

<p>Title of Report:</p> <p>Community Environmental Volunteering Activities</p>	<p>Officer Presenting:</p> <p>Head of Environment</p> <p>Author:</p> <p>Head of Environment</p>
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 To advise Members of the key consideration in taking forward community volunteering activities with regard to environmental activities in consideration of the Notice of Motion adopted recently by Council (21 03 C148/21A).

2 Background

- 2.1 Member's will recall that Council endorsed a Notice of Motion aimed at encouraging and supporting community engagement in dealing with environmental issues such as littering, fly-tipping etc.
- 2.2 it is widely recognised that positive and sustained community interventions can bring about and prolong real environment improvements impacting on the lives of residents and improving the quality and use of local areas.
- 2.3 Council has worked and supported communities right across the city and district in bringing forward schemes and more recently has funded the Live Here, Love Here scheme managed by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.
- 2.4 Officers will bring forward regular reports outlining this engagement and details of initiatives carried out.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 As with any activity taken forward or supported by Council health and safety is a key consideration that must be addressed and given full consideration. Where Council is providing assistance or support to an organisation, it must, just as it must do for employees, ensure that those organising events are fully aware of the health and safety implications and take all reasonable steps to ensure that events are organised safely.

- 3.2 Whilst these requirements can be managed and supported by Council in terms of Council properties, parks, open spaces etc, these are much more complex where an organisation or group of volunteers want to undertake activities along roadways, waterways, private property etc.
- 3.3 In particular, with regard to litter clearing along roadways, all those engaged in the activity would have to be fully aware of the requirements of the Code of Practice with regard to carrying out works on or near roadways.
- 3.4 In addition to the above any group wishing to take on litter or fly clearing works on lands not owned by Council will be required to have adequate insurance cover in place. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful may be able to provide this where activities are linked to their programmes.
- 3.5 Organisers would also need to ensure that they have addressed all of the other health and safety issues, that risk assessments are in place, training has been provided, adequate signage is in place, first aid arrangements are to hand etc.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement, Rural Needs and other Implications

- 4.1 As advised above where activities occur on Council owned lands, Council will be fully responsible for ensuring that all of the health and safety issues have been addressed and that appropriate supervision is in place. Council will provide insurance cover in such instances.
- 4.2 Where Council is providing equipment to organisations Council will have to ensure that the person receiving the equipment receives some training and is provided with a tool box talk on the safe use of items provided.
- 4.3 Where groups or individuals organise litter clearing events it will be for the organiser to ensure that all of the appropriate health and safety measures are in place and that adequate insurance cover has been arranged.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

Background Papers