



Report to

# Council

Meeting Date: 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Public/Private\*: Public

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

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## **PARKING AND ENFORCEMENT**

As part of the National Great Big Green Week that took place in September, Civil Enforcement Officers attended an event hosted by Sustainable Carlisle in the City Centre. They engaged with members of the public on Climate Change, provided advice on waste and recycling and Keeping Carlisle Clean as well as showcasing our new fleet of fully-electric vehicles.

We continue to deploy the camera van and it has been to various locations to raise awareness of the problem of fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling. Locations include Keenan Park and Eastern Way, Harraby, Holmehead Way and Richardson Street, Denton Holme and Talkin Tarn, Wetheral and Hayton.

Although the Courts are still catching up on prosecutions, we have seen two successful prosecutions in Court with fines of over £1,800 (including costs) being imposed. There are still 23 outstanding cases awaiting hearing by the Courts from last year plus a further 20 cases from this year awaiting Court action.

## **FLEET**

The Mayor's new lease car has been ordered and is expected to arrive by May 2022. This will be a new plug-in hybrid petrol / electric car (Mercedes E Class) that will replace the current diesel Jaguar.

## **OPERATIONS**

Members will be aware that our services have been impacted by the lack of HGV drivers locally and nationally. The Council has worked hard to prioritise and protect refuse and recycling collections but for the last month or so, we have been unable to operate garden waste collections at full service. We have now recruited additional drivers and have been able to fill some of our vacancies, but we still have two driver vacancies to fill and are

looking at how we can resolve this. I am pleased to say that we have been able to appoint our own staff into three driving roles; these are staff who joined us as loaders and were supported in their training as HGV drivers by the Council. I am sure Members will want to join me in passing on my thanks for the ongoing efforts of our frontline teams in maintaining services in very challenging times.

## **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

In October, the Mayor and members of the Executive met with Environment Agency CEO, Sir James Bevan, on a tour of the completed flood defence schemes in Melbourne Park and Bitts Park. The Agency have secured funding for a feasibility study to identify more climate resilient options (including upstream flood storage) for managing flood risk along the River Caldw. There will be opportunities for residents, businesses, and local interest groups to contribute to this feasibility study.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **Northumbria University Business Clinic**

We have received the final report from the students at Northumbria University, 'Marketing for a Greener Future'. The recommendations in this report will help inform our communication and engagement work as we implement the Local Environment (Climate Change) Strategy.

## **REGULATORY SERVICES**

On 30th September, an article in the News & Star reported that Carlisle has been named as one of the most hygienic cities in the UK for a night out. The study was undertaken by surveyors Property Inspect, who utilised the food hygiene inspection data submitted to the Food Standards Agency by our Environmental Health Officers. Carlisle was identified as the fifth best in the country, with 80.2 per cent of all venues receiving a 5 rating in their last inspection. Based on the standards of hygiene maintained by our businesses over many years, I am confident that the inspections going forward will continue to give the assurances that the public would like to see.

It is very much a concern that we are seeing an increase in COVID rates locally and nationally, with Cumbrian districts having some of the highest rates in the Country. In response to these rising rates, I am pleased to report that we have again strengthened Carlisle's Track & Trace Team. The team are working extremely hard to support the Cumbrian-wide response, led by Colin Cox, and the National NHS Test and Trace service. The main priorities for the Carlisle team are to track and trace all local cases the National Team have failed to contact and identify cases who have been in work settings or attended events and significant gatherings. As part of the localised outbreak control, Officers are contacting businesses where positive cases have entered the work setting during their infectious period. Businesses are very appreciative of the advice and support Officers are providing.

## **GREEN SPACES AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

Work has recently been completed on two land drainage projects, one at Yewdale Park, Sandsfield and Morton West, and the other at Briar Bank, Belah and Kingmoor. Existing field drainage has been improved and extended at both sites, aiming to tackle water which is affecting neighbouring residents.

A new footpath, approximately 300 metres in length, has been constructed to provide a formal pedestrian link between communities in Meadow View and Hunters Crescent, Harraby South and Parklands. The path, funded by S106 developer contributions, follows a well-used route which becomes waterlogged and very muddy during winter months. Further enhancements are planned in this area, with tree planting in the green space to the South of Pennine Way Primary School due to commence shortly.

Thomas Armstrong Contractors have completed the bridge deck replacement on Skew Bridge. The bridge is part of a vital pedestrian and cycling route bringing users into the heart of the city. Funded by the City Council capital budget the new decking will provide a safe non-slip surface for walkers and cyclists for many years to come.

A new Talkin Tarn leaflet has been completed with up-to-date information on Tarn facilities, what's on offer, and details of our water sports provider 'Talkin Adventures'. The Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme has developed six new resources, for young people, schools, youth groups and families. The six resources are: Art at the Tarn, Wonderful Water, Beneath the Surface, Nature Detectives, Reading the Landscape and Wildlife Matters, are available to download from the Talkin Tarn website.