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| Subject: | Anti-Social Behaviour in Parks/Open Spaces |
| Date: | 10th April 2018 |
| Reporting Officer: | Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department |
| Contact Officer: | Rose Crozier, Assistant Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department |

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| Restricted Reports | |
| Is this report restricted? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted? | |
| After Committee Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| After Council Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Some time in the future | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues |
| 1.1 | Further to discussion at People and Communities Committee on 9 January 2018, Members requested that quarterly updates on anti-social behaviour in parks and open spaces be provided. Members further agreed that the initial focus would be on Falls Park/City Cemetery and Orangefield Park/Avoniel Park. |
| 1.2 | The purpose of this report is therefore to update Members on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Context• Animation/Programming• Operational Co-ordination |

- Awareness Raising
- Maximising Strategic Opportunities

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- Note the progress against these actions and to receive a further progress report in June 2018.

Current Context

3.1 Reported Anti-Social Behaviour To Council

Ongoing analysis of reports from members of the public, along with anti-social behaviour witnessed by Council Officers has identified the following parks/open spaces as having issues with persistent anti-social behaviour.

3.2 Please note figures provided below are for the rolling year to date. Reports of anti-social behaviour in the last quarter have been minimal across the city, but Falls Park/City Cemetery continues to have consistently higher levels of reports during that period.

| Park/Open Space | Area | Reported Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| Falls Park/City Cemetery | West | 59 |
| Waterworks | North | 40 |
| Woodvale | North | 38 |
| Grove Playing Fields | North | 27 |

3.3 Please also note that the list below only represents the parks/open spaces with the highest numbers of reports of anti-social behaviour. Reports of anti-social behaviour are received for other parks/open spaces across the city but at a much lower level.

Repairs at Parks/Open Spaces

3.4 As indicated above, anti-social behaviour is often under-reported. Officers therefore regularly review requisitions for repairs at parks/open spaces due to vandalism, criminal damage or arson. The list below provides details on those parks/open spaces with the most repairs needed (in descending order of cost of repairs for this financial year with highest costs at the top) along with an assessment of the frequency of issues (based on requisitions for repairs):

3.5

| Park/Open Space | Area | Reason Repairs Needed | Frequency |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Musgrave Park | South | Arson/Criminal Damage | Unpredictable |
| Falls Park/City Cemetery | West | Arson/Criminal Damage/Burglary | Persistent |
| Marrowbone | North | Criminal Damage | Persistent |
| White Rise | West | Criminal Damage | Persistent |
| Dunville | West | Arson | Unpredictable |
| Sally Gardens | West | Criminal Damage | Unpredictable |
| Ligoniel | North | Criminal Damage | Unpredictable |
| Lenadoon | West | Arson | Unpredictable |
| Whiterock | West | Criminal Damage | Unpredictable |

3.6

Member Feedback

Elected Members engage regularly with Officers articulating concerns about anti-social behaviour in parks/open spaces. Officers have reviewed their Elected Members contact on this issue and the following parks/open spaces present most frequently as of concern:

| Park/Open Space | Area |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Falls Park/City Cemetery | West |
| Dunville Park | West |
| Marrowbone | North |
| Orangefield | East |
| Victoria Park | East |

3.7

Animation/Programming

Progress to Date

- Community led Youth Outreach Teams have been proactive around a number of parks and open spaces, but in particular around Falls Park/City Cemetery, Dunville and Orangefield/Avoniel
- A range of community events took place in parks and open spaces across the city over the St. Patrick's Day weekend (Dunville, Bog Meadows, Colin Glenn, Whiterock Leisure Centre and CS Lewis Square). Unfortunately, a scheduled event had to be cancelled in Marrowbone due to the health and safety implications of the severe wind
- Historical and Educational Tours of the City Cemetery were scheduled throughout the day on St. Patrick's Day to use the space positively and avoid anti-social behaviour

3.8

Next Steps

- The Parks Outreach Schools Programme will be commencing as the weather improves to encourage ownership of the parks and open spaces
- The Spring/Summer 2018 programming and animation schedules to be finalised both internally and with statutory and community partners for priority parks and open spaces
- Specific discussion with senior Education Authority Officers scheduled for mid-April 2018 to identify how they can better support this work

Operational Co-ordination

3.9

Progress to Date

- A number of workshops have been completed with statutory, community and voluntary youth providers in West, North and East Belfast on how to more positively engage the large groups of young people moving across parks and open spaces in the city. The South Belfast workshop is scheduled for Quarter 1 18/19.
- A citywide framework is emerging from these workshops with common themes identified as Outreach, Communication, Programming and Environmental Improvements
- Effective youth provider co-ordination in East Belfast has resulted in a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour in parks and open spaces in recent months
- Council Officers continue to work jointly with PSNI and local youth workers around parks and open spaces every weekend in trying to address any negative issues and support any vulnerable young people
- A pilot citywide tasking approach is being developed using existing publicly available data
- Council Mobile CCTV has been proactive every weekend around priority Council owned parks and open spaces in deterring anti-social behaviour. All evidence has been passed to PSNI.

3.10

Next Steps

- The citywide framework for working in partnership to more positively engaging the large groups of young people moving across parks and open spaces in the city to be finalised
- Internal testing of citywide tasking approach to take place before testing with partners and securing commitment to develop further
- Further development to take place of the emerging Youth Providers Forum around Lenadoon to include the Falls Park and wider West Belfast area.
- Initiation of Youth Providers Forums in North Belfast and South Belfast

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| 3.11 | <p><u>Awareness Raising</u></p> <p><u>Progress to Date</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint communication (PSNI, Council and HEI's) was issued to every post primary school in Belfast before the St. Patrick's Day period ▪ Joint (PSNI, Council and HEI's) media briefings were undertaken to highlight proactive work being undertaken across the city ▪ The scoping with partners for the Inter-Agency Community Safety Schools Programme has been completed and key community safety issues currently affecting young people have been developed |
| 3.12 | <p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing development of partnerships with post primary schools across Belfast to take place, seeking co-operation around communication with parents and pupils regarding wider community impacts and risks of anti-social behaviour ▪ Inter-Agency correspondence on this issue to be continually issued through schools/youth groups to parents and pupils over the spring/summer period ▪ Engagement to take place with organisations who advocate and lobby for young people in the development of messaging to maximise impact e.g. Children's Commissioner ▪ Preparation of Inter-Agency Community Safety Schools Programme for implementation in the 18/19 academic year ▪ Detailed scoping of how to proactively encourage parental responsibility around this issue |
| 3.13 | <p><u>Maximising Strategic Opportunities</u></p> <p>Officers continue to work to ensure alignment and connectivity between other strategic programmes of work to maximise benefit for people and communities in the city. For Members information, please see below some detail on other related programmes of work with the potential to positively impact on the ongoing challenges in parks and open spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PEACE IV Shared Spaces Project – This project provides capital and programming investment (£5.1 million) connecting a range of parks and open spaces in the wider Springfield area of West Belfast. The aim of this work is to create a 'necklace' of shared civic space, thereby transforming land into a shared civic space, which will improve connectivity between the city centre and outlying communities and neighbourhoods. ▪ Wider PEACE IV Programme – The wider PEACE IV Programme is providing investment in Children and Young People in the city (£1.66 million) and Building Positive Relations (£2.30 million). Open tenders for delivery of these programmes of work will become available in the coming months. |

- **Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI)** – Council was recently successful in securing £40,000 of funding from the Department for the Economy to facilitate innovation around how to better encourage positive use and deter negative use of parks and open spaces. Officers are currently working with partners to refine the ‘challenge’ to be issued to SME’s (including community and voluntary organisations Limited by Guarantee) for open call. There a high levels of interest in this ‘challenge’ because of its regional and national transferability, with the potential for a larger application to the ‘GovTech’ Fund whose purpose is to help the public sector modernise for the benefit of society

- **Smart Belfast ‘Things Connected’ Project** - Councils’ Smart Cities Team is involved in a consortium project with Ulster University supported by Digital Catapult, to provide SME’s with free access to a state-of-the-art wireless network linked to a range of low cost sensors. The sensors have the potential to assist in better understanding how our parks and open spaces are currently being used and to better anticipate future needs. All Data Protection and Privacy Impact requirements will be in place before any sensors are placed.

- **Fresh Start – Tackling Paramilitarism Action Plan** – Officers are currently working with Executive Office Officials and individual lead departments/organisations in maximising the benefit of the following work streams within the action plan for communities in Belfast.
 - **B4 ‘Communities in Transition’ – TEO/Co-operation Ireland**
 - **B12 ‘Young Men at Risk’ – Probation Board**
 - **A4 ‘Youth Outreach for young people at risk’ – Education Authority**

3.14

Financial & Resource Implications

Staff Resources

The above approach continues to support the values and principles of the City and Neighbourhood Services and wider Corporate Change Programme of customer focus, service integration and neighbourhood working. Learning from this work will continue to inform the ongoing transformation of the organisation.

Financial Resources

All of the above work continues to be accommodated from within existing Council and (D)PCSP revenue budgets. The work is intended to maximise existing resources, reduce duplication and facilitate joined up decision making and resource allocation in the identified parks/open spaces.

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| 3.15 | <u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are no equality or Good Relations implication at present, however, this will monitored on an ongoing basis. |
| 4.0 | Appendices – Documents Attached |
| | None |