

Meeting Date: 15th July 2014

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Environment & Transport Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Elsie Martlew**

GREEN SPACES – The Dale End Field play area replacement project was awarded to the Play Practice after a keenly fought tendering procedure. The winning bid showed a flair for design and a range of equipment that met all the technical requirements of the tender and most closely met the community's requirements.

The Chances Park Heritage Lottery Fund final claim was successfully submitted and paid in full, bringing the project to its final conclusion. One of the spin-offs from this £1m refurbishment of the park has been its adoption as a venue for all manner of activities, including the hugely successful Park Run, a weekly fitness event that regularly attracts 150 people – contributing to Carlisle's 'Healthy City' priorities.

Continuing the Healthy City theme, a new fitness trail is being installed on the riverbank path at Bitts Park. The 'green gym' provides outdoor exercise equipment in the form of a trail to be completed in sequence and improving strength, stamina and co-ordination. The new green gym will replace worn out equipment that has been well-used for many years.

At Hammonds Pond we are in the process of tendering the running of the cafe and watersports franchise. With two leading contenders in the running we are excited about the ideas that have already been put forward to improve the range of services available to our customers.

At Keenan Park a group of travellers arrived in the week prior to the Appleby Horse Fair. They were served with notice to quit within 24 hours of arriving and provided with refuse sacks to collect their rubbish, which they continued to use during their stay on the park. About 15 black sacks per day were collected from the roadside by the Street Cleaning mobile team. Eventually the group of mixed-nationality travellers, with about 20 caravans,

stayed for 7 days. The weather was wet during their stay and the park became muddy and rutted as a result of vehicle movements.

The clean-up entailed 6 man-hours and mainly consisted of clearing human waste and toilet paper from the woodland plantations which had been used as a latrine area. The wheel-ruts in the field were relatively minor and the ground will recover after levelling.

At Town Dyke a group of 5 caravans stayed for 7 days after being moved off Devonshire Walk car park. Here the clean up took 4 man hours and included removal of waste tarmac and paving stones (one of the travellers was in the 'driveway' business). Altogether a half-load of mixed waste was collected and taken to tip. After vacating Town Dyke the travellers took up occupation of private land nearby.

War Memorials

Stone cleaning and repairs to the Cenotaph in Rickerby Park is now complete although the landscaping work is still to be finished.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission have also cleaned the individual headstones and installed an information panel at Richardson Street that explains the role played by Carlisle as a centre for the treatment of injured soldiers. The Upperby and Stanwix cemetery war memorials have also been repaired and cleaned.

Stone cleaning of other Council owned memorials at Harraby, Botcherby and Eden Bridge Gardens is complete. Some painting to railings and waxing / polishing of bronze fittings remains outstanding but will be completed by mid July. The bronze plaque at the entrance to the Civic Centre has been cleaned, waxed and polished and the missing rose replaced. Work to community war memorials is now around 80% complete.

The work has been very successful and the change in appearance has been very noticeable, attracting a lot of positive comment from the public.

CITY ENGINEERS

Historic Quarter Parking and Loading Improvements – The new parking proposals were implemented on 30th June 2014. The changes were publicised with the media and a short warning period will operate while drivers become aware of the changes which are expected to be beneficial to users of the area.

City Centre Management - A programme of work has started to replace the seats in the City Centre Pedestrian area. The old seats are to be renovated and re-used in other locations around the City, in particular in some of the Green Spaces. A number of major events have recently taken place in the area, Music City, Pirrelli Rally and Gay Pride. The next major event is Armed Forces Day on the 28th June.

With regard to Weed Control around the City the County Council have now completed the initial spray with a second spray due later in the summer.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH –

Dog Fouling the number of complaints has reduced by 16% from last year.

Food Poisoning - Campylobacter is the most common cause of food poisoning in Carlisle with 132 confirmed cases last year. Nationally campylobacter is responsible for an estimated half a million cases of food poisoning, 22,000 hospitalisations and 100 deaths, which is why it has been public health enemy number one in the eyes of the Food Standards Agency. Raw chicken is a significant carrier of campylobacter and the City Council's Environmental Health Service are supporting the Food Standard Agency's campaign encouraging people to stop washing raw chicken. Washing raw chicken has been proven to be significant in spreading the germ from the chicken to hands, other foods and equipment – risking serious illness. It is hoped that people correctly handling raw chicken – e.g. storing it at a temperature below 5°C, avoiding the cross contamination that washing it and not properly separating raw and ready to eat foods can cause, correctly cleaning food preparation surfaces and properly cooking it – will see a reduction in the numbers of people affected by this nasty germ.

Gulls - Environmental Health have contacted a number of premises owners regarding gulls nesting and breeding on their premises. It is pleasing to note that most owners once notified either employ specialist pest control companies or take steps themselves to deter the gulls. Unfortunately no strategy provides an overnight solution. It is therefore important that residents are kept informed of the action companies are taking. In light of complaints about gulls in Denton Holme United Utilities are working with Environmental Health to keep residents informed of the action taken by the company in controlling the gulls on its site and the actions planned to be taken.

Gull control is a long term issue, but if all building owners/occupiers are pro active we can successfully control the gull population in Carlisle.

The gull sack introduction has been a success, however we are experiencing problems where certain residents are presenting their waste within the gull sacks loosely and not in bags. This is an early teething issue that the technical team are working on through communicative intervention.

The Council's gulls sack were in operation by the 1st April this year and are already having a positive impact on the number of complaints about rubbish from bins and litter received by the Enforcement and Education Team. When compared to an equivalent period last year complaints of litter and rubbish from bins were halved. Also, there were 54 complaints of litter and rubbish from bins in the three months before the sacks were introduced,

following the introduction of the sacks this figure dropped to 18 complaints received. If the sacks are used correctly they offer better protection from pests who would otherwise rip open and spread the rubbish. Early indications show that the sacks are helping to “clean up Carlisle”.