

Meeting Date: 29 April 2014

Public/Private*: Public

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

GREEN SPACES – Bitts Park is one of the Green Spaces Team's centrepieces and in the last month there have been two significant developments. Carlisle Leisure Ltd have installed an artificial skating rink, which will bring additional visitors to the park. And a separate company, LJM Asset Management, have started work on the Urban Adventure 'high ropes' course which will include a 50m zip wire slide. To be opened in May, Urban Adventure will provide an exciting and fun experience for all age groups in the setting of Bitts Park, and again bringing new visitors to enjoy the facilities provided by the various partners occupying the site.

At Talkin Tarn the Woodland Grant Scheme funding agreed with the Forestry Commission has enabled us to carry out a programme of tree safety work, focussing on the access paths and trails. Further work will be carried out in the autumn, removing dead, decaying and diseased trees.

At Dale End Field (Harraby) the tender process is underway for a new children's play area to replace the obsolete equipment currently in place. This is the first in a series of improvement projects on our play areas, bringing up the standards across our facilities. The project at Dale End Field is a partnership between the City Council and South Carlisle Residents Association with funding from the S106 contribution received from Barratt Homes in re-developing the ex-Cavaghan & Gray factory.

The Chances Park Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project came to an end in February. This project, a partnership between the City Council and the Friends of Chances Park, has seen over £800,000 of lottery funding invested in the park's facilities, including new paths, lighting, landscaping and play structures. Data from electronic counters placed at the main entrances to the park show a significant rise in visitor numbers.

Bereavement Services – The repairs to the main boiler at the Crematorium, mentioned in the previous report, have proved to be very successful and the boiler is operating at full efficiency.

The Council has received its Certificate of Compliance with mercury abatement regulations from CAMEO, the organisation set up to administer 'trades' in abated cremations. The law requires at least 50% of all cremations carried out in England & Wales to have mercury abatement; at Carlisle 100% of cremations are abated.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES – The in-house bring site collection service started on 2nd April 2014 from Cumbria Waste Services to deliver the service. Three staff transferred and we will carry out a number of reviews of rounds and make any adjustments accordingly.

Gull sacks were delivered in March with no major issues. There were a few teething problems and our Technical Officer Team has worked with our crews to provide advice and support to the residents that have been affected by the change. We hope that business owners will take the appropriate action to gull proof their buildings and we would also ask that the public do not feed the gulls.

Overview and Scrutiny have undertaken a Task & Finish review of recycling resulting in an excellent report that will prove very useful in the coming year. The report identified that there is a large increase in bulky waste collections from 308 tonnes in 2012 to 826 tonnes 2013 and a marked decrease (395 tonnes) in residual waste (fly tipping litter) collected by the street cleaning service. This is an indication of the positive impact on level of fly tipping of the Clean Up Carlisle campaign.

We have received positive feedback on the standards of cleansing and cleanliness of the city centre, and also on the way we are tackling cleanliness of bus shelters. We now want to further improve standards in the greater Carlisle area. A review of rounds and assessments in the next few months will identify areas of concern and give us an indication of where we can review and improve.

On the 25th March 2014, we were visited by the Health and Safety Executive for the final visit to verify compliance with the improvement notice issued to the council on round risk assessments last year. We were given the good news of a verbal confirmation of compliance with the notice issued last year.

The Neighbourhood Services team supported the “Stanwix Big Tidy” week between the 8th and 15th March. We offered support in scanning the area’s where children would be active to reduce any potential hazards that would affect them. We offered support of bags, litter pickers and collection of full bags. We took the road show to Stanwix on the Monday so that one of our Technical Officers supported by one of our Street Cleaning Supervisors could engage and educate the public in the Stanwix area.

We had some great feedback from the latest customer satisfaction survey on waste. 88.7% of residents are satisfied with our collection service with 96.4% of residents satisfied with the reliability of collections.

CITY ENGINEERS - Historic Quarter Parking and Loading Improvements - The Carlisle Local Committee considered the public feedback on our plans to create a restricted parking zone in the Historic Quarter on the 6th March. The proposals were approved for implementation and following the end of the call in period materials are being ordered.

Car Park Repairs – repairs have been carried out in a number of car parks to patch damaged surfaces and improve drainage.

Due to the mild winter the weeds are already a problem, I hope that by the time this report is considered by Council I am in a position to say that Cumbria County Council have started to carry out weed spraying.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - In February a stray dog was brought into the animal refuge, it was later discovered that it had Parvovirus and subsequently died. This has required the Refuge to put in place a very robust bio-security system, as it is impossible for them to tell whether a stray dog has been vaccinated against the disease. The Council deals with over 400 stray dogs a year, approximately 50% of these are collected by their owners with most of the rest being re-homed. It is important for pet owners to ensure that their pets have up to date vaccinations and are regularly treated for tapeworms and roundworms. All dogs should wear a collar and tag with up to date details of its owner, this should be in addition to any microchip (these should also be up to date) as it is not always possible to read a microchip before the dog is kennelled.

The Police have now started planning the County Wide CCTV System. It is anticipated that tenders will go out in April with works starting by the end of the year. The City Council are liaising with the Police Authority regarding gifting unused CCTV street furniture. A report will be taken to the May Executive to agree the release of the City Council's contribution to the Carlisle cameras.

The Environmental Health Service surveys a proportion of those businesses inspected to gather information on the perceived fairness and helpfulness of the inspecting officers. These businesses can range from premises inspected for food safety, air pollution control and health and safety. I'm pleased to report that over the last financial year 95% of businesses agreed or strongly agreed that their businesses are treated fairly during inspections by Environmental Health. 93% agreed or strongly agreed that the contact was helpful. The Environmental Health Service is keen to work with those businesses who want to comply for the good of their business and the community.

WAR MEMORIALS PROJECT

The project has now started on site, the memorial at Stanwix Cemetery has been repaired by our own mason. Work at the Cenotaph started on 24th March, a temporary ramp was purchased and was tried out at the Cenotaph week commencing 31st March.

Contact has been made with most of the owners and those responsible for maintenance of other war memorials with a view to providing help with cleaning and repairs.