardenlee Chase	Off Ardenlee Avenue, BT6	Dougan Residential and Commercial
North Queen Park	Off North Queen Street, BT15	Apex Housing Association

**Continuation of Existing Street**

<b><u>Proposed Name</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Applicant</u></b>
Conway Street	Off Falls Road, BT12	Harry Rolston Architects Ltd.

**Cleansing Services**

**Dog Licensing and Identification – Review of Coloured Collar Identification Tag for Dogs/Dog Licence Fee**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 Under the Dogs (Licensing and Identification) Regulations 1983 (as amended), which was made under the Dogs (NI) Order 1983, it is a legal requirement for the keeper of a dog to ensure that the dog wears an oval coloured licence tag attached to its collar.
- 1.2 The introduction of compulsory micro chipping of dogs under the Dogs (Amendment) Bill in April 2012 resulted in the dual identification systems of coloured dog licence tags and micro chipping.

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- 1.3 During scrutiny of the Dogs (Amendment) Bill in the Assembly, the Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) Committee recommended that the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) consult with elected council members to assess whether there is a need to continue with the dual identification systems of micro chipping and the coloured tagging of licensed dogs post April, 2015. The Department subsequently wrote to the Council in June seeking its views on the issue.**
- 1.4 DARD identified the following three options in considering the future of coloured collar identification tags for dogs:**
- 1. retain the dual identification system of the coloured collar identification tag with its associated costs, along with compulsory micro chipping for a further rolling four year cycle up to 2018; or**
  - 2. maintain the current dual system, with its associated costs and allow a further review period up to the end of December 2016 to assist with the settling in of the new review of public administration structures; or**
  - 3. abolish the need for coloured collar identification tags from January 2015, with compulsory micro chipping to be the sole method of identification.**
- 1.5 Under the Dogs (Amendment) Bill the fee for a dog licence was increased to £12.50, with concessions for people in receipt of certain specified benefits, elderly people and for neutered dogs. DARD also seeks the opinion of the Council in regard to a review of the current dog licence fee.**

**Key Issues**

- 2.1 DARD consulted with Elected Members in 2011 to assess whether there was a need for the dual identification systems of the coloured dog licence tag and micro chipping post 2012.**
- 2.2 At its meeting on 5th October 2011, the Health and Environmental Services Committee endorsed as the preferred option for Belfast City Council to retain the dual identification systems of coloured dog licence tags and micro chipping.**
- 2.3 Following the consultation, DARD appraised the responses from all 26 Councils, and based on this, agreed to allow micro chipping to bed in for approximately 18-21 months and to review the continued need for the dual systems in January 2014.**

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- 2.4 DARD indicated that the period from April 2012 until January 2014 would allow dog wardens time to see how compulsory micro chipping actually works in the field.**
- 2.5 The experience of the Belfast City Council Dog Warden Service during this period is that microchip details alone are not a reliable means of identifying a dog's owner or successfully reuniting a lost dog with its owner.**
- 2.6 Much of the dog warden's enforcement work, such as issuing fixed penalties for dog fouling, requires an officer, on the ground, to have ready access to relevant information about the dog and owner in question. A coloured licence tag attached to a dog's collar provides an obvious initial method of identification; whilst a microchip will also provide ownership details access to this information requires the use of a scanner, which often necessitates handling the animal.**
- 2.7 In response to consultation with the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), in 2010 the Health and Environmental Services Committee supported the increase in dog licence fee to £12.50 with protection and concessions for certain vulnerable groups and recommended that provision was made to allow the Minister to make further future discretionary increases in line with inflation. (minutes 19th January 2010)**
- 2.8 The fee for a dog licence should provide a meaningful contribution to the administrative costs involved and should reflect the obligations dog owners have to the principle of responsible dog ownership. Deferring the review of the licence fee will allow the Council to make considered assessments of administrative costs following changes in Local Government structures and reforms of the benefits system.**

**Resource Implications**

- 3.1 The cost of individual tags is 25 pence. Based on the number of licences issued in 2013-2014, which was over 11,600, the estimated cost for 2015-2016 will be around £3,000, this will be allowed for in the revenue estimates and as it is an existing expenditure item, there will be no additional expense incurred.**

**Recommendations**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the dual systems of coloured dog licence tags and micro chipping be retained for a further review period up to the end of December 2016 (option 2). It is recommended also that the review of the dog licence fee be**

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deferred until the new Local Government structures are in place and the reform of benefits is agreed.

**Members are asked to express their preference in relation to options 1, 2 or 3 and to advise if they are content to delay any review of dog licence fees until the new Local Government structures are in place and the reform of benefits is agreed.”**

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the current dual system of identification for dogs should be retained until December, 2016, as set out within option 2 of the report. The Committee agreed also to defer the review of Dog Licence fees until such times as the revised Local Government structures had been implemented and any changes to benefit payments arising from the Welfare Reform Bill, which was under consideration currently by the Northern Ireland Assembly, had been identified.

### **Street Cleanliness Index**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1     Relevant Background Information**

**1.1    The figures presented in this report cover the first quarter of the financial year i.e. the period from April to June, 2014. Monitoring figures were measured by Cleansing Services Quality Officers. Enforcement, Dog Warden and Education and Awareness information was supplied by the Customer Support Service, Dog Warden Service and the Community Awareness Section within Cleansing Services, who were responsible for these functions over the period concerned.**

**1.2    The monthly monitoring programme consists of a random 5% sample of streets throughout the city being inspected and graded. From the grading, a Street Cleanliness Index is calculated and plotted for the various areas of the city, and the city as a whole.**

**1.3    The index range is from 1 to 100, with a Cleanliness Index of 67 being regarded as an acceptable standard by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (formerly Tidy NI). The results show the trends on a month to month basis. To alleviate the influence of spurious results on the overall index, the results are averaged over the last 4 surveys. Spurious results may occur for reasons such as adverse weather conditions, seasonal problems etc.**

**2     Key Issues**

**2.1    The overall city wide cleanliness index for this quarter is 74. This is a similar score compared to the score for the previous**

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quarter's cleanliness index of 74. The index for the same period in the previous year was 73. A cleanliness index of 74 is above the target set and is considered an extremely good level of cleanliness.

**2.2** The breakdown by individual area is as follows:

**2.3** North

The North Cleanliness Indices for April 2014 to June 2014 were 73, 74 and 74 respectively. This represents a similar score for April (73) and June (74), and an increase for May (up 2), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 73, 72 and 74 respectively.

The area is maintaining a good level of cleanliness.

**2.4** South

The South Cleanliness Indices for April 2014 to June 2014 were 78, 73 and 75 respectively. This represents an increase for April (up 5), a decrease for May (down 3), and a decrease for June (down 2) by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 73, 76 and 77 respectively.

The area is maintaining a good to very good level of cleanliness.

**2.5** East

The East Cleanliness Indices for April 2014 to June 2014 were 75, 73 and 76 respectively. This represents a decrease for April (down 1), a similar score for May (73), and an increase for June (up 1), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 76, 73 and 75 respectively.

The area is maintaining a good to very good level of cleanliness.

**2.6** West

The West Cleanliness Indices for April 2014 to June 2014 were 72, 71 and 73 respectively. This represents a similar score for April (72), a decrease for May (down 1) and an increase for June (up 2), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 72, 72 and 71 respectively.

The area is maintaining a good level of cleanliness

**2.7 Central**

The Central Cleanliness Indices for April 2014 to June 2014 were 71, 74 and 73 respectively. This represents a decrease for April (down 1), a similar score for May (74) and an increase for June (up 2), by comparison to those figures for the same period in the previous financial year viz. 72, 74 and 71 respectively.

The area is maintaining a good level of cleanliness

**2.8 Complaints / Enquiries**

There were 1201 enquiries regarding street cleansing during the quarter (by comparison to 1233 last quarter).

**2.9** There were twenty Corporate Complaints (17 Stage One, and 3 Stage Two) during the quarter – one of which related to street cleansing (stage 1).

**2.10 Enforcement**

There were 693 Fixed Penalty Notices issued under the Litter (NI) Order 1994, and 142 summonses issued. In addition 1526 Article 20 Notices were issued requesting information.

**2.11 Community and Education Projects**

During the last quarter the Community Awareness Team launched the Brighter Belfast Awards, in conjunction with the Council's Parks Service. The team also launched Belfast's Next Top Doggie project which is designed to use social media to spread the dog fouling message. The team also engaged primary school children in the anti litter / anti dog fouling message through the 'Captain cleanup and the poop scoop mystery' puppet show and the Terrible tales of trash' road show.

**2.12** In the last quarter, the team facilitated 44 community cleanups involving 822 volunteers, visited 60 schools engaging 2441 pupils in the anti-litter and anti-dog fouling messages, and attended 8 community talks and events promoting the anti-litter / anti-dog fouling message to 987 citizens and 15 meetings across the city.

**2.13 Dog Fouling**

The overall instances of dog fouling observed by Cleansing Services Quality Officers, in the course of their 5% quality checks, during the quarter were 191. In addition the dog

wardens observed 153 instances of dog owners clearing up dog fouling. There is a focus placed on dealing with dog fouling hotspots as a result of complaints and information from staff out on the ground. Cleansing Services and the Dog Warden Service continue to work together to address hot spots when identified.

**2.14 Dog Warden Information**

During the quarter the following was noted:

1. A total of 32 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for dog fouling (31 last quarter)
2. A total of 267 dogs were seized for straying (258 last quarter)
3. A total of 202 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for straying (151 last quarter)

2.15 The Dog Warden Service exceeded the previous quarter figures and continues to work towards meeting business plan targets.

**3 Resource Implications**

**3.1 Financial**

There are no financial implications in this report.

**3.2 Human Resources**

There are no human resources implications in this report.

**3.3 Asset and Other Implications**

There are no assets or other implications in this report.

**4 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

4.1 There are no relevant equality and good relations implications.

**5 Recommendation**

5.1 The Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.”

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After discussion, during which the Head of Cleansing Services undertook to examine the feasibility of increasing bin provision within Bradbury Place and other areas in the city centre in order to cope with increased waste generated at night by patrons visiting entertainment venues and fast food outlets, the Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Environmental Health**

**World Health Organisation  
International Healthy Cities Conference**

The Head of Environmental Health informed the Committee that the United Kingdom Healthy Cities Network, which included Belfast, was part of a global movement for urban health which was led and supported by the World Health Organisation.

She explained that it was now twenty-five years since the implementation of the first phase of the Healthy Cities Programme in the European region of the World Health Organisation. That milestone would be marked at this year's International Healthy Cities Conference, which was being hosted by the Municipality of Amaroussin and the Hellenic Cities Network. The conference, which would be based upon the theme 'Health and the City: Urban Living in the 21st Century', would be held from 22nd till 25th October in Athens and would celebrate also the launch of Phase VI of the Programme and the implementation of the World Health Organisation's new health policy framework, namely, 'Health 2020'. In addition, it would provide Political Representatives and health professionals with an opportunity to reinforce their commitment to health, sustainable development and the Healthy Cities movement. The cost per delegate of attending the conference would be in the region of £900, provision for which had been made within the Environmental Health Service's budget.

The Committee approved the attendance at the International Healthy Cities Conference of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees).

**Consultation on Home Accident Prevention  
Strategy for Northern Ireland**

The Committee considered the undernoted report and agreed that the attached letter and comments be forwarded to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety as the Council's response to the consultation document:

**"1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has produced a consultation seeking views on a new 10-year Home Accident Prevention Strategy.**
- 1.2 The previous Home Accident Prevention Strategy 2004–2009 delivered many positive outcomes and made a significant contribution to reducing home accidents and deaths. This new Strategy aims to build on that contribution.**

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A comprehensive action plan to accompany the Strategy will be developed by the Public Health Agency in partnership with key stakeholders.

**1.3 The Partners identified in the consultation are:**

- The Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS)
- The Public Health Agency (PHA)
- Health and Social Care Trusts
- Health and Social Care Board (HSCB)
- The Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS)
- Department of Education (DE)
- District Councils
- Home Accident Prevention Northern Ireland (HAPNI)
- Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
- An Munia Tober
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

**1.4 Belfast City Council has aimed to address Home Accident Prevention since the inception of a Home Safety Pilot Scheme in 1992. Under Article 27 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, councils are authorised to promote safety in the home in order to reduce the high number of accidents and injuries. This legislation provides the *vires* for councils to carry out a range of home safety functions. In recent years, Belfast City Council's delivery of these functions has contributed to the DHSSPS Home Accident Prevention Strategy 2004-2009.**

**1.5 The Belfast Home Safety service currently includes the:**

- provision of home safety checks, which are primarily aimed at families with children under 5 years of age and older people. Home Safety checks are carried out using the RoSPA digi pen scheme (currently under review by PHA/out for tender);
- provision of advice on how to prevent accidents and, if necessary, providing appropriate safety equipment such as child-safety gates, fireguards and lockable medicine boxes;
- provision of advice and safety equipment including child safety gates, fireguards, lockable medicine boxes and home safety packs (which include plug-

socket guards, door-stoppers, toilet locks, cupboard locks and a lock for a DVD/Video player). Touch lamps and 4 gang sockets are also provided to elderly residents (Equipment provided to householders under the home safety check scheme is currently funded by Public Health Agency via Belfast Home Accident Prevention Group);

- distribution of Winter Warmth packs (consisting of a fleece blanket, thermal underwear, woollen hat, woollen scarf, gloves and socks) to elderly and vulnerable residents; and
- educational visits/presentations to older peoples groups, Surestarts, Church groups, schools, residents' groups.

1.6 Belfast City Council's Home Safety Check service is unique in Northern Ireland in that:

- staffing costs are currently funded by the Council, rather than via the Public Health Agency;
- Belfast City Council's Home Safety Checks include checks of all electric sockets, plugs and fuses and carrying out minor repairs, such as changing plugs, if required;
- provision of energy efficiency advice;
- focused referrals to/from other related services including Public Health/housing service within Environmental Health, Occupational Therapy, Good morning Schemes, N.I.F.R.S.

1.7 The service completes 1600 Home safety checks per year.

## 2 Key Issues

2.1 This will be a 10 year Strategy (2014–2024) and is aimed at the entire population of Northern Ireland as accidents can and do affect everyone.

2.2 The consultation identifies groups of people who are more likely to have accidents and more likely to suffer long-term effects as a consequence of an accident. It is proposed that the strategy focuses on children under 5, people over 65 and people who are socially deprived. However, it is recognised that the risk of having an accident can increase depending on a range of circumstances including disability, illness, multiple medications or other types of vulnerability.

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- 2.3** It proposes to prioritise interventions in relation to falls, carbon monoxide, smoke, fire and flames and blind cords.
- 2.4** It is proposed that the Public Health Agency will be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the strategy and for the development of an action plan with key partners to deliver the strategy.
- 2.5** The consultation highlights the improvements in road safety accidents and workplace accidents that have been achieved via targeted legislative and awareness-raising campaigns. Deaths from Home safety and leisure accidents are now higher than deaths on the roads. The consultation document asks for views on new approaches to reducing Home safety accidents.
- 2.6** The consultation also seeks views on how the progress of the strategy and future action plan will be monitored and asks for general suggestions that would assist with the delivery of the strategy.
- 2.7** A draft consultation response addressing these issues has been prepared and is attached for consideration, together with a covering letter (See Appendices 1 and 2). In particular, the draft response highlights the following;
- the Council believes that the continuation of The Home Safety Check scheme is critical to ensure the proposed objectives and priorities are met;
  - there needs to be focussed education and awareness campaigns in relation to the priority issues across Northern Ireland. Home Accident Prevention NI (HAP N.I) would be in a good position with its links to both the community, local and central government to assist with this;
  - home Accident Prevention could be introduced into the primary school curriculum;
  - the good practice that already exists especially around partnership working should be developed further. The HAP groups should be utilised to their full capacity in order to ensure home safety initiatives are delivered in such a way that they deliver on the action plan priorities whilst still addressing local issues on the ground. Local Government Reform will give the HAP groups greater economies of scale and

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assist in a uniform approach across Northern Ireland to the proposed action Plan.

- social media and TV advertising are two ways that awareness can be raised and can be extremely effective.
- adopting the HHSRS could be a critical step in ensuring dwellings which are unsafe to live are adequately assessed and dealt with appropriately.

**3 Resource Implications**

**3.1 Financial**

There are no direct or immediate financial implications.

**4 Equality Implications**

**4.1** None.

**5 Recommendation**

**5.1** The Committee is requested to agree the draft response and covering letter in relation to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's consultation on a Home Accident Prevention Strategy for Northern Ireland.

**Appendix 1**

Health Protection Branch  
DHSSPS  
Level C4  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3SQ

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Home Accident Prevention Strategy 2014-2024 (Draft for Consultation)**

The Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department's consultation on a Home Accident Prevention Strategy. Belfast City Council has aimed to address Home Accident Prevention since the inception of a Home Safety Pilot Scheme in 1992. Under Article 27 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland)

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Order 1992 councils are authorised to promote safety in the home, in order to reduce the high number of accidents and injuries. This legislation provides the *vires* for Councils to carry out a range of home safety functions. In recent years, Belfast City Council's delivery of these functions has contributed to the DHSSPS Home Accident Prevention Strategy 2004-2009.

The Council's Health and Environmental Services Committee, at its meeting on 6th August 2014, agreed the attached response to the above-mentioned consultation document.

I would point out that both the foregoing comments and the attached response will be presented to the Council for ratification on 4th September. I will advise you shortly thereafter of any amendments made to them.

In the meantime, should you require clarification on either document please contact Mr. Stephen Leonard, Environmental Health Manager on either 02890270305 or [leonards@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:leonards@belfastcity.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,

Democratic Services Officer

enc.

Appendix 2

COUNCIL RESPONSE

Name and address of organisation or individual responding:

Belfast City Council,  
Health and Environmental Services Department,  
The Cecil Ward Building,  
4-10 Linenhall Street,  
Belfast  
BT2 8BP

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, name of contact person:

Claire O'Neill, Principal Environmental Health Officer.

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Note: If you wish to respond to some or only one of the questions, please do so. The Department will welcome and will consider all responses.

- 1 *Given the case that has been made for having a home accident prevention strategy, do you agree that the Vision and Strategic Aim are appropriate? We would welcome any amendments that you may wish to suggest.*

The Council has no issues with the vision and/or strategic aim and would not wish to see any amendments.

- 2 *We would welcome your views on the definition of a 'home' (Chapter 2, P 14).*

The Council is happy with the definition provided.

- 3 *We have identified priority groups as being the under-5s, over-65s and people who are socially deprived. We would welcome your views on this prioritisation.*

The Council welcomes the prioritisation of under 5's, over 65's and people who are socially deprived.

The Council would welcome the inclusion of 'vulnerable adults' as a priority group. NHS Direct defines a 'vulnerable adult' as someone aged 18 or over, receives or may need community care services because of a disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

- 4 *We have identified priority issues for focus as: falls, carbon monoxide, smoke, fire and flames, and blind cords. We would welcome your views on this prioritisation.*

The Council would strongly agree with all of these priority issues and would in fact suggest that the Government seek to introduce legislation to regulate these hazards, particularly in the rented sector. At present it is possible to only make recommendations to Landlords to help improve home safety matters but they do not have to implement them.

The Council advocates for the introduction of A Housing Health and Safety Rating system (HHSRS) which is the regulatory standard in England and Wales.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hhsrs-operating-guidance-housing-act-2004-guidance-about-inspections-and-assessment-of-hazards-given-under-section-9>

This standard includes risk of falling, carbon monoxide and other fuel combustion products, fire, explosions, hot surfaces and materials, electrical hazards, collision and entrapment. This standard looks at the occupant of the property as well as the structure of the property to ensure all risks are minimised. The Department for Social Development (DSD) are currently reviewing the statutory fitness standard for Northern Ireland and the Council would support the move to adopting the HHSRS as it provides a holistic approach to the assessment of all dwellings and includes the priority areas referred to above.

- 5 *Do you agree that the Objectives and Strategic Priorities are a good basis for action? We would welcome any amendments that you may wish to suggest.*

The Council agree with the objectives and strategic priorities and believe they will be key to informing future action plans and the work programmes contained in them. The City Council looks forward to working with other partners in the identification and delivery of these work streams.

- 6 *The Public Health Agency will be responsible for implementation and evaluation of the Strategy and will develop an Action Plan in conjunction with a multi-agency Implementation Group. We would invite your views on potential actions that could facilitate delivery of the proposed objectives and priorities.*

- Systems for capturing information on Home Accidents need improving and further work is needed to inform the targeting of future home safety interventions and work programmes;
- The consultation paper refers to an action plan to accompany the strategy to be developed by the Public Health Agency and the development of structures to oversee the action plan. The Council agrees with this in principle but would like to be consulted further on this matter. The Council looks forward to commenting on this at that time;
- The City Council is happy for the PHA to be responsible for the future implementation and evaluation of the plan and welcomes the support this will provide HAPNI, local HAP groups and local authority Home Safety Services to deliver better home safety outcomes.

In addition to the above, the City Council would ask that any future action plans reflect the following;

- The Council believes that the continuation of The Home Safety Check scheme is critical to ensure the proposed objectives and priorities are met;
- There needs to be focussed education and awareness campaigns in relation to the priority issues across Northern Ireland. Home Accident Prevention NI (HAP N.I) would be in a good position with its links to both the community, local and central government to assist with this;
- Home Accident Prevention could be introduced into the primary school curriculum;
- The good practice that already exists especially around partnership working should be developed further. The HAP groups should be utilised to their full capacity in order to ensure home safety initiatives are delivered in such a way that they deliver on the action plan priorities whilst still addressing local issues on the ground. Local Government Reform will give the HAP groups greater economies of scale and assist in a uniform approach across Northern Ireland to the proposed action Plan.

- 7 We would welcome your views on how best to raise public awareness of home accident prevention.

The Council notes on page 9 of the consultation document that a wide range of interventions including legislation and public awareness campaigns have delivered reductions in road traffic and workplace accidents.

The Council notes that more people are killed due to accidents at home on an annual basis than accidents on the road and agrees that the approach outlined in the above paragraph should be adopted for home accident prevention.

- 8 *Progress in delivering the Strategy will be monitored and its effectiveness will be reviewed periodically. How best should we monitor and assess the impact of the Strategy over time?*

The success of the strategy and the action plan to support it will depend largely on the evidence that will be developed to inform the strategy and subsequent action plans. The baseline will need to be recorded and the success of the strategy will depend upon the realisation of actual reductions in home accidents.

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It will be important that action plans are supported by robust performance systems that report not just on activity but set realistic targets that allow the various agencies to demonstrate measurable home safety outcomes. The City Council notes that the plan will be reviewed after the first year and every 3 years after that. We would ask that consideration is given to some form of mechanism that allows the relevant agencies to report on progress on an annual or bi-annual basis.

Annual progress reports need to be prepared to ensure plans are being delivered and that health benefits are being realised. This would allow the PHA and partners to sit down and report on what is going well and to consider and review aspects that are not going well and may need different support and/or interventions.

The multi-agency implementation group established to implement the action plan could carry out his role.

- 9 *Please provide any other comments or suggestions that you feel could assist the development and/or delivery of the Strategy.*

There is already a lot of good work around home accident prevention but is not consistent throughout Northern Ireland and certainly a lot more could potentially be done. Awareness of the issues is a major concern for the Council as campaigns always appear to be delivered re-actively rather than pro-actively. The Home Safety Check Scheme is a great mechanism to talk to people about potential accidents in their home, but it needs to be run in conjunction with more targeted, awareness raising campaigns.

Social media and TV advertising are two ways that awareness can be raised and can be extremely effective. If we take the Road Safety campaigns on social media and TV and radio as an example, these have been extremely effective in helping to reduce road traffic accidents and deaths.

TV and radio campaigns may well seem costly but if it helps keep people out of A & E departments thus lifting the pressure on the departments and ultimately saving money in the long run then they can only be seen as a good thing.

Adopting the HHSRS could be a critical step in ensuring dwellings which are unsafe to live are adequately assessed and dealt with appropriately.

Finally, whilst the strategy will provide direction in the next 10 years, we feel that this will need to be supplemented by robust funding streams to enable all stakeholders to implement the strategy fully.”

### Waste Management

#### Northern Ireland Landfill Allowances Scheme and Recycling Rate Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### “1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Department of the Environment (DOE) has given each council a Northern Ireland Landfill Allowances Scheme (NILAS) target on an annually reducing basis up to 2020.
- 1.2 Each council is expected to landfill within the allowances set in order to ensure that Northern Ireland complies with the requirements of the EU Landfill Directive.
- 1.3 Since 2008, across the arc21 region, a protocol has been in place relating to the transfer of excess NILAS allowances between constituent councils, should this be required.
- 1.4 Members may remember that in 2009/10 and 2012/13, the Council made use of this protocol to transfer in surplus allowances.

#### 2 Key Issues

##### NILAS Progress

- 2.1 The NI Environment Agency (NIEA), the NILAS monitoring authority, has now notified the councils of their draft reconciliation NILAS positions for the 9th Scheme Year, 2013/2014. This shows that the total amount of biodegradable local authority collected municipal waste sent to landfill by Belfast City Council was 36,952 tonnes, equating to 80.94% utilisation of the 45,652 allocated allowances available for this scheme year.
- 2.2 As anticipated, following scrutiny by the NIEA, some figures have altered since the councils submitted these for validation but, as highlighted to the arc21 Joint Committee in June, two councils within the region (Down DC and Ards BC) now need to draw from the protocol.

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- 2.3 As per the protocol, the amount of allowances to be transferred from each council is set as a proportion of their surplus allowances and a slight excess of transfers has been included in each case to take account of any further minor changes should they arise.
- 2.4 The calculations by arc21 are presented in a table and show what each of the constituent councils are being asked to make available for the two councils which have exceeded their allowances. For Belfast this shows that 576 allowances and 33 allowances should be transferred to Down DC and Ards BC respectively (see table below):

<b>Council</b>	<b>Amount of Excess Allowance to be Transferred to Down (tonnes)</b>	<b>Amount of Excess Allowance to be Transferred to Ards (tonnes)</b>
<b>Antrim BC</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Ballymena BC</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Belfast CC</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Carrickfergus BC</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Castlereagh BC</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Larne BC</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Lisburn CC</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Newtownabbey BC</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>North Down</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>12</b>

- 2.5 The formal transfer procedure requires that any transfer request must be made to the NIEA before 30 Sept 2014. The request must be made on the official NILAS 003 form with the original signature of a duly authorised person. The NIEA has indicated that it would be helpful if the completed form was accompanied with a short letter on the respective Council's stationery to assist in streamlining the process.
- 2.6 Following submission, the NIEA will undertake a series of checks and, once satisfied the appropriate conditions are met, will update the landfill allowances register and notify all the councils involved that the transactions have been completed.
- 2.7 Members are, therefore, being asked to approve the transfer of the allowances to Down DC and Ards BC. Furthermore, in order to reduce bureaucracy, Members are also being asked to grant delegated authority to the Director to send the relevant transfer application to the NIEA as and when appropriate, with a subsequent report being provided to the Committee for notation.

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**3 Resource Implications**

**Finance**

**3.1 None**

**Human Resources**

**3.2 None**

**4 Equality Implications**

**4.1 None**

**5 Recommendations**

**5.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- (i) approve the transfer of the allowances to Down District Council and Ards Borough Council; and**
- (ii) grant delegated authority to the Director to forward the relevant transfer application to the NIEA as and when appropriate, with a report being submitted subsequently to the Committee for notation.”**

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Provision of Wheeled Bins and Assorted Waste Receptacles**

The Committee was reminded that the arc21 Joint Committee acted on behalf of its eleven constituent councils to procure services in support of the implementation of the arc21 Waste Plan. The Head of Environmental Health reported that a tendering exercise for the supply of wheeled bins and assorted waste receptacles had been completed earlier in the year and that the tenders had been evaluated on the basis of the cost, quality and technical requirements set out within the contract specification. Accordingly, the arc21 Joint Committee had awarded for a period of one year, with an option to extend for a further year, contracts for the supply of the following types of waste receptacles:

<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Container/Item</b>
Craemer	140 litre, 180 litre, 240 litre bins
HEYN	360 litre, 1100 litre (plastic), 220 home compost unit with 5 litre caddy
Mattiussi	Bottle banks, 23 litre kerbside caddy, compostable kitchen caddy liners (roll of 30)

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Straight	660 litre (metal), 1100 litre (metal), 7 litre vented caddy, 7 litre non-vented caddy, 55 litre kerbside box with perimeter rim, 55 litre kerbside box with perimeter rim and moulded handles.
Sturdy	660 litre (plastic)

The Head of Environmental Health referred also to the need to review the current charges for the supply of wheeled bins and provided details of those levied by other councils within the arc21 region. She pointed out that the review, if approved by the Committee, would seek to ensure that the Council could recoup a greater proportion of the costs associated with their purchase and delivery, whilst continuing to offer value for money for residents.

After discussion, the Committee endorsed the action which had been taken by the arc21 Joint Committee for the supply of wheeled bins and assorted waste receptacles. The Committee granted approval for a review to be undertaken of the charges imposed currently by the Council for wheeled bins and noted that a report setting out options in that regard would be submitted to a future meeting.

Chairman