

Meeting Date: 06 January 2015

Public/Private\*: Public

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

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## **GREEN SPACES**

**Friends of Engine Lonning – Interpreting Carlisle's railway history.** As a result of publicity, a group of railway history enthusiasts have come together to work on a project to tell the story of the former railway depot, now a popular local nature site. With members including former railway workers, engineers and a solicitor the group contains people with a range of skills to bring to the project. Eventually the group aim to restore the old locomotive turntable and bring the site to life with displays and storyboards of how it looked in its heyday combined with interactive interpretation of the site as it is today, a haven for wildlife and quiet recreation.

**Melbourne Park Play Area Consultation.** We have received 30 responses to our consultation on the plan to improve the children's play area at Melbourne Park. Suggestions and ideas have come from Friends of Melbourne Park; Brook Street School; Botcherby Community Centre and Botcherby Nursery group as well as from individual consultees. A project brief has been drawn up as a result of the consultation, which will see new equipment for younger children installed at the play area as a direct result of the community input. Funding is from S106 developer contributions.

**Liberty Swing project, Bitts Park.** Quotations are being sought for the installation of a swing suitable for youngsters who can't be taken out of their wheelchairs to be installed at the play area in Bitts Park. The 'Liberty Swing' was the model preferred by an informal project group including representatives of a range of disabled people's organisations. It has a platform base with clamp attachments for the wheelchair. It can be independently operated by the user or can be pushed – just like any other swing. The unit will include 3 bays altogether – the wheelchair swing plus a 'pod' seat and a standard seat, allowing

children of all abilities to have fun together. Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust have offered a grant of £20,000 towards the project.

**Parks Events 2015.** Among the highlights for 2015 in our parks will be three new open-air theatre performances – ‘Pride and Prejudice’ (June 17) and ‘Treasure Island’ (August 13) will both be staged at Talkin Tarn and ‘The Sorcerer’s Apprentice’ (17 July) at Bitts Park. Talkin Tarn will also host its annual regatta on the first Saturday in July, and Hammond’s Pond will be the location of the Upperby Gala on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

**Volunteer Days** – the Green Space officers organise regular volunteering days in our parks and nature reserves. So far this year, the volunteers have contributed over 143 days of work on a range of sites. This work helps us to keep our sites safe and provides rewarding physical activity for the volunteers themselves.

**Healthy City** - So far this season we have a 100% record for football pitches being playable. Despite recent wet weather the work done by Grounds team in the summer has helped to keep our 27 pitches in good condition. This season we have a total of 58 local teams (adult and youth) using our pitches and enquiries already coming in for next year. This is a massive investment in the physical well-being of Carlisle residents, providing space for healthy sporting activities for the children and adults who take part.

**Grounds** – Due to the extended period of mild weather we have been able to extend the life of the summer bedding in the city centre (e.g. the Civic precinct) with summer flowers still showing in mid-November. Elsewhere, seasonal bedding has been replaced by permanent planting (e.g. outside the Citadel) which has been favourably received. It has the benefit of retaining colour through the seasons and reduces costs.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

Andrew Smith started on the 10<sup>th</sup> November as the new Principal EHO Food Safety. Andrew has extensive experience as an Environmental Health Officer and line manager in both Copeland and South Lakeland District Council and his skills will be a welcomed addition to the team.

On Monday 20 October Environmental Health Officers Rebecca McKee and Donna Hastie attended the University of Cumbria’s Health & Wellbeing Week. The event brought together organisations with an interest in improving the health and wellbeing of staff and students at the University including NHS Cumbria, Macmillan Cancer Care and the Stoptober campaign. The Environmental Health team provided a stand covering tattoo safety, the food hygiene rating system and effective hand washing. The event was well attended by staff and students many of whom took part in our interactive demonstrations.

The '**Healthier Menus for Schools Award**' is a Cumbria wide initiative developed in partnership with all 6 Cumbrian Local Authorities and Cumbria County Council. The award aims to encourage the availability of healthy food options in schools. The award is currently being piloted in secondary schools and Carlisle's Environmental Health Service has been approached by Newman Catholic School who are willing to participate in the pilot.

**Healthy Options Award.** This scheme to encourage the options for healthy eating in restaurants and canteens is progressing well and Environmental Health, through the City Council, is hoping to officially launch the initiative on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The 12 businesses identified as meeting the award criteria will be invited to the launch to receive their award window sticker and certificate.

The Environmental Health Section supported small business Saturday on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2014. The Section shared a stall with the Federation of Small Business and was available to give advice on food hygiene and health and safety obligations. Along with protecting public health the Environmental Health Service has a key role in assisting business, information and advice is the most commonly used tool for improving compliance and small businesses particularly benefit from this service. The Environmental Health Section conducts confidential surveys of 10 % of those businesses inspected and is pleased to report that 94% of businesses surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that their business was treated fairly in the inspection and 92% of businesses surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that the contact was helpful.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**Correct Use of Gull sacks** - Waste services section through hard work across the section has now turned the corner regarding encouraging residents on the correct use of gulls sacks.

Some of the main issues included the customer putting many small carrier bags into the sacks which made it difficult for the crews to empty significantly slowing the e collection down. Not using the gull sacks at all and leaving black sacks out for collection which ended up getting ripped open by seagulls and other vermin. This obviously had a detrimental effect on the area creating an unsightly mess that resulted in more work for our street cleaning crews.

The improvement in the service and the use of the gull sacks has been achieved through education and enforcement of the correct way of using the sacks.

The number of seagull complaints and issues arising from the old purple bag scheme has significantly reduced (as we have removed the sea gull food supply )

A report on the service to date has been provided and testimonials from crew members has confirmed the improvement in the collection service and the cleanliness of the area has been confirmed by the street cleaning team that used to have to clear up the mess left by the ripped black bags.

## **CITY ENGINEERS**

**Fire Show** - Compliments received from residents on Cavendish Terrace thanking us for assisting in closing the road for the Fire Show and arranging road repairs prior to the event. The main Fire Show went well, we played our part in making things work.

**Christmas Lights** – We have received a number of compliments about the lights in the City Centre.