

Document Pack



**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

11th February, 2013

MEETING OF PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman / Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Thursday, 14th February, 2013 at 4.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters
 - (a) Apologies
2. Minutes
 - (a) Minute Clarification - Avoneil Leisure Centre (Pages 1 - 2)
 - (b) Declarations of Interest
3. Notice of Motion - John Luke (Pages 3 - 4)
4. Marrowbone Millennium Park (Pages 5 - 6)
5. Quarter 3 - Financial Report (Pages 7 - 18)
6. Mary Peters' Trust (Pages 19 - 20)
7. Anti-Social Behaviour - Update (Pages 21 - 30)

8. Improvement Programme Review (Pages 31 - 34)
9. Connswater Community Greenway Park - Opening and Lighting (Pages 35 - 36)
10. Leisure Estate Review / Stadia Update (Pages 37 - 48)
11. Support for Sport - Interim Report (Pages 49 - 56)
12. Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure - Water Recreation Grant Programme
(Pages 57 - 62)
13. Review of High Hedges (Pages 63 - 68)
14. Proposed Playground at Monagh Road / Drive (Pages 69 - 72)
15. Roselawn Crematorium - Listed Building Proposal (Pages 73 - 76)
16. Victoria Park - Tidal Flood Barrier (Pages 77 - 82)
17. 155-157 Newtownards Road / 2 Tower Street (Pages 83 - 90)
18. Springmartin / Blackmountain Play Area (Pages 91 - 96)
19. Land at Whiterock Close - Glor na Mona Lease (Pages 97 - 102)
20. Mary Peters Track - Update (Pages 103 - 104)
21. Sport NI Consultation - New Outdoor Recreation for Northern Ireland (Pages 105 - 140)
22. Northern Ireland Environment Agency - Consultation (Pages 141 - 154)
23. Public Holiday Closure / St. Patrick's Day (Pages 155 - 156)
24. Parks Events - Small Grants Schemes (Pages 157 - 164)
25. Contribution to Societies (Pages 165 - 168)
26. Charity Abseil - Cavehill (Pages 169 - 172)
27. Andersonstown Leisure Centre - Glor na Mona Historical and Cultural Society
(Pages 173 - 174)



Belfast City Council

Report to	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Minute of the Meeting on 10th January Regarding Avoniel Swimming Pool
Date:	14th February, 2013
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (Ext 6314)

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At the Committee's meeting on 10th January, a report was presented giving an overview of the work which was ongoing to address a problem with a leak at the Swimming Pool which had necessitated its closure.
1.2	During the debate on the issue, a proposal was made and seconded to the effect that the works which were required to be undertaken in respect of the pool be completed by the end of the financial year, since local representatives were getting criticism as the pool had been closed since August
1.3	The Director cautioned the Committee that the proposal would, perhaps, be unfeasible as the extent of the work and cost had yet to be determined and therefore it was unreasonable to assume in the absence of this information that required works could be completed within this timeframe. He suggested that, perhaps, it would be better if the Members were to undertake a site visit to see the problem at first hand.
1.4	The Members thought that this was a reasonable point and it was agreed that the site visit be undertaken without delay . It was agreed also that the Members from the Victoria and Pottinger District Electoral Areas be invited to attend. Accordingly, the site visit took place on 24 th January at 12:30 pm.
1.5	A report was subsequently presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 25th January, and it was agreed to endorse a proposal to set aside the usual requirement to invite tenders for the necessary remedial works at the Swimming Pool and to instead invite quotations for the works. This decision was taken to ensure that the works were undertaken as quickly as possible.

1.6	The decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee was ratified by the Council at its meeting on 4th February.
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2	Key Issues
2.1	At the Council meeting on 4th February, when the minutes of the Parks and Leisure Committee of 10th January were being discussed, Alderman Rodgers queried the accuracy of the minute in relation to the Avoniel Swimming Pool in so far as he felt that a proposal which had been properly seconded that the remedial works to the pool should be completed by the end of the financial year had been put to the meeting and agreed but that the minute did not record that fact.
2.2	As indicated above, the Committee did not agree to this course of action. The proposal was correctly made and seconded but, following information provided by the Director, the Committee agreed to instead undertake a site visit so that the extent of the problem might be seen at first hand. The proposal was not therefore put to the meeting for endorsement nor was a vote thereon taken.
2.3	It is worth explaining that during debate on a matter before a Committee any number of suggestions can be made. Some of these may get as far as being put as proposals by a Member and some may even receive a seconder. However, it must be understood that the mere making and seconding of a proposal does not mean that it has been agreed by the Committee. Agreement is only reached if the Chairman asks the Committee if it agrees with a properly seconded proposal and the Committee clearly enunciates its approval or if the matter is put to a vote and receives the approval of a majority of Members present and voting.
2.4	In the circumstances of this particular issue, it is clear that agreement on the proposal was not given by the Committee.
2.5	As it turns out, the decision to proceed without delay with remedial works to the Swimming Pool was taken by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 25th January and ratified by the Council on 4th February so there has been no delay whatsoever in commencing the process to have the remedial works undertaken.

3	Resource Implications
	None.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None.

5	Recommendations
	The Committee is requested to note the information.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Notice of Motion – John Luke Proposal
Date:	4th February, 2013
Reporting Officer:	Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer, ext. 6312
Contact Officer:	As above.

1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>At the Council meeting on 4th February, the undernoted Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor O' Muilleoir and seconded by Councillor Kyle:</p> <p>“John Luke (1906-1975) is one of Belfast's most celebrated artists and among our great city's most famous sons. His works of astonishing beauty adorn Belfast City Hall (in the form of his striking 1951 mural on the granting of a city charter to Belfast in 1613, painted for the Festival of Britain) and he is being honoured by a special retrospective now showing at the Ulster Museum.</p> <p>According to the programme for that exhibition, John Luke "was a painter, muralist, printmaker and sculptor, who began his life working in the city's shipyards. A modernist who was dedicated to craftsmanship, Luke's work is characterised by a unique sense of 'rhythm' he found in Ulster as a region."</p> <p>Among the most stunning works of this revered Belfast artist are several evocative landscapes of the Lagan River. It is of note that his credo as a painter was poetically captured by Luke in 1945 in the magazine Lagan: "I believe in the curve, the straight line and the holy shape, colour-relations, tone and design – all which go to make a living thing and not a culled mistake." His mesmerising tempera masterpieces were, he said, products of "going modern and being Irish".</p> <p>One of his most-loved works, 'The Locks at Edenderry' (one of several of the Lagan), depicts the point where the current Council-mooted Lagan Gateway scheme would culminate. This Council therefore agrees that it would be fitting for the City of Belfast to honour John Luke by naming the new bridge (currently without any formal name) being restored by the Council across the Lagan at Newforge in honour of this great artist who has left such a marvellous legacy to our citizens."</p> <p>In accordance with Standing Order 11(e), the Lord Mayor indicated that the matter would be referred to the Development Committee without debate.</p>

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to consider the Notion of Motion and take such action thereon as may be determined.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Marrowbone Millennium Park
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	Members will be aware that the Council has been working with local elected representatives and the Ardoyne Youth Providers regarding the development of a 3G Pitch facility at the Marrowbone Millennium Park.
2.	Key Issues
	The Chairman of the Committee has been approached by representatives of Ardoyne Youth Providers who would like to make a presentation to the Committee regarding the potential for a Phase two of their Marrowbone Sports Project.
3.	Resource Implications
	None
4.	Equality Implications
	None
5.	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to consider the request.
6.	Decision Tracking
	None

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Financial Reporting – Quarter 3 2012/13
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Manager

1.	Relevant background information
	<p>The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed on 18 June 2010 that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the council would produce financial reporting packs for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and each Standing Committee on a quarterly basis • the Budget and Transformation Panel would also receive monthly financial updates if there were any significant issues to report. <p>The reporting pack (Appendix 1) contains a summary dashboard of the financial indicators and an executive summary explaining the financial performance of Parks and Leisure Committee. It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators covering the year to date and the year end forecast position.</p> <p>The style and layout reflect much of the discussion and feedback arising from the members' financial training at the end of September 2010. As we previously advised the committee, we will continue to develop the style and contents of the reports in liaison with members.</p> <p>Central finance and our departmental management team have worked together to develop the information within this financial reporting pack.</p>
2.	Key issues
	<p>The current performance in quarter three of the Parks and Leisure department shows a (2.9%) variance against the year to date budget; i.e.; an under spend of £496K.</p>

The main issues are:

Income

Income for the department is down 4% or £341k on budget. Leisure Centres are down by 7% or £175k on the budget for fees and charges. Promotional activity especially around the new membership scheme is ongoing and campaigns have been underway from June.

Income from fees and charges at the Zoo is down 10% or £127k against budget and the income at the shop is also down £88k but this is offset by a reduction on expenditure on supplies by £78k. The poor weather and the opening of other prestigious visitor centres have impacted on the Zoo however promotional activities are taking place to address this.

Income from fees and charges in Parks and Open Spaces are up by 8.5% largely in relation to events and pitch hire and the Crematorium which is up on budget by £116k due to additional slots and increase in price.

Utility Costs

Utility costs are currently £131k over spent: 11% in Leisure and 2% in Parks and Cemeteries. The ongoing issues with the borehole at the Zoo are being resolved however the Zoo is currently connected to the mains which incur costs of £17k approx per month. The over spends in leisure relate to water and electricity costs being higher than budget and consumption increasing with the ongoing issues with the CHP units.

Grounds Maintenance

Grounds Maintenance expenditure is under spent against budget by £321k. £250k of this relates to the maintenance of playgrounds and £25k in relation to paths but both projects are on schedule to be completed by the end of the year. It is expected that £130k of expenditure for CCG will be used on preparation work for the overall scheme leaving £120k under spent in this financial year.

Supplies and Services

Supplies and Services within the department are under spent by 8% or £364k. This expenditure relates to a number of programmes of work that are being developed and also programmes of work with external partners that are underway and are being monitored on a monthly basis. The corresponding under claimed grant income off sets some of this under expenditure in relation to a number of key programmes. This also refers to the issue of the Zoo shop referred to above which has reduced its supplies for resale by £78k in response to poor sales.

General

Directorate support is largely on target however the ASB budget is likely to be under spent by £50k due to planning permission being required for a project and therefore the project has been delayed.

	<p>The department will continue to monitor the variance between actual and budgeted expenditure/income during the final quarter of the year.</p> <p>The financial reporting pack contains more detail on both the overall council position and the financial performance in each of the Services within the Department.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	There is a year to date under-spend of £496k and a forecast over-spend of some £160k or 0.7% by year end.

4.	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None.

5.	Recommendations
	Members are recommended to note the above report and associated financial reporting pack.

6.	Decision Tracking
	N/A

7.	Key to abbreviations
	None.

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Financial reporting pack

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Parks and Leisure Committee

Quarterly Finance Report

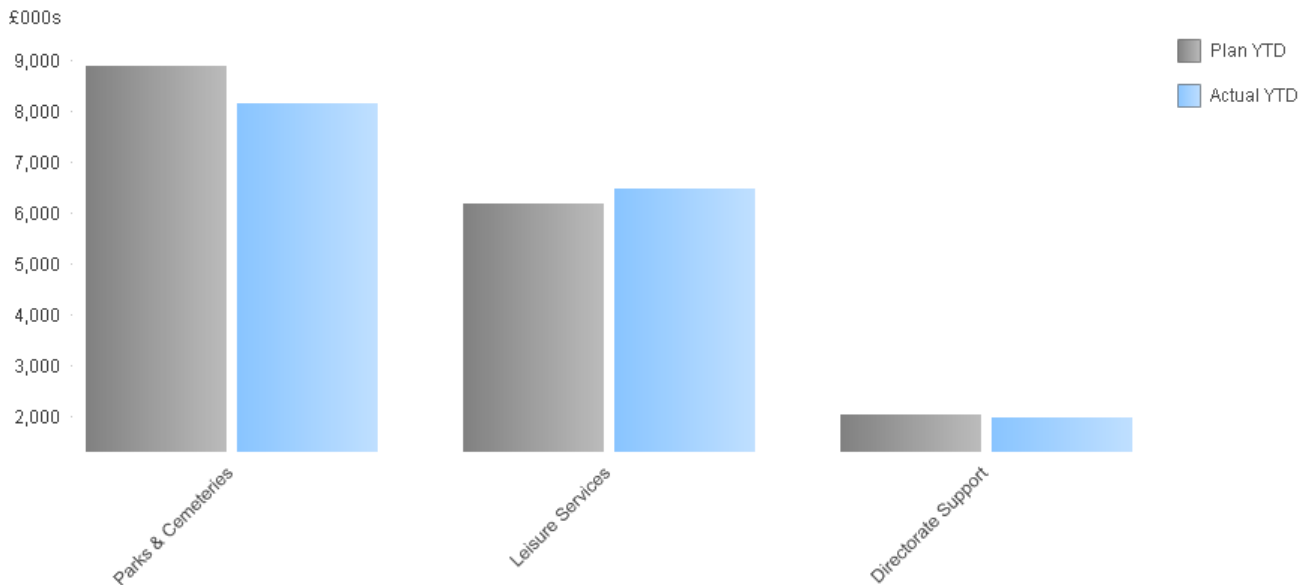
Report Period: Quarter 3, 2012/13

Dashboard

Revenue Section							Page
Service	YTD	YTD Var £000s	Var %	Forecast	Forecast Var £000s	Var %	3&4
Parks & Cemeteries		(735)	(8.3)%		(140)	(1.1)%	
Directorate Support		(59)	(2.9)%		(50)	(1.8)%	
Leisure Services		298	4.8%		351	4.3%	
Committee Total		(496)	(2.9)%		161	0.7%	

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)			
KPI	Actual	Target	
Compliant Purchases	81.8%	85.0%	
Timeliness Of Goods On System	49.5%	65.0%	

Committee Net Revenue Expenditure: Year to Date Position



Commentary and action required:

The current performance in quarter three of the Parks and Leisure department shows a (2.9%) variance against the year to date budget; i.e.; an under spend of £496K.

The main issues are:

Income for the department is down 4% or £341k on budget. Leisure Centres are down by 7% or £175k on the budget for fees and charges. Promotional activity especially around the new membership scheme is ongoing and campaigns have been underway from June.

Income from fees and charges at the Zoo is down 10% or £127k against budget and the income at the shop is also down £88k but this is offset by a reduction on expenditure on supplies by £78k. The poor weather and the opening of other prestigious visitor centres have impacted on the Zoo however promotional activities are taking place to address this.

Income from fees and charges in Parks and Open Spaces are up by 8.5% largely in relation to events and pitch hire and the Crematorium which is up on budget by £116k due to additional slots and increase in price.

Utility costs are currently £131k over spent: 11% in Leisure and 2% in Parks and Cemeteries. The ongoing issues with the borehole at the Zoo are being resolved however the Zoo is currently connected to the mains which incur costs of £17k approx per month. The over spends in leisure relate to water and electricity costs being higher than budget and consumption increasing with the ongoing issues with the CHP units.

Grounds Maintenance expenditure is under spent against budget by £321k. £250k of this relates to the maintenance of playgrounds and £25k in relation to paths but both projects are on schedule to be completed by the end of the year. It is expected that £130k of expenditure for CCG will be used on preparation work for the overall scheme leaving £120k under spent in this financial year.

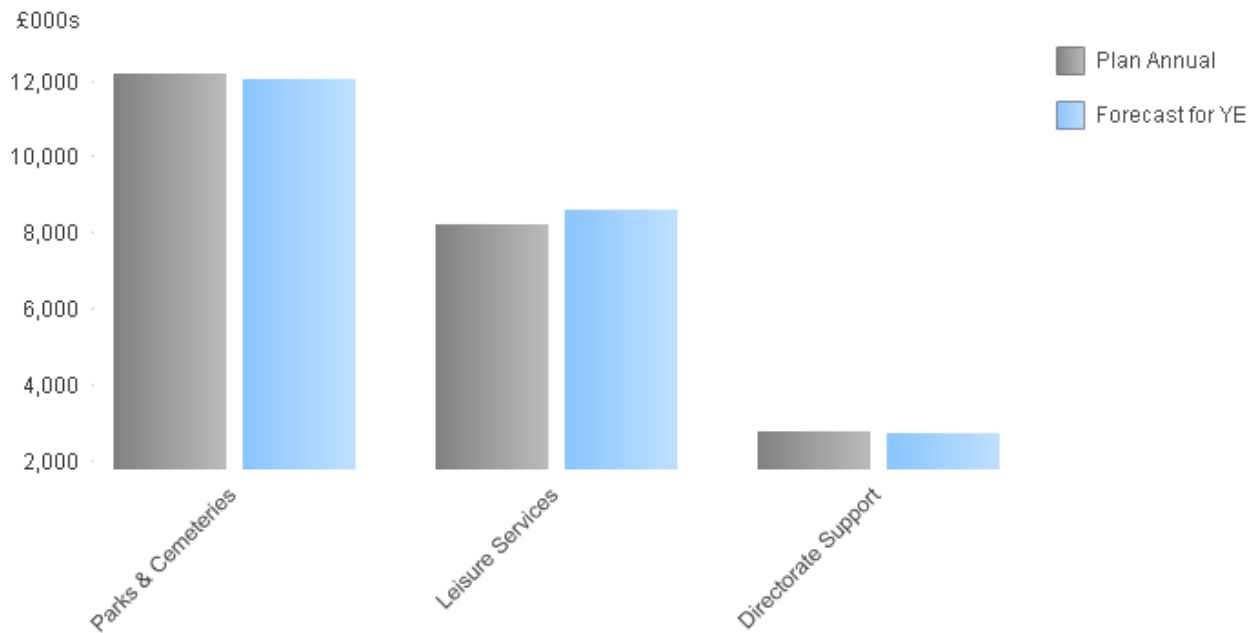
Supplies and Services within the department are under spent by 8% of £364k. This expenditure relates to a number of programmes of work that are being developed and also programmes of work with external partners that are underway and are being monitored on a monthly basis. The corresponding under claimed grant income off sets some of this under

expenditure in relation to a number of key programmes. This also refers to the issue of the Zoo shop referred to above which has reduced its supplies for resale by £78k in response to poor sales

The street trees budget is also showing additional income of £300k against the budget income and there is £156k additional expenditure incurred over budget to offset this additional income. This is partly due to an administration charge that we apply of 15% however the level of work being committed by these agencies' is not guaranteed and therefore not estimated for. The unit overall will be have a net position of £30k over in income.

Directorate support is largely on target however the ASB budget is likely to be under spent by £50k due to planning permission being required for a project and therefore the project has been delayed.

Committee Net Revenue Expenditure: Forecast for Year End (YE)



Commentary and action required:

The yearend forecast for the department at Quarter three is reported as £160k overspent.

The main issues for Leisure Services are in relation to Utility costs and it is expected that water and electricity will be over spent by almost £100k. In relation to income the service is forecasting that its performance will be £250k down on budget potentially £100k of this down to the closure of Avoniel pool. However promotional work is ongoing to improve membership and the Participation Manager is now in post and will be implementing an improvement programme across the city.

Parks and Cemetery Services are projecting an under spend of £140k by year end; the key reasons are as follows:

For Parks a number of programmes of work are currently being implemented but have experienced delays which may result in an under spend of approximately £160k. Management may also want to delay projects to try and reduce the level of overspends experienced by the department.

Also the zoo is forecasting approximately £200k reduction in income due to a fall in throughput which it will not be able to pick up during the year. The issue of the borehole at the zoo and the requirement to link to the mains for a period of time could incur charges of up to £100k however despite the current under spend of £120k the net position of the Zoo is likely to be overspent by £140k. The Zoo shop sales have also fallen however the supplies for resale have been reduced to balance this out.

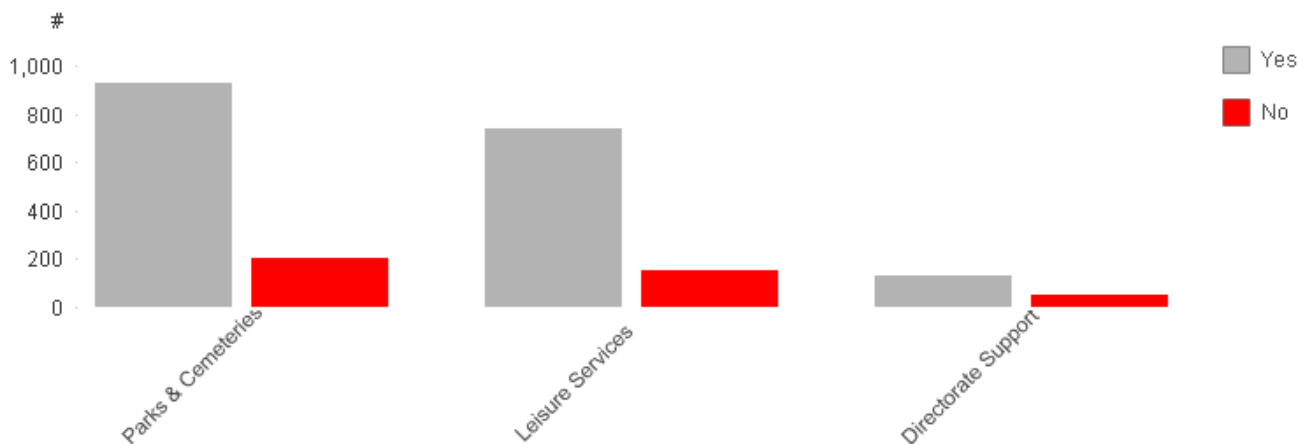
Fees and charges in the crematorium and from pitch hire are looking more favourable and the service is forecasting approximately £120k of additional income by year end

Directorate Support; specifically ASB budget is likely to be under spent by £50k due to planning permission being required for a project.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Procurement Compliance

Procurement Compliance refers to the purchases that are made in compliance with the standard procure to pay process in BCC. These processes help ensure that our creditors are paid in a timely fashion and our accounts are accurate and up to date. The following indicators are intended to give a flavour of how well we are doing at adhering to the processes.

Indicator 1: Compliant Purchases (Purchase order created on system before ordering goods)



The impact of ordering goods without a purchase order being created on the system are that a) the authorisation for purchasing goods has not gone through the proper channels, b) incomplete records are available and decisions are being made based on information that is not correct and c) suppliers whose invoices do not have purchase orders take longer to pay and this contravenes an objective of the investment programme, negatively affecting supplier relationships with BCC.

Commentary and action required:

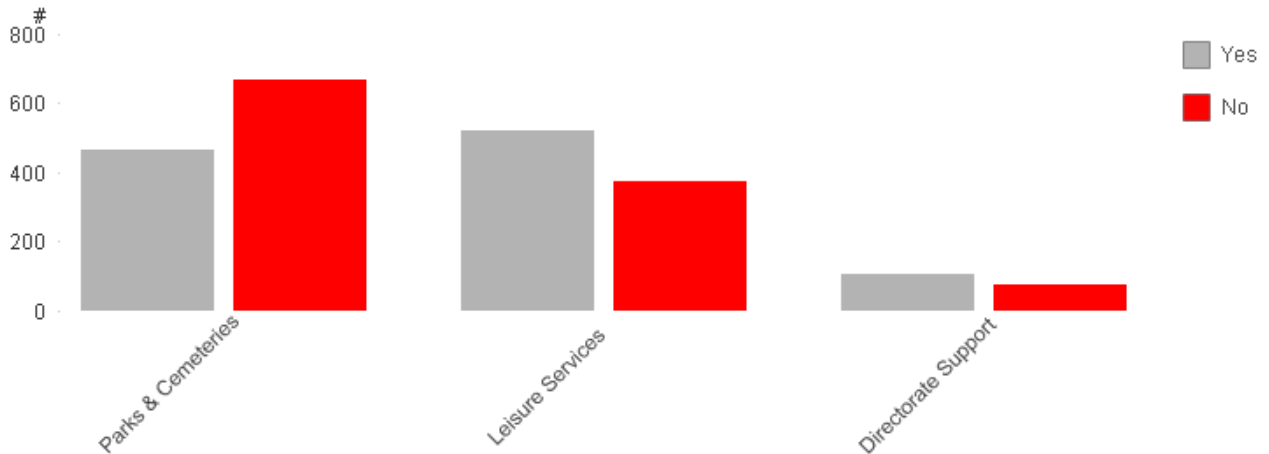
	Yes	No	Total	% Compliant
	1,802	402	2,204	81.8%
Parks & Cemeteries	931	202	1133	82.2%
Leisure Services	742	152	894	83.0%
Directorate Support	133	50	183	72.7%

The Parks and Leisure Department is 82% compliant in relation to raising purchase order on the system prior to receiving goods and the supplier invoicing for them.

The department is monitoring performance on a monthly basis and identifying any areas where there is non-compliance and reinforcing the policy.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Procurement Compliance

Indicator 2: Timeliness of Goods on System (Goods received and marked received on system within 5 days)



The impact of not marking goods as received onto the system is that a) BCC records of goods on site are not up to date and b) there is a risk that a department might overspend its budget as goods have been received but are not showing against the budget and c) it can take longer to pay the suppliers invoices and this contravenes an objective of the investment programme, negatively affecting supplier relationships with BCC.

Commentary and action required:

CostProfit_C...	Yes	No	Total	% Compliant
	1,092	1,112	2204	49.5%
Parks & Cemeter...	464	669	1133	41.0%
Leisure Services	522	372	894	58.4%
Directorate Sup...	108	75	183	59.0%

The Parks and Leisure Department is approx 50% compliant in relation to goods receiving orders on the system prior to the invoiced being received.

The department is monitoring performance on a monthly basis and is identifying any areas where there is non-compliance to reinforce the policy. On occasions the delivery note is also the invoice and this note would normally generate the goods received on the system. Also in relation to supply of services the receipt of the invoice is the document that informs managers that the service has been completed. The department is working on addressing these issues and also reinforcing the process with our suppliers.

Parks & Leisure Committee

Service	Section	Plan YTD £000s	Actuals YTD £000s	Variance YTD £000s	% Variance	Annual Plan 2012/2013 £000s	Forecast for Y/E at P9 £000s	Forecast Variance £000s	% Variance
Total		17,088	16,592	(496)	(2.9)%	23,166	23,327	161	0.7%
Parks & Cemeteries	Total	8,873	8,138	(735)	(8.3)%	12,178	12,038	(140)	(1.1)%
Parks & Cemeteries	Landscape & Planning	1,489	1,079	(409)	(27.5)%	1,848			
Parks & Cemeteries	P&C Development	133	121	(12)	(9.3)%	178			
Parks & Cemeteries	Parks & Cemetery Services	6,866	6,418	(448)	(6.5)%	9,358			
Parks & Cemeteries	Zoo	385	520	135	35.0%	795			
Directorate Support	Total	2,043	1,984	(59)	(2.9)%	2,768	2,718	(50)	(1.8)%
Directorate Support	P&L Directorate Support	1,326	1,316	(10)	(0.8)%	1,770			
Directorate Support	Policy & Business Development	717	668	(49)	(6.8)%	998			
Leisure Services	Total	6,172	6,469	298	4.8%	8,220	8,571	351	4.3%
Leisure Services	Leisure Centres	5,671	5,872	202	3.6%	7,671			
Leisure Services	Leisure Development	501	597	96	19.1%	549			



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Mary Peters' Trust
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Manager

Relevant Background Information	
	<p>In the last number of years the Parks and Leisure Committee has approved a contribution of £5,000 to the Mary Peters' Trust. The Trust assesses sporting need and provides small grants to individual sports people to assist them in achieving excellence in sport.</p> <p>Advice from the Legal Services Manager has indicated that as a general rule district councils do not have any legal power to contribute to the funds of charitable organisations. The only exception to that general rule being where an application for financial assistance is made under criteria which the Council has in place in relation to the incurring of expenditure for special purposes under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 section 37 (previously known as section 115 of the Local Government Act NI 1972).</p> <p>The Act permits the council to make any payment for any purpose which in its opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the council; b) the district or any part of its district; or c) the inhabitants of its district of any part of its district. <p>The amount of money available under Section 37 is subject to an annual cap and in determining whether any payment should be made the Council must ask whether the benefit would be commensurate with the payment to be made.</p>

Key Issues	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mary Peters Trust has made a request to the Council for a financial contribution to the work of the trust for the 2012/13 financial year. • Should the Committee be minded to make a contribution to the trust, given its charitable status, the contribution would have to be made under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011. • An assessment of the request against the criteria agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in 2004 has indicated that the request would bring a direct benefit to the inhabitants of Belfast. • It is proposed that a contribution of £5,000 be made to the Mary Peters' Trust under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011. If agreed it is considered that the benefit obtained will be commensurate with the payment made.

Resource Implications	
	<p><u>Financial</u> The proposed £5,000 can be accommodated within Section 37 budget</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no human resource implications.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None.</p>

Equality and Good Relations Implications	
	None

Recommendations	
	The Committee is asked to agree to make a contribution of £5,000 in the 2012/13 financial year to the Mary Peters Trust and resolve that the expenditure be approved under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, it being the opinion of the Committee that the expenditure would bring direct benefits to the inhabitants of the district and that the direct benefits would be commensurate with the payment made.

Decision Tracking	
	The Business Manager will be responsible for carrying out the decision of the Committee before the end of the 2012/13 financial year.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Antisocial Behaviour Programme Quarterly Update
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Peter Murray, Antisocial Behaviour Co-ordinator

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report an overview of antisocial behaviour by electoral area; • update committee on the activities of the Safer Neighbourhoods Antisocial Behaviour programme during June to December 2012.

2.	Key Issues
	<p>The antisocial behaviour programme contributes to the achievement of the departmental vision of providing quality parks, open spaces and leisure environments that people value and use. In particular, it enables the delivery of the departmental objective regarding the provision of programmes and services to make people feel safer.</p> <p>In line with the departmental plan, the objectives of the antisocial behaviour programme are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance the environment around Parks and Leisure facilities; • develop education initiatives involving creative or supportive interventions to model acceptable behaviour around Parks and Leisure facilities; • define enforcement as a deterrent against infraction of bye-laws or legislation; and • develop sustainable interagency and inter-departmental networks and leading a partnership approach to reducing antisocial behaviour. <p>The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator prioritises action and expenditure</p>

	<p>by collating evidence gathered through antisocial behaviour incident reports. This information is used to inform a coordinated partnership response, drawing on council resources, the support of local community resources, PSNI and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (see Appendix 1 Summary of Interventions)</p> <p>Members will recall that a new ASB incident recording system was implemented in February 2012. The new CRM system records more detail than the previous Flare system and a substantial increase in the number of reported ASB incidents was expected due to the improved categorisation of ASB.</p> <p>2.1 <u>Trends in the available ASB incident data</u> The evidence available for June to August 2012 indicates a slight seasonal increase in antisocial behaviour, especially in park areas in Balmoral, Court, Lagan Bank, and Old Park. (See Appendix 2: Table 1, Comparison of ASB incidents in Parks and Leisure Facilities across electoral areas between June to August 2011 and June to August 2012)</p> <p>2.2 The data for the period September to December 2012 indicates a decreasing trend of ASB. The rate of the decrease in ASB between June to December 2011 and June to December 2012 is significantly different. In 2012, incidents of ASB declined sharply between summer (June to August) and autumn (September to December) whereas they declined marginally in 2011. (See Appendix 2: Table 2, Comparison of ASB incidents in Parks and Leisure Facilities across electoral areas between September to December 2011 and September to December 2012)</p> <p>2.3 <u>Previous Interventions</u> There are a number of interventions that will have contributed to the reduction in expected ASB reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the months June to September 2012 in Old Park, in Marrowbone, walls were removed, fencing and gates were redesigned to restrict access from youths and increase the capacity of PSNI to identify youths gathering in the park. • In Old Park, in the Waterworks, a series of mobile CCTV van visits were planned in conjunction with the PSNI in support of the wishes of surrounding communities to reduce tensions in June and July. • In Lagan Bank, in Botanic Gardens, there was a group of drinkers that had repeatedly congregated at the bandstand and a series of joint operations were initiated in partnership with the PSNI to remove them. • A series of mobile CCTV van visits were also planned in Botanic Gardens and Ormeau Park to reduce the numbers of drinkers gathering. • In Balmoral, in Musgrave Park, Wedderburn and Woodlands, a number of fencing improvements, a series of joint operations with the PSNI and use of mobile CCTV van patrols was initiated to
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	<p>reduce the numbers of drinkers using the sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Court, the closure of Woodvale park has had a significant effect on the decreasing number of ASB incident reports. <p>For further information on interventions across the city please refer to Appendix 1: Summary of Interventions June to December 2012.</p> <p>2.4 The available data provides an accurate ASB profile for each park. The parks with the most incident reports suffer the following ASB issues: Falls Park: Drink, Littering and Rowdy behaviour Alexandra Park: Substance abuse, Drinking and Rowdy behaviour Waterworks: Drinking and Rowdy behaviour Botanic Gardens: Drinking and Rowdy behaviour Ormeau Park: Rowdy Behaviour and Vehicle nuisance Woodvale: Drinking and Vandalism Musgrave: Drinking and Rowdy behaviour Cavehill: Animal problems Victoria: Animal problems</p> <p>(See Appendix 4: Categories of ASB across Parks June to December 2012)</p> <p>2.5 <u>Future Interventions</u> The profile of incidents above demonstrates that specific interventions are required to reduce specific ASB. The use of mobile CCTV will be programmed to attend parks during the lighter evenings to deter drinkers and rowdy behaviour. The development of the approach to Young adult association areas will continue in Falls, Botanic and Musgrave. Ormeau Park will benefit from further restrictions to vehicular access and options will be explored with the Park Manager. Enforcement operations will be scheduled in Cavehill and Victoria Parks to reduce the impact of Animal problems.</p> <p>The electoral area which continues to show an overall increase of ASB incidents in parks areas, is Old Park. In the period of February to March 2013, the ASB coordinator will liaise with local Councillors, Park Managers and PSNI in order to identify appropriate interventions which will respond to the particular profile of ASB in the area.</p> <p>Members will recall the report to committee detailing the Young Adult Association areas (December 2012). The development of these sites are ongoing, they are designed to reduce the incidents of damage, littering and rowdy behaviour. The proposals are attracting positive comments from PSNI and community partners. Although these interventions are not appropriate for every park area in Belfast, there are a number of alternatives such as weekend education initiatives designed to attract participation from young people, which may be more appropriate for the Old Park area. A report will be brought back to members following any development or evaluation.</p>
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2.6	<p><u>Park Warden developments</u></p> <p>The internal resource used to reduce incidents of ASB is the deployment of Park Wardens. They have recently attended formal training led by the Association of Public Sector Excellence which was designed to support them in adopting statutory enforcement powers and inform their understanding of the legal framework underpinning enforcement operations.</p> <p>The partnership between the Dog Wardens, Litter Wardens, Get Home Safe Officers and Park Wardens has been very successful in providing a series of joint working opportunities and the necessary support to issuing fixed penalty notices.</p>
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3.	<p>Resource Implications</p> <p>The development of the programme will be facilitated through the agreed antisocial behaviour budget 2012-13 which is approximately £250,000.</p>
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4.	<p>Equality and good relations implications</p> <p>Much of the antisocial behaviour programme work spans activities related to reducing interface tensions and bringing youth together to take part in positive programmes and activities. All of the programme work is in line with the council's equality and good relations policies and procedures.</p>
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5.	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>Members are asked to note the contents of this update report</p>
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6.	<p>Decision Tracking</p> <p>Updates on the Safer Neighbourhoods antisocial behaviour programme will be brought by the ASB Coordinator to the Committee three times a year, in June, October and February.</p>
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7.	<p>Key to Abbreviations</p> <p>ASB: Antisocial behaviour CRM: Customer Relationship Management PSNI: Police Service for Northern Ireland CCTV: Closed Circuit Television</p>
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8.	<p>Documents Attached</p> <p>Appendix 1: Summary of interventions June to December 2012 Appendix 2: Comparison of ASB incidents in Parks and Leisure Facilities across electoral areas between June to December 2011 & 2012 Appendix 3: ASB in parks and electoral areas between June and December 2012 Appendix 4: Categories of ASB across Parks June to December 2012</p>

Appendix 1

Summary of interventions June to December 2012

There have been a series of successful actions implemented throughout the period of June to December 2012. A significant portion of time has been invested in the development of the Park Wardens and the resources they require to enforce bye laws and legislation.

Parks operations are separated into three distinct areas: North, East and South/West.

The details of thematic interventions within these areas are as follows:

North Belfast

Environment

- Fencing adaptations in several locations to enable safer access to park areas, ie Wheatfield and Marrowbone.
- Removal of internal fencing and repositioning the old playground in Marrowbone.

Enforcement

- Mobile CCTV Van patrols during June and July in Cavehill, Grove, Alexandra and throughout North Belfast especially in the Waterworks to deter youths from fighting.
- Joint Enforcement operations in the Waterworks with Dog wardens to support the Park Wardens to develop the skills necessary to enforce Clean Neighbourhoods legislation.

Education

- Support for the Halloween Lantern Parade to encourage legitimate use of Park areas during school holiday periods
- Support to install a giant bouncy “Stonehenge” castle and family picnic day in Grove Playing fields during the last weekend of August.

East Belfast

Environment

- Inverary fence improvements: following a series of incidents during the summer, the fence was replaced and a section of woodland is being adapted for use by local schools and education projects.
- Robert Bradford Memorial & Orangefield Parks: Working with the Community Outreach officer to improve the kickabout area, installing new nets and developing an activity programme
- Botanic Gardens: Improvements to the bandstand are underway to encourage more legitimate usage and deter youths from gathering and drinking around the bandstand. Currently consulting with PSNI and community representatives regarding the installation of Young adult association area.

Enforcement

- Mobile CCTV Van patrols during June and July: this resource was deployed to deter drinkers from gathering in the area throughout Ormeau, Orangefield, Botanic and Belmont Parks.

- Joint Enforcement operations in Ormeau and Cherryvale with Dog wardens to support the Park Wardens to develop the skills necessary to enforce Clean Neighbourhoods legislation.

Education

- Robert Bradford Memorial & Orangefield Parks: Working with the Community Outreach officer to improve the kick about areas, installing new nets and developing activity programmes.

South & West Belfast

Environment

- King William Park: additional fencing was installed which local young people placed artwork upon to improve the safety of the public whilst watching July band parades and deter drinkers from entering the park.
- Whiterock open space: fencing is being installed along the Whiterock road to deter youths from gathering and causing annoyance.
- Currently consulting with PSNI and community representatives regarding the installation of Young adult association areas.

Enforcement

- Mobile CCTV Van patrols during June and July to deter youths from fighting in Falls Park, City Cemetery, Musgrave Park and Woodlands

Education

- Falls Park: Support for the Teddy bears picnic and youth activities during Féile an Phobail.

All areas

The antisocial behaviour programme coordinator has been engaged in a range of internal and external partnerships.

Implementation of Park Warden Pilot

Park Wardens have now been issued with new uniforms and resources; a new ASB incident recording system is currently in use; Cross service training has been initiated to equip Park wardens with statutory powers.

Interagency and Interdepartmental networks

- Area based partnership meetings used to identify and monitor antisocial behaviour and co-ordinate interventions around parks and leisure facilities.
- Joint working with Community safety fora, PSNI and Antisocial behaviour Officers, are improving our ability to effectively respond to antisocial behaviour.
- Working in partnership with Dog, Litter and Alcohol enforcement officers to increase the capacity of Park Wardens to enforce bye laws.
- Participation in the internal officers groups such as the Bonfire internal officers group has provided support to effectively respond to a wide range of incidents, improve the effective “one council” approach and ensure safer park events throughout the city.

Appendix 2

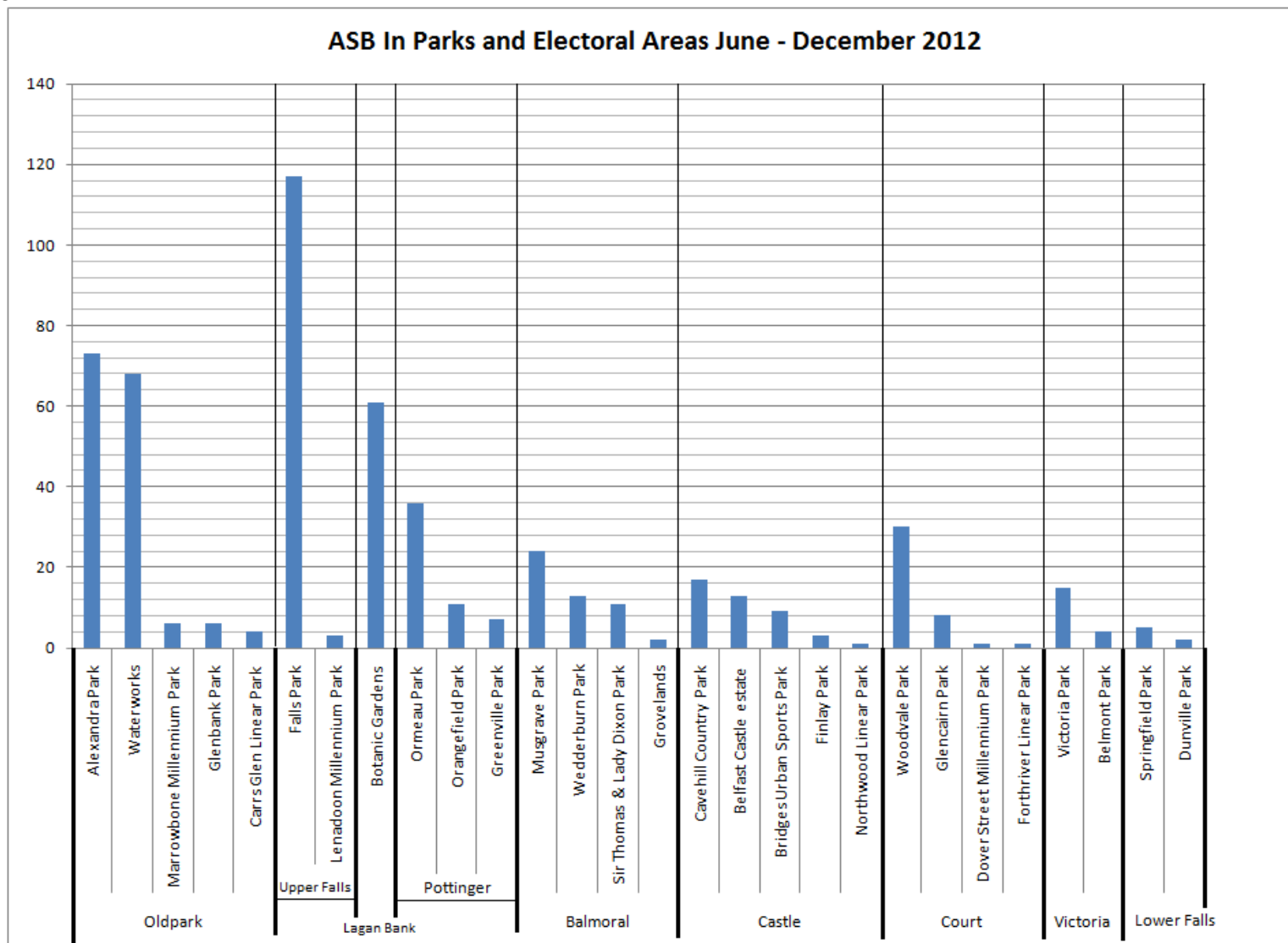
Table 1: Comparison of ASB incidents in Parks and Leisure Facilities across electoral areas between June to August 2011 and June to August 2012

Electoral Area	June - Aug 2011	June - Aug 2012
Balmoral	5	13
Castle	35	30
Court	15	23
Lagan Bank	26	51
Lower Falls	8	5
Old Park	47	75
Pottinger	72	36
Upper Falls	40	40
Victoria	16	14
Grand Total	265	287

Table 2: Comparison of ASB incidents in Parks and Leisure Facilities across electoral areas between September to December 2011 and September to December 2012

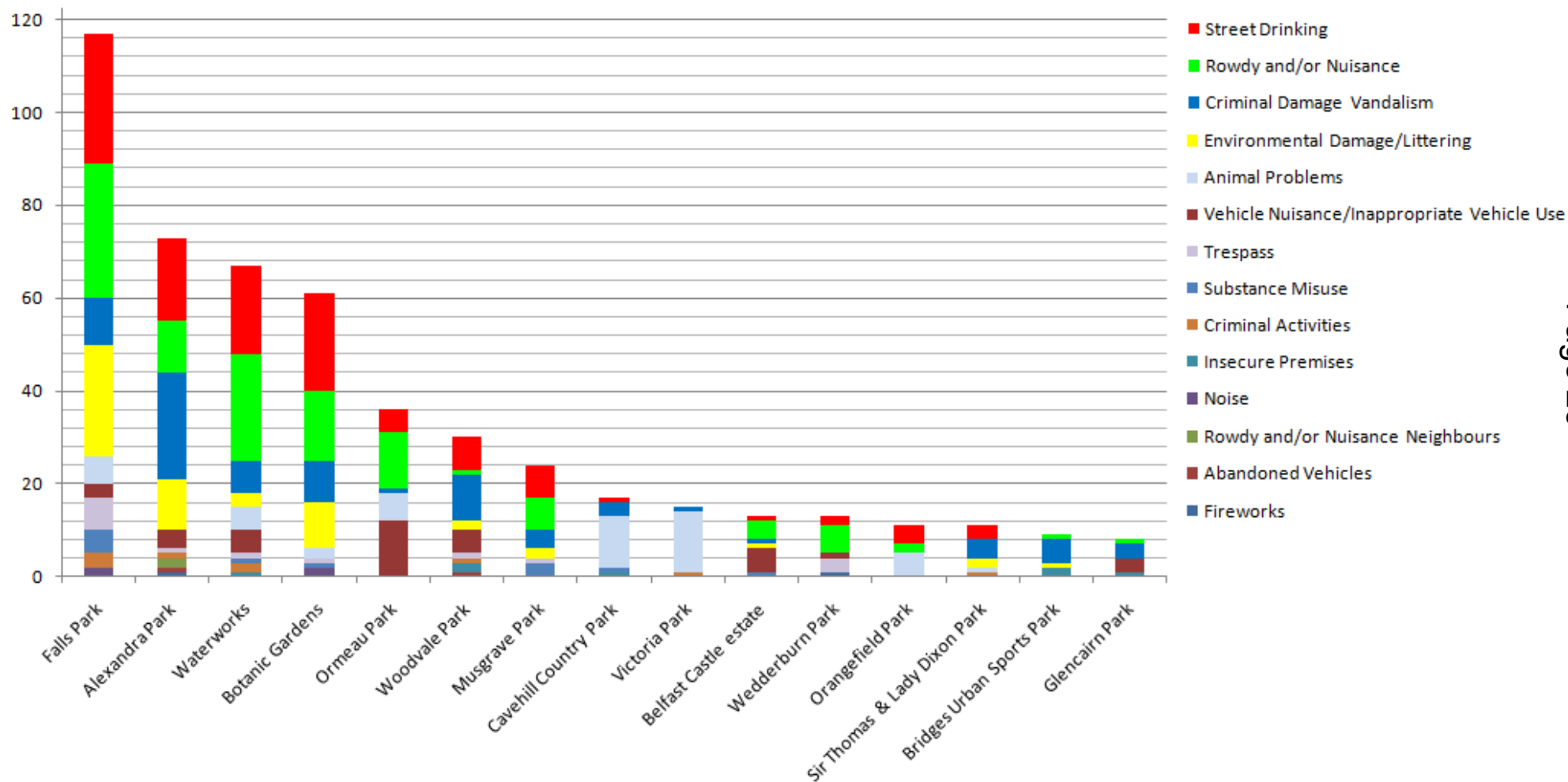
Electoral area	Sept - Dec 2011	Sept - Dec 2012
Balmoral	17	9
Castle	31	11
Court	57	9
Lagan Bank	16	10
Lower Falls	5	2
Old Park	52	57
Pottinger	66	15
Upper Falls	13	6
Victoria	3	3
Grand Total	262	122

Appendix 3



Appendix 4

Categories of ASB in Parks June to December 2012



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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Parks and Leisure Departmental Improvement Programme – Operational Reviews
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

1. Relevant Background Information

The Parks and Leisure improvement programme was initiated in January 2010 and focused on building capacity and delivering better services and better outcomes for communities in Belfast. The approach centred on:

1. reviewing management arrangements and improving operational efficiency and performance
2. bringing the Parks and Leisure functions of the department together to integrate community development and to work more closely in planning and service delivery.

The improvement programme comprised a number of work streams; Parks Improvement, Leisure Services Improvement, Review of Business Support, and an emerging Development Strand made up of policy, planning, development and community focussed services. Given the scale of the reviews the following phased approach to streamlining management arrangements and achieving operational efficiency was adopted :

Phase I

- Agreement and implementation of the Parks Management operational structural tier; and
- Agreement and implementation of Parks and Leisure Business Support management tier.

Phase II

- Operational review of Parks and Leisure Business Support including the leisure centre staff;
- Parks operational review to include: the review of the role of Team Leaders or “Parks Supervisors”; review of boundaries and numbers of staff; requirements for driving and playground inspections; development of processes; quality monitoring; and implementation of systems.
- Operational review of the Outdoor Leisure function
- Development of a Parks Community Resource (i.e. Community Warden);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the estates function including Belfast Castle and Malone House (this will include the exploration of a coordinated estates/commercial function across the Parks and Cemeteries Service); • Review of the Development function of Parks and Leisure • Review of Bereavement Services • Review of Customer service and investment in training • Establishment of a staff development programme to support the implementation of change and including investment in leadership. <p>Phase III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the management strand within Leisure Services; and • Review of the operational strand in Leisure Services • Review of operation at Roselawn Crematorium • Review of Landscape Planning and Development Unit • Review of Marketing and Communications • Review of operations at Belfast Zoo
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<p>2.</p>	<p>Key Issues</p>
<p>2.1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 was completed in January 2010 with agreed management side and trade union positions on the way forward. Proposals have been implemented with the establishment within existing resource of City Park Managers, Community Park Managers and Outreach Managers
<p>2.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase II has been completed with the exception of the review of the estates function including Belfast Castle and Malone House and the operational review of playground inspections. • Significant improvement has been realised in the delivery of the Parks function and the service has in the last three years achieved 10 Green Flag awards which reflects the improvement and high quality of the service. • The review of the Development Strand now referred to as Neighbourhood and Development has commenced with the appointment of the Neighbourhood and Development Manager in January 2013. Given the priority for delivery of the investment programme and the significance of the Parks and Leisure agenda within that, priority will be given to this review with further work being undertaken to bring together the Parks and Leisure operations and to establish management of the Departments' commercial businesses, i.e. Belfast Castle, Malone House and Belfast Zoo through the appointment of a Commercial Manager. • This work will seek to ensure the integrated management and planning of effective service delivery in support of Active Belfast and area based planning. Proposals on these functions will be brought to committee at a later date • The review of the OSAL unit is currently being implemented and the review of the Biodiversity function which was outstanding from the OSAL review will be completed in April 2013. • The review of playground inspections as part of the operational efficiency review is ongoing and will be reported to committee at a later date.
<p>2.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase III has been completed with the exception of the operational review of Leisure which now forms part of the transformation of the function under the Strategic Review of Leisure.

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Finance</u> Summary of financial implications to date:</p> <p>Phase I</p> <p>Deletion of 7 posts including 2 business support posts with a net saving of £217,685 per year.</p> <p>Deletion of Parks and Cemeteries Senior Manager and Leisure Manager posts and the creation of an Assistant Director post resulting in a net saving of £50, 797 after an initial payback period of 1.6 years.</p> <p>The operational review of driving requirement in the Parks function has resulted in a net saving of £39,730.</p> <p>Phase II</p> <p>Deletion of 2 posts with the creation of a new Open Spaces and Active Living Coordinator and Quality Manager giving a net saving of £43,018 after a payback period of 2.13 years.</p> <p>The value of the proposed new Park Warden role and Team Leader role resulted in an increase of approximately £40,000 on operational staff costs which is accommodated within existing budgets.</p> <p>Increased capacity at Roselawn Crematorium cost £100,000 but will be paid for in year one of operation. Growth in income in the first quarter of operation is £55k, however it should be noted that this is partly due to the increase in crematorium changes.</p> <p>Phase III</p> <p>After covering costs of reviewed posts and payback of 1.71 years deletion of 3 Leisure management posts with a saving of £140,485 and deletion of one temporary Leisure Centre Manager post saving £51,664.</p> <p>A management led job evaluation of Landscape Planning and Development Unit resulted in a number of posts being upgraded with a net cost of £14,405. The cost was met by the savings generated from the deletion of 3 x posts from the structure and also from the termination of a number of agency contracts within the unit.</p> <p>The cost of creating a Neighbourhood and Development Manager was £56,695 and was funded from corporate resources repaid from departmental efficiency savings to be realised through an agreed action plan.</p> <p>The financial implications of the OSAL review were as follows: Cost of re-designating posts: £ Nil Cost of creating new post of Events Officer: £ 36,160 Total cost: £ 36,160</p> <p>Savings from deleting post of Marketing officer: £ 36,160 Net Cost: £Nil</p> <p>As part of the OSAL review there was a one off cost of £70,806 for voluntary redundancy. This was funded from existing departmental budgets. The</p>

	<p>payback period is 1.92 years and met with corporate criteria.</p> <p>The Zoo review financial implications were as follows:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Cost of redesignating posts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£14,358</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of creating new posts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£255,858</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Savings from deleting posts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£106,447</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Total cost</td> <td style="text-align: right;"> £163,769</td> </tr> </table> <p>The Zoo operation has been dependant on agency staff at a cost per annum of £213,088. These agency costs have been met from direct employee costs and are included in the revenue estimates for 2013/14 which will cover the cost of new posts however agency costs will need to be tightly managed going forward.</p> <p>The Zoo review has contributed to the Council's commitment laid out in the investment programme to create job opportunities in particular at basic entry level.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>Staff and Trade Unions have been consulted throughout the review process and an agreed position on proposals has been achieved as they have been developed and brought forward to committee.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>	Cost of redesignating posts	£14,358	Cost of creating new posts	£255,858	Savings from deleting posts	£106,447	 Total cost	 £163,769
Cost of redesignating posts	£14,358								
Cost of creating new posts	£255,858								
Savings from deleting posts	£106,447								
 Total cost	 £163,769								

Recommendations
Members are asked to note the updated position on the departmental improvement programme.

Decision Tracking
Assistant Director Parks and Leisure

Key to Abbreviations
OSAL – Open Spaces and Active Living

Documents Attached
None



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Connswater Community Greenway – Opening Hours and Lighting
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) will create a linear park through East Belfast, following the course of the Connswater, Knock and Loop Rivers, connecting the open and green spaces and remediating the Connswater River itself. The Greenway will reconnect the communities of East Belfast and restore the rivers as community assets. It will create vibrant, attractive, safe and accessible parkland for leisure, recreation and community events and activities.</p> <p>As the design phase is progressing consideration is being given to the opening and closing of parks and the lighting of the space.</p>

2.	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The CCG is an open greenway comprising 16kms of accessible cycle and walkways, linking people and places. It is envisaged that the spine of the greenway will be open 24 hours except where there are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health and Safety risks to the public 2. Issues that cannot be addressed in relation to anti-social behaviour 3. Environmental restrictions <p>Where either 1,2,3 are likely to arise, the design where possible may allow for gates to be included and the management and closure of these areas will be agreed with key stakeholders including park users, local communities, businesses, land owners and council staff.</p>
2.2	<p>Lighting supports the use of the CCG and highlights key areas and routes. Lighting has been included to encourage people to use the greenway, on the assumption that there is increased safety in numbers. PSNI Design Out Crime experts have advised</p>

	that proper use of lighting has been shown to reduce ASB and other crime across the UK.
2.3	It is proposed that areas of the greenway are classified as either the main spine of the greenway or general areas and through consultation agreement is sought on the opening, closing and lighting of the areas. Design for safety and use along the CCG needs to involve users and the residents in the area(s). Involvement of local communities has been proven to reduce levels of vandalism and crime.
2.4	It is proposed that information sessions will take place where users and residents will have input to the CCG opening and lighting hours where local factors will need to be taken into consideration. Crime statistics and local perceptions will also need to be considered and PSNI, community safety wardens and council staff consulted.
2.5	Proposals regarding opening and closing and lighting of the area will be brought forward to committee after the consultation has been completed and the findings analysed.

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>

Recommendations
Members are asked to note the report.

Decision Tracking
Assistant Director Parks and Leisure

Key to Abbreviations
CCG Connswater Community Greenway PSNI Police Service for Northern Ireland ASB Anti-social behaviour

Documents Attached
None



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Update report: Leisure Transformation and Windsor Park and Casement Park Stadium Developments
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Caroline Wilson, Programme Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Under the Investment Programme Implementation Plan, agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June 2012, it was agreed that a project would be initiated to enable the re-development of the leisure estate and that research would be undertaken to develop options.
1.2	The NI Executive has committed significant investment towards local sports facilities including £25.2m to the IFA for the redevelopment of Windsor Park and £61.4m to the GAA for the redevelopment of Casement Park, which is further supported by other funding. Appointment of a contractor for Windsor Park is planned for July 2013 and for Casement Park by September 2013.
1.3	On 22 June 2012 the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee received a report on both stadia. Committee gave approval in principle for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a feasibility study on Windsor/Olympia/Midgley; and - consideration of the future development of leisure facilities at Andersonstown in the context of the wider strategic review of leisure.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	At its meeting on 25 January 2012, SP&R Committee received a report in respect of the Leisure Transformation Programme (attached as

	<p>appendix). In the discussion which followed, Members welcomed the report and stressed the urgency of the need for change, to deliver both better outcomes and value for money. They agreed the need for balanced city investment, in line with the principles of the Investment Programme and to work expeditiously with strategic partners, such as IFA and GAA, to deliver the maximum regeneration impact across the city.</p>
2.2	<p>At the meeting, they agreed to hold a Special meeting of the SP&R Committee to receive a full briefing from the consultants on the review report, to which Members of the Parks and Leisure Committee would be invited, along with any other Members of Council. This is to be arranged during February.</p>
2.3	<p>In relation to the stadia development, as Members are sharply aware, the new iconic stadia are on an aggressive timeline for delivery. There is a limited window of opportunity for the Council to take advantage of the potential regeneration opportunities arising from both the Windsor and Casement stadia. As outlined in the attached report, SP&R Committee agreed in the phased plan for physical transformation of the leisure estate, that the Windsor and Casement developments were included in Phase 1.</p>
2.4	<p>As part of the grant conditions, DCAL has recently insisted that both major developments demonstrate strong community benefits and has now approached the Council for support. In anticipation of this, the Council has been working on potential options for the sites. DCAL need details of any inclusive Council regeneration and a decision on agreed funding commitment for new centres and associated works by the end of May 2013.</p>
2.5	<p>In line with the emerging leisure estate principles (to be confirmed over the coming months), SP&R Committee agreed that Options 1 and 2 were the best fit in terms of maximising socio-economic factors and outcomes, including good quality facilities and social benefits.</p>
2.6	<p>In order to inform the development of these two options on the wider regeneration impact of the two stadia, it is essential that the views of the local communities need to be taken into account when developing and considering options for both sites. The timetable attached at appendix 2 outlines public consultation events for both sites in February to explore the leisure transformation opportunities that both stadia present.</p> <p>Staff and trade unions have been and continue to be briefed on the review process.</p>
2.7	<p>DSD's Belfast Regeneration Office has also recently approached the Council expressing an interest in partnership delivery through complementary public realm activity, as well as the provision of local play facilities. This is in the context of their work in Neighbourhood Renewal</p>

	and maximising local community benefits.
2.8	Members should be assured that Council officers are engaged in an intensive series of meetings with partners, in order that information is presented to the Committee to make timely decisions, within the tight timeframes laid out by the two developments as well as embed these important strategic opportunities in the overall transformation of leisure provision in the city.

3.	Resource Implications
	<p>Human: This will be a major physical and service transformation process and the resource implications for implementation will be fully assessed as part of the development of a transformation plan.</p> <p>Financial: Depending on political agreement, there is potentially a capital cost of up to £60m over 5 years which will form part of the Council's medium term financial planning arrangements.</p> <p>Assets: None at present.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	The Leisure Estate Review and stadia developments within that will be screened at periodic intervals in line with the Council's equality obligations.

5.	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to note the information presented in this update.

6.	Decision Tracking
	None

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>IFA - Irish Football Association</p> <p>DCAL - Department of Culture Arts and Leisure</p> <p>SP&R - Strategic Policy and Resources</p> <p>DSD - Department of Social Development</p>

8.	Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Leisure Estate Review Update and Next Steps</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Inclusive Stadium Redevelopments</p>

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Leisure Estate Review update and next steps
Date:	25 January 2013
Reporting Officers:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources
Contact officers:	Caroline Wilson, Programme Manager

1.0	Relevant background information
1.1	Under the Investment Programme Implementation Plan, agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June 2012, it was agreed that a project would be initiated to enable the re-development of the leisure estate and that research would be undertaken to develop options.
1.2	Deloitte was appointed to undertake a piece of work to provide an evidence base on Belfast's leisure estate needs, specifically the current status of the leisure estate and outline options drawing on best practice, in the context of the Review of Public Administration.

2.	Key issues
2.1	<p>Deloitte report</p> <p>The Deloitte report is nearing final draft form. It is recommended that the full report is presented to a special joint meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and Parks and Leisure Committee, to which all members of Council will be invited, in early February.</p> <p>The Deloitte report has six main sections which are outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Urgency of internal case for change – costs; aging assets; delivering outcomes; terms and conditions; not fit for modern purpose 2. Urgency of external case for change – strategic opportunities esp. stadia; health inequalities horizon; customer and partner expectations 3. Guiding principles 4. Options for going forward – status quo, etc. and assessment against principles

	<p>5. Models for delivery – NPDO (Non Profit Distributing Organisation e.g. social enterprise or trust), private sector, internal transformation programme, etc. and assessment against principles</p> <p>6. Conclusion – need for transformation plan and speedy, bold decisions.</p> <p>Agreement on the guiding principles will facilitate the next stages of the review process, in particular, the development of a financing strategy to meet Members’ ambitions for the transformation of the leisure estate.</p>
<p>2.2</p>	<p>Member feedback</p> <p>In informal discussions with Members, the following points have been raised in relation to the review of leisure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There is a need for urgent action on the leisure estate, particularly regarding the Windsor and Casement stadia developments as phase 1 of that process; – There is a need to reduce the cost to the rate-payer and to re-focus the service towards delivering health outcomes; – Importance of working in partnership, including with schools and universities; – There is a need for a sustained and positive engagement with the trade unions, to enable a fundamental review of working practices as well as provide job security; – The need for balanced investment across the city and there was no ‘one-size-fits-all’ provision model. <p>The Executive Summary strongly emphasises the Members’ and partners’ opinion that there is an urgent case for change.</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Drivers for change</p> <p>There are four key drivers for change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial: the subsidy for leisure services and average annual cost to the ratepayer is currently £8.01 million. The physical improvement of the leisure estate is dependent on the Council’s agreed medium term financial strategy, the success of service improvements and the future business model. Cash savings within the leisure budget will form a key element of the strategy to finance future physical investments. – Health outcomes: the worst nine wards in Northern Ireland in terms of health deprivation are in Belfast. There needs to be a sharpened focus on improving health outcomes – getting more people, more active, more often – and the transformation of the physical leisure estate will only partially achieve the Council’s ambitions in this regard. – Strategic opportunities: there are a number of imminent strategic opportunities for the Council to maximise its investment in the future provision of a fit-for-purpose leisure estate, including the stadia developments, Girdwood, health estate review and Social Investment Fund.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of Public Administration: from 2015, Belfast will incorporate large areas of Castlereagh and Lisburn district councils. Plans need to be made now to ensure adequate leisure and recreational facilities are available, particularly with the likelihood that the rate burden in these areas will be increased to be brought into line with the rest of the city.
2.4	<p>Guiding principles</p> <p>Deloitte recommend the following guiding principles to inform future decisions regarding leisure provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality: Council leisure facilities should be fit for purpose, attractive and welcoming. - Focus on health and well-being outcomes: Working with others to improve the health of the population, especially those most in need, and those with the most to gain, is an essential priority to improve individual and community quality of life and if we are to limit the cost to our society and our economy of avoidable ill-health. - Value for money: Future Council investment in its leisure estate should focus on provision of a value for money leisure service demonstrated through user numbers, health and well-being outcomes and financial metrics. The physical asset base will need to maximise efficiency and income generation opportunities across Council assets and, ultimately, the wider public estate. - Balanced investment and accessibility: There should be sufficient provision within each quarter of the city of wet, dry, health and fitness facilities that cater for a diversity of activity and meets the needs of different ages and abilities. The facilities should be well-connected, welcoming and safe, and promote connectivity, cohesion, 'shared-ness' and access for all. - Partnership: Partnering opportunities (for example, with adjacent Councils, private sector, education estate and universities etc) and strategic opportunities should be actively explored, pursued and integrated into the transformation plan. - Affordability: A capital financing strategy will be required to support the building of a new leisure estate. This strategy will need to be considered in the context of current capital financing requirements and the commitment, as part of the Investment Programme, to set the district rate at inflation or below for the next three years. Financing will need to include revenue savings generated from within the leisure budget. A key element of the transformation of leisure provision will be to ensure its sustainability, in terms of programming and ongoing running costs. <p>These sit within the context of the Investment Programme principles.</p>
2.5	<p>Physical Investment</p> <p>Members have stressed the need to maximise the opportunities for joint investments, to deliver greater collaboration between organisations and value for money for rate-payers. The emerging physical transformation plan includes the following strategic opportunities:</p>

Phase	Transformation of Leisure Estate
1.	Strategic asset opportunities under Investment Programme : – Windsor and Casement Stadia; Girdwood; Whiterock Community Corridor; Templemore Baths Potential partners: DCAL; IFA; GAA; DSD; Health Trust; SEUPB
2.	Strategic asset opportunities under reform of local government including: – Avoniel; Robinson Centre; Andersonstown; Lagmore/Poleglass and Brook Activity/Colin Potential partners: Castlereagh BC; BMC; SIB; Lisburn City Council
3.	Strategic asset opportunities towards a ' One Public Estate ¹ ' approach including: – Ballysillan; Ozone; Shankill; BCC community centres Potential partners: Community sector; QUB; DE
<p>External funders such as DCAL and SEUPB have strict funding timeframes which determine an uncompromising project delivery timeline. For example, a decision to commit to the stadia opportunities as phase 1 of the leisure estate review will have to be made by May 2013.</p> <p>A separate report on the stadia is on the agenda for this Committee. This contextualises the stadia as Phase 1 of the leisure transformation process and references the principles outlined above.</p>	
2.6	<p>Service Transformation</p> <p>1. Outcomes</p> <p>Members have outlined an ambition to substantially increase the focus on delivering better health outcomes. While it is acknowledged that there are some excellent examples of health-focussed participation programmes run in leisure centres including examples such as the Healthwise referral programmes; Active Communities schools and youth programme; and the recent Olympic legacy programme, there is further opportunity to increase this work and tailor these outcomes to local need.</p> <p>2. Finance</p> <p>The second key element of the service transformation programme will be the realisation of cash savings from the leisure budget which will be required to part-finance Members' capital investment ambitions. This will include increased income, reduced running costs and improved participation levels and partnership funding.</p> <p>In order to deliver these two elements, aligned and integral to the physical investment programme, it is recommended that there is a complementary plan, which will make provision for:</p>

¹ The 'One Public Estate' (OPE) approach is based on local public service providers collaborating on managing their land and buildings as a collective resource across an area, to improve outcomes for local people and maximise efficiencies.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Business model for delivery – Programming and participation – Partnership development – Ways of working e.g. terms and conditions – Marketing and membership sales – Online capacity – Performance management. <p>Further political discussion is needed to fully explore service transformation including the business model options presented.</p>
2.7	<p>Staff and trade union engagement</p> <p>Staff and trade unions have been and continue to be briefed on the review process. They are aware of the unsustainable levels of subsidy going into leisure services each year and the increasing public and political pressure to provide a value for money service which demonstrates significant delivery of health outcomes.</p> <p>Job security is a key driver for staff and intensive engagement with staff and the trade unions over the coming months will be a key strand of the development of the transformation plan.</p>
2.8	<p>Process to develop Transformation Plan</p> <p>It is proposed that over the coming months, on the basis of in-depth consultation with Members and partners, and seeking external advice and expertise as deemed appropriate, a transformation plan needs to be developed to realise the opportunities in the leisure estate review. This will examine two work-streams, over three phases (as at 2.5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Defining the physical investment programme including political agreement on financing strategy and phasing of developments; and – Defining service transformation programme including political agreement on business model and efficiencies. <p>Based on this engagement, a draft transformation plan will be presented for consideration by both the Parks and Leisure Committee and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee by May 2013. This implementation-focussed plan will inform Committee in order to make the necessary decisions to invest in the stadia, as part of Phase 1 of the transformation plan.</p>
2.9	<p>Next steps</p> <p>These two work-streams, over the next 3 months, will include significant engagement with Members and stakeholders, including party group briefings and workshops with input from relevant experts and other local authorities.</p>
2.10	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The potential scale of the change presented by the review of leisure, and the ambition of</p>

Members to deliver a re-vitalised, fit-for-purpose leisure provision, present both enormous opportunities and challenges to the Council. This is alongside major programmes of work in relation to the commitments in the Investment Programme as well as the reform of local government. The resource implications for successful implementation of the two work-streams over the three phases for review of leisure will be fully assessed as part of the development process for the transformation plan and regular reports brought to Committee for their consideration.

3.0 Decisions required

Committee is asked:

- To agree the principles for going forward (above at 2.3);
- To agree the three phases of the physical asset transformation plan (above at 2.5), with a complementary service transformation process;
- To agree to a special joint meeting with the Parks and Leisure Committee, to receive a presentation on the full Deloitte report; and
- To authorise officers to facilitate party group briefings on the leisure review, as requested.

4.0 Resource Implications

Human: This will be a major physical and service transformation process and the resource implications for implementation will be fully assessed as part of the development of the transformation plan.

Financial: The costs for any external support required to develop the transformation plan will be made within existing departmental revenue budgets.

Depending on political agreement, there is potentially capital costs of up to £60m over a period of 5 years which will have to form part of the Council's medium terms financial planning arrangements.

Assets: None at present.

5.0 Equality Implications

The Leisure Estate Review will be screened at periodic intervals in line with the Council's equality obligations.

Appendix 2: Inclusive stadium redevelopments
Timetable

DRAFT

Date	Activity
January 2013	Engagement: Initial consultation with members and internal departments on options for Windsor Park / Olympia and for Casement Park / Andersonstown
25 January	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee Report
February / March	Engagement: Public consultation period including public meeting(s) for Andersonstown site, details to be confirmed, and public meeting(s) for Olympia site, details to be confirmed
February	Development Committee Update on Olympia Community Centre
February	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee (Special) Presentation from GAA on Casement Park stadium, all members to be invited, details to be confirmed
14 February	Parks & Leisure Committee Update on progress
22 February	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee Update on progress
14 March	Parks & Leisure Committee Update on progress
22 March	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee Update on progress
11 April	Parks & Leisure Committee Update on progress
19 April	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee FUNDING DECISION
April	Engagement: Feedback to public
May	DCAL advised of any funding decision
24 May	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee Update on progress
June - September	Progression to tendering and contract stages
<i>September</i>	<i>DCAL construction at Windsor Park scheduled</i>
<i>January 2014</i>	<i>DCAL construction at Casement Park scheduled</i>

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Support for Sport Interim Review
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks & Leisure
Contact Officer:	Claire Moraghan, Sports Development Officer

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that a range of changes to the Support for Sport Grant Scheme were approved following Committee on 12 April 2012.
1.2	As part of the review process it was agreed that an early report on the effect of the changes would be brought before Committee following implementation of the new scheme.

2	Key Issues														
2.1	<p>Status of proposed changes Table 1</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Change</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>More clearly defined aims and objectives</td> <td>Complete Available to all applicants hard copy and online</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advance payment of 50% total funding</td> <td>Complete</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The development of an on-line application form</td> <td>On hold due to centralised grants review</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hospitality grant re-focused and reduced to £25,000</td> <td>Complete 25 events with guests from Europe, Asia and North America</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The development of an Individual Grant for high level performers</td> <td>Complete. 27 awards made November 2013</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The establishment of a reward scheme for accredited Clubmark sports clubs.</td> <td>Complete. 25 clubs rewarded</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Change	Status	More clearly defined aims and objectives	Complete Available to all applicants hard copy and online	Advance payment of 50% total funding	Complete	The development of an on-line application form	On hold due to centralised grants review	Hospitality grant re-focused and reduced to £25,000	Complete 25 events with guests from Europe, Asia and North America	The development of an Individual Grant for high level performers	Complete. 27 awards made November 2013	The establishment of a reward scheme for accredited Clubmark sports clubs.	Complete. 25 clubs rewarded
Change	Status														
More clearly defined aims and objectives	Complete Available to all applicants hard copy and online														
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The development of an Individual Grant for high level performers	Complete. 27 awards made November 2013														
The establishment of a reward scheme for accredited Clubmark sports clubs.	Complete. 25 clubs rewarded														

2.2 Opportunities for Participation

During the review priorities for funding were identified as;

- The education of coaches and volunteers
- Increased opportunities for women and girls, disabled and older people
- Promoting sport and physical activity as a social integration and health improvement tool
- The need to address any imbalances in applications across the City.

2.3 It is estimated that there are over 16,000 club members from the 133 applications made to the small grant scheme. From this 11,671 are male and 5010 are female. Table 2 below shows the breakdown of awards made in 2012/13.

Table 2 Breakdown of awards per category and priority group

Category	No. of Awards	Total Amount
Total No. Applications	133 (of 153)	£124,506
New Clubs/sections	30	£29,094
Governing Body Coaching Qualifications	123 (individuals)	£24,112
Club Development (Child protection, 1 st Aid)	108	£5,352
Try-it/Development events	63	£52,376
Women/Girls Groups	13	£11,685
Older People	8	£4,780
Disability Groups	5	£4,675
Other section 75	6	£5,918
Clubmark	25	£16,250
No. of Sports supported	28	124,305
Individual grants	27 (7 sports)	£15,000
Hospitality	25	£24,845.00

2.4 At party group meetings members stressed the need to ensure that imbalances in funding across the city were addressed. The trend in funding by area over the last three years is identified in Appendix 1. The data shows that in the current financial year (2012/13) there is a similar spread in small development awards in the South, East and West of the city with a slightly higher proportion going to North Belfast. The spread in awards across the city is illustrated in Appendix 2.

2.5 The Sport Development Officers focus has been on the promotion of the small grants and the development of the clubs in these areas. However in the large grants (£5,000) both South and East gain a lower portion of funds. These larger grants are more competitive and the spread reflects the number of applications received from each area. It is anticipated that with time clubs in South and East Belfast will be in a stronger position to be successful in the process.

<p>2.6</p>	<p>Club feedback on the scheme changes indicate that it has been well received and could be a reason for the marked increase in applications in the first five months of the 2012/13 financial year. While we can see an increase in uptake by underrepresented groups it is their anecdotal feedback that gives a better picture of Support for Sport benefits.</p> <p>“Support for Sport has allowed us to deliver an excellent programme and increase participation among females particularly” “we have seen a 10% increase in membership” “we are a special Olympic club and without Belfast City Council’s help we could not have established this club which is now at maximum capacity.....with your help we hope to grow as a club and cater for more” “through funding we provide more than a soccer experience, we promote tolerance and inclusivity and now have 20+ players from African nations” “To us Support for Sport is new possibilities”</p>
<p>2.7</p>	<p>Support for Sport moving forward Work continues with targeted workshops planned for the month of March across the city in-line with the scheme reopening in late February for the 2013/14 financial year. Investigations into the development of an online form and improved data capture are also being actioned.</p>

<p>3</p>	<p>Resource Implications</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p><u>Financial</u> Members should note that the budget has not increased for small development grants and £16,250 was awarded to sports clubs achieving varying levels of Clubmark. The budget in this current financial year was fully allocated within the first five months. This could be explained in part by the increased awareness of the scheme and also that 50% of funding is now paid up-front and therefore is easier for clubs to manage their finances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Development Grants £120k • Large Development Grants £60k • Hospitality Development Grants - £25k • Individuals Development Grants - £15k
<p>3.2</p>	<p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>There are no human resource implications other than officer time to process the applications.</p>
<p>3.3</p>	<p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>Not Applicable.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	All applications have been assessed in line with the current Support for Sport scheme.
4.2	Following the review of Support for Sport, the revised scheme has undergone equality screening in accordance with Council requirements. This process has 'screened out' the revised scheme, identifying only minor, positive equality impacts, and determining that there is no requirement to proceed to Equality Impact Assessment.

5	Recommendations
	Members are asked to note the content of this report.

6	Decision Tracking
	None

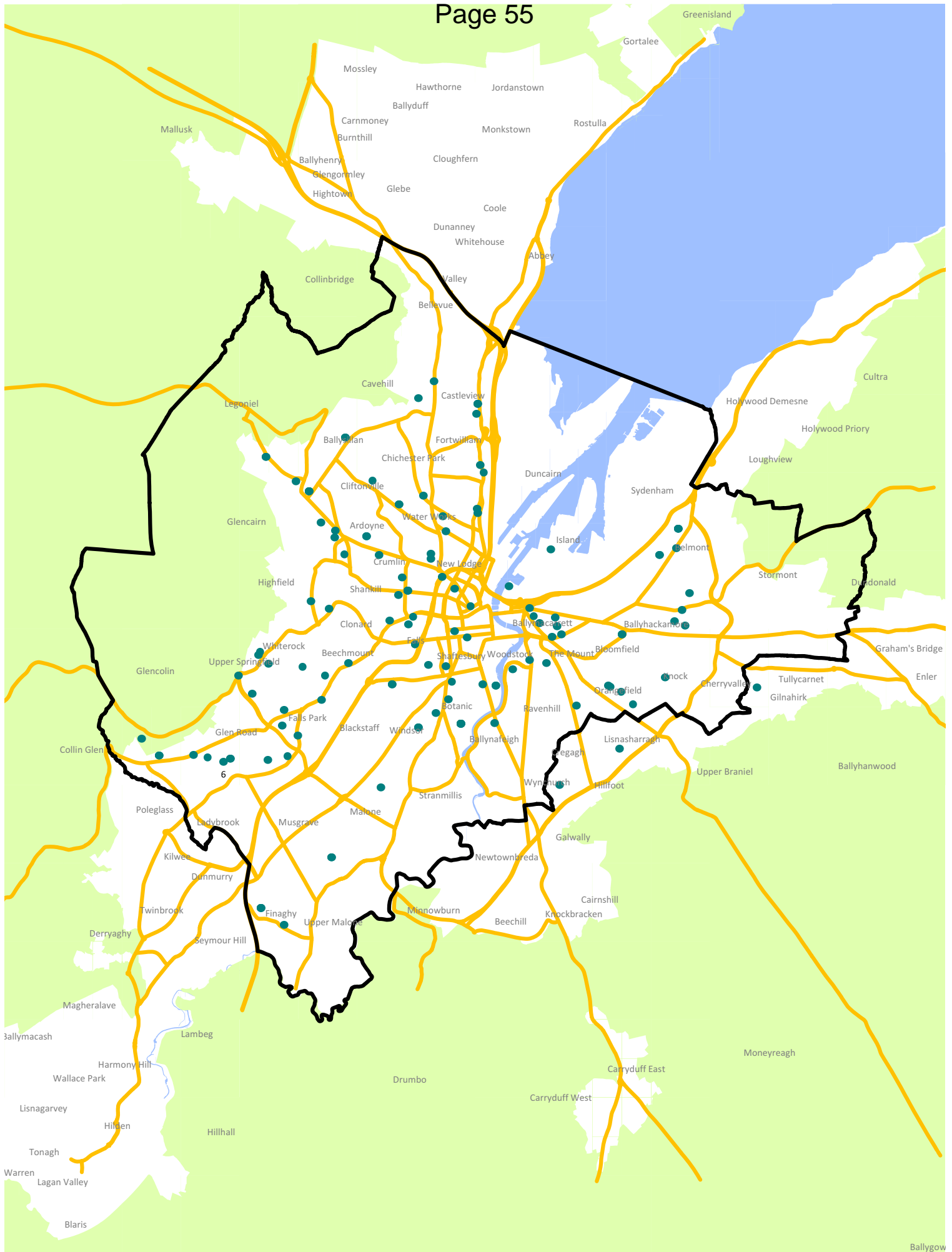
7	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: The trend in funding by area over the last three years 2010/11 to 2012/13. Appendix 2: The spread of small development awards made across Belfast in 2012/13.

Appendix 1 - Support for Sport Area Breakdown 2010-2013

Small Grants		2010/11			2011/12			2012/13			
		No. small applications	Amount awarded	Large Grants	No. small applications	Amount awarded	Large Grants	No. small applications	Amount awarded	Large Grants	Clubmark
Community	North	8	£8,413	n/a	6	£6,140	n/a	3	£3,223	n/a	n/a
	South	4	£2,495	n/a	2	£1,706	n/a	5	£3,861	n/a	n/a
	East	5	£6,307	n/a	6	£3,566	n/a	4	£3,105	n/a	n/a
	West	7	£5,958	n/a	10	£7,524	n/a	4	£3,175	n/a	n/a
	Citywide	3	£2,475	n/a	1	£750	n/a	1	£1,000	n/a	n/a
Sport clubs	North	38	£38,298	£5,000	43	£36,083	£10,000	34	£31,152	£25,000	£4,250
	South	16	£14,273		21	£12,778	£15,000	24	£25,810	£5,000	£3,500
	East	24	£27,486	£10,000	26	£26,083	£15,000	30	£26,792	£10,000	£3,750
	West	42	£37,429	£50,000	31	£32,200	£15,000	28	£26,388	£25,000	£3,750
	Citywide	2	£5,638	£5,000	3	£2,965		0	£0		£1,000
	Totals	149	£148,772	£70,000	149	£129,795	£60,000	133	£124,506	£65,000	£16,250

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Appendix 2: Spread of small development awards made across Belfast in 2012/13

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	DCAL Inland Waterways: Water Recreation Grant Programme: 2013/14
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Emer Boyle, Policy and Business Development Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to inform Members that the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's (DCAL) Inland Waterways Water Recreation Grant Programme 2013/14 is currently open for applications. Appendix 1 refers.
1.2	The objective of the grant programme is to provide funding to assist in creating and / or improving access to inland waterways on publicly owned land, which is free for the public to access and use. This is an opportunity for the Parks and Leisure Department to submit applications, to access external funding which will assist in enhancing inland waterway sites within the Department's responsibility.
1.3	Criteria which will be of particular merit in the application process are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving access to inland waterways to encourage increased use of facilities; • developing and enhancing facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities or have mobility problems; and • targeting social need by addressing issues surrounding social exclusion or contributing to improved social inclusion.
1.4	The total grant budget available from DCAL for 2013/14 is £90,000 across Northern Ireland and individual projects can attract funding up to a maximum of £20,000. DCAL has advised that, given the level of interest in the programme, funding will only be considered for one project per Council. Projects must be delivered and completed during the period 1 April 2013 and

	<p>31 March 2014. Project proposals must demonstrate match funding, both financial and in-kind, from Council and associated partners.</p> <p>1.5 The application process required interested parties to submit an initial expression of interest to DCAL by 31 January 2013. The Parks and Leisure Department forwarded an expression of interest to DCAL on 25 January which identified its intention to explore the following Council sites as options for project proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lagan Lands East • Lagan Meadows • Sir Lady and Dixon Park • Half Moon Lake <p>1.6 The completed application for a project proposal is due to be submitted to DCAL no later than 15 February 2013.</p> <p>1.7 Council, through its Corporate Plan, is committed to improving access to services and facilities, ensuring as many people as possible within the city can connect to all opportunities available and which improve their quality of life. The Parks and Leisure Departmental Plan supports Council's objectives by committing to work with partners to integrate services, creating links across the city whilst making facilities accessible and valued by citizens which contribute to improving social and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>The Council's Investment Programme demonstrates a commitment to maintaining and enhancing vital community facilities and assets whilst ensuring everyone has access to high quality green spaces and good leisure opportunities. The DCAL Inland Waterways funding opportunity will assist Parks and Leisure Department to directly contribute to these aims and objectives, through delivery of its programme themes people and communities and the environment.</p>
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2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The Parks and Cemeteries Services planning process includes key actions to improve customer experience in parks and open spaces. The DCAL Inland Waterways Funding Programme is an opportunity to attract external funding, which will supplement in-house financial resources to support the key actions identified in the planning process.</p>
2.2	<p>Following further consideration of the sites detailed in paragraph 1.5 it was identified that Half Moon Lake was likely to be the most suitable location to meet the criteria specified in DCAL's funding programme. Additionally, consultation with DCAL has suggested that Half Moon Lake is a site that has attracted its attention and one which DCAL is keen to see developed and improved.</p>
2.3	<p>The proposed project at Half Moon Lake would predominately involve creating permanent, structured, safe viewing platforms, incorporating disability and</p>

	<p>mobility access. Building these platforms and completing mobility improvements will create enhanced access and improve opportunities for greater use of the lake and surrounding area for everyone.</p>
2.4	<p>Project proposals within DCAL's funding programme will connect with planned work identified in the Parks and Leisure Departmental Plan and Council's Investment Programme, thus maximising all available resources and avoiding potential duplication.</p>
2.5	<p>To comply with the funding criteria, the Parks and Leisure Department must demonstrate sufficient in-house resources, matched with partnership funding to complete the project within the designated timescale. It would be Parks and Leisure Department's intention to evidence its commitment through in-house financial and in-kind resourcing. This will be supplemented in the longer term with funding from Council's Investment Programme. Given the direct link with Public Health Agencies strategies around health and wellbeing and active lifestyles, external partner funding is currently being explored with the Public Health Agency. Additional in-kind contributions from relevant voluntary and community organisations including Friends of Half Moon Lake is ongoing.</p>
2.6	<p>As the project proposal is presently a work in progress, a final budget has not yet been completed. The budget will be included in the funding application submitted to DCAL and presented to Parks and Leisure Committee in a further report to be presented to Committee in March 2013.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u> As outlined above, it is a requirement of the funding criteria to demonstrate partnership funding and options are currently being explored with Public Health Agency. The project proposal is still a work in progress therefore a final budget has not been prepared. A financial contribution will however be required by Council and this will be provided from the Parks 2013/2014 budget, in line with current planning and estimates processes.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Human Resources</u> Officer time will be required for coordinating and submitting funding applications, liaison with DCAL officers and planning, managing and delivering project activities.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None at this stage.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	<p>There are no known associated equality considerations at this stage however, should the application process progress, Equality and Good Relations factors will be taken into account in the development of the project.</p>

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of this report; • Agree that the funding application as outlined in paragraph 1 is submitted to DCAL by 15 February 2013; • Agree that a further report is submitted to the Parks and Leisure Committee in March 2013, which will include a detailed budget illustrating partnership funding attracted to the projects, together with the financial investment required by Council.

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	<p>A report providing a detailed budget together with the outcome of the application submitted to DCAL under the programme will be presented to Committee in March 2013 by the Policy and Business Development Manager.</p>

7	Key to Abbreviations
7.1	<p>DCAL: Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure</p>

8	Documents Attached
8.1	<p>Appendix 1: DCAL Letter notifying Council of Inland Waterways funding opportunity.</p>

17th December 2012

Chief Executive's Office		
Date	20/12/12	
Seen by	CX	
GR	SPP	Bus Supp.
Dev	F&R	H&ES
P&L	P&P	Other
Ref	MCN 44/12	

Mr Peter McNaney
Chief Executive
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Hall,
BELFAST
BT1 5GS

*TO Aileen
Pemberton for
Luis McNaney*



Department of
**Culture, Arts
and Leisure**

www.dcalni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

**Cultúr, Ealaíon
agus Fóillíochta**

MANNYSTRIE O

**Fowkgates, Airs
an Aisedom**

Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7EG
Tel: +44 (0) 28 9025 8825
Text phone: (0) 28 9052 7668
email: dcalni@dcalni.gov.uk

Dear Mr McNaney

INLAND WATERWAYS: WATER RECREATION GRANT PROGRAMME 2013/14

I am writing to advise you that the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's water recreation grant programme for 2013/14 is available with effect from 1 April 2013. At present it is anticipated that this will be the last year that the scheme is available.

The Grant Programme's primary purpose is to assist provision of water related access, for example riverside paths, canoe steps or other similar facilities on publicly owned land which is free for the public to access and use.

Successful applications will be expected to have a strong strategic partnership emphasis (for example improving community access and creating community links).

Targeting Social Need through projects which either address some of the problems of social exclusion or contribute to better social inclusion will be of particular merit when assessing applications. There is an emphasis on providing facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Applicants must demonstrate that they will have sufficient resources of their own plus partnership funding to be able to deliver the project before the end of the financial year in which the grant is available.

Application forms are available by email from Barry Young
barry.young@dcalni.gov.uk

If you have any questions regarding the application process or your proposed project please contact Barry at 02890 515123 to discuss it further.

Initial expressions of interest should be made by telephone to Kathleen Conlon at 02890515104 before 31 January 2013. Completed applications should be submitted by no later than 5pm on Friday 15 February 2013. Applicants will be advised whether or not their application has been successful by 31 March 2013. Applications made later in the year may still be considered but only if funds remain in the budget and will still be subject to assessment based on the criteria referred to above.

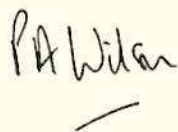


INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

The grant aid budget for 2013/14 is £90k. Projects can attract funding up to a maximum of £20k per project. All applications will be assessed on the basis of merit and availability of funding and may include site visits before a decision is made.

There is a small amount of funding which remains unallocated during the current financial year (12/13). New applications for small projects will still be considered provided these can be completed and the funds drawn down before the 31st March 2013. Arrangements for assessment are as referred to above.

Yours sincerely



PAT WILSON
INLAND WATERWAYS BRANCH



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	High Hedges Act Implementation Review
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>In March 2012 committee was presented with a report on the implementation of the High Hedges Act setting out the key stages of the process (see appendix 1). Committee also authorised the Director of Parks and Leisure to enforce the provisions of the High hedges Act (NI) 2011 under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>Committee also authorised the Director of Parks and Leisure to carry out a series of functions associated with performing the Council's statutory role under the High Hedges legislation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcing all Regulations or Acts made and remedial notices under the High Hedges Act (NI) 2011 • Issuing and serving remedial notices • Exercising all powers in relation to the High Hedges Act (NI) 2011 • In conjunction with Legal Services, instituting legal proceedings and making legal applications on behalf of Belfast City Council • Authorising individual officers for the purpose of exercising any statutory power under the High Hedges Act (NI) 2011. <p>Committee approved the process and requested that the process be reviewed within 12 months. Members are reminded that in September 2011 the Parks and Leisure Committee approved submission of the final consultation response to DoENI setting out the Council's preferred fee of £350.00 which covers the cost of investigating and processing a complaint.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p><u>High Hedges Act – the review of the process</u></p> <p>From April 2012 to date the service has dealt with 119 complaints in relation to high hedges the majority of these by telephone. All but one of these complaints was dealt with informally. The one complaint that did proceed through the formal route was completed without any appeal with the service receiving the £350 required fee. The officers however have dealt with over 1300 calls requesting advice and guidance on the legislation. Nine months into the new legislation there is still an uncertainty about the volume and patterns around the enquiries going forward.</p> <p>Originally the DoENI scoping consultation had estimated that there could be a backlog of 800 high hedge problem cases which will be required to be determined by district councils in the first 2 to 3 years that the legislation is in operation.</p> <p>The experience to date therefore is that the service is working hard with residents to resolve issues regarding high hedges through the informal process. The service will continue to improve the communication of this legislation and has information packs available and detailed information on the website which it will continue to maintain and promote.</p> <p>Committee is therefore to note that the unit wishes to continue with the existing process as it has been tested and proven successful. Committee is asked to recognise that the service being provided is proving to be more in relation to advice and guidance through the stage one of the process and that only one complaint has gone through all the stages of the process. The financial implications in relation to this are set out below.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
	<p>In the report to committee in March 2012 the view was that the High Hedge fee of £350 would cover the costs associated with administering this new legislation.</p> <p>Currently there are two fixed term officers providing advice and support in this area at a cost of £54k. The estimates for 13/14 include both officers' costs however there is associated income from other projects to offset their costs. The assessment is that sustaining this level of income over time is unlikely.</p> <p>It is recommended that the current provision of service with the two officers as set out above continue as is and review after a further period of a year. It is acknowledged that there are peaks and troughs in the requirement for advice and guidance provided by the unit. However both</p>

	officers are also involved in supporting other funded work that is provided by the unit and officers are satisfied that both posts can be covered by the income from these projects for the next year subject to review and the impact of RPA on the unit.
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4.	Equality Implications
	<p>DoENI have undertaken an equality impact screening of the High Hedges Bill and the High Hedges fee regulations concluding that “there is no adverse impact for any of the nine categories listed under Section 75”.</p> <p>The High Hedges legislation was presented to the Council’s equality consultative forum and it was suggested that the High Hedge process was reviewed after a 12 month period. From the analysis of the enquiries/complaints that we have received we do not feel that there is any adverse impact on any of the nine categories under Section 75. Also as the majority of the cases were resolved without any fee being levied we do not feel our process is prohibitive due to a fee being applied where relevant. However we will review this again in 12 months.</p>

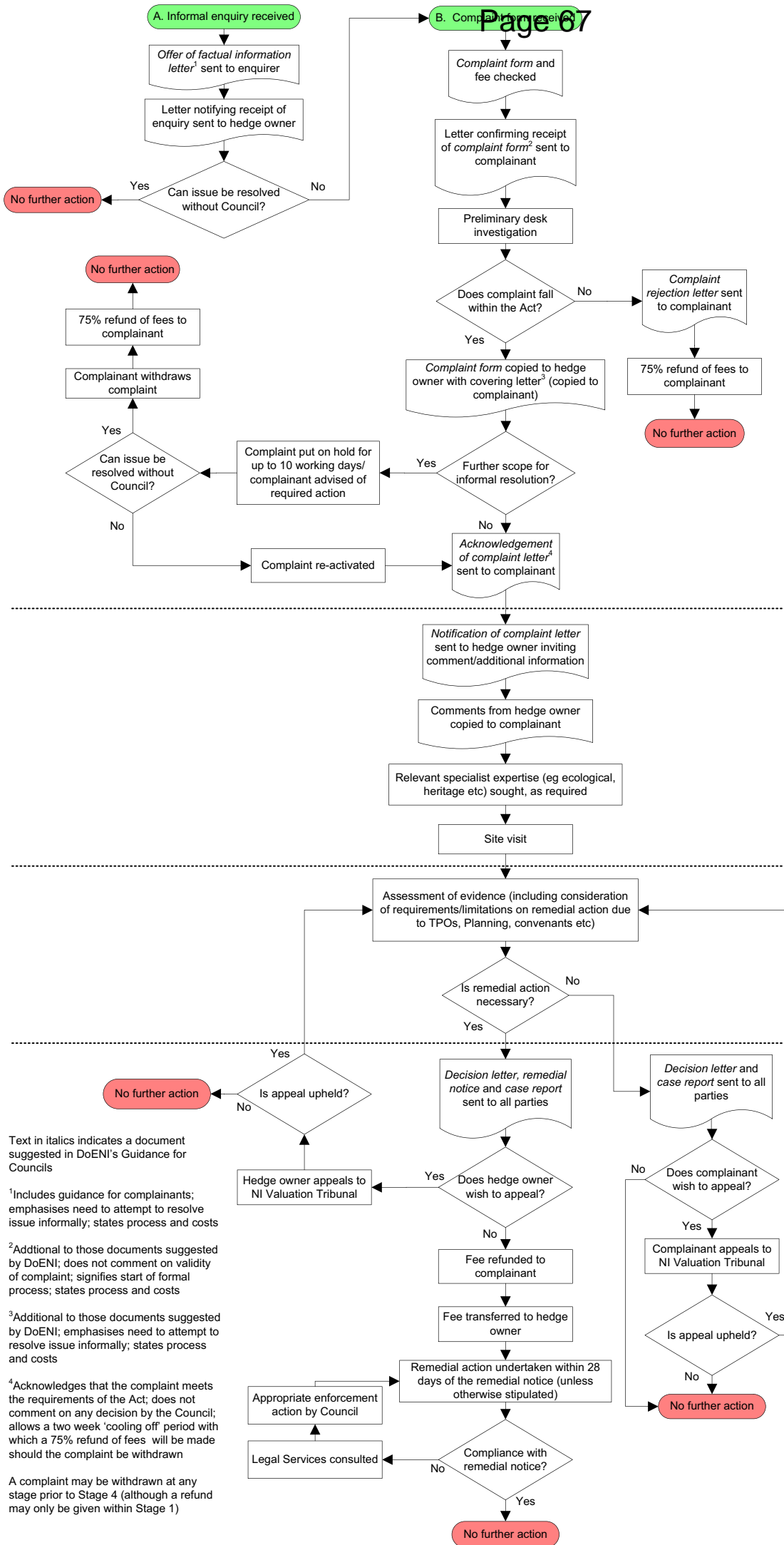
5.	Recommendations
	<p>Members are asked to note the contents of this report and;</p> <p>Note the success of the informal process to date Note that the formal process has been tested successfully Agree to maintain the resources currently in place for the service with a further review in a year’s time.</p>

6.	Decision Tracking
	The unit manager and the Business Manager will ensure the review takes place by March 2014.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	DoENI – Department of the Environment Northern Ireland RPA – Review of Public Administration

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 High Hedges Process Map

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Stage 1 – Establishing a Complaint
 (A 75% refund of fees may be made should a complaint be withdrawn within this stage)

Stage 2 – Investigation

Stage 3 – Determining Action

Stage 4 – Implementation

Text in italics indicates a document suggested in DoENI's Guidance for Councils

¹Includes guidance for complainants; emphasises need to attempt to resolve issue informally; states process and costs

²Additional to those documents suggested by DoENI; does not comment on validity of complaint; signifies start of formal process; states process and costs

³Additional to those documents suggested by DoENI; emphasises need to attempt to resolve issue informally; states process and costs

⁴Acknowledges that the complaint meets the requirements of the Act; does not comment on any decision by the Council; allows a two week 'cooling off' period with which a 75% refund of fees will be made should the complaint be withdrawn

A complaint may be withdrawn at any stage prior to Stage 4 (although a refund may only be given within Stage 1)



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Proposal for development of a play park at Monagh Road, Belfast
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Officers have received a request from the Upper Springfield Development Trust relating to a proposal to develop a piece of land to the rear of shops and flats adjacent to Monagh Road / Monagh Drive in West Belfast.</p> <p>The land is currently owned by the Belfast Education and Library Board. An unused Youth Club is currently on the site however the Board has declared the land surplus and has engaged with the local community and the Department for Social Development to consider development options for the site. The site is essentially derelict, rubbish is routinely dumped, fires are set and it is a gathering point for local youths engaging in general nuisance activity in the area. The community is anxious to regenerate the site and bring it into positive use and believe that a physical development will aid this.</p> <p>The Upper Springfield and Whiterock Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board commissioned a Feasibility Study, supported by DSD, to look at potential development options for the Monagh Road Site at Turf Lodge. A copy of the study is available upon request. The study has identified a series of options. The preferred option was a multipurpose community facility at an estimated cost of £700,000, excluding Vat and professional fees and charges. However, a number of issues have been raised around the sustainability of such a building and the feasibility study is currently being reviewed. One of the options considered related to the provision of a play park. The Council has been asked, should a Play Park emerge as the best option for the site, following a review of the feasibility study:-</p>

	<p>Would BCC take ownership of the land? Would BCC maintain it?</p>
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2	<p>Key Issues</p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider the request within the following context:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Community is anxious for the derelict land to be brought into positive use. A feasibility study has been completed, albeit being reviewed at present; 2. The community is aware of the social challenges within the area and believe that the physical improvement of this site will greatly support their efforts on the ground; 3. There is a commitment from those involved at a community level to make this project work; 4. However, the proposal at this time is speculative, there is no design detail; there have been no site surveys and there is no funding commitment; although the DSD has been supportive of the feasibility study; 5. Traditionally the Council has accepted the transfer of land and the associated management, maintenance and public liability of play parks where the capital cost has been secured from sources other than the Council. However, within the current financial constraints it is becoming increasingly difficult to absorb the revenue cost of additional facilities, estimated to be £13,500 per annum, excluding any cost associated with vandalism or anti social behaviour on the site; in addition, this increases the future potential capital liability of the Council, i.e. the need to replace the facility; agreeing to the request would increase the liability placed upon the Council; 6. The position regarding the disposal of the land by the Board is not yet clear, it is likely that there would be a cost associated with the acquisition of the cost; this cost may be borne by DSD but it is not clear nor are the terms and conditions associated with the disposal; 7. The Committee is asked to note that there are a number of Council maintained play parks in the general area at Falls Park; Moyard; Springhill; and Pat O'Hare Park (McCrorry Park); in addition consideration is currently being given to a further play area. Committee should note that no assessment of this proposal has been carried out under the Council's Strategy for playgrounds. However this will now be carried out in advance of the Committee's meeting. 8. The general area suffers from anti social behaviour; 9. The site itself is sufficient in terms of size for a play park, however it is situated in a secluded area at the rear of properties, it is not considered to be an ideal location for a play park; 10. In addition, access to the site is limited, there are pedestrian paths however vehicular access is restricted and construction on the site would be hampered by these factors.
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3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Whilst there would be no capital spend implications it is anticipated that the routine maintenance of this would be a further £13,500 per annum plus the associated public liability and any costs resulting from anti social behaviour.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>The project would be added to the work load to existing in the area in terms of opening and closing of the facility; daily inspection and any associated clean up.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality implications

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is asked to note the report and to direct Officers as to whether they wish to agree in principle to accept the management, maintenance and public liability responsibilities for the proposal in the event that it should go ahead.

6	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be brought to Committee at a later date if required.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	DSD – Department of Social Development

8	Documents Attached
	None

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Roselawn Crematorium – Proposed listing
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee that Officers have received advance notice of the proposed listing of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Three such notices have been received in respect of the Crematorium at Roslawn, specifically relating to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Crematorium Building; 2. The Gate Lodge and Gate Screen; and 3. The Toilet Block, Porters Lounge and Concrete Gazebo <p>This situation has arisen from a survey undertaken by Northern Ireland Environment Agency, to allow it to update and improve the list of buildings of special architectural / historic interest. One of the areas currently being worked on is Castlereagh.</p> <p>Belfast City Council has been informed the intention to list in its capacity of Owner of facility and not as a statutory consultee. NIEA has sought the views of both Castlereagh Borough Council and the Historic Buildings Council. It is our understanding that Castlereagh has not yet responded, while the Historic Buildings Council has responded supporting the proposal to list the buildings.</p> <p>As the owner the Council is entitled to make a written submission however NIEA has informed us that they can only take into account information relating to the architectural or historic interest of a structure and not for example to its functionality or current use.</p>

Members may be aware that should the buildings be listed it will place certain responsibilities on the Council as the owner, for example, it must be maintained in a certain way and any proposed development or demolition requires the approval of NIEA. Members should note that there is grant aid in place.

A meeting with NIEA was held on 7th February. At that meeting Officers expressed concerns about the proposed listing from an operational perspective: The main points raised included:

- The crematorium and cemetery are likely to remain operational for another 30 – 40 years and beyond;
- The crematorium is heavily used and our desire to avoid work nuisance at a sensitive time for bereaved families results in timing issues around routine and planned maintenance, therefore any additional requirements would exacerbate the process;
- The Council may consider a second chapel on the site at a future date;
- The Council was looking at internal alterations to improve accommodation for staff and the public;
- The Council is considering the removal of the canopy at the side of the main crematorium building to facilitate access by Emergency Services;
- The Council is currently implementing changes such as the installation of new cremators and the associated mercury abatement equipment which will impact on the external façade of the building and will be erecting new signage on the external wall and the Porters Annex, which is the cemeteries office on the site;

In response, NIEA indicated that:

They appreciated the operational nature of the buildings, but pointed out that they had a duty to list buildings where they felt it was appropriate;

On the issue of maintenance it was pointed out that the listing would relate to building as it stands in its current state; there would be no requirement to for example replace PVC windows with wooden frames in the future. This has to some extent lessened the perceived impact, but nevertheless, it may still result in time delays and potentially higher costs.

On the issue of any future development either to the building, its contents or indeed its environs it was stated that this would require listing building consent;

these meetings, should the listing be formally approved. In the event of the Council having plans to alter any of the buildings or construct adjacent to the buildings it will require listed building consent.

2	Key Issues
	<p>The Committee is asked to note that in conclusion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The indications are that the buildings will be listed; 2. In relation to maintenance, there are regular meetings between NIEA and Council Officers and the crematorium buildings will now be included in these discussions to facilitate future works; 3. [plans for alterations to the buildings or their contents or to the environs within which they are located will require listed building consent; 4. The Council can if it wishes make a written submission to the NIEA on the matter, NIEA has indicated that whilst the consultation period has lapsed it will defer a final decision until after the Committee meeting on 14th February to take on board any comments it may have.

3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Should the buildings be listed it could potentially increase the cost of future works, however, it is not possible to estimate the cost.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>There are no additional human resource implications.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u></p> <p>The listing will preserve the special architectural and historic features of the buildings.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	There are no equality implications

5	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to consider the report and offer up any additional comments for inclusion in a response to the NIEA on the matter.

6	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be brought to Committee in March 2013.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	NIEA – Northern Ireland Environment Agency

8	Documents Attached
	None



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Installation of Tidal Flood measures at Victoria Park
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Members will be aware of the ongoing problem of flooding in parts of the city. In response to this a number of projects have been identified which are aimed at minimizing the impact of the flooding. A series of recommendations were made in the flood incident report which was approved by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting in June 2012. One of the recommendations related to the installation of a tidal flood barrier at Victoria Park.</p> <p>The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARDNI) was in contact with our Emergency Services staff in January 2013 and informed us of their intention to install the tidal flood barrier at Victoria Park as quickly as possible and proposed a date in early February. Following discussions with operational staff it was agreed that the work would be completed on the 5 and 6 February. The intention was to install the barrier at the tunnel access to Victoria Park and that access through the tunnel will not be permitted. Temporary notices informing park users of the closure have been put up and the Council's web site updated.</p> <p>A pedestrian gate will remain open during the works.</p>

2	Key Issues
	<p>The Committee is asked to note the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This work was undertaken as part of ongoing flood alleviation measures to minimise the potential impact of flooding;

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. DARDNI / Rivers Agency carried out the work and has a right of access in such instances; 3. The work was undertaken over a two day period and has been completed; 4. Access to the park was restricted during the works; however a pedestrian gate remained opened to minimise the inconvenience to park users; 5. Notices had been put up in the area in advance of the works to inform users and residents about the works and a diversion sign was in place during the work period.

3	<p>Resource Implications</p> <p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There are no financial implications for the Council.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>It will be necessary for Council staff to be trained in the use of the barrier should flooding occur. Discussions are ongoing to clarify roles and responsibilities in the event of flooding.</p>
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4	<p>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</p> <p>There are no equality implications</p>
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5	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>The Committee is asked to note the report.</p>
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6	<p>Decision Tracking</p> <p>No further action is required.</p>
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7	<p>Key to Abbreviations</p> <p>Department of Agriculture and Rural Development - DARDNI</p>
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8	<p>Documents Attached</p> <p>Appendix A – Draft specification of works and photographs showing location of the barrier.</p>
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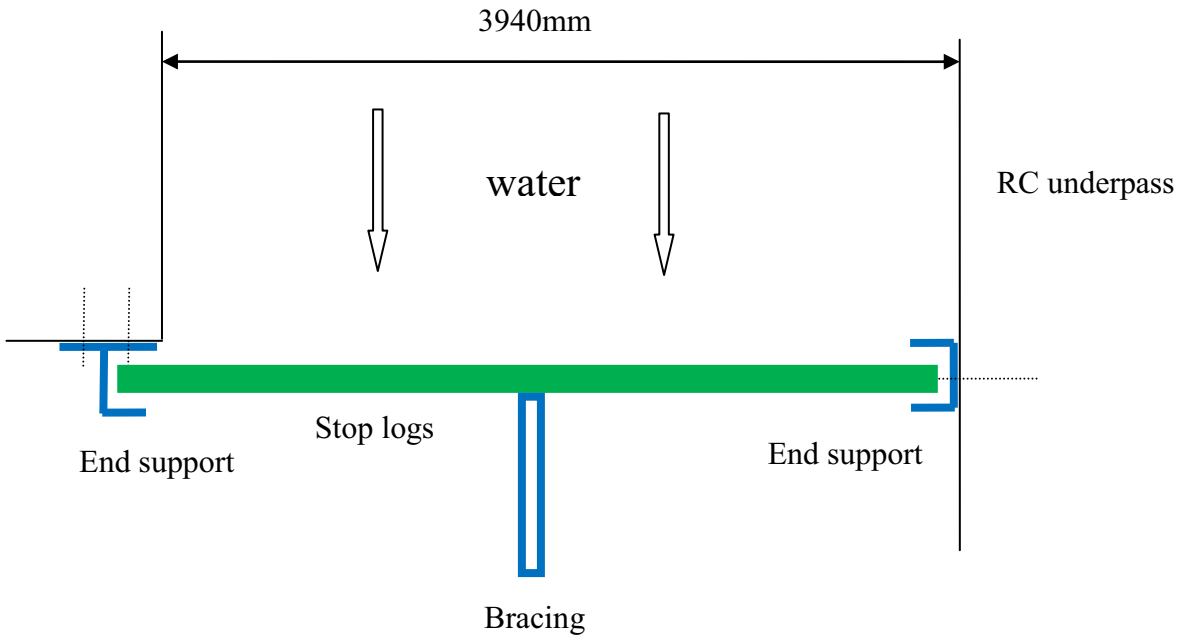
Tender for Demountable Flood Barrier System at Victoria Park Underpass, Belfast.

Details / Specification of Proprietary Demountable Flood Barrier System

1. Aluminium stop-logs for ease of man-handling (2 men max).
2. One end support to be recess / reveal mounted (with seals).
3. One end support to be surface mounted (with seals).
4. End support security covers.
5. Demountable back brace system with ground fixing arrangement.
6. Lockable compression clamps
7. All necessary fixings and bolts etc.
8. Full installation and maintenance instructions / guidelines.
9. Refer also to attached photos and sketch diagram. Note direction of water loading.
10. Existing underpass walls are reinforced concrete.
11. Width of underpass opening = 3940mm.
12. Due to existing concrete splays and other constraints, barrier cannot be installed "inside" underpass.
13. Height of barrier = 2300mm minimum.
14. All components delivered to Lisburn by end of November 2012.
15. Barrier system will be installed by others.

Please provide tender costs as follows:-

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Design, manufacture and supply of demountable flood barrier system | £ _____ |
| 2. Delivery of all components to Rivers Agency, Lisburn, BT27 5QB | £ _____ |
| 3. After appointment, one site visit (with Rivers Agency member of staff) to check design requirements and measurements. | £ _____ |
| Total | £ _____ |



Sketch Layout of Barrier System – not to scale, diagrammatic only.



Photograph of end of underpass with end supports indicated



Further photos of underpass sides

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Proposal to develop land 155-157 Newtownards Road / 2 Tower Street.
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The purpose of this report is to inform members of a proposal to develop a small corner site at 155-157 Newtownards Road and 2 Tower Street. The proposal has emerged from the East Belfast Partnership Board and is supported by the Department for Social Development who is also the land owner. A copy of the site map is attached as Appendix A and an outline of the proposal is attached as Appendix B.</p> <p>The project is the latest in a series of similar environmental projects in the area aimed at improving the general appear of the neighbourhood.</p> <p>The Department has asked the Council to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accepting the maintenance; management and public liability associated with the project once it is completed; 2. Accepting the transfer of the land.

2	Key Issues
	<p>The Committee is asked to note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council is supportive of environmental projects of this nature and in the past has accepted the management, maintenance and

	<p>public liability of similar projects, however, owing to financial constraints within the Council it is becoming increasingly difficult to absorb the additional workload associated with these sites;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The Council cannot undertake the management and maintenance of a site which it does not own unless accompanied by a service level or contract agreement with another public organisation; 3. The Council cannot accept the public liability of a site it does not own; 4. Should the Committee agree to accept the liability associated with this site it is likely that the land would need to transfer; 5. The Department has indicated that the maintenance could be absorbed within its own regime for a short time however it does not wish to take on the public liability element; the site will not be enclosed and may be subject to damage. 6. The Committee has four options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1 would be to refuse the request to accept the transfer of land and associated maintenance and public liability; Option 2 would be to refuse the request accept the transfer of land but agree to include the maintenance on the basis of a service level agreement; Option 3 would be to agree to the request to accept the transfer of land and the associated maintenance and public liability; Option 4 would be to agree to the request to accept the transfer of land and the associated maintenance and public liability but seek a maintenance contribution from the Department for an initial five year period.
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3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There is no capital expenditure implications associated with the works however there will be a ongoing maintenance liability and associated public liability responsibility.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>This would add to the workload of the existing staffing establishment.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u></p> <p>This project would improve the general appearance of the area and would help support the wider regeneration of the area.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality implications

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is asked to note the report, consider the options outlined above and direct officers as to its preferred option.

6	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be brought to Committee in April 2013.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8	Documents Attached
	Appendix A – Site Map Appendix B – Outline Proposal

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Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland

ACE MAP

155-159 NEWTOWNARDS ROAD
BELFAST, BT4 1AB

Plot Scale 1: 1250

Information from OSNI basic scale surveys.

130-14SW2
IG 335530/374376
Printed: 17-OCT-03

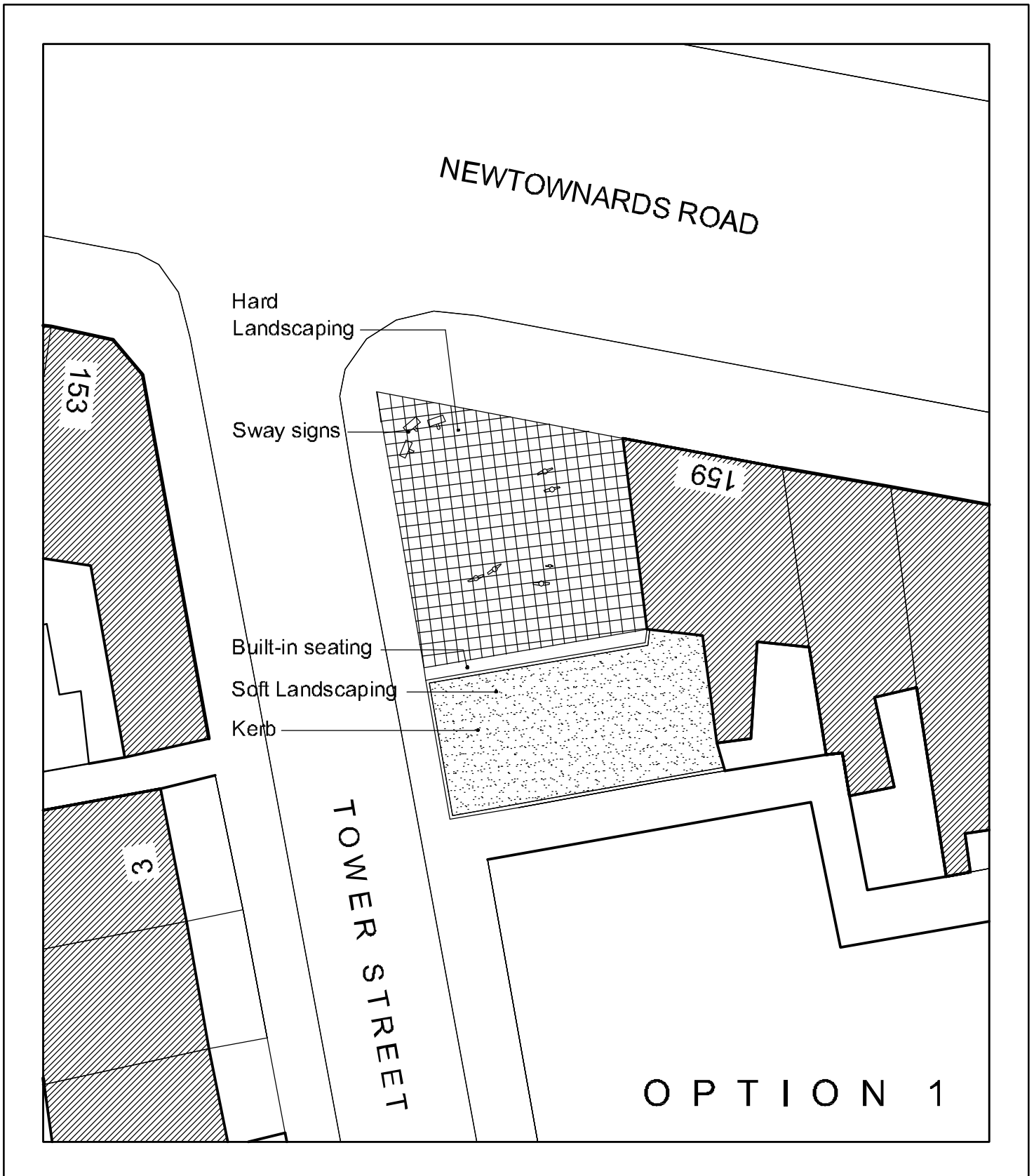
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Project: Proposed Landscaping at 155-157 Newtownards Road for East Belfast Partnership	Contents	Site Plan		
	Drawing no.	001	OS Ref	
	Scale	1:200	Date	Oct 2012
OS license/permitt no. 2293 Crown copyright	McNally Morris Architects 82 Stranmillis Road Belfast BT9 5AD T-0244 90 29389 F-0244 90 69252 E-info@mcnallymorrisarchitects.com Dominic Morris BSc (Hons), BA Arch RIBA MRIAI Hugh McNally BSc (Hons), Dip Arch RIBA			This drawing is the copyright of McNally Morris Architects Ltd and may not be reproduced without their express permission. Any scheme designs subject to detail survey. Any discrepancies should be reported to the architect.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Land adjacent to Springmartin Play Area
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager, Property and Projects Department

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to make the Committee aware of a lease request from the Blackmountain Action Group in respect of the potential development of land adjacent to Springmartin Play area.
1.2	The SP&R Committee at its meeting on the 23 November 2012 endorsed the Shankill Area Working Group recommendation to add a further £50,000 to the £100,000 of Local Investment Funding previously approved in principle (in October 2012) to allow Blackmountain Action Group to develop a mini soccer pitch at the site adjacent to Springmartin Play Area, with all funding subject to confirmation of costs, clarification of legal issues, sustainability etc.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	The Council hold the 1.02 acre site shown outlined red on the plan attached at Appendix '1' at Blackmountain Park off the Springfield Road from the NIHE by way of a 9000 year lease subject to the following main terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use the site as a play area. • Not to assign or sub-let the site without consent.
2.2	That part of the site shaded yellow has been developed as playground and the remainder of the site is effectively an area of waste land.
2.3	The Springfield Star Blackmountain Community Mini Soccer Pitch committee comprising of 14 members from local schools, youth projects,

	<p>residents, football club and local councillors was set up to discuss the lack of sporting facilities available within the Blackmountain Community. Due to the lack of sufficient facilities in the immediate area the Blackmountain Springfield Star Football Club has been training and competing on offsite locations and as such they advise that they are finding it increasingly difficult to actively engage and recruit local children. The Springfield Star Blackmountain Action Group agreed to seek LIF funding through the AWG to redevelop the existing grassed area, shown shaded blue on the plan attached at Appendix '1', at Blackmountain Park with a third generation playing surface, erection of 4m high pitch side fencing and 4 floodlight masts.</p>
2.4	The Springfield Star Blackmountain Mini Soccer Pitch committee have now become the Blackmountain Action Group.
2.5	It is proposed that the Council's Property & Projects Department will deliver this project.
2.6	<p>The Committee is asked to note that the Blackmountain Action Group have requested a three year lease for the portion of Springmartin Play area shown shaded blue on the plan attached at Appendix '1'. This proposal is in line with the SP&R Committee's clarification of LIF guidance to Members at its meeting on the 22 June 2012, that a LIF proposal in respect of a Council asset could be eligible if it was subject to a lease of reasonable duration from the Council. The Blackmountain Action Group specifically requested a short term lease as they are aware of the risks and responsibilities associated with managing sporting facilities. The granting of the lease will be subject to receipt of the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a satisfactory business plan which clearly demonstrates the sustainability of the proposed project, (ii) a sports development plan, (iii) consent from NIHE to change of user and subletting, (iv) securing the appropriate approvals including planning and building control.

3.	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>Financial</p> <p>The redevelopment of this land to provide a third generation playing surface, erection of 4m high pitch side fencing and 4 floodlight masts is to be funded by way of £150,000 of LIF support as agreed in principle by SP&R on the 23 November 2012. The Council will deliver the scheme via Property & Projects. The amount of rent to be charged by the Council and the details of the lease will be the subject of a further report to SP&R in due course.</p>
3.2	<p>Human Resources</p> <p>Resources in Parks and Leisure, Estates Management Unit and Legal</p>

	Services involved in agreeing detailed terms and drawing up the proposed lease..
3.3	Asset and Other Implications The provision of a third generation synthetic surface would increase use of the facility and help address short fall in provision. It would support the development of programmes to support initiatives around health and well being; community safety and the creation of shared spaces.

4.	Equality Implications
4.1	An EQIA was carried out at the outset of the Investment Programme. As part of the due diligence process, officers will equality screen all the LIF projects, both individually and as a whole programme. Where any adverse equality impact is identified, either at individual project level, or at a programme or area level, mitigating actions will be devised for inclusion in the letter of offer, and/or for the consideration of the AWGs.

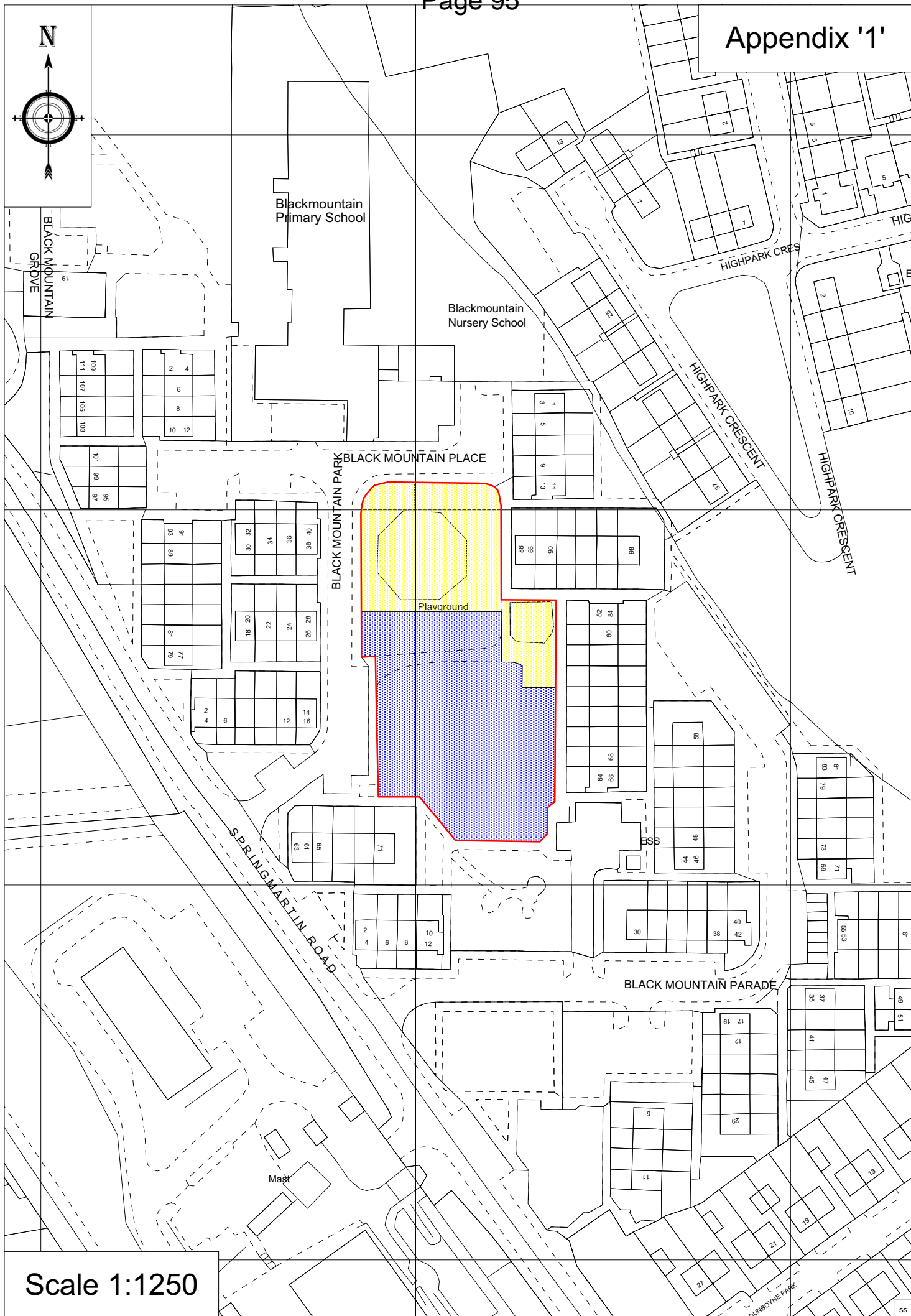
5.	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree, in principle to enter into a lease arrangement with Blackmountain Action Group for a period of 3 years subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) receipt of amended business plan, (ii) sports development plan, (iii) consent from NIHE to change of user and subletting, (iv) securing the appropriate approvals , including planning and building control and council agreement to making the land available. (v) approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in line with Standing Orders.

6.	Decision Tracking
6.1	Actions to be completed by Estates Management Unit and Legal Services by 30 April 2013

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	NIHE – Northern Ireland Housing Executive LIF – Local Investment Fund SP&R – Strategic Policy and Resources AWG – Area Working Group

8.	Documents Attached
	Plan attached at Appendix '1'.

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Scale 1:1250

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Land at Whiterock Close: Lease to Glór Na Móna, Whiterock
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager, Property and Projects Department

1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to make the Committee aware of a lease request from Glór Na Móna in respect of the potential development of Council land adjacent to Whiterock Leisure and Community Centre and to seek a decision on this matter.
1.2	The SP&R Committee at its meeting on the 24 August 2012 endorsed the West AWG recommendation to provide £112,000 of Local Investment Fund to Glór na Móna subject to match funding being obtained within 18 months and subject to confirmation of costs, clarification of legal issues, sustainability etc.

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	The Council owns an extensive area of land in the vicinity of the Whiterock Leisure and Community Centre. Part of this area, shown outlined red on the plan attached at Appendix '2', was formerly the site of Bunscoil an Sleibhe Dhuibh; the site has been vacant since that school opened its new accommodation on the Ballymurphy Road in 2002.
2.2	The site lies within the Whiterock Community Corridor concept area. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 22 June 2012 agreed that the Whiterock Community Health and Well Being Corridor was one of a number of schemes that should be progressed to Strategic Outline Case stage. This would allow for it to be considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for inclusion in the uncommitted section of the Capital Programme.
2.3	Glór na Móna is an Irish language organisation that operates to promote Irish language and related activities in Upper Springfield and the surrounding area.

	The group promotes Irish through cultural events and develops services for the Irish language community.
2.4	Glór na Móna's existing leased premises is basement accommodation which is poorly lit and ventilated with low ceilings creating an uncomfortable and oppressive environment.
2.5	Glór na Móna have received approval in principle for £112,000 of Local Investment Fund support as outlined at paragraph 1.2 above which will be matched by a further £112,500 from CISTE to construct a modular building on that part of the former Bunscoil site shown shaded yellow on the plan attached at Appendix '2'.
2.6	The Committee is asked to note that Glór na Móna have requested a seven year lease for the area of land shaded yellow on the plan attached at Appendix '2'. This proposal is in line with the SP&R Committee's clarification of LIF guidance to Members at its meeting on the 22 June 2012, that a LIF proposal in respect of a Council asset could be eligible if it was subject to a lease of reasonable duration from the Council.
2.7	The Glór na Móna project, while progressing under the LIF, is also being considered as part of the wider project proposals emerging for the Whiterock site as the Strategic Outline Case for the Whiterock Community hub develops. Given the modular nature of the proposed construction it is proposed to retain flexibility within the lease to allow for future reconfiguration of the overall site, if required, in order to ensure a joined up delivery of community facilities at this location.

3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>Financial</p> <p>The SP&R Committee at its meeting on the 24 August 2012 endorsed the West AWG recommendation to provide £112,000 of Local Investment Fund to Glór na Mona subject to match funding being obtained within 18 months and subject to confirmation of costs, clarification of legal issues, sustainability etc. CISTE have confirmed match funding of £112,500. If any additional funding is required Glór na Móna have advised that they may will seek a loan from the Ulster Community Investment Trust.</p>
3.2	Detailed terms of the lease including rent will be brought to the SP&R Committee for approval.
3.3	<p>Human Resource</p> <p>Resources in the Estates Management Unit and Legal Services involved in agreeing detailed terms and drawing up the appropriate form of lease.</p>
3.4	<p>Asset and Other Implications</p> <p>The siting of the proposed modular building for Glór na Móna at the Whiterock Road end of the former Bunscoil site leaves the use of the remainder of the area flexible in terms of the emerging Whiterock Community Health and Well Being Corridor.</p>

4.0	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	An EQIA was carried out at the outset of the Investment Programme. As part of the due diligence process, officers will equality screen all the LIF projects, both individually and as a whole programme. Where any adverse equality impact is identified, either at individual project level, or at a programme or area level, mitigating actions will be devised for inclusion in the letter of offer, and/or for the consideration of the AWGs.

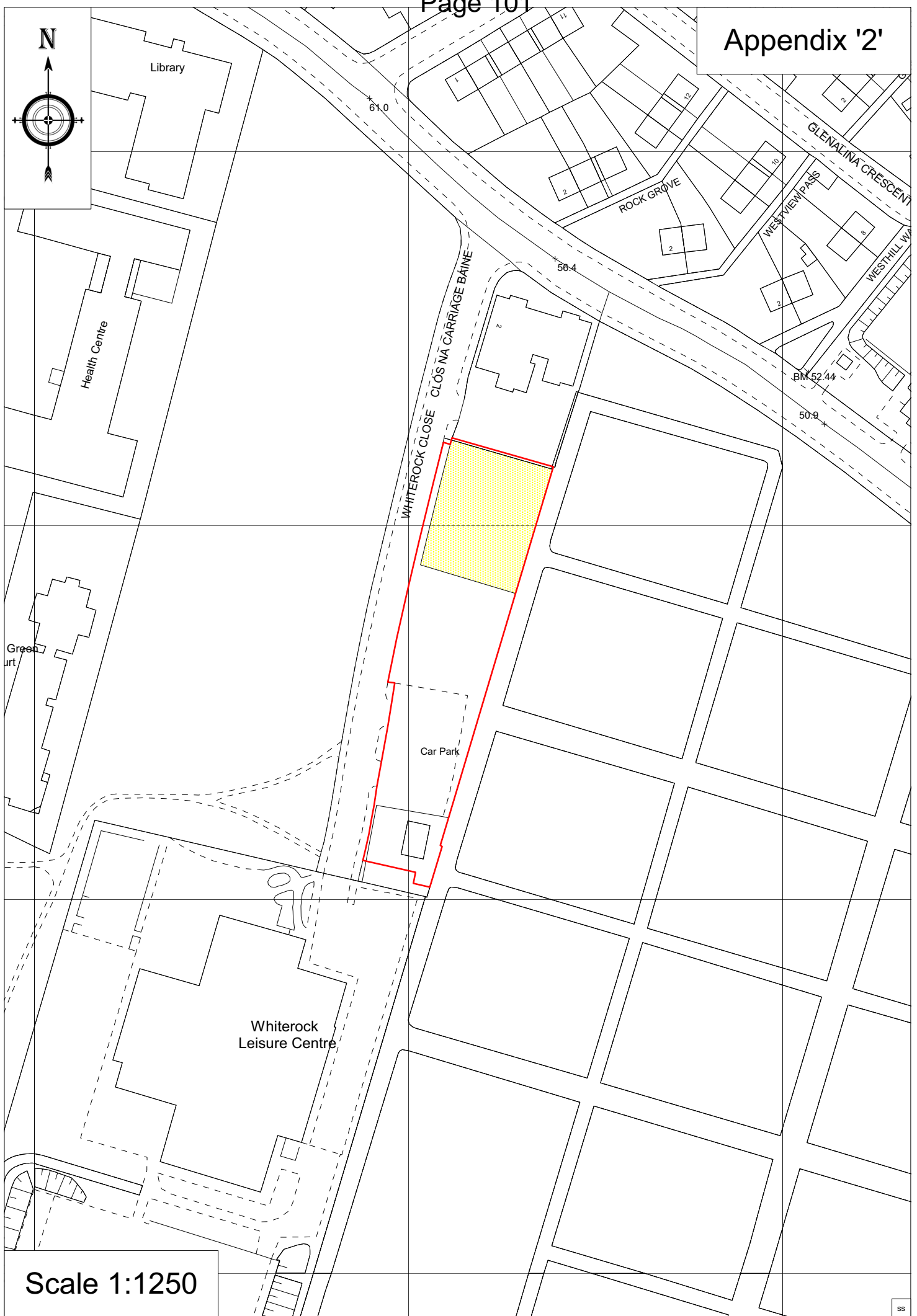
5.0	Recommendations
5.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <p>Agree, in principle to enter into a lease arrangement with Glór Na Móna for a period of 7 years subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Glór na Móna receiving £112,500 of match funding from CISTE. (ii) Glór na Móna providing a satisfactory business plan. (iii) Glór na Móna securing the appropriate approvals including planning, building control. (iv) Approval of the SP&R Committee to the rent and detail terms of the lease in accordance with Standing Orders.

6.0	Decision Tracking
	<p>Actions to be completed by the Estates Management Unit and Legal Services by the 30 April 2013.</p>

7.0	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>LIF: Local Investment Fund</p> <p>EQIA: Equality Impact Assessment</p> <p>AWGs: Area Working Groups</p>

8.0	Documents Attached
8.1	Plan attached at Appendix '2'.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Mary Peters Track
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Committee will be aware that work is continuing to upgrade the Mary Peters Track.</p> <p>As previously reported the new eight lane track has been laid and the infield area has been completed. The contractor has requested and been granted a contract extension to complete the spectator stand and this is scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2013. Following completion application will be made to Athletics UK and IAAF for accreditation which will permit the track to be re-opened, it is anticipated that this will be completed during March 2013.</p>

2	Key Issues
	<p>The Committee is asked to note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The physical works are nearing completion, some minor adjustments are required and a snagging list has been produced. It remains our intention to re-open on during Easter Week, week of 1 April 2013; 2. It is intended to arrange an athletic event at the new facility on 3. 25 June to officially re-launch the facility. Work on this is ongoing on this in conjunction with Northern Ireland Athletics and further information will be brought to the Committee at its March meeting;

	<p>4. As reported previously the management agreement for the facility has been recently retendered. Two tenders have been received and these are currently be evaluated with a view to an appointment in February 2013.</p> <p>5. Work on the statue of Dame Mary Peters is continuing and a procurement process is underway, it intended that the statue will be unveiled as part of the official opening on 25 June 2013.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There are no additional financial implications.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>There are no additional human resource implications</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality implications

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is asked to note the report.

6	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be brought to Committee in March 2013.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8	Documents Attached
	None



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Sport NI Consultation on a New Outdoor Recreation Plan for Northern Ireland
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Emer Boyle, Policy and Business Development Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	In December 2011, the Council received an invitation from Sport NI to contribute to a pre-consultation on a Ten Year Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland, the response to which was approved by Members at the Committee Meeting on 15 March 2012.
1.2	In November 2012, the Council received an invitation from Sport NI to respond to a final consultation on the above plan. Sport NI is seeking responses to this consultation by 15 February 2013.
1.3	It was agreed that the Parks and Leisure Department would coordinate preparation of a response on behalf of the Council. The Policy and Business Development Unit has prepared a draft response following a request for input from relevant officers across the Council.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	The aim of the consultation is to seek views on <i>Our Great Outdoors – The Draft Outdoor Recreation Plan for Northern Ireland</i> (a copy of which is provided at Appendix 1). Full details of the consultation are available at http://www.sportni.net/about/Consultations .
2.2	The Draft Plan sets out recommended actions for a range of bodies including Government departments and agencies, and local authorities

<p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p>	<p>under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structures; - Policy and Legislation; - Funding; - Communication; - Making the outdoors more accessible; - Volunteering; and - Research and monitoring. <p>In summary, the consultation asks for views and comments on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Content of the Plan</i> - including key issues covered, required changes and suggested structures; and 2. <i>Structure of the Plan</i> - including clarity, language and possible case studies. <p>The consultation also requests views on the outcome of its equality screening process with respect to the Draft Plan.</p> <p>A proposed response from the Council is provided at Appendix 2. Subject to approval by this Committee, it is proposed that the final response is submitted to Sport NI by 15 February with the proviso that this is subject to full Council approval at its meeting in March.</p>
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<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>	<p>Resource Implications</p> <p><u>Financial</u> None required.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> None required.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None at this stage.</p>
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<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p>Equality Implications</p> <p>Screening undertaken by Sport NI of the impacts of the Plan with respect to Section 75 legislation has concluded that a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.</p>
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<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>Members are asked to approve submission of a response subject to any comments provided.</p>
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6.	Decision Tracking
	Policy and Business Development Manager
7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None
8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - <i>Our Great Outdoors – The Draft Outdoor Recreation Plan for Northern Ireland.</i> Appendix 2 – proposed consultation response.

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Our Great Outdoors

The Draft Outdoor Recreation Action Plan
For
Northern Ireland



For Consultation

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1. Introduction

Northern Ireland has a combination of extremely varied land and seascapes with beautiful scenery within a very small geographical area. Mountains, moorlands, winding river valleys, green rolling countryside, extensive inland waterways, a spectacular coastline, woodlands and forests all make up the Northern Ireland environment. Towns and cities in Northern Ireland tend to be small and are bounded by fantastic scenery and the outdoor environment provides a resource that has tremendous potential to attract visitors and to promote enjoyment, health and well-being for local communities.

This new 10 year action plan to continue to develop outdoor recreation is being coordinated by a steering group comprising a range of government organisations, Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI); (formerly the Countryside Access and Activities Network - CAAN) and land owning representatives. This co-ordinated approach demonstrates a strong commitment to realise the value of the outdoors.

It provides key recommendations for actions and challenges that need to be addressed to make Northern Ireland a place where outdoor recreation can genuinely deliver:

1. Healthy lifestyles for local people
2. Economic growth through encouraging visitors to come and enjoy the outdoors
3. Protection of habitats and ecosystems for future generations.

The recommendations provide the focus for the steering group to decide what actions and activities are pursued. It has been prepared by the consultants working alongside officers of the steering group and is the result of an extensive examination of the issues and a wide consultation with interested groups and individuals who have contributed to the process in meetings and written responses setting out what needs to be done. A list of all those organisations who responded to the consultation can be found in Appendix 1

THE VISION

The vision for a new Outdoor Recreation Action Plan is:

“To continue to build a dynamic culture of sustainable outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland.”

To achieve this vision the aim is for Northern Ireland to be a place where:

*There are increasing opportunities and improved access and infrastructure for sustained and increased participation by all in the broadest possible range of outdoor recreation activities.

*There are accompanying benefits to communities in terms of health, social cohesion and economic development.

*People enjoy the outdoors and show a high degree of responsibility for themselves, towards others and the environment they are using and play their part in maintaining, supporting and enhancing that environment.

2. Why have an Outdoor Recreation Action Plan?

A love for the natural environment, its special landscapes, secret places, fantastic coastlines and the wildlife that inhabits these areas, is a strong part of the fabric and culture of life in Northern Ireland. However, the opportunity to benefit from the resources that we value is not accessible to all. It is therefore necessary for government, businesses and voluntary organisations to work together to provide opportunities to grow this interest and love for the outdoors in a sustainable manner so that the full potential of the outdoors can be realised. The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan (ORAP) will be the key driver to make this happen.

Outdoor recreation for relaxation and enjoyment brings a range of significant benefits to society, communities and to individuals.

These benefits include:

- Health, well-being and enjoyment for all.

An accessible environment could be a significant resource for local people to enhance their quality of life by enjoying the outdoors. There is clear evidence highlighting the very strong connection between health and green spaces, including research undertaken by the Countryside Recreation Network in 2005¹. CAAN research in 2008 and 2010 into trends in outdoor sports² and walking, cycling and horse riding³ has also shown that there has been a significant growth in demand for outdoor recreation activities – especially those that are undertaken independently, rather than through an organised club or body.

- Economic benefit and sustainability.

The spectacular landscapes, seascapes and habitats of Northern Ireland are a vital tourism product. There has been a very significant growth in the adventure and activity tourism sector – with only a handful of commercial providers in 1998 and now well in excess of 100 businesses operating across Northern Ireland. The growing number of retailers and outlet stores selling “outdoor equipment” also reflects the growth in this sector. There is increasing recognition in other parts of the UK and Europe of the economic benefits that outdoor recreation can bring. Studies in Wales⁴ and Scotland⁵ have demonstrated the wider economic value of the sector for not only activity providers but also accommodation providers, cafés, restaurants, pubs and bars.

- Education – about the environment, self and others.

Outdoor enthusiasts feel a strong connection with wild landscapes and coastlines and it is in the interests of the users themselves, land managers and those who

¹ A Countryside for Health and Wellbeing CRN 2005 ISBN 1 84387 137 8

² Trends in Outdoor Recreation (1995 – 2008) www.outdoorrecreationni.com/publications/research-reports/

³ Trends in Walking, Cycling and Horse riding in Northern Ireland (1995 – 2010) www.outdoorrecreationni.com/publications/research-reports/

⁴ The Economic Impact of Walking and Hill Walking in Wales - Welsh Economy Research Unit, Cardiff University.

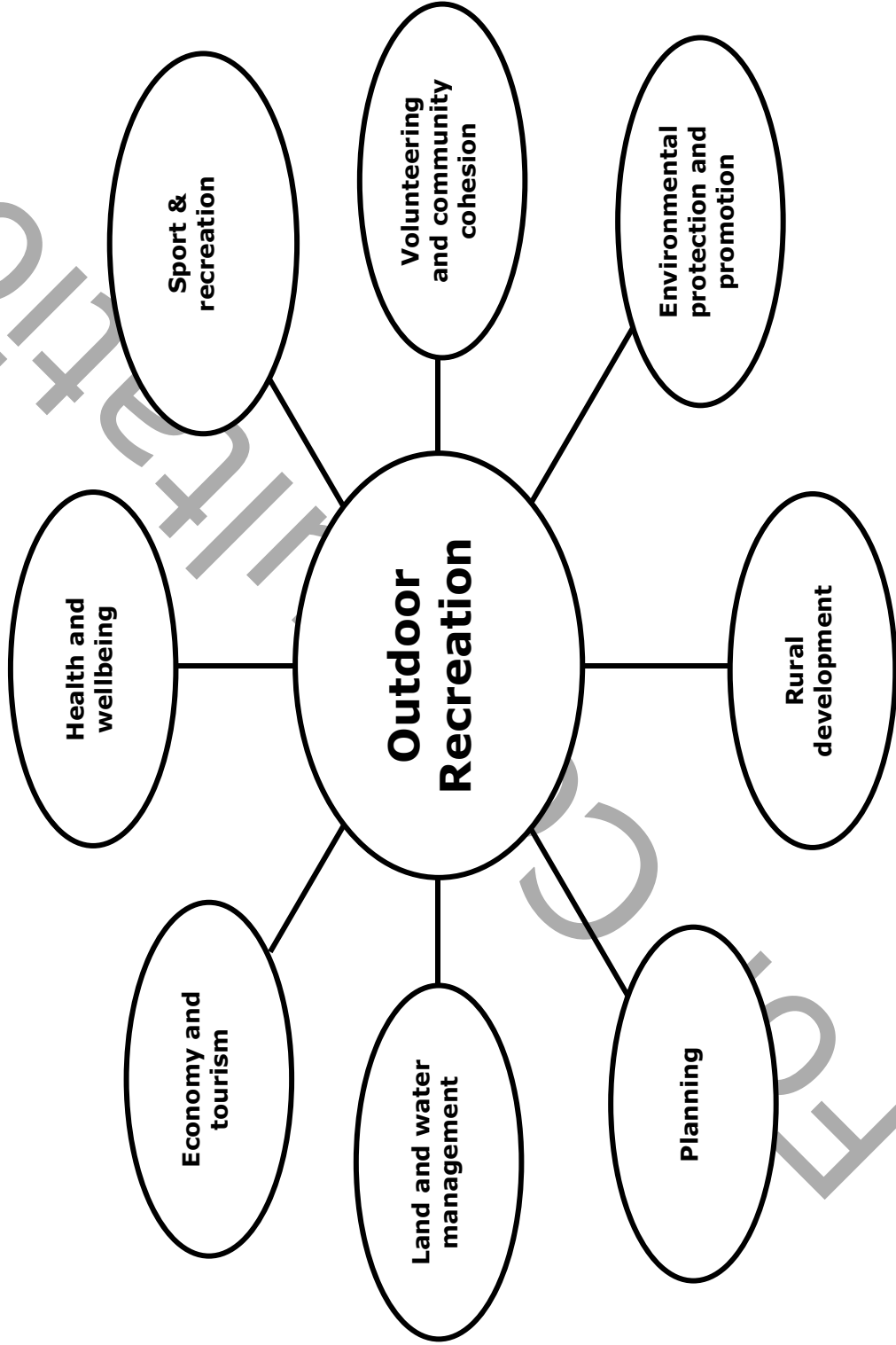
⁵ Assessing the economic impacts of nature based tourism in Scotland - a report commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage

organise activities to work in partnership with nature conservation bodies to ensure that these areas are protected and their special qualities maintained. There is a long history of the Education and Library Boards providing high quality educational courses for their own schools and youth groups through the use of the outdoors. In recent years this has been matched by a significant growth in the number of pupils opting to do outdoor activities as part of the GCSE PE curriculum. Outdoor environments have also been extensively used for team development in the corporate sector. The development and value of volunteering is now a strong feature of the work undertaken by organisations such as the National Trust, ORNI and Mourne Heritage Trust bringing with it a wide range of benefits to the individuals and organisations involved.

Outdoor recreation is therefore very broad and encompassing, as Diagram 1 highlights and has a great potential to provide many benefits to society. The importance of joint working between the organisations that recognise these benefits of Outdoor Recreation is critical and the inter-relationships between users, agencies, land owners / managers and providers is fundamental for success in this plan.

For Consultation

DIAGRAM 1 The breadth of Outdoor Recreation



3. Background

Northern Ireland's first Countryside Recreation Strategy was developed by the Environment and Heritage Service of the Department of Environment (now NIEA) and the Sports Council of Northern Ireland (now SNI) in 1998.

The vision of the strategy was "to develop and sustain a vibrant countryside recreation culture in which responsible and well informed people enjoy high quality, sustainable and appropriate activities in an accessible, well managed yet challenging environment; where landowners and managers are welcoming and there are accompanying benefits to local communities both in social and economic terms."

There were 3 principles underpinning this vision:

- Mutual respect between all interested parties;
- Sustainable access;
- Quality of the experience.

One of the main outcomes from the strategy was the creation of a network of key stakeholders including CAAN and an associated company limited by guarantee, to deliver the products and the infrastructure required for the implementation of the strategy. The success of CAAN is well noted and the prominence of outdoor recreation has significantly increased in the past 12 years, however it has been recognised that more needs to be done.

In March 2009, Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) commissioned an independent review of this Strategy. The review concluded that the majority of the overall 'agendas' and actions set out in the Countryside Recreation Strategy and subsequent Operational Plans for CAAN had been achieved and indeed exceeded. It concluded that, given changing priorities and responsibilities, there now needed to be an agreed wider framework for action linking new public health, personal wellbeing and economic agendas, tied-in with an emerging role for Local Government with the anticipated reform of that sector.

The key recommendation emanating from that review was that Government should now prepare a new Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Northern Ireland.

4. Process of Developing the Outdoor Recreation Action Plan.

Following discussions between Government Departments it was agreed that the logical way forward would be to develop an Outdoor Recreation Action Plan (ORAP) that feeds into "Sport Matters" the NI Strategy for Sport 2009-19. Targets for increased participation, sustainable access and improved infrastructure have already provided the focus for a wide range of bodies to work together. Sport Matters has been adopted by the Executive and is a cross departmental strategy with the necessary governance and monitoring arrangements already established.

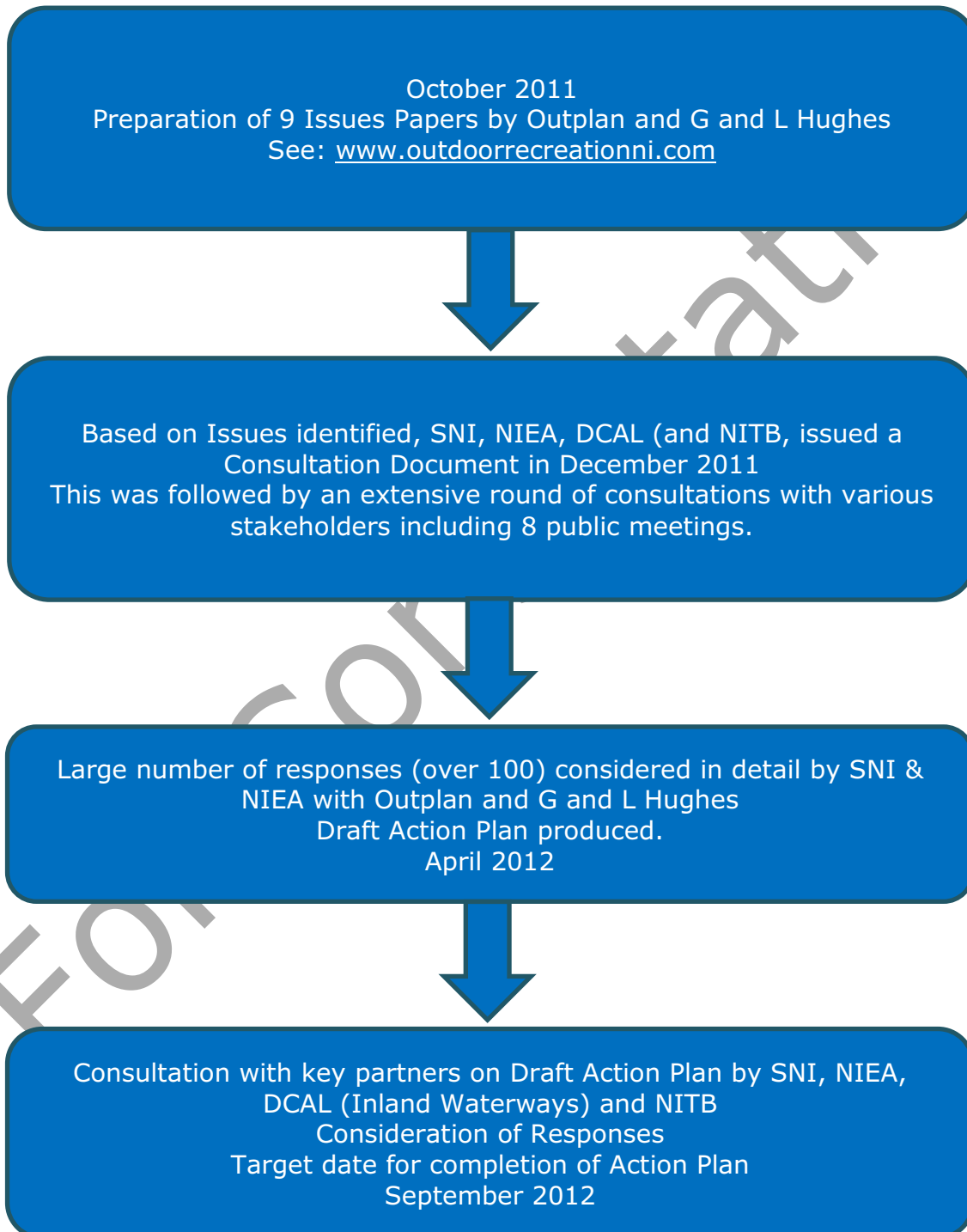
Associating the ORAP with Sport Matters offers the potential to deliver on a range of other government strategies and policies including:

- "Our Passion, Our Place" – the NIEA strategic priorities 2012 – 2022.
- A Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020.
- A Fitter Future for all – Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022.
- "Shaping our Future" The Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025.
- "Everyone's Involved" The Sustainable Development Strategy.
- The NI Rural Development Programme 2007 – 13.
- "Join In, Get Involved: Build a Better Future - A Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2012."
- The "Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy – People and Place"

Early in the discussions amongst the stakeholders it was agreed that the plan had to be backed up by clear targets and actions to be undertaken.

The process for developing the plan

The development of the plan was commissioned by Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) with support from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure Inland Waterways Branch (DCAL).



5. The Consultation Process

SNI in partnership with NIEA, DCAL Inland Waterways and the NI Tourist Board commissioned the consultants to prepare a series of nine separate papers to identify the primary issues that influence outdoor recreation. The topics identified were:

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Widening Participation
- Environmental Awareness, Engagement and Sustainability (supporting conservation through outdoor recreation) incorporating education
- Governance and Partnership Working (integrated outdoor recreation management) incorporating access
- Promotion and Raising Awareness
- Volunteering and Community Engagement / participation
- Activity Tourism and Entrepreneurship (rural and economic development)
- Facilities
- Monitoring and Evaluation

These Issues Papers provide valuable background information, identifying more than 189 issues that could be addressed to develop outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland. The papers are available on line at www.outdoorrecreationni.com.

A number of key and recurring themes emerged from the Issues Papers.

1. A need for a review and development of legislation, policy and responsibilities.
2. The importance of partnerships and structures for developing, managing and advocating a coordinated approach to outdoor recreation.
3. The critical issue of investment; whether that is time, energy or resources.
4. The importance of communication, marketing and promotion.
5. The provision of appropriate facilities and infrastructure that meets the needs of those who wish to take part to ensure that current and future participation is sustainable.
6. The importance of research, monitoring and evaluation to provide a strong evidence base to provide the rationale for the development and management of activities and facilities.

Following the preparation of the Issues Papers the steering group developed a wide ranging consultation programme to examine the key themes and issues to ensure that the development of outdoor recreation meets the needs of land owners, users, statutory authorities, governing bodies and activity providers. The consultation took a number of forms:

- Web based survey for individuals and / or organisations.
- Meetings with focus groups such as Countryside Officers, activity providers, governing bodies etc.
- A series of 8 regional open meetings for interested parties to hear first-hand about the proposed action plan and feed in their views on the emerging issues.

The consultation exercise generated widespread support for the preparation of the ORAP and the key recommendations and actions to move forward are based on the extensive responses provided. The detailed examination of the responses received has led to thirty four key recommendations being identified that if implemented will address the key barriers, issues and problems and enable the realisation of the vision.

6. Key Themes

The main themes to emerge from the issues papers and confirmed by the consultation process are outlined below and the proposed actions highlight which theme and issues they will address:

Theme 1

A review and development of legislation, policy and responsibilities.

The issue of the differences in and inadequacy of access legislation in Northern Ireland compared to the rest of the UK and Europe was extensively highlighted in both the issues papers and through the vast majority of the responses to the consultation. These brought up a high level of response on the importance of policy on access to public land. The complex arrangements and responsibilities for policy and provision of outdoor recreation were also highlighted across a number of the issues papers.

Theme 2

The importance of partnerships and structures for developing, managing and advocating outdoor recreation.

There is a great range of organisations and agencies that have an interest in outdoor recreation and consequently there is a risk of independent working and duplication of effort as well as certain aspects being neglected as a consequence of the lack of a joined up approach. While there are some very good examples of co-ordination, there are further opportunities to create stronger mechanisms to help achieve the vision and a more joined up approach.

Theme 3

Investment of time, energy and resources.

As public funding is likely to continue to decline in future years, the importance of innovation, sustainability, volunteering and buy-in from users and private sector businesses will become increasingly important.

Theme 4

The importance of communication, marketing and promotion.

With good evidence of the growth in interest and participation in outdoor recreation there is a need to ensure that participants know where they can go, how to behave responsibly and what opportunities exist.

Theme 5

The provision of appropriate facilities to ensure that current and future participation is sustainable.

The growth in demand for outdoor recreation which is being experienced has to be managed. There is a need to ensure that the full potential of taking part can be realised in a way that does not compromise the habitats and eco-systems on which the experience relies.

Theme 6

The importance of research, monitoring and evaluation to provide for evidence based development and management.

Although not a "hot topic" as part of the consultation it is clear from the issues papers that Northern Ireland lags behind the rest of the UK and other parts of Europe in having a needs and evidence base to underpin investment decisions in outdoor recreation. With scarce resources it is necessary to answer the question what "works and why?"

Draft Outdoor Recreation Action Plan

7. Recommended Actions:

Note that a list of the Acronyms for the lead bodies is provided in Appendix 4

A: Structures

This key series of actions relates to the creation or continued use of a number of committee and networking structures. These will allow for the proper consideration of and action on matters highlighted both in the Issues Papers and affirmed through the Consultation process.

Action No	Structures	Lead body and Partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
A1	<p>Create a 'Strategic Outdoor Recreation Group' * to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure overall delivery of this Plan Address any strategic issues identified by Departments of Government, local authorities, other national organisations Address relevant matters raised by the proposed National Outdoor Recreation Forum (referred to below). <p>This Group will comprise Agencies and Government Departments with responsibility for outdoor recreation and must have an acknowledged role in agreeing a joined up approach to policy on access, inputting to/advising on proposed legislation, requesting consideration of legislative changes especially in the area of access and liability, and in considering the appropriate role for and on-going responsibilities of local authorities post RPA.</p> <p>The Group may form specific and time-limited Working Groups on specific matters. Early consideration should be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross border access issues, and an all-Ireland approach to development of activities where appropriate Ways to work with the health sector Potential to improve the economy. <p>* The Group may have another name.</p>	<p>Lead Body(ies) DOE/DCAL</p> <p>Key Partners SNI NIEA NITB DARD Forest Service NI Public Health Agency Waterways Ireland NI Water ORNI (Secretariat)</p>	<p>Establish in Q1 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop clear terms of reference for the role and membership of the Group. Create necessary administrative support mechanisms. Canvas views of Permanent Secretaries, CEO's / Chairs of Departments and Agencies. Use next round of consultation to establish concept. Group should report to the chair of SMGM

Action No	Structures	Lead body and Partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
A2	<p>Establish a 'National Forum' to address strategic issues, solutions and actions.</p> <p>This Forum will sit outside Government and have the capacity to 'lobby' and invite / request presentations or papers. Membership will be comprised from local forums (A3) and strategic partnerships with observers from national agencies.</p>	<p>Independent Chair*</p> <p>ORNI secretariat Supported by SNI</p>	<p>Establish by end of 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Terms of Reference and membership. *Chair should have 'profile'
A3	<p>Create a network of 'Local Outdoor Recreation Forums'.</p> <p>These will identify local issues, potential solutions and actions. Unresolved or 'common' issues will be referred to the National Forum.</p> <p>Membership will include LA Access Officers, Activity Tourism providers, Education Board staff, Outdoor Sports clubs representatives and users, AONB or land management bodies and appropriate National Governing Body representatives.</p> <p>Appendix 3 highlights the current and some potential forums</p>	<p>Chairs selected locally.</p> <p>Secretariat 'in house' or from local authorities.</p> <p>Supported by SNI/NIEA</p>	<p>Some already exist but a good spread of forums to be in place by end of 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of best way forward for LA representation and role post RPA. Consideration of the role of landowners and conservation interests.
A4	<p>Develop, support and enable private sector partnerships for the development of access, promotion of messages and participation in outdoor recreation: To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The retail sector (including hospitality) The activity tourism sector The hospitality sector Landowners 	<p>Lead Body(ies) DETI / NITB</p> <p>Key Partners Activity Tourism Forum Local Tourism Reps ORNI(secretariat)</p>	<p>By 2014</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission research to examine the synergy between the needs of users and the outdoor industry. Look into options for corporate sponsorship and marry this to access development priorities and sustainable use.

B: Policy and Legislation

The areas of policy and legislation featured heavily in the Issues Papers prepared for this Plan and also had the highest response rate of any area in terms of the Consultation document. It is clear that a broad body of opinion thinks that changes are fundamentally necessary for progress to be made. The actions that follow are intended to address such matters but will require determination and Political support at a national level.

Action No	Policy and Legislation	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
B1	<p>The Strategic Group (as in 1 above) will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop policies and propose legislative priorities, changes and developments to maximise the benefits and opportunities for Outdoor Recreation. 2. Create supportive and co-ordinated policy frameworks and priorities that will provide clarity and recommendations on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Who is responsible for what – DOE, Sport NI, District Councils (including post- RPA responsibilities) b. Communication on the responsibilities of both users and landowners c. Policies on access to all appropriate public land d. Public rights of way and permissive paths (including gating orders) e. Access and management within any proposed National Parks and existing Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) f. Planning policy – with respect to the role of both Area Plans and the associated Planning Application process g. Inland water h. Coastal access 	<p>Government Departments and Agencies led by DCAL/DOE (through Strategic Group)</p>	<p>In line with the creation of strategic group.</p>	<p>Terms of Reference of the Strategic Group to include this role. Political realisation that such changes that are recommended are implemented for the public good. The aim must be to develop joined up policy amongst the statutory bodies.</p>

Action No	Policy and Legislation	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
B2	The Strategic Group will facilitate the development and implementation of consistent and complementary departmental policies to support Outdoor Recreation. These must include access to publicly owned land and the approach of public bodies to managing risk.	Each Department / Agency reporting to the Strategic Group	To Commence in 2014	This is a national target through 'Sport Matters' so would be monitored by Sport NI
B3	The Strategic Group would foster an approach to ensure full recognition of the benefits of outdoor recreation and the need to continue implementation of this Action Plan in the next Programme for Government.	Strategic Group led by DCAL & DOE	During 2014	Working groups comprising of relevant Officers would prepare papers for the Strategic Group and commission joint research to develop the evidence base.
B4	Ensure that full account is taken of outdoor recreation in each AONB Management Plan and provide guidance for the development of local action plans.	Strategic Group led by DCAL/DOE	2016	As AONB Management Plans are developed or revised.
B5	Embed the value of outdoor education in providing the steps towards lifelong healthy active lifestyles and understanding of the environment by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum development with CCEA/Colleges; - Implementing the Manifesto for Learning Outside the Classroom in Northern Ireland; Creating links to local academic institutions, and their education and land management courses.	Department of Education Environmental Education Forum, Wardens Association, Council for Learning Outside the Classroom.	To commence in 2013-14	Way forward to be clarified following discussions between working group and Department for Education

C: Funding

Funding is crucial for the development and maintenance of infrastructure, for the promotion of opportunities and to lever other funds. It was a key issue which emerged from the consultation.

Action No	Funding	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
C1	Investigate, develop and implement opportunities for funding and supporting access to the natural environment through Government, lottery funded programmes, SEUPB (Interreg), agri-environment schemes, Rural Development Programme, LEADER and identify funding for events.	Strategic Group led by DCAL/DOE.	2014	Academic institution to be commissioned to identify and provide ongoing service to Government Departments and Agencies. Provide clarity about where access development may reduce eligible area within agri-environment schemes.
C2	Promote information about key new funding programmes which could be used to develop Outdoor Recreation	ORNI	2014	Good communication mechanisms to be explored to be able to reach all sectors
C3	Broker partnership for 3 year grant scheme for access - funding pot for developing greenways, links to communities, core path networks and high pressure sites to maximise opportunities for local access and reconcile conflicts.	Strategic Group led by DOE	2016	Once research in C1 above is completed.
C4	Investigate and provide information on cost effective insurance for volunteers, groups and land managers.	ORNI	2014	Dialogue with insurance industry based on evidence from legal cases.

D: Communication

The Consultation responses in particular highlighted the need to disseminate good news stories about access, to promote good practice and to increase awareness about both opportunities and personal responsibility. Good communication from the full range of organisations involved in outdoor recreation is also essential in maximising partnership working.

Action No	Communication	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
D1	Develop and promote clear messages about personal responsibility and Occupiers Liability.	SNI & DOE & HSE & DSO	2013	Information needs already known and some work has been done on this – however, a continual process for this is essential.
D2	Develop and provide information and guidance/tools: a. For local authorities – how to manage/develop recreation. b. For landowners - how to manage/develop recreation.	CLOA/Sport NI/NIEA	2014	Good practice handbook and guidance on standards is required to ensure a consistent approach.
D3	Promote 'good news'. Engage with broader media and personalities. Include benefits to society – including healthy lifestyles and economy.	ORNI with info provided by all	On-going	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D4	Promote good practice in the management of recreation and especially large scale events on protected sites and priority habitats.	ORNI, Local outdoor recreation forums / NIEA	2012	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D5	Provide clear communication (including into the school curriculum) on social (inter-user/dogs) and environmental responsibility (in connection with LNT and/or Countryside Code). Provide information about invasive species and biosecurity.	NIEA/SNI/DE/ ORNI	2013	Consider to be connected to B5 as well as D1.

Action No	Communication	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
D6	<p>Develop website and downloadable information of what you can do near to you, (including 'Apps' and social media) and ensure web sites are connected to show:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where you can go; Information on accessibility (disabled toilets, paths for buggies, wheelchairs and people with limited mobility, how to get there etc); Events Local clubs. 	ORNI	Commencing in 2013	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D7	Develop guidance re signage and promote good practice	ORNI DRD Roads Service	2015	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D8	Provide training for activity providers, clubs and recreational land managers. Training designed to encourage diversity through innovative approaches and including an understanding of the motivations and aspirations of different user groups.	ORNI / DSNI / SNI	2013 – on-going	Further discussion between providers and clubs etc on how diversity can be embedded.
D9	Promote value of external accreditation to demonstrate compliance regarding safety and quality of provision.	Sport NI, NITB	2013	Adventuremark New 'Qualitymark' Green flag
D10	Market NI/Ireland as a tourism destination for outdoor recreation including attracting National and international events. Boost the profile of the region and the opportunities presented for more specialist activities.	NITB, Failte Ireland	On-going	Existing funding
D11	Provide appropriate funding streams for a range of scales of events including small grants programmes.	NITB / Sport NI	2014	On-going funding commitment

E: Making the outdoors more accessible

This requirement received considerable coverage in the Issues Papers. Furthermore the Consultation process showed that there is a strong desire for more facilities and equality of access to them. The need to develop concept plans and core path networks also featured highly in responses to the Consultation.

Action No	Making the outdoors more accessible	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
E1	Map current hubs for outdoor recreation and identify geographical gaps in provision. Develop framework for creating recreational 'master plans' for these hubs to ensure appropriate infrastructure and management. Include economic benefits and other ecosystem services (ecosystem services are the processes by which the environment produces resources utilised by humans such as clean air, water, food and materials).	NIEA / SNI /CLOA/ ORNI	Commencing in 2013	Links to A3
E2	Develop a systematic toolkit for community path networks and trial this toolkit (with funding package) for a target area.	DOE & DOE Planning & PHA	By 2016	Joint approach to be agreed.
E3	Identify special areas of significance for outdoor sport through utilisation of existing ORNI database with governing bodies and relevant organisations. This will also identify gaps in site and club provision. Audit of angling has not yet been undertaken and is required.	Sport NI/ DCAL	By 2015	Joint approach to be agreed.
E4	Development and adoption of national standards for outdoor recreation facilities including sustainable trail development way marked routes and other recreational facilities.	Sport NI, ORNI, NIEA	2014	Production of good practice guides and agreement on acceptable standards.

F: Volunteers

The role and importance of volunteers in outdoor recreation provision and management should never be underestimated. There is widespread understanding of the need to mobilise and properly utilise this valuable resource.

Action No	Volunteering	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
F1	<p>Promote the value of and signpost opportunities for volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a form of Outdoor Recreation; - For individuals; - For organisations (businesses), and <p>The creation of "Friends of" groups.</p>	ORNI, DSD, Volunteering Now	2014	Further dialogue required with DSD and Volunteering Now to raise the profile of outdoor volunteering.
F2	<p>Share good practice and provide training for volunteers in a range of skills and to build capacity through partnerships with other NGOs.</p>	DSD, ORNI, Volunteering Now	2014	Volunteer workshops Greater engagement with NIEL

G: Research

The Consultation re-iterated the importance of relevant and focussed research as highlighted in the Issues Papers. Feedback clearly supported the need for studies on the economic value of outdoor recreation and its benefits to participants and value to society. There was also felt to be an immediate need to evaluate existing provision and identify gaps at a strategic NI wide level.

Action No	Research and monitoring	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
G1	Undertake public surveys to identify recreation demand – who participates, what do they participate in, who doesn't (and why) and where people want to go. (In parallel with similar surveys in GB e.g. Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) which is intended to provide baseline and trend data on how people use the natural environment in England.)	Sport NI, NIEA	2015	Funding
G2	Undertake research into the economic & social (community cohesion) benefits of outdoor recreation. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity tourism; - Volunteering; - Health savings and - Ecosystem services * (defined at E1 above) - 	Sport NI, NIEA, NITB, DSD, DCAL, PHA	By 2014	Agreement on the importance of this research and joint funding.
G3	Develop a joined up approach (systems and procedures) for monitoring and evaluation of facility use at a national level.	Strategic Group (A1)	2014	Co-ordinated approach required
G4	Research into current and needed infrastructure for camping in key areas, particularly in the Mourne and Antrim Hills.	Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, Sport NI, DARD	2013	Co-ordination and funding

Appendix 1

The following individuals and organisations were invited to be part of the steering group

Chairman	Murray Cowan	SNI board member
Vice Chair	Maia Taylor	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Caro-Lynne Ferris	Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland	
Pat Wilson	Department of Culture Arts and Leisure Inland Waterways Branch	
Richard Schaible	Forest Service Northern Ireland	
Sean Fitzpatrick	Northern Ireland Agricultural Producer's Association	
Martin Carey	Northern Ireland Protected Area Network	
Alan Moore	Northern Ireland Water	
Niall McAleenan	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	
Rosemary Lightbody	Northern Ireland Tourist Board	
Michael Lipsett	Chief Leisure Officers Association	
John News	Sport Northern Ireland	
Mike McClure	Sport Northern Ireland	
David Gray	Department of Environment Environmental Planning Group	
Barbara Muhly	National Trust	
Jason Rankin	Ulster Farmers' Union	

For Consultation

Appendix 2

Organisations which provided input into the consultation process

1	Antrim Borough Council
2	Ardnabannon Outdoor Education Centre
3	Armagh District Council
4	Ballyholme Yacht Club
5	Ballymena Borough Council
6	Ballymoney Borough Council
7	Banbridge District Council
8	Belfast Canoe Club
9	Belfast City Council
10	Belfast Hills Partnership
11	British Horse Society
12	C3 Canoe Club
13	Canoe Association of Northern Ireland
14	Carrickfergus Sailing Club
15	Causeway Coast Adventure Racers
16	Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust
17	Causeway Open Award Centre
18	Climbni
19	Cloughey & District Community Association
20	Coleraine Borough Council
21	Colmcille Climbers
22	Conservation Volunteers NI
23	Cookstown District Council
24	Corralea Activity Centre Ltd
25	Countryside Alliance
26	Countryside Access and Activities Network
27	Craigavon District Council
28	Derry City Council
29	Down District Council
30	Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
31	Dungannon Borough Council

32	East Antrim Boat Club
33	Far and Wild
34	Fermanagh District Council
35	Fermanagh Ramblers and Hillwalkers
36	Forest Service NI
37	Foyle Hill walking & Rambling Club
38	Gortatole OEC
39	Green Party
40	Harps Cycling Club
41	Harps Cycling Club
42	Inland Waterways Association Ireland Newry & Portadown branch
43	International Mountain Biking Association
44	Island Wheelers
45	Jungle NI
46	Killowen Outdoor Education Centre
47	Lagan Canal Restoration Trust
48	Lagan Valley Regional Park
49	Larne Borough Council
50	Limavady Borough Council
51	Lisburn City Council
52	Lissan House, Cookstown
53	Lough Neagh Partnership
54	Loughs Agency
55	Maple Group Practice
56	Martin Crossin City Tours
57	Mencap
58	Mid Ulster Walking Club
59	Mountaineering Ireland
60	Mourne Heritage Trust
61	Moyola Angling Association
62	Newry and Mourne Council
63	NI Scouts
64	North Down Borough Council

65	NI Protected Area Network
66	NW Mountaineering
67	Ocean Youth Trust Ireland
68	Omagh District Council
69	Ring of Gullion AONB
70	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
71	Shannaghmore Outdoor Education Centre
72	South West College – Omagh campus
73	Sperrin Harriers Running Club
74	Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership
75	Sperrins Tourism
76	St Colmcille Climbing Club
77	Strabane District Council
78	Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership
79	Tidy NI
80	Tourism Ireland
81	TrailBadger.com
82	Ulster Angling Federation
83	Ulster Farmers Union
84	Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs
85	Ulster Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club
86	Ulster Rural Riders Association
87	Ulster Society for the Protection of the Countryside
88	Ulster Wildlife Trust
89	Upperlands Community Group
90	Visitor Monitoring Ireland
91	Waterways Ireland
92	Department of Social Development
93	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Appendix 3

List of Existing and potential Local Outdoor Recreation Forums

The consultation highlighted that these could be aligned to new Council boundaries under RPA, within AONB management areas or linked to tourism destination areas.

Existing Forums

Mourne Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by Mourne Heritage Trust and supported by SNI)

Causeway Coast and Glens Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust and supported by SNI)

Lagan Valley Regional Park Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by LVRP)

Antrim Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by Antrim Borough Council)

The Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership (SLLP) effectively acts as a forum although there may be value in considering a recreation sub group for the partnership

Potential Forums

Sperrins

Fermanagh

Ring of Gullion

Lough Neagh / Lower Bann

For Consultation

Appendix 4 Glossary

Acronym	Body/Organisation
DOE	Department of Environment
DCAL	Department of Culture Arts and Leisure
SNI	Sport Northern Ireland
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
ORNI	Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
PHA	Public Health Agency
DSD	Department of Social Development
DSNI	Disability Sport Northern Ireland
DRD	Department of Regional Development
CLOA	Chief Leisure Officers Association

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Consultation feedback

Our Great Outdoors – The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland.

Please return your comments by 15th February 2013

Name (optional)		Organisation	Belfast City Council
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Content of the Action Plan

1. Does the Action Plan reflect the key issues that you believe are fundamental to developing Outdoor Recreation in Northern Ireland?

Answer:

The greatest opportunities people have to participate in outdoor recreational activities are those which are easily available to them (local parks, open spaces etc). For this reason issues around regeneration need to be considered with greater involvement of Department of Social Development, Planning Service and local authorities.

Issues which impact on local land use such as lighting, anti-social behaviour, etc need to be considered.

With the topic of health and wellbeing featuring strongly in the action plan, it will be essential to ensure high level representation from the Public Health Agency.

Consideration should be given to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on walking and cycling: local measures to promote walking and cycling as forms of travel and recreation.

Whilst councils may provide secretariat functions for local outdoor recreation forums and that the role for Local Authorities post RPA will be taken into consideration, there is sparse reference to Local Government. Given input to the previous consultation by the majority of councils participation may be implicit. However, with Planning and Tourism responsibilities moving to councils in the near future, it will be important for councils to remain closely involved alongside Government departments and agencies in delivering outdoor recreation opportunities.

2. Are there any changes that you feel need to be made to the detailed actions? Please highlight any specific sections to which your comments relate.

Answer:

'Barriers to sport and physical activity participation' identifies socio-cultural barriers, practical barriers and knowledge barriers. A common theme across each of these is the issue of self-perception. The communication theme could greater reflect the need to promote outdoor recreation as an option for people to be active.

3. Do you believe that the suggested structures will help to give a clearer voice for change and developments on a local and national level?

Answer:

A diagram of the proposed structure would assist in understanding who will be involved and at what level.

Structure of the Action Plan

4. Is the document clear in its structure and easy to understand?

Answer

The addition of case studies and pictures will soften the document considerably.

5. Does the language used provide clear information in plain English?

Answer

The term AONB is used within the structure theme (page 13) without a full description (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The full description is not given until page 14.

6. The final document will contain a lot more photos and case studies. Can you provide any photos or short (max 300 words) case studies on relevant topics highlighted within the plan?

Answer

Do you have any other comments?

Answer

**Thank you for taking the time to provide us with your feedback.
Please return completed responses to:**

**Mike McClure, c/o Tollymore National Outdoor Centre, Hilltown
Road, Bryansford, Co. Down, BT33 0PZ
Tel 02890383855 Email mikemcclure@sportni.net**

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) - Consultation on the Draft Policy Position Statement on the Establishment and Management of NIEA Country Parks
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Emer Boyle, Policy and Business Development Manager Karen Anderson-Gillespie, Policy and Business Development Officer

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	In January 2012, the Council received an invitation from the NIEA to contribute to a consultation on the draft policy position statement on the establishment and management of NIEA country parks. The NIEA is seeking responses to the consultation by 15 February 2013.
1.2	It was agreed that the Parks and Leisure Department would co-ordinate the preparation of a response on behalf of the Council. The Policy and Business Development Unit (PBDU) has prepared a draft response following feedback and input from relevant officers across the Council.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The NIEA is currently undertaking a stakeholder consultation on the draft policy position statement on the establishment and management of NIEA country parks; a copy of the full consultation document can be provided on request.
2.2	Whilst there is no statutory duty for NIEA to consult on internal management statements, they welcome constructive feedback from stakeholders on the management and use of NIEA country parks

	including views on their future management post 2015.
2.3	As part of the consultation process NIEA developed and distributed a reviewers comment sheet which provided the structure for open comments and feedback. Following consideration by relevant officers across the Council, a response has been completed in draft form for approval by Members, see Appendix 1.
2.4	In summary, the draft response supports the broad thrust of the detailed report and highlights the need for clarity and both local and regional involvement in any future management post 2015 to ensure all interests are represented and any impact are realised.
2.5	Subject to approval by Committee, it is proposed that the final response is submitted to NIEA by 15 February with the proviso that this is subject to full Council ratification at its meeting in March.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> None required at present
3.2	<u>Human Resources</u> None required at present
3.3	<u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None at this stage.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	The NIEA have included a blank equality impact screening form at the back of the report in Appendix 1, which is yet to be completed.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to – (i) Note the contents of this report; and (ii) Approve submission of the draft consultation response to NIEA, subject to any comments or amendment provided, by the deadline of 15 February.

6	Decision Tracking
N/A	

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7	Key to Abbreviations
NIEA – Northern Ireland Environment Agency PBDU - Policy and Business Development Unit	

8	Documents Attached
Consultation can be provided on request Appendix 1 – Draft Consultation Response	

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Document title and version		NIEA - Policy Position Statement on the Establishment and Management of Country Parks			
Document distributed on	2/1/13	Comments due by	15/2/13	Send comments to	richard.orr@doeni.gov.uk

General observations and comments

In general Belfast City Council would support the broad thrust of the detailed report on the policy position statement on the establishment and management of Country Parks. At a regional level NIEA’s Country Parks complement other public open space provision and are extremely important given the limited opportunities the public have to experience natural habitats. Within Belfast and the wider conurbation the NIEA Country Parks are important in particular the closer sites of Colin Glen Forest Park, Crawsfordburn, Redburn and Scrabo. We welcome the acknowledgement of the importance of Country Parks and the acceptance of the wider benefits and outcomes these sites create in relation to the economy, health, environment, tourism and recreation. The Council would also support a statutory designation for country parks as this currently is not a designation under NI legislation.

The only part of the document which might impact on Belfast in the future is the reference in Chapter 8.2 to potential alternative management options, including the suggestion that the Country Parks managed by NIEA should be run by local authority’s pg 43-45 and pg 63. However, seven of the eight country parks that are currently managed by the NIEA do not reside within the Belfast City Council boundary area now and post RPA and therefore do not have any direct impact on the Council’s current or future resources. However Colin Glen Forest Park is currently owned by the NIEA and is contract managed by the Colin Glen Trust. Colin Glen Forest Park will lie within the new Belfast District Council boundary area post RPA, therefore the Council would seek further clarification and involvement around any future changes to current arrangements and the likely impact this may have on the Council. Under local government reform the Council would require significant additional resources in order to undertake any additional form of operational management and environmental education actions.

Throughout the report there is reference to the importance of environmental education and the opportunities Country Parks provide to deliver this service. However, it is with great disappointment that we note the lack of provision by NIEA of environmental education. The reinstatement of NIEA environmental education service should be given top priority. Furthermore funding towards environmental education has been drastically cut hence other organisations do not have the resources to deliver these services. Belfast City Council considers that the NIEA should deliver environmental education across all Country Parks. The Council is extremely disappointed to see that the Department is considering the disposal of Redburn Country Park which is a key resource in the wider Belfast area. Prior to any disposal of land and/or reduction of public access we would assume that consultation will be undertaken with the general public.

2.0	Executive Summary	<p>In relation to the first paragraph on pg 3 around the definition of a country park, the Council queries the use of the term <i>“in a managed rural setting”</i>. What is meant by this? We would suggest revising the wording slightly as some country parks may not be considered “rural” for example Redburn and Colin Glen Forest Park.</p> <p>We would suggest that the wording in Appendix 1 could be used <i>“which would provide for safe, countryside recreation, primarily for urban dwellers, in a variety of natural settings including the coast, woodland, river corridors, lakesides, hills and peatland.”</i></p> <p>Given increasing urbanisation and the fact that Country Parks “were acquired and developed by Government, largely to provide the urban population of Northern Ireland with managed open space for countryside recreation” – Page 4, we would suggest that the above statement is either amended or clarification provided.</p>
3.0	Introduction	<p>Belfast City Council would like to know the status of Colin Glen Forest Park? Page 4 refers to “Degraded lands” at Colin Glen and from the document it appears that the NIEA does not consider Colin Glen a Country Park. It is not listed as a Country Park in the Appendices and the only reference is in relation to its attainment of Green Flag.</p> <p>The use of the term degraded land could be misconstrued given its high nature conservation importance.</p>
3.1.5	Management	<p>Should the Department introduce charges at sites, whilst regrettable we would consider a modest charge for car parking more appropriate than charging individuals an entrance fee. All revenue generated should be reinvested into the sites. If this approach was taken it is likely the public would be more willing to accept a charge.</p>
3.3.2	Government strategies	<p>The report should mention that the NI Biodiversity Strategy is currently being reviewed and in the absence of this refer to the EU 2020 strategy to facilitate future planning.</p> <p>We agree with the statement on Page 9 <i>“While there is some scope for increasing revenue at NIEA Country Parks the greatest economic impact is through adding to the options for ‘great days out’ which help hold tourists in a local area where they spend on food, accommodation and souvenirs”</i> and would have concerns with the drive to adopt a more “commercial focus”.</p> <p>Page 9 states <i>“NIEA Country Parks are managed to enhance the quality of life and well-being of visitors and to promote responsible environmental attitudes.”</i> It must be recognised that environmental education and awareness is required to achieve behavioural change.</p>

<p>3.3.3</p>	<p>DOE and NIEA policies and strategies</p>	<p>Page 9 - The current NIEA Corporate Plan (2009-12) envisions NIEA as being ‘<i>recognised as the leading body responsible for protecting the environment and heritage of Northern Ireland</i>’ and raising environmental awareness ‘<i>through the interpretation and exemplary management of our properties</i>’ Whilst we welcome this statement it is important to note that in order to achieve this it is important that interactive engagement with the public through events and education provision both for children and adults e.g. through training, volunteering opportunities are provided.</p> <p>Page 10 - <i>Through its country parks NIEA can contribute to <u>all</u> of these outcomes, most notably by engaging the wider public in the natural heritage conservation agenda by providing them with the opportunity to learn about and interact with nature.</i></p> <p>While we consider this very important NIEA needs to allocate more resources to this in order to achieve it.</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Vision</p>	<p>The vision as outlined on Page 12 is not aspirational and is weakened by the use of terms such as “will seek”.</p> <p>The Council would suggest extending the vision to include areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • habitat enhancement and restoration, • best practice management and the use of Country Parks as demonstration sites • research and development • key environmental education hubs for a range of stakeholders both for formal and informal education purposes • opportunities for volunteering and training in conservation.
<p>4.2</p>	<p>Mission Statement</p>	<p>There is no reference to protecting the environment and heritage of these sites which is surely the key reason people visit these sites.</p> <p>The text “<i>They provide opportunities for the public to experience a variety of natural habitats, heritage and landscape features and to interact quietly with nature</i>” should be in bold as this is a key function of Country Parks.</p>

4.3	Management Values	<p>The Council would question whether the management values outlined in (4.3) are sufficient in relation to the mission statement and aims in (4.2). The management values are so visitor focused and the Council would question whether they provide a balance in preserving the ‘<i>special areas</i>’. For example some visitors may undermine the nature of some of the country parks if not controlled e.g. mechanical outdoors activity.</p> <p>The statement “<i>Management will follow sound environmental principles, with a presumption towards conserving the natural and historic heritage.</i>” <i>The use of the word presumption weakens this statement.</i> As previously outlined the natural habitats, heritage etc are the main reasons why people visit and value country parks.</p>
5.0	Selection	<p>“<i>NIEA is unlikely to take on the acquisition, development and management of additional country parks in the foreseeable future. It may, however, seek to acquire additional lands to enhance existing country parks</i>”</p> <p>This is disappointing given the previously demonstrated importance and wider benefits that country parks bring to the economy, health, environment, tourism and recreation. In addition the suggestion of land disposal is also concerning given the importance and benefits of these sites at a regional level.</p>
6.0	Declaration, establishment and quality control	<p>6.2 Refers to Colin Glen Forest Park achieving Green Flag but this site is not mentioned throughout the rest of the document.</p>
7.0	Management	<p>“<i>Country Parks have been central to the development of NIEA experience in managing land for conservation in Northern Ireland, necessary not just to conserve their features but also to determine and demonstrate best practice and to provide sound advice to others.</i>” –</p> <p>This is a key point however, throughout the document it seems NIEA is moving away from this objective as outlined in the vision and mission statement. This is a key function of country parks and should be built upon. There are opportunities to share best practice and train external bodies such as Local Authorities, other government departments, NGOs etc. The introduction of the Biodiversity Duty places requirements on all public bodies and NIEA could use country parks to raise awareness and train public bodies. Country Parks could also offer volunteering opportunities at all these sites.</p>

7.1	Management planning	Section 7.1 states “ <i>The major features for which NIEA manages its country parks are the provision of public access, information and education</i> ” yet there is no education provision.
7.2	Management Logistics	7.2 There is no mention of Colin Glen Forest Park here.
7.3	A stimulating, safe, enjoyable countryside experience for all visitors	<p>7.3. We would suggest starting this section with the text in Section 7. 3.3 Amenity but to expand it to cover access provision, facilities etc.</p> <p><i>“The suite of NIEA Country Parks was chosen because the properties had ‘intrinsic appeal’ in terms of their scenic quality and special features including seashore, rivers, woodland, panoramic views, interesting buildings and natural habitats. NIEA will seek, though multidisciplinary working groups, to ensure that completed developments do not detract from the attractiveness of these sites.”</i></p> <p>In addition any proposals should not detract from the scientific value of these sites. Recreational facilities, trails etc should only be developed if appropriate and sensitive to the site.</p>
7.3.1	Health and Safety	The Council would suggest that the first bullet point of the health and safety standards outlined in 7.3.1 is moved to the previous paragraph outlined in 7.3.
7.3.4	Equality of Opportunity for all visitors	We would recommend that in section reference is made to the Equality Impact Screening form attached in Appendix 13
7.4	Provision of appropriate countryside facilities	<p>7.4 states that NIEA country parks have been selected and are managed to be able to absorb large numbers of visitors engaged in a wide range of activities. The Council would be keen to know if this has ever been assessed?</p> <p>We would welcome the forward thinking approach outlined on page 23 which makes reference to facilities and provisions that NIEA may supply at chosen country parks. It is hoped that the reference to natural habitats where visitors can experience nature refers to habitat creation and/or restoration proposals.</p>

7.4.3	Specialist Features and Activities	<p><i>NIEA is pleased to facilitate many such activities where these are compatible with the management values for the park and reasonably can be accommodated without impinging on the enjoyment of other visitors.</i></p> <p>However, the management values as previously outlined are not strong enough to ensure protection of the natural and heritage features.</p>
7.4.7	Management of Specific Areas, Facilities or Services by Third Parties.	<p>We would suggest that prior to any changes of use and/or the reduction in public access, public consultation should be undertaken.</p>
7.5.1	Environmental Principles	<p>“The use of peat products and tropical hardwoods will be avoided” – As the leading body responsible for protecting the environment and heritage of Northern Ireland, NIEA need to demonstrate a strong leadership and advocacy role on these crucial environmental issues.</p>
7.5.2	Habitat Management	<p>The draft report doesn't seem to specify anything about surveying/cataloguing their current woodland structure. On page 28 of the document under 7.5.2 Habitat Management paragraph two, <i>'most areas will be managed ... for example in undertaking woodland management.</i> It certainly covers new planting, favouring native trees etc however the Council would suggest that the NIEA should be undertaking an inventory/survey of their current tree stock/woodlands, primarily identifying hazardous trees, as the countryside parks are well used by the public (hence the duty of care). Also by surveying their trees, it would certainly give clearer and informed direction as to what tree species they should be planting/re planting in the future.</p> <p>The NIEA position statement on IAS refers to controlling and or eradication measures on any IAS which is known to be causing an adverse impact on the properties. We would recommend the insertion of “or have the potential to adversely impact”. As by the time impacts can be demonstrated it will be too late to eradicate them with control as the only option. There should be provision for rapid response mechanisms to be undertaken.</p> <p>Links should be made to the Northern Ireland IAS Strategy and the potential contribution of these sites to investigate and demonstrate best practice approaches to IAS control.</p>

7.6.2	Customers	We would recommend the development of friends and/or volunteer groups to assist with the care and promotion of specific features as proposed on page 31.
7.7.1	Customer Care	<p><i>“Country Parks afford NIEA with an excellent opportunity to engage the public on environmental issues and to promote the conservation of the Northern Ireland natural and built heritage, environmental protection and sustainable use of the earth’s resources. NIEA will promote good visitor behaviour and adherence to the Northern Ireland Country Code and ask visitors to take their litter home”.</i></p> <p>We believe this is positive but needs resourced and as outlined in section 7.8.2 the most effective means of relaying a message is often by direct contact with another person.</p>
7.8	Enhanced visitor appreciation of and commitment to the environment	<p><i>NIEA will use its country parks to influence both the behaviour of visitors while in the Parks and the way they treat the wider countryside and their environment in general by providing opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes and commitment needed to protect and improve the environment.</i></p> <p>This statement only makes reference to signage, while this is positive there is much greater potential for meaningful engagement to take place otherwise the opportunity to affect behavioural change will be lost.</p>
7.9	Inspiration Interpretation	<p><i>NIEA is committed to capturing the imagination of visitors to its country parks, particularly of children, on the wonders of the natural environment and the local history of the area.</i></p> <p>While the sentiments in this section are welcome, trained and experienced staff are required to deliver these.</p> <p><i>Taken collectively, the suite of NIEA country parks affords a wonderfully diverse range of settings, landscapes types, habitats and species on which to provide information and engage the visitor’s imagination.</i></p> <p>We agree with this statement but it needs to be interactive to affect behavioural change.</p> <p><i>NIEA considers that environmental education is critical in achieving awareness of the environment and instilling the values, skills, attitudes and behaviours consistent with sustainable development.</i></p>

		<p>This statement is extremely important and needs to be resourced on a site basis to maximise usage by both schools and the wider public. NIEA should develop education/training opportunities in the widest sense in particular for adults.</p> <p><i>NIEA will seek to maintain the appropriate staff skills, knowledge and professional expertise needed in order to ensure the quality and educational relevance of resources it provides.</i></p> <p>The Council would recommend this as a priority.</p> <p><i>While NIEA is not currently resourced to employ professionally qualified educators to provide formal environmental education, it will continue to make available to other providers its education facilities and curriculum-related materials.</i></p> <p>Throughout this policy document it is acknowledged that country parks provide a key opportunity to deliver environmental education however, NIEA are not resourcing this. Furthermore funding towards environmental education has been drastically cut hence other organisations do not have the resources to deliver it. Environmental education should be prioritised including guided walks, talks, tours, enabling hands on experiences of the natural world. These should form a core part of each site work/ management plan.</p>
7.11	Accounting and value for money	<p>The annual figure of over 1.6 million people to these sites demonstrates their popularity and overall benefits regionally. The cost of £1 per visit appears to demonstrate good value for money.</p> <p>The reduction in resources for the operation of Country Parks, with consequent reduction in the quality, maintenance and service provision is very disappointing given the importance of these sites, the high levels of usage and the vast array of valuable services provided.</p>
7.12	Monitoring	<p>The council would be keen to see the key performance indicators used to measure and monitor the performance of NIEA country park management. This section seems quite light, the Council would be keen to see exactly how NIEA country parks will achieve the outcomes outlined as part of the vision at the start of the report.</p>

8.2	Potential alternative management arrangements	<p><i>All seven NIEA country parks include areas of important habitat and five have lands designated for nature conservation.</i></p> <p>This is a key point but is not robust enough throughout the report. These sites are of International and National importance and should be showcased. Four of the listed 7 sites are of European importance namely; Peatlands, Ness, Roe Valley and Crawsfordsburn and 5 are of National importance with 1 under consideration for ASSI designation.</p> <p><i>The country parks provide NIEA with its most important interface with the Northern Irish public. They enable NIEA to promote important messages on a wide range of topics (see 7.7, 7.8 and 7.9) and in particular to engage with children whose awareness of ‘green’ issues is likely to determine their commitment to the environment when they grow up?</i></p> <p>We would agree that an interface between the public and central government is critical but this needs to be interactive.</p> <p><i>NIEA seeks to provide its visitors with more than just a pleasant walk in the countryside. By explaining to visitors what they see in its parks and why the park environment is the way it is NIEA aims to enhance their experience in the countryside and to build a community committed to environmental conservation. We would query the fact that there is currently no provision to deliver this. The Council agrees with the concept that these are national assets and should be managed at a Central Government level</i></p>
13	Appendices	
	Equality Impact Assessment	<p>There was no reference throughout the report to Appendix 13 DOE Section 75 Equality of Opportunity Screening analysis form.</p> <p>Appendix 13 Equality of Opportunity Screening analysis form hasn’t been completed</p>
	Rural Impact Assessment	<p>There was no reference throughout the report to Appendix 14 Rural Impact Assessment.</p>

Notes:

1. *If you have no comments to make, please enter 'no comment' in line 1 of the above table.*
2. *Add additional rows to the above table as required.*



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Closures for Public Holidays and update on St Patrick's Day 2013
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Each year a plan is presented to committee setting out the opening/closing arrangements for public holidays. At the January 2012 Committee, Members approved the closure arrangement in respect of public holidays for 2012/13 and advised that committee would be presented with an update in relation to St Patrick's Day 2013.</p>

2	Key Issues
	<p>Members are asked to note the following information:</p> <p>At the time of submitting the report in January 2012 the public/bank and statutory holiday entitlements had not been confirmed. The recommendations of the January 2012 report were made on the basis that Sunday 17 March would be allocated as the St Patrick's day public holiday for shift workers. However the Council has since confirmed that Monday 18 March has been allocated as the designated St Patrick's day holiday for all staff including shift workers.</p> <p>As a result of this the following centres which were all due to be closed on Sunday 17 March 2013 will now close on Monday 18 March 2013 instead : Andersonstown, Whiterock, Ozone Tennis Centre, Loughside and Falls.</p> <p>As per the January 2012 report the majority of centres close on bank holidays however some centres remain open to facilitate the smaller customer throughput and these are chosen on a geographical basis and rotated each year and this practise will continue for 2013/14.</p>

	<p>Staff training has also proven difficult operationally for mandatory training or briefing sessions on operational issues. Members are asked during December to allow a training day to be allocated per centre. Any other short closures will be delegated to the director to facilitate operational reviews and improvements.</p> <p>Planned maintenance closures will also need to be facilitated and a further report will be submitted to committee in relation to these and the bank holiday arrangements for 2013/14 as soon as they are agreed.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The financial impact of implementation of this change has been reflected within the revenue estimates for the period 2012/13.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>Staff required to work on 18 March are entitled to normal pay for that day, plus plain time for the hours worked, plus time off with pay, at a later date.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	None

5	Recommendations
	It is recommended that members approve the change in date for St Patrick's day closure for 2013.

6	Decision Tracking
	The Committee Decision will be implemented by the Assistant Director and appropriate notification will be provided to staff and customers.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	None



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Parks Events Small Grants Scheme
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Brian McKinley, Events Co-ordinator

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Members are reminded that at its meeting on 15 November 2012, approval was given to support the grant scheme for groups wishing to stage events in parks during the summer of 2013. It was agreed by Committee to increase the maximum grant per group from £2,250 to £3,000 and in May 2012 the Committee granted delegated authority to the Director to approve funding applications to the scheme in 2013/14 if required.</p> <p>Information on the scheme was advertised accordingly and the closing date for applications was set at 8 January 2013. The criteria used for assessing applications to the scheme is attached in Appendix 1.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The applications were assessed according to the criteria agreed by Committee. Of the 22 applications, 21 met the criteria for an award to be made. Full details of the applications received and the recommendations for grant awards are presented in Appendix 2. ▪ A Community Parks Outreach Manager will contact the group that was not successful in receiving an award to help them identify other options for their proposed event. ▪ Due to the lower number of applications received, further applications will be invited and the conditions of the existing scheme will apply.

	<p>Information on the Scheme will also be advertised and the Parks Outreach Officers will work to ensure that communities across the city are aware of this funding opportunity and are encouraged to apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Officers will continue to review the scheme and any revisions will be brought back to the October Committee for consideration and approval.
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> £100,000 was allocated in the revenue estimates to cover this scheme.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> The management of the scheme mainly involves staff from the Open Spaces & Active Living Unit and Business Support. The Community Park Managers and Outreach Officers are responsible for liaising with groups.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> The running of community events increases use of the parks and creates a sense of ownership.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	<p>There are no known equality and good relation implications.</p>

5.	Recommendations
	<p>It is recommended that the Committee note:-:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ that the groups listed in Appendix 2 have been awarded grants under the Director's delegated authority.

6.	Decision Tracking
	<p>All actions will be completed by the Open Spaces & Active Living Manager by October 2013</p>

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>None</p>

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Current criteria for the parks events small grants scheme Appendix 2: List of applications and proposed grants.

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Appendix 1

Proposed Criteria for Parks Events Small Grants Scheme 2012

Introduction

Community Park Outreach Managers will work with you to ensure that you get the best from our local parks and open spaces. They will help you identify and develop new possibilities and opportunities to use council sites. We are about People, Places and Possibilities.

Applications will be assessed according to a number of criteria. To be successful, an application DOES NOT have to score highly on all criteria, some inevitably will be more relevant to an event than others.

1. Community benefit

Does the event benefit the local community around the park or open space: for example, does it help to encourage a sense of ownership by the local community, provide opportunities for cross community activity and does it complement other council schemes such as Summer Interventions, etc.

	Points
No tangible benefit to surrounding community	0
Alignment to other council schemes, eg Summer Interventions, benefit to surrounding community, helping to create ownership of park	50
Event with good relations as a theme	100

2. Health benefit

Does the event provide a health benefit to those attending; for example, activities that encourage exercise, walking, children's games (sporting competitions are not covered by this grant fund).

	Points
No tangible health benefit	0
Some health benefit, e.g. walking, children's active games – but not just a bouncy castle	50
Event with health as main theme or thrust	100

3. Environmental benefit

Does the event provide benefit to the local environment within the park or open space: for example, through a litter clean up, bulb or tree planting, habitat management (this would have to be done according to the park management plan).

	Points
No environmental benefit	0
Immediate or temporary benefit e.g. litter clean up as part of event (not just tidying up afterwards), temporary art	50
Medium or long term environmental benefit e.g. tree/bulb planting, habitat management	100

2. Educational benefit

Does the event provide some educational benefit to those attending: for example, information on a relevant issue, a theme or message that will help to change attitudes, links to the school curriculum, etc

	Points
No educational benefit	0
Some educational benefit e.g. definite message or theme, as opposed to say just a 'fun' day	50
High educational benefit e.g. links to curriculum, changing attitudes	100

Additional points will be awarded for events that make use of the fabric of the park in the event which help promote aspects of it. For example, an event that used the paths of a park for a guided walk or included activities based around an historical or natural feature in the park would score more highly than an event which simply took place in marquees and made no reference to anything within the park itself to promote it.

Using the fabric of the park as an integral part of event, rather than just an event staged in a park 50 points

One of the aims of the scheme is to encourage events in some of the local and district parks, and so scoring is biased towards these parks and away from parks such as Botanic Gardens, Ormeau Park and Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park.

Using a local or district park or playing field site 50 points

Appendix 2: List of Applications & Proposed Grants 2013						
Successful Applications for Parks Events Small Grants Scheme 2013						
Ref. No.	Group	Date(s)	Venue	Title of Event	Amount of Grant Requested	Proposed Amount of Grant to be Awarded
PESGS 01/2013	Inner East Youth Project	24-Jul	Victoria Park	Teddy in the Park	£3,000	£2,835
PESGS 02/2013	St Teresa's Youth Centre	19-Jul-13	Northlink Playing Fields	Party In the Park	£2,440	£2,440
PESGS 03/2013	Ballynafeigh Community Development Assoc	April 9,11,13,14 & June 4,6,8,9	Ormeau Pk	Neighbourhood Bird Watch	£2,288	£2,288
PESGS 04/2013	The Conservation Volunteers	06-Oct	Ormeau Pk	The Big Green Weekend	£2,900	£2,900
PESGS 05/2013	Artillery Young Mothers Group	12-Jul	North Queen St Playground	Young Parents Fun Day	£2,381	£2,381
PESGS 06/2013	Cairde Loch na Leathghealai	04-Aug	Half Moon Lake	Fun Day in the Park	£3,000	£2,780
PESGS 07/2013	Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	12-Jul	Cliftonville Playing Fields	Craic @ the Cricky	£3,000	£3,000
PESGS 08/2013	All Nations Ministries	10-Aug	Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon Park	International Community Picnic	£2,780	£2,758
PESGS 09/2013	Féile an Phobail	28-31-Aug	Falls Park	Draiocht Children's Arts Festival	£2,800	£2,800
PESGS 10/2013	Sólás	7-Apr & 29 Sept	Botanic Gardens	Awareness of Special Needs in Our Community	£3,000	£3,000
PESGS 11/2013	Ardoyne Fleadh Project	25-Aug	Marrowbone Park	Fun on the Hills	£3,000	£3,000
PESGS 13/2013	Belfast Hills Partnership	01-Jun	Ligoniel Park	Invertebrate Investigation Day	£1,000	£1,000
PESGS 14/2013	Belfast Hills Partnership	29-Jun	Cave Hill Country Park - Carrs Glen	Walk for Woodland & Waterside Wildflowers	£1,000	£1,000
PESGS 15/2013	Belfast Hills Partnership	5&6-Jul	Cave Hill Country Park - Hazelwood	Mammal Watch	£1,000	£1,000
PESGS 16/2013	Shankill Area Social History Group	13-May	Shankill Graveyard	Bringing Our History Alive	£2,850	£2,950
PESGS 17/2013	Willowfield Parish Community	07-Sep	Ormeau Park	Family Fun Day	£2,050	£2,050
PESGS 18/2013	Holy Family Youth Centre	12-Jul	Alexandra Park	Lark in the Park	£2,852	£2,852
PESGS 19/2013	Old Stranmillis Residents Association	01-Jun	Sharman Road Open Space	Stranmillis Residents Good Relations Day	£3,000	£3,000
PESGS 20/2013	Rare Breeds Survival Trust NI	6 & 7-Apr	Victoria Pk (TBC)	Country in Town Spring Display	£3,000	£3,000

	Support Group					
PESGS 21/2013	Disabled Ramblers NI (Shopmobility Belfast)	May-Sept	Various Parks	DRNI Park Rambles 2013	£3,000	£3,000
PESGS 22/2013	Lower Oldpark Community Assocation	14-Sep	John Hewitt (Alloa Street)	John Hewitt Park Event	£3,000	£3,000
Unsuccessful Application for Parks Events Small Grants Scheme 2012						
Ref. No.	Group	Date(s)	Venue	Title of Event	Amount of Grant Requested	Comments
PESGS 12/2013	Paperclip Architects	06-Apr	Drumglass Park	Art in the Park .. A moment in time	£3,000	Application did not demonstrate how event met criteria



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Contribution to Societies for the Spring and Autumn Flower Shows in 2013
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Brian McKinley, Events Co-ordinator

1.0	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to pay £100 contribution to each Society involved in the spring and autumn flower shows.</p> <p>The Parks and Cemeteries Services Section organises the annual Spring Fair in April at Barnett Demesne and the annual Autumn Fair in September at Botanic Gardens. Council Officers work in partnership with two flower show committees during the year to organise the flower show elements of the Spring Fair and Autumn Fair.</p> <p>In previous years the Committee has authorised the making of a £100 donation to each of the horticultural Societies involved in the organisation of these flower shows, in recognition of their assistance throughout the year</p> <p>In 2012 the Spring Fair at Barnett Demesne incorporated the annual spring flower show and over 500 horticultural exhibits on display, with a mix of environmental activities, children's entertainment, displays of animals and birds, demonstrations and music. This year almost 8,000 visitors attended the Spring Fair over the two afternoons.</p> <p>Also in 2012 the Autumn Fair took place in Botanic Gardens. This inter-departmental event between Parks and Leisure and Development, combined the annual autumn flower show with a number of food stalls, a selection of plant and craft traders, children's entertainment, workshops</p>

	and music. Almost 1,000 horticultural exhibits were on display at the flower show and the event attracted 15,000 visitors. The Grand Finale Band Concert, which completed the Music in the Parks programme for 2012 took place in Botanic Gardens as part of the Autumn Fair.
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2.0	Key Issues
	<p>Council Officers meet with each of the spring and autumn flower show committees three times a year to discuss and plan for the two events. Altogether there are 13 Societies represented on the two committees.</p> <p>A contribution of £100 is being requested for each Society to demonstrate that the Council recognises the support shown by all the horticultural societies involved in the flower shows. The Societies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Friends of Bonsai ▪ Northern Ireland Daffodil Group ▪ Belfast and District Beekeepers' Association ▪ Belfast Winemakers' Circle ▪ British Cactus and Succulent Society ▪ Federation of Women's Institutes of Northern Ireland ▪ Irish Fuchsia and Pelargonium Society ▪ North of Ireland Dahlia Society ▪ Northern Ireland Bonsai Society ▪ Northern Ireland Group of Flower Arrangement Societies ▪ Northern Ireland Orchid Society ▪ Northern Ireland Vegetable Association ▪ Rose Society of Northern Ireland <p>The £100 contributions are normally sent out to the Societies involved after each event has taken place. The Societies involved with the Spring Fair would receive their donation in April while those involved in the Autumn Fair receive their donation after the September event.</p>

3.0	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> £1,300 was allocated in the revenue estimates to cover the contributions.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no additional human resources implications.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> Working in partnership with the horticultural societies provides additional assistance to the Council. Also their presence at shows and events offers additional interest for visitors and adds an educational element to the events.</p>

4.0	Equality Implications
	There are no known equality implications

5.0	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to approve a £100 contribution to each of the Societies outlined above.

6.0	Decision Tracking
	None

7.0	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.0	Documents Attached
	None

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Request for Charity Abseil on Cave Hill
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Paula Irvine, Community Parks Outreach Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.2	The Council has received a request from Activities NI to hold a charity abseiling event on Cave Hill. This event has become an annual occurrence on the hill as this will be the third year running for this event. The event organiser has once again requested the use of McArt's Fort where the main event will take place.
1.3	The event is scheduled to take place on a Saturday 14 September 2013.
1.4	All proceeds raised as a result of the event will be donated to Meningitis Research.
1.5	Consideration has been given to the health and safety implications and environmental issues involved in the surrounding area.

2.	Key Issues
2.2	In previous years the main concern has been the possibility of nesting birds around the cliff faces on Cave Hill and indeed last year the event had to be postponed following a pre-event survey detected nesting birds. It is for this reason that the event organiser has decided to change the date for this year's event to September.
2.3	Holding the event in September minimises the risk of nesting birds being disturbed as a result of the abseil, however the event organiser is still required to carry out a survey in the weeks leading up to the event and the results will be made available to Council officers. As with in the past if birds are found to be nesting in the vicinity of the proposed abseil, the event will be delayed until advice is received from the Raptor Study Group and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

2.4	As with all such events, health and safety issues with regard to the holding of the event will be addressed through the preparation of an event management plan by the organisers to the satisfaction of Council officers. The event organisers will be required to undertake all the necessary risk assessments and to ensure that all health and safety requirements are met.
2.5	The event organiser has expressed an interest in holding several abseiling events on Cave Hill throughout the forthcoming year. It is proposed therefore that authority to do so be granted by the Director under the scheme of delegation. Future consent will be granted by the Director of Parks and Leisure on confirmation from the Park Manager that all event management criteria have been met and following consultation with the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign.

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There are no financial costs to Belfast City Council.</p> <p><u>Human resource</u></p> <p>No additional human resources known at this time.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u></p> <p>The use of Cave Hill Country Park for the event.</p>

4.	Equality and good relations implications
	There are no equality or good relations implications anticipated.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>It is recommended that the committee grant approval for the charity abseiling event to take place at McArts Fort on the Cave Hill on the condition that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The event organiser ensures that all health and safety requirements are met to the council's satisfaction, including event management plan, risk assessments, safe systems of work and equipment inspection information. 2. The event organiser ensures that the necessary bird surveys are carried out prior to the event taking place. 3. Any future abseiling requests for Cave Hill are permitted by the Director of Parks and Leisure under the scheme of delegation.

6.	Decision Tracking
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	All actions will be completed by Michael Largey Community Parks Manager and Paula Irvine, Community Parks Outreach Manager.
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7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	None

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Andersonstown Leisure Centre: Gort Na Mona Historical & Cultural Society
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks & Leisure
Contact Officer:	Adrian Walker, Leisure Operations Manager

1. Relevant Background Information

Gort Na Mona Historical and Cultural Society have requested use of the facility at Andersonstown Leisure Centre. Gort Na Mona has stated that they are a group based in the Upper Springfield area which research and tell of the history of the area and the people who reside there. Prior to this application three events have been held at Whiterock Leisure Centre and Andersonstown Leisure Centre without incident and no complaints were received at the centre.

2. Key Issues

An application for the use of the Main Hall (event time 7pm -1.30am) and surrounding rooms at Andersonstown Leisure Centre on Easter Saturday 30 March 2013 inclusive of set up, site clearance and clean up on Sunday 31 March 2013 has been received from Gort Na Mona Historical and Cultural Society.

The facility request is for an Irish folk music evening and bar facilities would be required.

The organiser has undertaken to provide the following information in support of the application:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal letter of application • Safety statement • Risk Assessments • Public Liability Insurance • Occasional licence • List of security staff and registration numbers
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> The fee charged to Gort Na Mona Historical and Cultural Society is in line with Council charging policy and will include staff costs for out of opening hours use.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other implications</u> Council officers will liaise with organisers in relation to the potential environmental impact of this event.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	<p>The organiser will also leaflet the surrounding area to make residents aware the event is taking place and provide a contact number should any event queries arise.</p> <p>The booking of this event is in line with the department's event policy. There is no equality or good relations implications relating to this event which will be open to the public.</p>

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Members are asked to consider Gort Na Mona Historical and Cultural Society application to hire facilities at Andersonstown Leisure Centre on Saturday 30 March 2013 and approve it subject to the provision of the appropriate event management plan.</p>

6.	Decision Tracking
	<p>Leisure Operations Manager</p>