

Report to:

**Council**

Agenda  
Item

**11(b)(iii)**

Meeting Date: 7 January 2014

Public/Private\*: Public

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

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### **CITY ENGINEERS**

Surfacing of Dacre Road/Devonshire Walk - The County Council have resurfaced these roads to the rear of the Castle. The existing roads were in a poor condition and badly drained. These problems have been resolved by the use of a high quality surfacing which enhances the high quality of the surrounding environment. The County should be complemented on this work.

Historic Quarter Parking and Loading Improvements - A formal public consultation has just started on proposals to create a restricted zone in the Historic Quarter of the City Centre. Public comments are invited on proposals to provide up to an additional 11 disc parking places, an additional 14 Blue Badge bay, and 13 loading bays which will be available for alternative parking uses outside loading hours. This work is part of ongoing plans to improve the public realm for users and businesses.

Festive Lights - The Festive Lights and Winter Light displays are now operational. This year, additional street lights have been illuminated with the display now including St Cuthbert's Lane, St Alban's Row and St Cuthbert's Churchyard.

### **CCTV**

The City Council has been thoroughly vindicated by insisting that CCTV should be funded by the main user i.e. Cumbria Constabulary. The proposed county wide scheme will not see other district councils switch back on to CCTV.

We were expecting to contribute to the capital cost of the scheme however, there is some ambiguity as the Police Commissioner categorically stated on television that his office would fund the capital costs and the revenue costs would be funded by Cumbria Constabulary.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE**

The Environmental Health Service has continued to increase its work in supporting local businesses. Presentations have been made at the Carlisle Business Interaction Centre, in conjunction with the University of Cumbria, to explain the role of regulation and the support available to small businesses from Carlisle City Council. The service has also been on hand to offer advice at events held by both the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Business.

It is pleasing to note that in surveys of businesses contacted by the Environmental Health Service **96%** of those contacted either agree or strongly agree that the Environmental Health Officers are both helpful and fair. A Business Support Strategy produced by the Environmental Health Service will be launched in the new year.

The Environmental Health Service have served 5 Abatement Notices for Statutory Nuisance on premises to control gulls nesting and breeding. With the control measured agreed in compliance with the Notices, and voluntary agreements which were also secured, 15 premises where the breeding and nesting of gulls was considered to be a problem in the summer of 2013 have now agreed control measures for the next breeding season which would otherwise not be carried out.

Social Media (Facebook) was recently used to promote a free micro chipping event with the overall aim of promoting responsible dog ownership. A total of 104 dogs were chipped and the social media posting turned out to be one of the most successful ever by Carlisle City Council.

Environmental Health Officer Michael Cunningham was again successful getting a place on the European Commission's Better Training Safer Food course on Food Hygiene and Controls on Meat and Meat Products. Our Environmental Health Officers regulate meat product premises such as Pioneer (Rosehill), Calder Foods (Burgh Road Industrial Estate) and Cavaghan and Gray (Durranshill) to ensure they comply with international law. The training not only benefits the competence of our officers it also puts Carlisle on the European map.

## **GREEN SPACES**

Helped by better weather this autumn, the football pitches in the City Council's care are a fantastic resource for local sports clubs. Our pitches host about 30 matches every weekend, including age groups from 6 yrs to adult. That equates to about 12,600 players so far this season! The benefits to health and wellbeing are immeasurable, with children and adults alike burning the calories and keeping fit. We are proud that all our fixtures have been able to go ahead as planned with no cancellations due to pitches being unplayable, which is a great tribute to our Grounds team under Lee Lowis.

Healthy eating is another important function of the Council's green spaces, this time from the allotments. A rough estimate would suggest that the combined allotments in Carlisle produce over 30 tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables every year – a significant amount of food that is fresh, nutritious and healthy and grown on the doorstep!

A £19,000 crime-busting improvement scheme has been completed in St James Park, Carlisle. Funded by Carlisle City Council, Riverside Housing, the Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner, Cumbria County Council, the Carlisle & Eden Community Safety Partnership the works also had the support of the Denton Holme Community Association (Green Group) and Denton Holme Community Centre. The games area is now reopened with improved lighting and security fencing.

The area had previously been the target of anti-social behaviour and a series of crime prevention measures have been put in place to help design out crime. Works included:

- The removal of an old breezeblock wall and fencing around the perimeter of the MUGA;
- Levelling off the playing surfaces;
- New high 'ball court' double wire fencing around two sides of the site;
- Flood lighting improvements – the lighting will be controlled by a timer;
- General improvements to the site to clear the surfaces and clear away debris.

At St James's Park (Denton Holme) the project to improve the dilapidated ball courts was completed on time and within budget, making the facility safer and easier to access by all users. While not a full-scale MUGA, which would have cost 10 times the price, the ball court allows local youngsters to play 5-a-side football or basketball in a safe, controlled environment.

Winter bedding plants (pansies and polyanthus) are now safely in the ground and will provide a splash of colour to the parks and city centre during the winter and early spring.

**Bereavement Services** – With both cremators re-lined and functioning properly the next major piece of maintenance was the boiler which takes the waste heat from the cremators and uses it to heat the Chapel and other buildings in the complex. A leak was identified by the engineers which required some re-welding of the unit. Fortunately the contractor was able to complete the job over a weekend meaning that our operations were not interrupted.

Following the sad loss of Graeme Farish in September, further re-organisation of the workforce has taken place in order to make sure that the standard of care in Carlisle's cemeteries and crematorium grounds is maintained at the highest level.

### **STREET CLEANING AND WASTE SERVICES**

The Bring Site project on schedule for implementation beginning April 2014. Purple sacks to wheeled bins - phase 1 is complete, preparation is underway for phase 2 early in the new year. Separate communication will be issued to Members about what is happening in their wards.

The Waste & Resources Action Programme has begun in earnest in identifying and evaluating the options for the future waste and recycling options in Carlisle.

Christmas collection timetable will be advertised and also be on the City Council website. Residents are asked to check their calendars.

## **TRANSPORT**

Very positive meetings with Cumbria County Council and Swest Trans the transport authority for South West Scotland to discuss High Speed 2 and the necessary investment on the current west costs main line which is vital for the economy and well being of the region. It is vital that there is positive collaboration on these issues.