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Report to:

Council

Agenda
Item:

10(b)(iii)

Meeting Date: 09 January 2018

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Environment & Transport Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Chris Southward**

GREEN SPACES & BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Green Spaces have been please to help two local community groups by allocating them space on some of our vacant allotments recently:

- Carlisle Carers is the umbrella group for people who care for elderly or disabled relatives. Gardening is often seen as a therapeutic activity so to provide carers with some respite the Carlisle Carers have taken an allotment at Holmes Avenue (Currock). The project was launched on a wet day in early November, attended by a party of invited guests.
- At Botcherby the Conservation Volunteers have taken on a number of unused plots in order to create a community allotment. While allotments are very popular and our occupancy rate is around 85%, the prospect of keeping a plot tidy is quite daunting, especially for new gardeners. The community plot will help local residents to gain the skills needed to grow their own produce successfully, with the confidence of working as part of a team rather than alone.

At Chance's Park, a group of 58 local children from Newlaithes School took part in the annual bulb planting event. This year 4,000 bluebell bulbs were planted in the space by the play area. The Friends of Chance's Park helped with the planting, bulbs were provided by Carlisle City Council. Thanks to everyone for all the hard work and I'm looking forward to seeing the results in the Spring as the blooms emerge!

Talkin Tarn - The successful visitor season at Talkin Tarn continues, surplus income in re-invested at the Tarn to improve the experience for our customers. Approximately 2,500 people attended Talkin Tarn on the evening of October 22nd to remember loved ones as part of the 'Lake of Lights' event organised by Eden Valley Hospice. The evening was made up of, poems, readings and songs of remembrance culminating in the launch of 300 candle-lit lanterns on the Tarn.

Bereavement Services For some years, Bereavement Services has operated an out-of-hours service for local funeral directors. To take the service forward we have now upgraded our booking system and are in the process of placing it on the 'cloud', meaning that funeral directors will now be able to make a complete booking, out of hours, from their own offices. In addition to reserving a funeral service they will be able to upload all the details requested by the family including choice of music.

CAR PARKING

The layout is changing in Castle Car park to accommodate the increasing number of motor homes, coaches and motor caravans we are getting in Carlisle. In early January Castle, West Walls and Caldew Riverside car parks are also being gated after 8pm on a night to tackle antisocial behaviour. Overall car park income is steady and car park usage has been good over the Christmas period. Changes proposed by Cumbria County Council to the zone C parking restrictions should increase the car park occupancy, if they are accepted.

Castle Car Park, West Walls & Caldew Riverside are to have barriers fitted to help to eliminate night time misuse. There will be adequate signs to explain the new procedures.

Whilst there has recently been reported problems with private parking companies; the City Council car parks remain reasonably priced and fairly enforced, exceptions are made for individual customers circumstances.

It was reported that surplus money in ticket machines (due to unable to give change) was approximately £21,000 over the last year, we have a wide range of parking payment options in place for the majority of our car parks. These include contactless, card, Apple Pay, Android Pay and payments using mobile phones. Any payments, including surplus cash, are reinvested in other council services.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Pest Control - As part of the ongoing improvements to the Pest Control Service, I am pleased to report that the Service has now moved onto 'Salesforce', which is the new Customer Relationship Management System. The back-office staff within Regulatory Services have been trained in the system and the implementation has proved a big success. Should residents choose, they will have the facility to book pest control services online and the new software will open the way for further service improvements, including the use of mobile hand-held devices by pest control officers.

The City Council's Pest Control Service continues to be highly valued by Carlisle residents and businesses; in particular the free service to treat rats within domestic premises. To give you an indication of how well received the service is, Pest Control dealt with 933 service requests between April and December 2017. Rats are the most common treatment (512) followed by wasps (262).

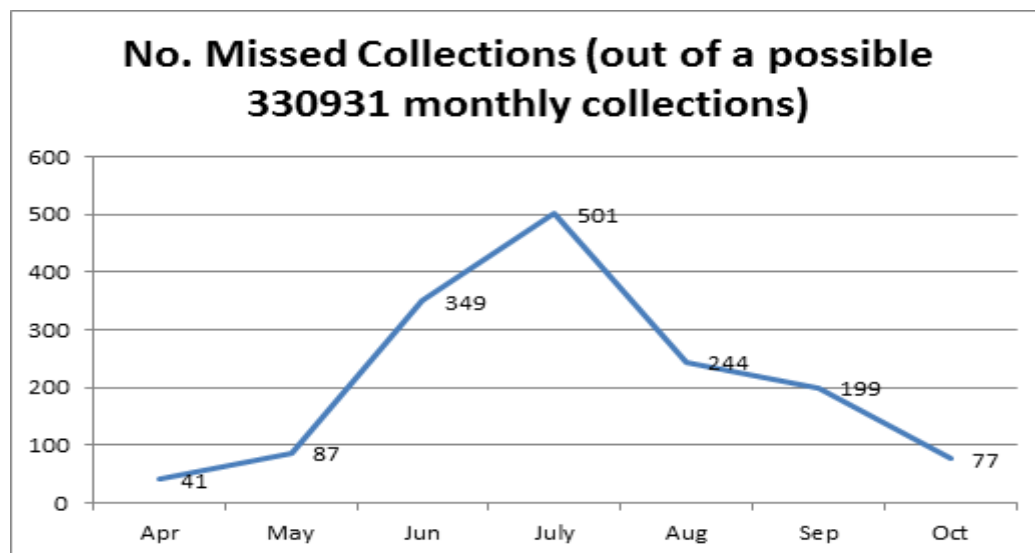
The Authority also holds 23 pest control contracts providing excellent value for money to local businesses; we hope to increase the number of contacts over the next 12 months. We offer contracts which guarantee we will do a number of visits to premises proactively over a year – farms and businesses take up the 12 month contracts so they can have some assurance that pest infestations are controlled on their premises. Food businesses are sometimes required to have pest control contracts to prove their due diligence (they are taking all the responsible steps for food hygiene and safety).

Air Quality - City Council's annual appraisal report for air quality has been approved by Defra. Despite incorrect media reporting, the City Council's district has complied with the air quality standards for particulate matter. Only two areas exceeded the air quality standards in 2016/17 and these were both for Nitrogen Dioxide from vehicle emissions in the areas around Dalston Road and London Road. The Housing and Pollution Team of the City Council will continue to monitor nitrogen dioxide in 2018/19 and work with partners such as the County Council to further develop what Defra called a "comprehensive" action plan.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

In Cab Systems have now all been installed, drivers have been trained and the system is in use. Anything reported can be viewed by the Supervisors, Back Office Staff and the Contact Centre staff so that the customer can be dealt with at the first point of call.

Missed Collections – There was a peak once the new service started in June but these have settled back down again now : -



Carlisle's Recycling Rate for the first 6 months of 17/18 is 46.64%. In 16/17 the same period was 46.35%. This is likely to drop in the second half of the year due to less garden waste being recycled in Winter months. Our overall annual % in 16/17 was 41.6%. This is dropping year on year due to the manufacturers producing more compact, lighter, packaging and people using more paperless systems. Paper usage has reduced nationally.

Since the new recycling services were introduced in June 2017, we have seen an increase in kerbside recycling and a slight decrease in bring site recycling: -

	July – Sept 16	July – Sept 17	Outcome
Total dry recycling	17.7%	18.4%	Increased - Good
Kerbside recycling tonnes	1628	1685	Increased - Good
Bring site recycling tonnes	456	436	Decreased - Expected
Kerbside refuse (rubbish) tonnes	5661	5474	Decreased - Good
Garden waste tonnes	3574	3295	Decreased - Not so good but see next table below

The reason recycling at bring sites has reduced is most likely because new build and rural properties are now being provided with a kerbside service.

The drop in garden waste collected is due to the higher than average Summer for garden waste in 2016 compared to a poorer than average Summer for garden waste this year. New builds were added to the garden waste service in September 16 and the annual figures show an overall increase of 7% which shows a truer record rather than just looking at the Summer months: -

	Sept 15 – Aug 16	Sept 16 – Aug 17	Outcome
Garden Waste tonnes	8949	9576	Good

Sale of recyclable materials is higher than estimated but this can fluctuate from month to month depending on the market: -

	Jul 17 – Sept 17 Estimate	Jul 17 – Sept 17 Actual	Outcome
Sale of recyclable materials	£62,750	£69,031	Good

Officers in Neighbourhood Services are looking at the new recycling rounds data to determine which areas are putting out the least recycling and which areas are producing the most refuse so that we can concentrate on these areas to improve recycling rates in Carlisle. We can do this by encouraging those not recycling to start recycling and to encourage those placing out lots of refuse to reuse items by giving to charities etc rather than throwing things away and for people to only buy what they need rather than buying too much food and end up throwing lots away as out of date.

PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER

A consultation on a new Public Space Protection Order for Carlisle is underway and closes on Friday 19 January 2018. The legal order aims to Keep Carlisle Clean and maintain the quality of the district's environment and green spaces so that everyone can enjoy living, working in and visiting Carlisle.

The 'new' behaviours to be addressed under the Public Space Protection Order are:

- Challenging anti-social behaviour by groups or individuals in the city centre public spaces and car parks within the district;
- Smoking, consuming alcohol, drug taking and solvent abuse in play areas; and
- Dogs excluded from enclosed play areas.

As part of the Public Space Protection Order we are also introducing the requirement for dogs to be kept on their leads in the following areas:

- Carlisle Cemetery and Crematorium;
- Stanwix Cemetery;
- Upperby Cemetery Manor Road; and
- Talkin Tarn Country Park (designated area only).

To find out more and to give your views, visit www.carlisle.gov.uk/consultations