



<b>Subject:</b>	Anti-Social Behaviour in Parks/Open Spaces
<b>Date:</b>	7 November 2017
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	Further to discussion at the special People and Communities Committee meeting on 18 October 2017 Members requested that a report be submitted which would consider the implementation of additional preventative measures to the Council's Parks, including the feasibility of staffing resources. The report would include projected expenditure, resource requirements and detail any financial impact on the Council's existing budgets.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the contents of the report and endorse the strategic direction and allocation of resources as outlined.</li></ul>

3.0	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<p><b><u>Additional Preventative Measures</u></b></p> <p>3.1 Members will be aware that anti-social behaviour is challenging to resolve, not just in parks/open spaces but across Belfast generally. It is a complex issue and is, in most circumstances, the manifestation of wider community and societal vulnerabilities which require holistic strategic planning and investment with statutory, community and voluntary partners.</p> <p>3.2 Effectively and sustainably addressing these vulnerabilities can take time, and it is important to recognise the detrimental impact on the quality of life of individuals, families and communities affected by anti-social behaviour in the present. It is therefore incumbent on all partners (including the Council) to do whatever it can operationally to minimise anti-social behaviour in the present. Weekend nights and school holidays are usually most problematic.</p> <p><b><u>Operational Preventative Measures</u></b></p> <p>3.3 Council provides a range of existing services the purpose of which is to address anti-social behaviour. These services are outlined below:</p> <p><b>3.4 Mobile CCTV</b></p> <p><u>Existing Provision</u> – One mobile CCTV van follows a pre-set route each weekend based on parks/open spaces hot spots. Cover is provided on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights up to end March 2018</p> <p><u>Existing Provision Cost</u> – The cost of existing provision up to end March is approximately £42,000 per year and this is budgeted for within existing revenue budgets. A procurement exercise is scheduled for early 2018 as the existing contract runs out.</p> <p><u>Additional Provision</u> – The existing contractor has only one mobile CCTV van. In the short term, an additional supplier would be required and availability is not guaranteed.</p> <p><u>Additional Provision Cost</u> – The approximate cost of an additional vehicle is £700 per night. To provide an additional vehicle on each Friday, Saturday and Sunday night up to end March 2018 would cost an additional £40,000.</p> <p><b>3.5 Safer Neighbourhood Officers (SNO's)/Park Wardens</b></p> <p><u>Existing Provision</u> – 4 SNO's are on normal shift from 4.30pm – Midnight on Friday and Saturday nights. SNO's do not normally work on Sundays. Park Wardens work annualised hours in line with the seasonal opening/closing times of parks. Park Wardens are not on normal shift after approximately 6.30pm, however, practically they are not available from 5.30pm as they have locking up duties during the last hour of their shifts.</p>

Existing Provision Cost – The existing provision as outlined below is part of normal Council service delivery and as such is budgeted for within existing revenue budgets.

Additional Provision – Additional overtime hours could be provided by offering voluntary overtime (minimum team of four for health and safety reasons) to provide an additional team on Friday and Saturday nights and to put one team on Sunday nights where there is no provision currently.

Additional Provision Cost – The approximate cost of one additional team of four on voluntary overtime on each Friday and Saturday night would be £950 per night (8 hour shift). The approximate cost of providing one team of four on voluntary overtime on Sunday night would be £1,250 per night. The approximate total cost of increasing provision to this level would be £65,000 up to end March 2018.

### **Alcohol Enforcement Officers (AEO's)**

3.6 Existing Provision – Alcohol Enforcement Officers are a casual pool of Officers trained to undertake alcohol enforcement duties and deal with low level anti-social behaviour. They have other jobs within Council and are only available to undertake work outside their core working hours. AEO's are currently being used each weekend and during half term week to work alongside SNO's with the overall provision being one team of four dedicated to Falls Park/City Cemetery and a mobile team covering other hot spot parks/open spaces.

Existing Provision Cost – A small budget exists for AEO's during spring/summer months and at key events and times, however, this is full committed for the remainder of the year. Additional AEO provision after the Halloween half term week will require additional budget of £450.00 for each team of four per night (6 hour shift). This approximate total cost of increasing AEO provision to this level would be £27,000 up to end March 2018.

### **Summary and Budget Implications**

3.7 Three front line job roles exist currently within Council whose responsibility it is to deal with low level anti-social and nuisance behaviour, namely Safer Neighbourhood Officers, Park Wardens and Alcohol Enforcement Officers. No front line job role exists whose responsibility it is to deal with serious anti-social behaviour or criminality and the current Mobile Attendant job role does not provide for any role in dealing with low level anti-social and nuisance behaviour.

3.8 Those three front line job roles are spending the majority of their time at present working to address the issues around parks and open spaces.

3.9 If additional provision is required in the form of more CCTV provision, staff voluntary overtime or additional casual AEO's hours, no budget is available at present for this work.

3.10 Some available budget may be available within the Parks ASB Budget to assist with additional operational provision, however, this would reduce the monies available within this budget to support positive animation and community led diversionary work around parks/open spaces.

**Integrated Planning in Neighbourhoods**

3.11 Members will recall that whilst anti-social behaviour can be a concern at a range of parks/open spaces across the city, it is most persistent and prevalent in a smaller number.

3.12 Members may wish to consider how our convening role in community planning and the learning from the locality planning pilots can provide a platform for a more integrated, holistic and sustainable approach to addressing concerns around the most challenging parks/open spaces as part of an area model.

3.13 This approach would consider how anti-social behaviour in these parks/open space is the manifestation of a range of other pressures and vulnerabilities within the surrounding communities.

3.14 The approach would also use the park/open space as its core 'place', but would work with statutory, community and voluntary partners in the surrounding neighbourhoods to explore key connections and dependencies, working with other community, voluntary and statutory partners. For example in some of the areas there is significant investment in other services provide by statutory partners and local youth groups.

3.15 The purpose of the approach would be to identify the key pressures and vulnerabilities in the connected neighbourhoods which could be contributing to the issues in the park/open space and also to identify earlier and more sustainable opportunities to intervene to prevent the anti-social behaviour from starting in the first place. This may entail aligning some of our resources at a number of parks and open spaces and using a more coordinated approach to get better results where there is work currently being undertaken.

3.16 Such an approach may take longer to bed in (depending on current structures and relationships already in place), however we could develop an integrated approach that deals with immediate issues, while developing longer term and more sustainable was of working better at a local level. The work being developed in open spaces and parks could be part of an overall integrated plan for the area

3.17 Key Elements of the Approach would be:

- Community centred to ensure the community voices are heard and are part of co-designing solutions to problems
- Sustainability to ensure meaningful and long term change is the focus

- Opportunities for community led social innovation
- Early intervention and prevention to include opportunities to tackle associated drugs/alcohol, mental health, education and employment challenges
- Evidence based (community evidence as well as statistical evidence)
- Improvements in the integrated service offer to communities (both internally for Council and as a wider group of statutory, community and voluntary service providers) to improve community confidence
- Reduce duplication and identify opportunities for more efficient use of Council resources
- Identification of key community assets in the areas and how to support the development of these
- Physical measures which could assist in the core park/open space and opportunities to attract wider physical investment in the connected neighbourhoods
- Opportunities to work with local partners to develop animation programmes to change
- Risk of displacement would be considered and contingency plans would be developed to minimise that
- Role of schools, parents and youth providers in the area, including how the Education Authority Local Advisory Group plays its part in meeting the needs of young people in parks/open spaces
- Connecting other associated agenda's and partnerships and ensuring they are harnessed and channelled for maximum benefit to the park/open space and its connected neighbourhoods e.g. Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, PEACE, Fresh Start, Urban Villages, Belfast Strategic Partnership, Local Advisory Groups (LAG's)
- Regular reporting to Area Working Group's on progress and direction

### **Financial & Resource Implications**

#### 3.18 Staff Resources

Whilst the benefits of partnership working are acknowledged and evident, the above approach will still require significant changes in ways of working both internally and externally.

It is therefore suggested that Members would consider this approach around Falls Park/City Cemetery and Orangefield/Avoniel Park in the first tranche and at a later date consider inclusion of other parks/open spaces.

#### 3.19 Financial Resources

The financial implications of providing additional operational preventative measures are outlined above. No revenue budget is available at present to facilitate an increase in operational preventative measures without a consequential reduction in monies available to support positive animation and community led diversionary events in these parks/open spaces.

3.20	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are no equality or Good Relations implication at present.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	None.