

**The Chairman and Members of  
North West Area Committee.**

**Meeting: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**Item No: 9**

**Update on The Poppintree Sport and Community Facility**

A report (Item No.6) was presented to the North West Area Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> January last, detailing a number of concerns in relation to the on-going issues affecting operations at the Poppintree Sport and Community Facility and impacting the surrounding area

Following a meeting with Elected Representatives, the issues/concerns were discussed, a number of measures were identified. We agreed a series of actions would be undertaken by Management of the facility. The Area Office. Public Domain and Housing Teams in conjunction with An Garda Síochána undertook to look at the surrounding area and the impact anti-social behaviour and dumping is having on the facility, its customers, staff and the community.

Since then the management and staff at Poppintree have been working with the Area Office teams and other agencies to put in place some immediate measures to improve the conditions for customers, staff and anchor tenants. These actions include the following –

- In February the facility returned to the normal operating hours as follows –

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am to 9pm	9am to 9pm	9am to 9pm	9am to 9pm	9am to 4pm	10am to 4pm	Closed

- All the community groups have now resumed their full activities.
- A number of security measures have been implemented including; access; securing of doors that were previously accessible from the outside leading to security and safety breaches; new fob access system within the building; a revised and upgraded security camera system including night-time cameras etc.
- Communications between the Centre, the Area Office and An Garda Síochána have been strengthened.
- **Further structural improvements may be required including –**
- A wall is to be built under the balcony of the pavilion building at the rear of the facility to stop fires been lit and thereby minimising further damage.
- A review of other possible structural interventions with City Architects to eliminate blind spots and recessed areas. Actions to be agreed include the removal of easy access to the roof which has caused a number of significant difficulties, including structural damage, leaks etc.

The Centre Manager has met with the Poppintree Youth Project to agree measures to address some of the issues taking place. The youth project have engaged with the local

youth community who are now attending activities in the facility twice a week. Additional sport and recreational activities will be added through the direct support of our Sports Development Officers. The Poppintree Youth facility, Aisling and Cross Care are going to work in partnership to actively engage the youth in the area.

The Ballymun Healthy cities programme organised a clean-up of the rear of the facility on the 4th of March to coincide with Better Ballymun Day, this included litter picking and tidying up the murals. We will continue to work with this group to engage the community in a more positive programmes.

The Area Manager has engaged with An Garda Síochána to discuss the ongoing issues in this area. We have established a working group consisting of the Area Manager, Public Domain Officer, Housing Manager, Sargent of Community Policing and Community Policing Officer assigned to the area. The relevant officials have had a number of meetings with local residents to address concerns and work towards collaboration on possible solutions. The Public Domain and Community Team met with the Principal of the local school and they have engaged to undertake an art project around St. Josephs Hill with support from Dublin City Council and An Garda Síochána. We have also engaged with the Ballyrunners and the Ballymun Health & Fitness groups to increase activities on the ground in this location.

The Chair and members of the North West area Committee and the JPC Steering Committee have requested that the Poppintree Working Group should be established under the JPC guidelines The next meeting of the North West Area JPC is 28th March this matter can be explored and discussed.

The impact of Covid, the pod systems and staff moving on has caused low staff numbers in recent times. The operation of the facility is supported from the staff on the community employment scheme. There will be a competition for relief attendants in the next few months where we hope to allocate additional staff to Poppintree Centre

The above outlines some of the measures taken in 2022 to mitigate the serious issues impacting services at Poppintree and we will continue with these and other measures and continue to update you of any further actions taken.

It is important to recognise that the resolution of the issues highlighted will require a continued comprehensive and rounded approach, not only in terms of security, but also attendance, appropriate activities, better communication, engagement etc. The Poppintree Sport and Community Facility offers a number of facilities to the community of Ballymun and the surrounding areas. The facilities include a Sports hall, studios, youth facilities, creche, boxing club, catering kitchen and Astro Pitch.

**Donncha Ó Dúlaing,**  
**Senior Executive Officer**