

Meeting Date: 5th January 2021

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Environment & Transport Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Nigel Christian**

REGULATORY SERVICES

The Local Air Quality Action Plan is currently out for public consultation, this sets out the priorities for the next 5 years and what the Council in conjunction with its Partners will aim to deliver through a dedicated Action Plan to make improvements in air quality. The Report can be found on the City Council website and feedback should be to EnvironmentalHealth@carlisle.gov.uk before the middle of January.

GREEN SPACES

Tree Planting

- Approximately 200 'standard' (over 2 metres tall) trees will be planted across the City this winter. Areas to be planted will include Melbourne Park (as part of the Environment Agency works), Harraby, St James' Park, as well as various residential areas
- Members, Officers and myself recently met the Forestry Commission Implementation Officer for the Forestry Investment Zone Pilot North East Cumbria, a project that comes to an end in March. This gave us a fascinating insight into the complexity of woodland and wood product carbon cycles and lessons learned and opportunities for developing woodland in NE Carlisle

Talkin Tarn

- The Talkin Tarn kiosk and takeaway has remained open during the second lockdown and has proved to be a popular location for residents wanting a breath of fresh air and a hot drink
- The Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme at Talkin Tarn. This project, led by the North Pennines AONB Partnership, aims to conserve, enhance and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of a special part of the North West of England
Talkin Tarn will play a key role in delivering this project. One element of the project is to provide schools the opportunity to access environmental education for children

in Carlisle District. Talkin Tarn will be the venue for this centre of learning using the existing education facilities that are currently on site. The Fell Foot Forward team have now appointed an education provider to work with the Talkin Tarn team to draw up various environmental education programmes to tap into the key stages of the national curriculum. Part of the Fell Foot funding will pay for schools within Carlisle District to visit the Tarn to trial set education programmes, with the aim of putting together education packs online, for schools to access before coming to Talkin Tarn for outdoor learning. More information about Fellfoot Forward can be found at: https://www.northpennines.org.uk/what_we_do/fellfoot-forward/

Melbourne Park – Environment Agency update

- Work is progressing at Melbourne Park and is due to be completed March 2021. Various footpaths within the park have already been handed back to the City Council therefore allowing key pedestrian access routes to reopen

Rickerby Park

- United Utilities will shortly be completing their essential work of lining the water main that runs through Rickerby Park. Where possible, work to reinstate the park will begin. However, due to the current ground conditions it is envisaged that the bulk of the reinstatement work will not happen until Spring 2021

Chances Park

- Probation services have been undertaking site improvements in Chances Park carrying out work such as painting entrance features, litter picking, and path edging

The Swifts

- Plans to transform the Swifts into an urban site for nature are now progressing with work set to start over the winter
- The project is being undertaken in partnership with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and it will take approximately a year to carry out all of the capital works required
- The project will encourage native flowering species which support pollinating insects, which have seen drastic population declines in recent years
- The Council is also exploring the possibility of partnership working with the University of Cumbria whereby students will undertake regular species monitoring across the site in order to identify long term changes and trends

GROUND MAINTENANCE

Winter maintenance programme is going well, with lots of positive comments from the public. Staff have been pruning shrubs, edging grass areas and tidying up cuts both the city and rural area. This work will continue through the winter months. In addition to this we have been assisting with allotment clear ups.

Junior and Sunday league football is resuming after the latest lockdown and we will continue our pitch maintenance work to support games during the winter.

BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Government guidance continues to affect the provision of funeral services and we continue to have restrictions in place. The Team's priority remains provision of a meaningful funeral for as many mourners as possible, whilst ensuring the safety of the public and our staff. The Team are exploring options to deliver live streaming of funeral services for mourners who are unable to come to Carlisle Crematorium. This will be available in early 2021.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

I would like to again place on record my thanks for the ongoing efforts of Neighbourhood Services staff who continue to do an excellent job maintaining refuse and recycling collections and keeping our streets and centres clean in these unusual times. The Team have focussed their efforts on leaf-fall clearance in recent weeks and were able to draw in additional staffing resources to improve our response. Staff have also worked extra hard to support the re-opening of our city centre after the second national lockdown and continue to maintain an enhanced cleaning regime and regularly cleaning down and topping up the hand sanitation stations. Our car parks have of course been quiet in recent months, but we are pleased to be seeing an increase in occupancy as the city centre emerges from lockdown. In this regard, although the start was delayed, we were pleased to promote our free parking offer on late night shopping Thursdays in the run up to Christmas.

We have continued to see an increase in the number of fly-tipping incidents being reported to us with 88 reports for September compared to 43 for last year. October and November have also seen similar increases. The Christmas fly-tipping campaign is now underway, as well as renewing signage at all supermarket bring sites, there will be additional cameras in place at key sites building on the success of last year's campaign.

Since August, the Enforcement Team have carried out the following enforcement action 13 x littering offences, 2 x dog fouling offences, 1 x dog off lead, 4 x fly-tipping, 7 offences relating to a breach of community protection notice and 2 offences of household duty of care.

From Monday, 14th December, residents had the option to view upcoming collection dates, download or print a calendar listing all the collection dates for 2021. All they need to do was to enter their postcode and click on their address.

The online versions of the calendars are a new eco-friendly approach and mean that no printed calendars will be sent direct to households. The new approach also prevents any future confusion over possible date changes that occur after the calendars have distributed.

By making the calendars accessible online, residents can be sure that they are viewing the most current information.