

Meeting Date: 4th January 2022

Public/Private*: Public

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

REGULATORY SERVICES

Food Standard Agency – Register a Food Business Service:

I am pleased to report that Carlisle City Council's Regulatory Services have signed up to the Food Standards Agency's 'Register a Food Business Service'. It is a legal requirement for Food Business Operators to register their food business with the local authority. This new system will allow the Food Business Operator to complete their details online using the new portal. The City Council has 1,243 registered Food Businesses at the present time.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

The impacts of the HGV driver shortage appear to be easing with collection services now operating in line with the established collection calendars. As we near Christmas, the collection frequency reduces to six-weekly, reflecting the seasonal nature of this service.

The Council will also be repeating our successful fly-tipping campaign focussed on our local recycling sites (bring-sites) with clear messages and signage in place to prevent the illegal dumping of rubbish at these sites over the festive period. As in previous years, we will have CCTV cameras operating at some sites and enforcement action will be taken against those responsible for fly-tipping and littering offences.

Members will be aware of the legal requirement for dog owners to ensure that their dogs are micro-chipped and the details kept up to date. The Government has agreed to introduce similar legislation for cats. It is understood that the micro-chipping rules for dogs will be reviewed and any new legislation affecting cats will be introduced to coincide with any changes that may impact on the micro-chipping requirements for dogs.

The Council is looking at options to install further electric vehicle charge points in our car parks to support the transition to electric vehicles for residents and visitors. Funding to

support this is available from the Government under their Off-street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS) and Officers are working with colleagues from Cumbria County Council and from other Councils on the potential submission of a single coordinated bid across the county. If successful, this will build on our existing work to install electric vehicle charge-points under SOSCI (Scaling On-street Charging Infrastructure) which saw the installation of charge points at various locations across Carlisle.

Environment Act 2021

Members may also be aware that the Environment Act 2021 was passed in November. This will enable the Secretary of State to implement the various elements of the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy which we have been aware of for a few years now. Further legislation will be needed and is likely to see a requirement placed upon Councils to:

- Collect a core set of material for recycling or composting. This must include: glass / metal / plastic / paper / card / food waste / garden waste
- Collect food waste weekly and separate from other waste
- Provide garden waste collections free of charge to residents

The Act provides scope for the Secretary of State to add more waste streams to this core list in future, where such items can be recycled or composted, where there would be an environmental benefit and where there is a market for it.

The Act will also:

- Extend Producer Responsibilities to require manufacturers to contribute to the cost of disposal for products they produce
- Set manufacturing standards to ensure that products are more durable, easier to repair and recyclable
- Create deposit return schemes for drinks containers – detail yet to be determined. This will impact on Council income levels by removing such material from the household recycling collections
- Apply charges, similar to the carrier bag charge, to reduce use of single-use plastic

The cost of the new requirements will be significant locally and nationally. Government has previously indicated that it will fund the new requirements.

BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Services at the Crematorium continue to operate with restrictions in place. The capacity remains 120, services are limited to 20 minutes and attendees are asked to wear masks. All families are still able to request livestreaming of services through their Funeral Director for people who cannot attend, and this is available for seven days afterwards.

The office continues to operate on an appointment basis and the Book of Remembrance remains open, including at weekends.

GREEN SPACES

The Swifts Urban Nature Reserve

The penultimate phase of works in the Swifts Urban Nature Reserve project has now been completed. Over 200 native flowering trees, a mixture of hawthorn, goat willow and crab apple, have been planted around the existing stands of poplar trees which were thinned at the start of the year. The new trees will provide additional feeding opportunities for pollinating insects alongside the wildflowers which were planted in the meadow areas during the autumn.

Green Spaces improvements

- Two festivals have been confirmed for next summer celebrating pollinators and the wildlife of Cumbria
- The 'Festival of Nature' will be held at Talkin Tarn during the weekend of 18th and 19th June 2022. Run in partnership with Fellfoot Forward the festival will be aimed at families and budding naturalists with lots of events, activities, music, and arts with partners invited from across the wildlife conservation sector of Cumbria held over the weekend at Talkin Tarn
- The Big Buzz – will be held over the weekend of 23rd – 25th September 2022. A Carlisle city-wide festival - culminating in three days of pollinator themed music, film, art, humour, talks and sharing. Creating connections between pollinators, the places they inhabit and the people they share them with. Leading to positive change individually, locally, and nationally. CWT will showcase the work of pollinator projects such as the Swifts Project, and we will demonstrate real activity on the ground that is making a difference for pollinators and insects. This festival will further engage with the wider community to nurture the awareness of pollinators and the need to protect and increase the habitats they need to survive, and stimulate an increase in participation in pollinator themed activities in Cumbria and beyond
- This month Talkin Tarn launched an augmented reality trail. After downloading the app visitors can use their phone to scan QR codes at various locations around Talkin Tarn where the user can see old Tarn photos and Talkin Tarn wildlife appear before you on your phone screen