**COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS
SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**



**MEETING OF SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Monday, September 10, 2018**

**QUESTION NO.1**

**QUESTION: Councillor P. Donovan**

To ask the Chief Executive for an update on the pilot program undertaken by the Council to trial a Green flag for parks.

**REPLY:**

The Green Flag Award is the international benchmark standard for parks and green spaces. It aims to recognise and reward the best green spaces and encourage high environmental standards.  The Green Flag is a sign that a park is managed to high standards, which have been independently verified. Awards are given on an annual basis and winners must apply each year to renew their Green Flag status.

In 2017, South Dublin County Council submitted an application for Corkagh Park and the park was awarded a Green Flag. In 2018 both Corkagh Park and Sean Walsh Park were entered for the award and both were successful in receiving the Green Flag. It is proposed to continue to examine the remaining parks in the County with a view to increase the number of Green Flags on a gradual basis.

The Green Flag is an award which requires renewal on an annual basis and each site is judged on its own merits against the eight award criteria (set out below) having regard to the particular operational opportunities and constraints of the site.  Each of the award criteria is equally weighted and it is acknowledged that not all parks may meet all the criteria.  If a candidate park does not meet a particular criteria this may be explained in the Operations Management Plan which is submitted as part of the application. The Operations Management Plan required for entry in the Green Flag should set out under each award criteria heading how the park operates on a day to day basis in order to meet the criteria and success stories should be highlighted.  It is intended to be a working document which should include a short to medium term action plan.  The Operations Management Plan must be reviewed and updated annually in order to apply for renewal of a Green Flag.

Green Flag Award applications are judged against eight key criteria as follows:

 1. A welcoming place

When approaching the Park, the overall impression should be positive and inviting. There should be good and safe access and good signage to and in the Park

1. Healthy, safe and secure

The Park must be a safe and secure place. Equipment and facilities must be safe to use.

1. Clean and well maintained

The Park should be clean, well maintained and free from litter and vandalism

1. Sustainability

Methods used in maintaining the Park should be environmentally friendly as far as possible. Parks should minimise and justify pesticide use, eliminate horticultural peat use, recycle waste plant material.

1. Conservation and heritage

Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and management of natural features, wildlife and fauna, landscapes and built features.

1. Community involvement

The Park should actively involve members of the community as far as possible. There should be evidence of community involvement within the Park and recreational facilities provided for all sectors of the community.

1. Marketing

A marketing strategy should be in place. There should be good provision of information to users, e.g. about, activities, features, ways to get involved. The park/green space should be promoted as a community resource.

1. Management

An Operations Management Plan should be in place to address the previous 7 criteria. The plan must be actively implemented and reviewed annually."