

COUNCIL: 25 JUNE 2015

STATEMENT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

AGENDA ITEM: 15

Apprenticeships

You may recall that earlier in the year I announced the creation of a new Apprenticeship Scheme within Cardiff Harbour Authority and for Mechanical Engineering and I am now pleased to advise of the establishment of a further scheme also within the Harbour Authority that has been established and for Marine Engineering. This new scheme which will be based on a four year term and linked to a recognised qualification will provide a sound foundation in general engineering with specialisation in marine operations ensuring that skills are transferred enabling the Harbour Authority to maintain the marine environment and flotilla to a high standard. The establishment of this scheme demonstrates the Councils commitment to Apprenticeships.

Bute Park

On Tuesday of this week I had the pleasure of speaking at an event to celebrate the successful completion of the Bute Park Restoration Project. The event reinforced what can be achieved in being ambitious and through working with others and both of these factors have, I believe been central to the success of the project. As you may be aware the project is the largest public parks project ever in Wales with total investment in excess of 5 million pounds and in addition to the individual restoration schemes I was pleased to learn of the developments and improvements over time which include the establishment of a constituted friends group and their active involvement in the management and maintenance of the Park, the increase in the number of visitors to the Park which is now in excess of 2 million per year and the levels of customer satisfaction. In respect of the latter I learnt that a visit to Bute Park is now ranked second out of 184 of the Top Things to Do when in Cardiff, according to Trip Advisor. The transformation in and beauty of the Park is quite remarkable and if you haven't visited it recently I would strongly recommend that you do so, we are very well blessed.

Bereavement Services

During June, Bereavement Services facilitated 2 dramatised heritage trails around Cathays Cemetery. Bereavement Services have led heritage trails in Cathays for many years, but the addition of performances researched and scripted by drama students from the University of South Wales, offering eye

witness accounts and first person perspectives, truly brought the past to life in this historic cemetery.

Bereavement Services have carried out wildflower planting in Thornhill, Cathays and Western cemeteries as part of a wider Project to encourage bees to be more active in our open spaces.

Local School Children have planted Poppy's in Cathays Cemetery next to the Commonwealth War Grave section as part of our ongoing WWI commemoration. In November a special Memorial Stone will be laid on the section to recognise Frederick Barter who was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1915.

Thornhill Crematorium will host a Memorial Service for baby's and infants in partnership with the local Stillborn And Neo Death Society (SANDS) group on Sunday 28 June at 11:30 AM.

Recycling and Waste Strategy

I am pleased to be able to stand here and confirm that because of our strong recycling and waste strategy; engagement with the minister on our commitments to drive forwards recycling and also that fact the we exceeded the statutory recycling targets for 14/15 the fines threatened for 13/14 have been waived. These show the importance of not standing still and the need to constantly strive for more recycling.

Viridor Energy Recovery Facility

I attended with a number of Councillors including the leader the opening of the Viridor energy recovery facility this week. The opening of this facility by the First Minister reflects the important asset that Project Gwrydd team have delivered for not only the City but the region in securing our treatment requirements for the future. In addition, this facility is providing sustainable energy to potential 50,000 homes.

Neighbourhood Services Pilot

We are also seeing excellent results from our new way of working in the neighbourhood services pilot. The teams are cross working to deliver real savings; improve response times and these results are being to show in improved street cleansing survey results.

Since January the cleanliness index for the pilot area has gone from 58% to 69% and the high or acceptable cleanliness index has gone from 68% to 85% in five months.

The expansion of the scheme is full steam ahead for next month and proves working without silos can reduce costs and increase our performance.

Councillor Bob Derbyshire
Cabinet Member for Environment
24 June 2015