

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 6th December, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murray (Chairperson);
Alderman McCoubrey;
Councillors Bunting, Bower, Canavan,
Cobain, Michael Collins, M. Donnelly, R. M. Donnelly,
de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, Magee, Maghie, McAteer,
McCusker, McMullan, Newton, O'Hara and Verner.

In attendance: Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and
Civic Services; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were recorded.

Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Róis-Máire Donnelly to her first meeting of the Committee.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 8th and 22nd November were taken as read and signed as correct.

It was reported that the minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st November, subject to the following amendments:

Tree Strategy

The Council agreed to engage with DFI seeking it to include the installation of tree pits as road chicanes in residential areas to increase overall tree coverage, slow the speed of traffic, promote road safety, and support the development of active travel.

Enforcement Action within Smoke Control Areas

The Council agreed that the minute be amended to reflect that it had been agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would contain detail regarding the data

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within smokeless zones and include enforcement action detail that had been taken around bonfires, including information regarding the regulation and management of bonfires.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Verner declared an interest in agenda item 4 (a) – Social Supermarket Funding – Update as she was employed the Greater Shankill Partnership who was a Strategic Partner, she left the meeting whilst the item was being discussed.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following seven items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following 7 items as, due to their nature, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**Pitch Partner Agreement –
Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 9th August, concern had been expressed regarding the Council's governance arrangements at the Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park with East Belfast Football Club (EBFC).

The Director advised that the current governance arrangements stated that the Council was required to obtain a list of trustees, office-bearers and individuals requiring safeguarding checks, this process was consistent with all clubs. The Director confirmed that the necessary checks had been undertaken on two separate occasions and he could report that the EBFC had been compliant with the Council's requirements.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services responded to a number of queries from a Member and also confirmed that the Club was compliant with the Council's requirements.

The Member expressed concern in relation to the Council's current policies around governance and he asked that his concerns be recorded in terms of the current Partnership arrangement with EBFC and the Council.

The Committee noted that EBFC was compliant with the Council's monitoring requirements in respect of the Partner Agreement.

**Proposed structural review for the Crematorium
and a proposal to increase the fees and charges**

The Committee considered a report which detailed proposed structural changes to the staffing at the City of Belfast Crematorium, along two options seeking to increase Bereavement fees and charges to offset the costs.

The Director of City Services advised that, since the last structural review in 2011, there had been a 40% increase in the number of burials, she added that the City of Belfast Crematorium was the third busiest out of a total of 314 crematoria in the UK and was also the cheapest for cremations. She detailed that the proposed charge increases were necessary to fund the required structural changes to ensure that this critical regional service continued.

A number of Members spoke in support of the need for a staffing review and reiterated the critical nature of the service and also commended the valuable and often difficult role of the staff at the crematorium.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to defer the matter to enable the Director of City Services to liaise with the Director of Finance to re-examine the figures, including the non residents' allowance and that a report would, if possible, be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to enable any uplift to be considered as part of the overall rate setting process.

Financial Reporting - Quarter 2 2022/23

The Committee noted the contents of a report which summarised the Quarter 2 financial position for the People and Communities Committee, including a forecast of the year end outturn. It noted that the Quarter 2 position showed an under spend of £3.01m (6.8%), with the forecast year end position being an underspend of £1.3m (1.6%), which was well within the acceptable variance limit of 3%.

The Members were advised that the main reasons for the quarter 2 Committee under-spend related to vacant posts across a number of services, the receipt of additional income and the timing of grants and programmes.

The Members were reminded that, as discussed at the November meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, these were indicative figures and the recent unbudgeted pressures had not been factored into the departmental forecast which was likely to significantly impact this position.

The Members noted that any further underspends that arose throughout the year would firstly be used to offset the forecasted deficit.

The Committee noted the financial update.

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**GLL Annual Schedule of Charges
proposal for 2023/24**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided the Committee with an update on the proposed GLL pricing structure for the period 2023-24.

Following a query, both the Director and Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services advised that the proposed CPI/RPI price increases were a contractual entitlement and, as such, the Committee could articulate a view on the proposed price increases but did not have the authority to challenge the pricing review proposal.

During discussion a Member sought clarity in respect of the delivery of the social value element of the contract and whether it was equitable across the city.

The Director advised that an officer would liaise with the Member directly to provide more information on how social value element was delivered throughout the city.

Following discussion, the Committee:

- noted the proposed schedule of charges for 2023/24;
- noted the rationale presented in support of the proposed price revisions but noted its disappointment and the increase; and
- agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would give consideration as to when the contract with GLL could be reviewed, if the contract could be broken and consider whether any management fees could be introduced which would help to offset the price increases.

**Late night hot food premises
opening hours on Ormeau Road**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Members of ongoing complaints from residents attached to late night opening of hot food premises on the lower Ormeau Road and detailed that a request had been received from the Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG) seeking permission for a delegation of residents to attend the January meeting of People and Communities Committee to highlight the impact of late-night opening on the local neighbourhood.

The Director detailed that Local residents had been liaising with officers in relation to this issue and had asked the Council to consider using its powers under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985 to make a closure order to prevent residents in the neighbourhood of the premises being unreasonably disturbed either by persons resorting to the premises or by the use of the premises for the supply of meals or refreshments. It was noted that a closure order could only be made between the hours of midnight and 5am.

The Director confirmed that officers had written to the businesses concerned but the complaints had persisted.

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The Committee:

- agreed to the attendance of a deputation of residents from Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group to attend the January meeting of Committee to highlight the impact of late-night opening on the local neighbourhood; and
- agreed that a report would be submitted to the January meeting in relation to making a closure order in respect of any premises which was causing unreasonable disturbance to residents.

Installation of Gates at Crescent Park

The Committee agreed to defer the report to enable deputations from both objectors and supporters to be heard at the January meeting of Committee.

Capacity and Revenue Funding 2023/26

The Committee agreed to defer the report for consideration at Party Group Briefings and agreed that, in the interim, officers would liaise with DfC to establish if any additional funding was available.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Notice of Motion - Belfast Cycle Network

The Committee was advised that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 24th November, had referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Harvey and seconded by Councillor Nelson, to the People and Communities Committee for consideration:

“That this Council, along with the PSNI and Department for Infrastructure, should develop a long-term, comprehensive strategy to ensure that the Belfast cycle network is kept clean and free from obstructions, such as parked cars and commercial bins.”

Councillor Maghie, on behalf of the proposer and seconder who were both unable to attend the meeting, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the motion.

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting.

Notice of Motion - Corey Jack Aughey Memorial Park

The Committee was advised that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 24th November, had referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Pankhurst and seconded by Councillor McCullough, to the People and Communities Committee for consideration:

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“This Council notes with deep sadness the passing of Corey Aughey on holiday in June 2022. We also note that Corey was a well-known and loving character within the Glenbryn area of North Belfast. As such, this Council will move to rename “Glenbryn Playpark” as the “Corey Jack Aughey Memorial Park” as a fitting tribute in his memory. The Council will also agree to install a memory bench in his name within the park.”

Councillor Verner, on behalf of the proposer and seconder who were both unable to attend the meeting, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the motion.

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting and noted that the motion would take due consideration of the Council’s Park Naming Policy.

Notice of Motion - Inclusive Leisure Services

The Committee was advised that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 24th November, had referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Michael Collins and seconded by Councillor Ferguson, to the People and Communities Committee for consideration:

“This Council recognises the shortage of services available for people with disabilities. The Council will seek to engage with BETTER to expand and promote inclusive services within our leisure centres to ensure an accessible and welcoming environment for everyone.

The Council will seek the input of service users, engage with autism support networks, BETTER and Disability Sport NI to bring inclusion and community to our leisure centres by improving accessibility for people with autism and other disabilities in a number of key areas including:

- Belfast’s 12 leisure centre to promote inclusive sessions for people with disabilities as is the case with Lagan Valley Complex and Dundonald Ice Bowl in Lisburn
- These sessions should include but not be limited to swimming pools, and should be at an accessible hour for children and parents to make best use of them
- The Council will work with BETTER to ascertain which other services: such as trampolining, Inflatable Park facilities and any other leisure facilities which may be included in these inclusive sessions
- The Council will strive to ensure all amenities inside leisure centres are fully inclusive for people with disabilities. This includes improving advertising and continuing to promote the use of WAP cards, as well as ensuring staff are adequately trained to support children, families and carers to provide fully inclusive services to people with autism and other abilities

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- The Council will continue its pioneering work with Swimming Buddies in Brooke Leisure Centre and explore ways to expand this across all 12 leisure centres in Belfast, to ensure the life skill of swimming lessons are readily accessible for children at a local level offering a supportive space for families and provided in an inclusive manner
- The Council will engage with BETTER to explore the permanent installation of a Sensory Room in one or more of our leisure centres in Belfast
- The Council will strive to better promote and advertise inclusive services in our leisure centres across all of our social media platforms and publications with the overall aim of being leaders in the area of inclusive leisure services.”

The proposer of the motion, Councillor Michael Collins, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the motion, during which he requested that a deputation from Swimming Buddies be invited to a future meeting to hear more about its inventive work at the Brooke Leisure Centre.

A number of Members spoke in support of the Motion and reiterated the need to ensure that the Council's leisure and park facilities were accessible and inclusive to all.

During discussion a Member stated that she felt that the a Children's Champion role within the Council should be considered, this would be a role that would specifically advocate and champion the needs of all young people throughout the city.

The Chairperson of the recently established Council's Disability Working Group, Councillor McMullan, advised that attendance at the inaugural meeting had been poor and he encouraged those nominated Members to attend to enable engagement to commence around the inclusivity of Council services to all.

The Committee:

- adopted the motion and agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting; and
- agreed that a deputation from Swimming Buddies be invited to present to the February meeting of the Committee in respect of its work in the Brooke Leisure Centre.

Notice of Motion - Imagination Library

The Committee was advised that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 24th November, had referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor de Faoite and seconded by Councillor Howard, to the People and Communities Committee for consideration:

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“Belfast City Council:

- Acknowledges that the majority of physical brain development occurs in the first three years of life, when children form over 1 million new neural connections per second;
- Recognises the benefits of reading, and reading aloud, to young children which can promote the development of basic literacy and vocabulary skills, establish strong inter-personal relationships between children and parents/guardians, as well as improving longer term educational, health, social and economic outcomes;
- Is concerned about the rising cost of living which will limit the ability of families to pay for essential educational resources like books for young children;
- Agrees to investigate and establish a pilot of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in the City to provide a new book each month for children aged 0-5, working with any interested partners to secure the success and sustainable funding of the scheme.”

The proposer of the motion, Councillor de Faoite, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the motion.

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Social Supermarket Funding – Update

(Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager, and Mrs. M. Higgins, Lead Officer – Community Provision, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 Following P&C and Council approval in August/September 2022 to take forward the design and delivery of the Social Supermarket Fund (DfC allocation) in-year, officers have spent the intervening months liaising with area-based Strategic and Thematic partners to identify and then liaise with potential delivery partners, assessing capacity to deliver and to what level of resource and to seek their views on how the additional funding could best be used within their service delivery models whilst ensuring that the high level social supermarket principles set by DfC are met.**

The paper outlines officer recommendations following these meetings/ discussions and seeks member agreement for the proposed approach outlined for 22/23 allocation and delivery.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Note the outcomes of engagement and co-design processes undertaken with strategic and thematic partners in support of implementing the Social Supermarket Fund (SSF) 2022-23.
- Note and agree the allocations to nominated area-based delivery partners (as detailed in Appendix 1, available on mod.gov) following discussions with Strategic Partners.
- Note and agree the allocations to nominated city centre and thematic-based delivery partners (as detailed in Appendix 1, available on mod.gov) following discussions with Thematic Partners.
- Grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to enhance awards to delivery partners in-year (dependent on budget and capacity) in order to ensure in-year spend.

3.0 Main report

Background

Social Supermarket Fund

- 3.1** In September Council approved acceptance of £228,342.42 for delivery of a social supermarket fund (SSF) for 22/23 in the Belfast area. The social supermarket model aims to offer a sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to help address the root causes of poverty rather than simply provide food. This is achieved through the provision of a referral network for wraparound support.
- 3.2** The objective of administering this fund is to support the co-design of a social supermarket model in Belfast council area and in-year implementation of same. The Department for Communities have stated that they will also consider requests to support projects that meet the high-level social supermarket principles to enable actions to address food insecurity to be delivered in 2022/23.
- 3.3** Members gave approval for officers to engage with existing Strategic and Thematic Partners to agree participating partners ensuring coverage for all areas. It was agreed that 60% of the

overall allocation (£137,005) was to be made to area partners based on population and deprivation figures. A summary of the area allocations (as detailed at Appendix 1, available on mod.gov).

- 3.4 The overall aim of the co-design process has been to support delivery by organisations who have the capacity to deliver a social supermarket model through enhancement of their existing service provision. In a small number of cases, for example where the area/partner financial allocation is relatively low, partners have stated that they wish to provide food vouchers to those in extreme need that they identify through other wrap around services they are already providing (as noted in 3.1 second paragraph DfC have confirmed they would be content with this).

£91,336.97 was then allocated to support organisations who work with key communities across the city, on a thematic basis. However, follow up engagement with thematic partners has identified that most individuals who are members of communities of interest/Section 75 groups should be able to access provision on an area basis as part of the community in which they live.

- 3.5 Nonetheless, there was recognition that some people experience barriers in accessing services at an area level and that, for these individuals, ability to access a form of city centre-based provision might be beneficial. It was also noted that there are currently particular pressures meeting the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, and those with complex needs, in accessing food alongside wrap around service provision.

- 3.6 Two organisations have been identified as having a model that could be adapted to meet the Social Supermarket approach on a city centre basis to meet the needs of those identified above, namely:

- Storehouse – City centre based – long established foodbank (15 years) with a wide range of relevant partners who refer into their services including for example the Welcome Organisation, Extern, Womens Aid.
- Homeplus – University area – already provide support to refugees and asylum seekers and are seeking to extend their operations to enable weekend provision.

- 3.7 Making an equal allocation to each of these organisations would equate to an award of £45,668.48 which may prove challenging to spend within the financial year 22/23 (3 months remaining). It is therefore recommended that a maximum allocation of £21,000 is made to each of these two organisations.

- 3.8 Whilst other thematic partners have indicated they are not in a position to establish a social supermarket type model some have expressed an interest in using a smaller allocation to provide food vouchers to those in extreme need that they identify through other wrap around services. As noted previously, as long as this food is provided within the high-level social supermarket principles, then this would be considered eligible spend. As detailed at Appendix 1, available on mod.gov, this outlines recommended allocations to thematic partners made on this basis.
- 3.9 Some of the area-based partners have also indicated that they could accept a higher level of funding to deliver activity in support of the SSM fund; members therefore may wish to consider making additional allocations available to area partners, based on identified slippage and their capacity to spend in year. However, members should note that many of these area-based organisations have since been recommended by committee as delivery partners for the recently approved Council Fuel Hardship Fund. The additional work associated with administration of this fund may have an impact on their capacity to deliver enhanced activity supported by the Social Supermarket Fund.
- 3.10 Members are asked to grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to consider and approve any allocation of identified slippage so that timely allocations can be made, and external funding can be maximised. NB Delegated authority for the Director was approved in 21/22 to ensure that external funding was maximised.
- 3.11 All organisations identified in this report will be required to submit a project proposal, which will be assessed by officers through an agreed process, to ensure that activity meets the aims of the funding programme, is eligible, presents value for money, and can be delivered within timescales. The same process will be used for the allocation of any identified slippage.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.12 All activity outlined in this report can be delivered within existing resources – via the allocation from DfC.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications
and Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.13 This will be considered throughout and any appropriate issues highlighted to Members.”

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During discussion several Members acknowledged the valuable work delivered through the DfC Pilot Social Supermarket programme and a Member sought clarity that this proposal would not interfere with that work.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed that this was an additional funding allocation from DfC to councils which was intended to compliment the Pilot scheme, with a view to developing new approaches to enhance social supermarket provision in each of the Council areas.

The Committee requested that future DfC funding arrangements would provide ongoing support for the existing DfC pilot initiatives as well as the new approaches.

The Members were also advised that an evaluation of the pilot social supermarket model had been completed by DfC which provided detail on all the models used. The Lead Officer undertook to circulate this to all Elected Members.

A number of the Members reiterated the value of the voluntary work undertaken via the Social Supermarket initiative in their respective District Electoral Areas and following discussion it was agreed that representative from a Social Supermarket provider would be invited to a future meeting to enable the Members to hear first-hand more about the valuable work with the local community.

During discussion a Member sought clarity around the detail in respect of the 9 organisations/groups previously allocated funding in 2020, including how much funding each group had been allocated and spent and any changes to strategic partners with each round of allocations.

The Director advised that a review report on the Strategic Partners had previously been agreed and it was anticipated that this would be submitted to Committee early in the New Year.

The Committee:

- noted the outcomes of engagement and co-design processes undertaken with strategic and thematic partners in support of implementing the Social Supermarket Fund (SSF) 2022-23;
- noted and agreed the allocations to nominated area-based delivery partners, following local engagement;
- note and agreed the allocations to nominated city centre and thematic-based delivery partners following discussions with Thematic Partners;
- granted delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to enhance awards to delivery partners in-year (dependent on budget and capacity) in order to ensure in-year spend;
- agreed that that the review of Strategic Partners, which had already been committed to, would provide detail in respect of the 9 organisations/groups allocated funding in 2020, including how much funding each group had been allocated and spent and identify any changes to strategic partners with each round of allocations;
- agreed that a Social Supermarket provider would be invited to a future meeting to outline its work in the local community;

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- recognised the valuable work delivered through the DfC pilot Social Supermarket programme and that this additional funding from DfC to councils was intended to develop new approaches. The Committee requested that future DfC funding arrangements would provide ongoing support for the pilot initiatives as well as these new approaches; and
- noted that an evaluation of the pilot social supermarket model had been completed by DfC which provided detail on all the models used and that this would be circulated to all Elected Members following the meeting.

Stadia Community Benefits Initiative
2022-2023 Quarter 2 Update

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To advise Committee of progress with the Stadia Community Benefits Initiative (SCBI) for 2022/2023 and update on the action plan.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

Note progress to date

3.0 Main report

3.1 The Council has been undertaking the Leisure Transformation Programme to renew its Leisure facilities across the City. This Programme has been influenced by the Partnership opportunities presented by the NI Executive Stadia Programme.

3.2 The Council, Department for Communities (DfC) and the Irish Football Association (IFA) have recognised the opportunities presented by the Stadia Programme, have committed to work together to maximise these benefits, and have agreed to establish a Stadium Community Benefits Initiative as part of the Belfast Community Benefits Initiative (‘the Project’) to implement and deliver agreed objectives including promoting equality, tackling poverty, and tackling social exclusion within the Belfast area.

3.3 In March 2016 the Council, DfC and IFA signed an agreement which sets out their respective commitments to the project. As other major stadia are developed in Belfast it is anticipated that other sports governing bodies shall become parties to the agreement. At its April 2018 meeting People and Communities committee agreed that Council would work with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) within the Stadia Community Benefits Initiative

and recognised their significant planned investment in Gaelic Games in the city to support their Gaelfast strategy. GAA activities became fully incorporated into the action plan at the start of financial year 2019-2020, with Gaelfast staff imbedded into the governance structure at the Delivery Board and the Policy and Performance Group.

- 3.4 The agreement is for a period of ten years with financial commitment from Council and IFA in place to the end of March 2026. Delivery is managed through monthly meetings of the Delivery Board, which reports quarterly to the Policy and Performance Board. Financial and performance reports will be presented to Council and other partners' Boards as necessary.
- 3.5 The Policy & Performance Group is responsible for agreeing the Benefits Realisation Plan and associated annual targets. Work was undertaken to ensure the end benefits/outcomes are aligned to partners' strategies. To measure the progress of this the Council and the IFA have developed a range of indicators/intermediate benefits which are monitored through programme delivery:
- a. Number of coaching sessions provided
 - b. Number of coaches engaged in delivering coaching
 - c. Number of sessions improving club governance
 - d. Number of volunteering opportunities
 - e. Participation opportunities for under 16s
 - f. Female participation rates
 - g. Number of people completing skills development programme
 - h. Number of sessions for under-represented groups
 - i. Number of sessions for school and youth groups
 - j. Community group usage of stadia
 - k. Number of clubs attaining club-mark
 - l. Educational opportunities
 - m. Number of programmes targeting ASB
 - n. Improved collaborative working
 - o. Number of disabled participants
 - p. Number of older people participating
- 3.6 The policy and performance group held their meeting on Friday 4 November to review performance to date and to be updated in terms of the programme for Q3 and Q4
- 3.7 Following the completion of a baseline assessment in early 2017, annual workplans are developed each year. The Action Plan for 2022-2023 has been produced by the partners and includes a mixture of sports specific programmes including National Governing Body specific coach education courses and some joint collaborative initiatives delivered by both sporting codes such as

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information webinars which continue to prove popular. A joint conference will take place in January 2023.

Performance

- 3.8 Delivery to date in Q1 and Q2 of year 6 (financial year 2022/2023) has started strongly and details of the IFA and GAA specific activities are included at appendix (i) and appendix (ii)

A number of joint initiatives are planned for Q3 and Q4

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.9 In accordance with the Council's obligations under its DfC Funding Agreement for the Olympia Regeneration Project, the Council has committed a sum of £100,000 per annum for a minimum of ten years, so that a minimum of £1,000,000 is contributed in total to the Project.

In relation to 2022/23 Q2 spend partners have reported a normal level of spend in line with programmes delivered. Partners have projected full utilisation of the budget across both joint and individual work programmes by the end of March 2023.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.10 There are no additional impacts related to this report.”

The Committee noted the update.

**Belfast Boxing Strategy 2022-2023
Quarter 2 Update**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to provide £200,000 in funding to the Irish Athletic Boxing Association Ulster Branch (IABA) in the current financial year for delivery of an agreed action plan which supported the Belfast Boxing Strategy and he then provided an update on the progress in relation to the agreement up to the end of September 2022.

He explained that, in line with the Council's objectives, the Belfast Boxing Strategy Steering Group had met quarterly. The Steering Group was chaired by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and attended by Council officers, IABA officers and officials and Co. Antrim officials.

The Committee was reminded that the Council had previously agreed a total of 37 Indicators with the IABA to monitor delivery of the programmes. The Director reported that the IABA had been compliant with all the reporting matters.

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The Members were reminded that the IABA had developed the action plan relating to 2022 – 2023. This plan had been approved by Committee at meeting on 8th March 2022

Following a query from a Member, the Director confirmed that the Boxing Strategy was being considered within the context of the development of the new Belfast Physical Activity and Sport Development Strategy for the city.

Noted.

Belfast City Youth Council Update

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Members that, at its September meeting, it had agreed to postpone the special committee meeting with Belfast City Youth Council (BCYC) from October until 20th December, 2022.

He updated that the current cohort of BCYC had not had the opportunity to meet consistently and identify their priorities for the incoming term. Furthermore, the new Children and Young People's Co-ordinator had not commenced his employment with the Council until the beginning of November. Since then, he had been engaging with the Youth Council membership, but they were currently not in a position to take part in the special Committee meeting in December.

As the next scheduled meeting between the BCYC was not until June, it was suggested that, if possible, officers would arrange a special committee meeting in late February/early March and also arrange a meeting with the Youth Champions of each party and the Youth Council in the interim. This would enable the new co-ordinator more time to rebuild relationships with the membership of the BCYC and support them to actively participate in the rearranged meeting.

The Committee approved the recommended approach to engagement with Elected Members and the BCYC in the coming months and agreed that the next scheduled special meeting of People and Communities committee with the Youth Council be postponed until late February/March 2023.

**Leisure Contract Compliance and
Performance Reporting Schedule**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To present proposals for reporting on performance and contract compliance in relation to GLL and the leisure management contract.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider:

- The proposed contract compliance and performance report schedules presented below at 3.5, 3.6 and in Appendices 1 and 2.
- To consider the recommendation that GLL only attend committee meetings as required to present or be available to respond to queries in relation to specific reports or topics.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 In November 2020 SP&R agreed to review the tri-partite leisure model and the Active Belfast Limited (ABL) Board, including its membership and governance arrangements. Terms of reference were approved in June 2021 and First Point Management and Consultancy Limited were appointed to conduct the review.

The final review report was presented to the SP&R Committee on 25th March 2022. After consideration the committee approved Option 3 as the preferred way forward. Namely, to bring Contract Compliance and Performance Monitoring of GLL back into the Council and commence the winding up of ABL. The committee decision was subsequently ratified by Council on 4th April.

ABL has been dormant since 6th June and will remain so until formally dissolved.

Contract compliance, performance management and financial transactions have been managed through City and Neighbourhood Services (CNS) (previously as Parks & Leisure) since the contract with GLL commenced on 1st January 2015. Until June 2022 reports were presented to ABL and into Council through SP&R. On 18th November SP&R agreed that future governance and reporting would be through the People and Communities Committee (P&C). The decision was ratified by Council on 1st December.

Proposals for committee consideration include general oversight arrangements, periodic reports, key performance indicators, budgets and financial transactions and audit/risk assurances.

3.2 Outcomes and proposals

This paper sets out proposed report schedules for governance and performance monitoring of the leisure management contract. The process will be delivered through CNS including the preparation of committee reports.

CNS will continue to gather and collate contract compliance evidence and performance data as previously required for reporting through ABL.

3.4 Committee reporting and governance overview

Following the decision to bring management of the GLL leisure contract back under direct Council control, all related reports will be presented through the P&C committee.

An extensive schedule of reports is defined within the conditions of contract. An established schedule has evolved since 2015 and is now well established. Contract governance and performance reporting mechanisms have always been subject to review by the Council's Audit, Governance & Risk unit.

3.5 Contract compliance

CNS takes the central role in collating information and works with Corporate H&S, Corporate finance, Audit, Governance and Risk Services and BCC Legal Services to review and present assurances.

Contract compliance requirements are set out within the legally binding contract between BCC and GLL. As these contractual requirements will remain unchanged, it is proposed that the same suite of check mechanisms and assurance reports be retained as part of direct Council governance procedures. For example, existing mechanisms include:

- a) Assurances on key BCC/GLL policy alignments
- b) Health and Safety (including Safeguarding) reporting
- c) Timelines for submission of key annual proposals around, pricing, programming, marketing and promotion, sports development, community engagement, etc.

3.6 Performance reporting

Periodic performance report measures and formats have evolved since contract commencement in January 2015. The current scorecard format has provided consistent and comparable management information for the last four years. Nine key performance indicators (KPI's) are presented under the following three themes:

- a) Business (financial)
 - Labour cost recovery
 - Expenditure recovery
 - Cost per visit

b) Membership

- Pre-Paid monthly membership net gain
- Pay & Play membership net gain
- Swim School membership net gain

c) Occupancy

- Main hall occupancy to capacity ratio
- Studio occupancy to capacity ratio
- Synthetic Pitch occupancy to capacity ratio

A sample scorecard (quarter 1 2022/23 example) is presented at Appendix 1, available on mod.gov. Quarterly scorecards present current quarter, last quarter, same quarter last year and current year to date data for comparative purposes.

The above KPI's present a solid overview of contract performance. All three themes are accepted within the wider leisure industry as key drivers of overall performance.

To provide the above, CNS would continue to collate more detailed data, beyond the nine listed KPI's, which would be retained on file should additional or more specific ad-hoc performance analysis be requested.

- 3.7** It is recommended that contract compliance and performance reports be presented at a strategic level to Committee on a six-monthly basis presented in November and May. This would allow for sufficient time to collate and verify management information data related to the preceding six-month periods of April to September and October to March.

Additional annual reports requiring approval by specific dates will be presented as detailed in Appendix 2, available on mod.gov.

Given the timeline around the transfer of contract governance from ABL to Council, the first report covering April to September 2022 will be presented to committee in January 2023. The routine biannual report cycle (November and May) will resume from May 2023.

CNS would continue to collate monthly management information data on a centre-by-centre level. Unless otherwise requested, six monthly committee reports would be presented at a strategic overall service level supported by centre specific performance examples where appropriate.

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An annual report schedule is presented for consideration in Appendix 2, available on mod.gov. The schedule reflects the sequence of reports historically presented through ABL.

3.8 Summary

Members are requested to consider the contract compliance and performance report schedule proposals set out above and below in Appendices 1 and 2.

Key elements of the proposed schedule are:

- a) Six monthly reports on contract compliance and performance at a strategic level.
- b) Annual reports on specific issues requiring approval by defined dates as set out in the conditions of contract.
- c) CNS will continue to gather detailed data and will present all reports to P&C committee.
- d) At members discretion GLL will be available to attend meetings to respond to questions relating to relevant reports.

Members are requested to consider:

The proposed contract compliance and performance report schedules presented above at 3.5, 3.6 and below in Appendices 1 and 2.

The recommendation that GLL attend committee meetings as required to present or be available to respond to queries in relation to specific reports or topics.

3.9 Communications & Public Relations

None

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

None

**3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations as outlined at 2.0 and 2.1 of the report.

**Belfast City Airport Request - Bird Strike Management
at Victoria Park: Implications to Air Safety**

The Committee considered a request from The George Best Belfast City Airport (GBBCA) regarding bird strike management at Victoria Park.

The Members were advised that the control of birds in the flight path to the airport was a requirement of the airport's Civil Aviation Authority licence. In line with GBBCA's national aerodrome license requirements and associated guidance material presented in CAP772: Wildlife Hazard Management at Aerodromes, and that the airport was required to identify sources of risk and to reduce and maintain any risk to an acceptable level in compliance with the Civil Aviation Authority licensing requirements.

The Members were reminded that the Committee had granted a similar request for rookery management at the December 2021 meeting of the Committee. Following the works, the GBBCA had reported that the post breeding rookery management had seen a further reduction in nesting rooks the following spring and a redistribution of nests to another location within Victoria Park. With progress made and still potential for the rookery to expand, the airport had identified the need to follow up with another session of winter nest removal and nest site discouragement.

He detailed that the proposed works would include:

- the removal of old rook nests to take place during the works period;
- any necessary thinning of sheltering pines, structural pruning of preferred nesting trees, and reducing shelter from ivy.

The Committee was advised that, if approved, the GBBCA would appoint a suitable contractor with previous experience to undertake the works. In addition, officers would review the submitted risk assessment and insurance certificates in line with procedure and work with Legal Services to issue the requested licence. The licence would include relevant conditions to ensure that the airport had confirmed that all works were permissible and that any required licences were in place to permit the works to take place within the required timescales. The licence would also place an onus on the airport to ensure that health and safety measures were implemented, essential signage was assembled and one-way systems were established where necessary.

A Member noted the need for the required works from a health and safety perspective but requested that the Council write to the NIEA seeking it to ensure that the works were undertaken as sensitively as possible to ensure that the habitats and consequently the populations of both Canadian geese and mute swans were not detrimentally affected.

The Committee:

- agreed the request from George Best Belfast City Airport (GBBCA) to permit access under licence to Victoria Park to facilitate rookery management and to undertake further winter nest removal and nest site discouragement during mid-January 2023;

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- noted that the licence would permit works to commence in early January and end on 31st January 2023 and permit GBBCA thereafter to carry out monitoring until 31st March 2023, subject to the terms and conditions;
- noted that any decision to grant permission was subject to a legal agreement that would be developed by the Council's Legal Services Department which would ensure that any works were permissible, and the required NIEA licence and consents were in place; and
- agreed to send a letter to the NIEA asking it to ensure that it monitored carefully the works being undertaken.

**Supporting Vulnerable People
Impacted by Cost of Living**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To provide P&C Committee with an update on plans to support vulnerable people and families impacted by the cost-of living crisis and who are at risk of negative health and social impacts of living in cold homes.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and**

- i note the Council's expanding role in supporting vulnerable people/households impacted by the cost-of-living crisis**
- ii note the work underway to bring forward a programme of warm hubs (Warm Welcome / Warm Spaces) in Council assets and facilities during this winter period**
- iii consider the civic leadership and convening role of the Council in bringing together a citywide programme of similar support and in helping raise awareness and signposting to such facilities**
- iv note the support provided by the MarCom's team in helping to raise awareness and promote the support available including the development and rollout of the #BelfastTogether narrative.**

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 Households and vulnerable individuals are experiencing the perfect storm, emerging from a Covid-19 pandemic, growing pressures on household incomes and unprecedented increases in gas and electricity bills. The impacts of fuel poverty are felt in**

a wide range of ways, on physical and mental health, household finances, the economy and ultimately on people's quality of life. Despite the hard work of many agencies across the statutory, community, voluntary and private sectors, the impact of fuel poverty is intensifying within Belfast and the wider region.

- 3.2** It is important to highlight the growing pressures and demand on referrals to existing support schemes including the Affordable Warmth Scheme and the Belfast Warm and Well programme both of which are already exceeding capacity and we are still to enter the winter period. The Warm and Well programme has experienced a 300% growth in demand since it was first established.
- 3.3** Members will be aware of the recent decision taken by the SP&R Committee to allocate £1m towards a fuel hardship scheme across the city. Council officers are also engaging with the Department for Communities to explore what support can be brought forward for those most need during this winter period.

Key Issues

- 3.4** Members may be aware of the growing focus across the UK whereby public, voluntary and faith organisations are utilising local community assets and facilities as 'warm hubs' which are open for people to go to keep warm and often to refreshments and to take part in social activities. This initiative is being brought forward at pace in response to the inability of people and families to heat their home this winter.
- 3.5** Whilst recognising that 'warm hubs' should not be seen as an alternative to providing households with adequate resources to make heating their homes affordable, there is a growing number of councils across Northern Ireland who are already bringing forward similar plans for either setting up, supporting or highlighting/signposting the locations for 'warm hubs'. Whilst not a new concept, as we enter the forthcoming winter months, this is a practical step to support people in communities who need it the most.
- 3.6** Within Belfast, the concept of warm hubs (or Warm Welcome/Spaces) is building momentum with a number of key services including, from a Council perspective, our leisure and community centres, putting in place plans to have locations within their facilities as warm hubs which will be made available for people to avail of during the colder months.
- 3.7** Work is also underway to programme a series of activities and events within these facilities (e.g. tea clubs, homework clubs,

classes, wellness programmes etc) to encourage attendance and broaden the scope (to reduce stigma and encourage longer-term engagement). Discussions are also ongoing with other key statutory agencies and community service providers including NI Libraries, Museums, the Public Health Authority and Area Partnership Boards in relation to their plans/proposals. Officers have also utilised established community planning networks to gather information on relevant local initiatives which may be planned

- 3.8 Whilst the Council has a direct role in providing such facilities, it can also use its leadership and convening role to help coordinate a citywide programme and help identify, raise awareness and signpost to locations which may be available across the city through multiple platforms and channels. Members to note that officers are currently pulling together a short and easy-to-read information booklet which will outline the range of key support services available as well as advice, including energy savings tips, to help people mitigate the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis. Again, the intention would be that this information would be shared as widely as possible and using multiple channels.

Marketing and Communications

- 3.9 Our Marketing and Communications team is providing comms support around a number of initiatives that Council is rolling out in response to the cost-of-living crisis. Some of the initiatives have been referred to above and seek to support communities/households in need - for example our 'warm spaces, warm welcomes' programme in leisure/community centres; extra programming in community centres to encourage people, particularly seniors, into our community centres; community advice sessions including energy saving advice; fuel stamps; age-friendly events, and the Fuel Hardship Scheme. It is also important to note that ongoing communications activity and messaging around the circular economy, employment academies and support for businesses – all relate back to Council supporting the city/communities during this time of crisis.
- 3.10 Similar to our communications approach during Covid, our Marcomms team is providing signposting for our residents and ratepayers to relevant third-party services and resources available to help with the cost-of-living crisis, including the 'warm spaces, warm welcomes' scheme being delivered by our leisure partners, GLL. In the latest edition of City Matters, we included a dedicated section on where to go for support and advice in relation to the cost-of-living crisis. We have also developed a #BelfastTogether narrative so that relevant information can be 'badged' in a consistent, recognisable way. This is currently running across

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Council's social media channels, and we will continue to regularly review and update our web content.

- 3.11** Earlier this month, we launched our own programme of 'warm spaces, warm welcomes' in community centres, involving the Lord Mayor in Marcomms activity including the Lord Mayor's video blog, and our Marcomms activity has also been highlighting the positive work going on to support older people in our communities including information sessions and age-friendly events. We are planning more PR and Marcomms activity to promote this work and encourage citizen engagement in the coming weeks. As detailed at Appendix 1, available on mod.gov, is some illustrative artwork developed for the upcoming drop-in sessions.
- 3.12** Members to note that a core group of internal officers from across council, including e.g. CNS, Climate and Community Planning will be brought together to ensure that the internal consideration and operational planning of future support is coordinated and synergies maximised. MarCom's will continue to provide advice, support and leadership on the associated comms and how this can fit with the #BelfastTogether narrative.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.13** The financial implications contained within this report will be funded through existing departmental budgets and/or through possible financial or in-kind contributions from partners towards programming activity.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Implications**

- 3.14** None."

The Committee noted the update and recommendations and detailed at 2.0 of the report.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Quarterly update on Pitch Partnership Agreements

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Members that the Council was currently developing a new policy in regard to the management of assets within the community, with pilots being delivered across a number of sites. He reported that one of the sites included in the initial pilot had been Ulidia Playing Fields and this site had now been assessed using the pilot approach.

He reported that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 21st October, had endorsed the Committee's recommendation to transfer the existing Partner

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Agreement at Ulidia to a long-term lease. He continued that it was anticipated that, following review of the CAT pilot process, a number of the other sites might also be made available for consideration under new management arrangements. However, until that time, and to ensure continuity of service provision, it was intended that the remaining existing Partner Agreements would continue until new arrangements had been established.

The Committee noted the quarterly progress report in relation to Partner Agreements at seven sites and that all Partners had been compliant on reporting matters and financial checks for July – September 2022.

Cherryvale Gate Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- Update members on the Cherryvale gate opening resident/member engagement meetings.
- Present mitigations for approval and completion.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the detail discussed at the resident/member engagement meetings.
- Consider the mitigations discussed and grant approval for officers to move ahead with the works.
- Note ongoing engagement with DFI in reference to the crossing.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Following a decision at Council on 3rd October 2022, officers and members from the Lisnasharragh DEA have completed a number of engagement meetings with residents interested in the opening of the gate at Cherryvale Playing Fields from Knockbreda Park and the proposed anti social behaviour mitigations.

3.2 Meetings were held on 21st October and 17th November to accommodate residents and members attendance. Residents from 8 surrounding properties who were opposed to the gate opening were invited and 11 residents attended the discussions. A combined note of the meetings is attached at Appendix 1 for information. An updated timeline of committee decisions and engagement with residents has been attached as Appendix 2.

- 3.3 Measures and key issues discussed are outlined below:**
- **Fencing –Additional fencing and the replacement of the inner gate was discussed and officers agreed to a site meeting with residents before installation.**
 - **It was communicated to residents that CCTV would not be installed but the Council is currently considering a CCTV policy which will inform any future decision in relation to this.**
 - **Lighting – this is not seen by council as a necessary mitigation. It is too costly and the gate will be closed at dusk in line with our parks opening hours.**
 - **Additional dog litter bins will be installed to facilitate increased dog walkers in the area.**
 - **Tree pruning carried out around the sub-station.**
 - **Increased park warden patrols following the opening of the gate and this would kept under review. Numbers would also be provided to residents to contact when they witnessed ASB.**
- 3.4 If such measures detailed above were implemented in order to manage anti-social behaviour concerns, the costs would be as follows –**
- **Additional Litter bins - £800**
 - **Erection of fencing around substation and rear of houses at Rosetta Park - £13,000**
 - **Resurfacing of the triangle if land outside the current gate £4000.**
- 3.5 At September Committee it was agreed that a letter would be sent to DFI (Appendix 3) requesting an update on the installation of the pedestrian crossing. A reply was received and a copy is attached at Appendix 4. Since receiving this letter, council officers have further engaged with DFI on the timeline for installation of the crossing. Initial feedback from DFI officers confirms that a recent survey confirms that due to the busy nature of the road, this crossing will be installed regardless of the gate opening. Council have agreed that this work should be completed before the opening of the gate.**
- 3.6 When this matter was considered by members at its September meeting, officers were requested to produce a report on ASB in parks across the city and this information is currently being collated. Members should also note that following the opening of the gate that it was agreed that the area would be kept under review for a period of 6 months.**

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- 3.7 The committee is asked to note the engagement with residents and consider the reduced antisocial behaviour mitigations recommended for installation.**

Finance and Resource Implications

- 3.8 Operational arrangements can be accommodated within existing budgets.**

**Equality or Good Relations Implications /
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.9 An Equality & Rural Needs impact assessment of the proposal has been completed and no implications have been identified.
Legal Services**

- 3.10 A triangle of land exists between the gate and the footpath which officers had not yet been able to identify ownership of. The issue had been referred to Legal Services and is subject to further investigation in relation to title.”**

A Member thanked the officers for their efforts in facilitating the engagement meetings with the residents and welcomed the progress that had been made to ensure the reopening of the gate.

A further Member asked officers to liaise with NIE to establish responsibility for the erection of the additional fencing around the substation and with DfI regarding the cost for the resurfacing of the triangle of land outside of the current gate.

The Committee:

- granted approval to progress the works;
- agreed that officers would liaise with NIE to establish responsibility for the erection of the additional fencing around the substation and with DfI in regard to the resurfacing of the triangle of land outside of the current gate; and
- noted the ongoing engagement with DfI regarding the crossing.

**Requests for containerised storage at
Falls Park and Sally Gardens**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To advise and seek member support in dealing with two requests from soccer clubs for installation of containers on council land.**

2.0 Recommendations

- That members support the application for installation of a storage container by Belfast Celtic at Falls Park for their own use. This recommendation is based on the recent incidents of vandalism resulting in damage to the Club's equipment.
- That members do not support the request from Celtic Boys for installation of a container for their exclusive use at Sally Gardens on the basis that the requirements for storage at the wider site and the expectations of the broad range of users are not fully understood at this time.
- That members make recommendations as appropriate to Strategic Policy and Resources committee regarding the agreements required to govern the installations approved.
- That officers will recommence work on development of a policy to govern the use of containerised storage at CNS sites and whilst this is in development no further requests will be considered.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 Members may recall that in April of 2017 the committee received and approved a report from the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services establishing a management position in respect of the provision of containers and other storage accommodation on land owned and managed by Belfast City Council. The management position was adopted in the absence of any formal policy.
- 3.2 The Committee agreed that where it can be established that containers are required by a sports club for storage of essential equipment the Council will consider granting permission. Factors influencing decision making include consideration of proposed use, regularity of the use; appearance, size and access; in addition the sports club would be responsible for maintenance; obtaining appropriate public liability and building/content insurance and for installation and subsequent removal as well as the cost of any reinstatement required at the site.
- 3.3 A key factor in support of any approval is a pre-existing formal relationship between the club and the council at the site. Where existing relationships, governed by a legal agreement such as an FMA a lease or a partner agreement, are in place they provide a surety and leverage should the Terms and Conditions of use of any

containerised facility be broken. It was agreed that where permission is to be granted it would be limited to the period of the existing agreement or would be for a period deemed reasonable by the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood services but not initially to exceed 2 years.

Key Issues

- 3.4 In the absence of a formal policy, City and Neighbourhood services departmental asset board have been managing containerised storage requests on this basis. Two requests have now come forward simultaneously which warrant consideration by members as they sit outside the normal circumstances, ie. there is no existing agreement with the club at the site.
- 3.5 The first is a request from Belfast Celtic FC who are seeking permission to install at their expense, a storage container near the 3G pitch in Falls Park. The request comes because goalposts owned by the club but stored at the pitch, have been repeatedly broken and vandalised. There have been at least seven recorded incidents of antisocial behaviour leading to damage of the club's property and costing the club several hundreds of pounds in repair and replacement costs. Despite the efforts of council officers to curb the anti-social behaviours at the site the risk to the club's equipment remains. The council is not currently in a position to provide storage for the club's equipment and the club therefore are requesting permission to purchase and to house a storage container on council land to be able to safely store this equipment.
- 3.6 The club have no formal facility management or partner agreement for use of this site but, in common with other users, book the site through the normal council booking process. Belfast Celtic are the most frequent user of these pitches, their recent bookings amount to 43% of the total with the other 57% split across nine other users.
- 3.7 The second request has been made by Celtic Boys FC who have asked for permission to install a container at their own expense to house equipment on land in the car park adjacent to the pitch at Sally Gardens Community Centre. This club has no formal agreement with the council for use of the site other than through the standard booking process.
- 3.8 The pitch at Sally Gardens is subject to an agreement governed by the GAA joint management board. The board submit block booking requirements twice yearly and only once they have been put on the system can other sports including soccer make bookings on the site. Celtic Boys FC are one of 10 regular customers and their bookings represent 28% of the total with Oliver Plunkett FC being the most frequent user with bookings representing 32%.

- 3.9 In considering both of these requests the requirements and expectations of the broad range of site users need to be given consideration particularly in relation to any perceived opportunity for other users to request additional containers for their exclusive use.

The CNS assets board is recommending that members support the application for installation of a storage container by Belfast Celtic at Falls Park for their own use. This recommendation is based on the recent incidents of vandalism resulting in damage to the Club's equipment. If supported the agreement would run for a maximum period of 2 years and align to the management position established by the 2017 committee decision as outlined in paragraph 3.2 of this report.

- 3.10 In considering the request by Celtic Boys FC at Sally Gardens the CNS asset board could find no immediately evident reason to warrant the installation of storage at the site for the exclusive use of this one club. On the basis that supporting the request may not best serve the requirements and expectations of the broad range of site users the board is recommending members do not grant the club's request at this time. However, given the significant physical changes ongoing at Sally Gardens in developing The Colin Healthy Living Centre officers propose a comprehensive review of storage requirements at the site to highlight any gaps in supply and identify solutions to best serve the needs of users across sports and community programming.
- 3.11 In considering these requests for containers and the nature of the equipment the clubs are seeking to store at council sites, officers have identified what may be a gap in provision. Some further work is required to fully understand the extent to which large non portable equipment, over and above that provided by council as a standard part of the booking, is required to support pitch use. Officers propose to review equipment provision and, if a gap exists, how such equipment might best be supplied and stored.
- 3.12 The current and other recent requests have also highlighted the weaknesses of operating under a management position and reinforce the need for development of a formal policy on provision of containers at council sites. Work on development of this policy, begun pre pandemic by the CNS policy and business development unit, had identified at least thirty five CNS sites utilising containers for storage, most sites with more than one container and the majority owned by site users rather than by council. Officers propose that this work, having been paused to allow CNS to focus on other priorities, is recommenced. Whilst this work is

ongoing no further requests for installation of containerised storage by site users will be considered.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.13 In line with the position agreed in 2017 those clubs being authorised to place containerised storage on council land will be responsible for all costs associated with supply of the container, obtaining any necessary planning permission, obtaining appropriate public liability and contents insurance and for installation, maintenance and subsequent removal as well as the cost of any reinstatement required.

Whilst both requests indicate that the clubs would meet all installation and operational costs and would be governed by a suitable agreement drafted with support of officers from the estates and legal team, it should be noted that compliance failures in the past have resulted in council being forced to remove facilities of this nature from sites and as a result council has incurred significant cost.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

None.”

It was proposed by Councillor D. Donnelly, seconded by Councillor R. M. Donnelly and subsequently agreed that both the requests received would be approved and that Belfast Celtic at Falls Park and Celtic Boys at Sally Gardens be granted permission to install containers at the respective locations for their own use.

The Committee therefore:

- approved the application for the installation of a storage container by Belfast Celtic Football Club at Falls Park for their own use, based on recent incidents of vandalism which had resulted in damage to the Club's equipment;
- approved the request from Celtic Boys Football Club for the installation of a container at Sally Gardens for their own use, with a review of the overall storage requirements at the site to be undertaken out to highlight any gaps in supply and to identify solutions to best serve the needs of the other users;
- agreed to make the appropriate recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources committee regarding the agreements required to govern the installations of the two containers; and
- agreed that officers would recommence work on the development of a policy to govern the use of containerised storage at CNS sites and whilst this was being developed agreed that no further requests would be considered.

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Public Right of Way at Floral Park

The Committee considered a report seeking to assert a Public Right of Way from Floral Park to Antrim Road, using that the Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983.

The Director reported that in 2021 an application had been received by the Council to develop land on a route that a public right of way crossed. He explained that this had previously been investigated in 2005, however, despite a grant of planning permission having been given, the development of the land had not proceeded and consequently the assertion had not been undertaken by the Council.

The Members were advised that the current proposal included a diversion of the existing route. The land in question had previously been granted planning permission and it was likely to be granted again. He explained that Article 16 of the Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 gave the Department power to divert any public right of way where it was needed to enable compliance with a planning permission. The Council had written to DAERA and had been advised that the route could only be diverted after it had been asserted.

The Director confirmed that Legal Services were satisfied that previous evidence supported the case for the route being a public right of way and that its status could not have changed since that time.

He explained that for a Public Right of Way to exist at Common Law there were two essential elements:

- dedication by the owner of the soil; and
- acceptance of the Right of Way by the public.

In this instance the Director reported that the following evidence demonstrated presumed dedication by the landowner;

- the path was constructed through the amenity space by the developer providing a pedestrian link between Floral Park and Antrim Road;
- the route in question had been used 'as of right' by the general public;
- the use continued for a sufficient period to imply the owner intended to dedicate a Public Right of Way; and
- the route connected two public places or places to which the public regularly resort that use has followed a more or less consistent line.

Given the above assessment, the Committee granted approval to assert the Public Right of Way from Floral Park to Antrim Road.

Operational Issues

Proposal for Dual Language street signs

The Committee was advised that the application for a dual language street signage had been received prior to the implementation of the new dual language street signs policy, therefore, it had been considered under the old policy.

Following consultation with the applicant and given that at least two thirds of the total numbers of persons surveyed in the streets were in favour of the proposal to erect a second street nameplate in Irish Between Divis Street and Institution Place, BT12, the Committee approved the application.

Chairperson