



Subject:	Partnership Agreements 23/24
Date:	7 March 2023
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Kelly Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager Cate Taggart, Neighbourhood Services Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise members of the existing Partnership Agreements that are in place to deliver services aligned to Neighbourhood Services activity. Members are asked to consider future funding to continue these partnership agreements in 23/24.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	It is recommended that Committee agree to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Continue funding to each of the partners at the same level for the 23/24 financial year (£240,109)- Enhance promotion of partnership efforts to increase public awareness of activity delivered through these funding agreements.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	Members are aware that City & Neighbourhood Services works in partnership with a number of organisations that share common strategic objectives and that some of this work is supported through annual funding agreements to deliver against agreed outcomes.
3.2	In 2021/22 an extensive review of the first six Partnership Agreements listed below was completed; the review concluded that the agreements provided strategic alignment, added value and value for money. In line with these findings, council agreed that these partnership funding arrangements should continue at the same level to deliver services in 22/23.
3.3	At the start of 2023 a desktop review of the last two agreements listed below, which were not part of the original review, was carried out. It was agreed that these funded programmes should be considered as part of the overall departmental partnership arrangements and have therefore been included in this paper for consideration. In line with any decision to extend funding, officer will agree specific deliverables with these organisations in advance of next year's programme and events. These are likely to include

information in relation to economic impact, visitor numbers and increased audiences, and increased cultural diversity and awareness

3.3

Project	Funding
Belfast Hills Partnership	£36,900
Lagan Valley Regional Park	£67,000
Outdoor Recreation NI (promotion of mountain bike trails)	£5,000
Keep NI Beautiful (Live Here Love Here and Eco Schools Project)	£55,000
Mary Peters Trust	£5,000
Bryson Energy (previously Play Resource) *	£31,209
Belfast Mela	£20,000
Belfast International Arts Festival	£20,000
TOTAL	£240,109

* Note – Play Resource Warehouse is no longer in existence and instead has merged with Bryson Energy.

3.4

The review recognised the annual nature of budgeting within local government, however it highlighted that forward planning and service delivery could be improved if a longer term funding cycle could be provided to these partner funding arrangements.

3.5

Whilst this is recognised as desirable, given the wider financial support provided to the community/voluntary sector on an annual basis and the challenges to financial planning at present it is **NOT** recommended that funding is allocated beyond the 23/24 financial year at present to these partners.

3.6

Financial implications

The total financial allocation to these partner funding arrangements is £240,109. These budgets were approved as part of rate setting for 23/24.

3.7

Equality or Good Relations Implications

None identified at this stage.

4.0

Appendices – Documents Attached

4.1

Appendix 1 – Review of Partner Funding Conclusions Summary Tables

Abbreviations used

- LVRP (Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- KNIB – LHLH (Keep NI Beautiful Live Here Love Here)
- BHP (Belfast Hills Partnership)
- PRW (Play Resource Warehouse)
- KNIB – Eco Schools (Keep NI Beautiful Eco Schools)
- ORNI (Outdoor Recreation NI)
- MPT (Mary Peters Trust)
- BIAF (Belfast International Arts Festival)

Appendix 1 – Review of Partner Funding Arrangements Conclusions Summary Tables

1. Alignment to the Belfast Agenda

Partnership	Belfast Agenda Priorities			
	Growing Economy	Living Here	City Development	Working and Learning
<i>Relevant issues within priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase tourism spend. Attract investment into Belfast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve neighbourhoods. Improve the city living experience. Enable active, healthy, and empowered citizens, Provide fit for purpose city services. Support younger and older people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the city's infrastructure and improve connectivity locally, nationally, and internationally. Drive the physical and cultural regeneration of the city centre. Deliver key strategic physical projects and policies. Attract more tourists Protect/enhance environment/built heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance and increase the skill levels of our residents and attract and retain even more skilled people. Match people and skills to opportunities across Belfast Reduce poverty and economic inactivity.
LVRP	✓	✓	✓	✓
KNIB - LHLH		✓	✓	
BHP		✓	✓	✓
PRW	✓	✓	✓	✓
KNIB - Eco Schools		✓	✓	✓
ORNI		✓	✓	
MPT		✓		
Belfast Mela	✓	✓	✓	
BIAF	✓	✓	✓	

2. Alignment to other Council strategies/policy frameworks

Name of Strategy/Plan	LVRP	KNIB - LHLH	BHP	PRW	Eco-Schools	ORNI	MPT	Mela	BIAF
Belfast: Our Recovery (2020)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Belfast Resilience Strategy (2020)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Draft Local Development Plan (2020)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (2020)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Draft Belfast Open Spaces Strategy (2019-2023)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Waste Agenda Framework (2017-2025)		✓		✓	✓				
Belfast Integrated Tourism Strategy (2015-2020)	✓		✓					✓	✓
Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy (2009-2012)						✓	✓		
Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2007)	✓	✓	✓						

3. Added value to the Council/city

Added Value	LVRP	KNIB - LHLH	BHP	PRC	Eco-Schools	ORNI	MPT	Mela	BIAF
Cost savings /Levering Additional Funds	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Volunteer in-kind Resources/Support	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Access to Expert Advice/Knowledge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marketing Platform/ Positive Publicity/ Enhanced Branding Recognition	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategic Leadership/Influence /Advisor	✓	✓	✓						
Enhanced ability to deliver to influence change	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Partnership Collaborative Advantage/Economies of Scale	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Health/Wellbeing benefits for Children/Young People		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Supporting Central Government plans/strategies	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Responsiveness to anti-social behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Responsiveness to public hazards	✓		✓			✓			
Evidence based approach to supporting environmental quality standards/responding to local and national consultations	✓	✓	✓						

Environmental Education Support leading to Positive Behaviour Change		✓		✓	✓				
Improved Council-School Relationships					✓				
Financial Incentives for Belfast Schools					✓				
Council involvement in an International/Global Environmental Eco-Programme					✓				

4. Value for Money

Partnership	Council Funding	Council's proportion of total partnership budget	Deliverables Achieved – Rag Rating
LVRP	£67,000	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 deliverables – 100% fully achieved.
KNIB – LHLH Programme	£41,000	7.3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 deliverables - 67% fully achieved (2 out of 3). 33% partially achieved – due to Covid-19 restrictions (1 out of 8)
BHP	£36,900	12.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 deliverables – 87.5% fully achieved (7 out of 8). 12.5% partially achieved – due to Covid-19 restrictions (1 out of 8)
PRW	£31,209	8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 deliverables – 62.5% fully achieved (5 out of 8). 12.5% partially achieved – due to Covid-19 restrictions (1 out of 8) 25% deliverables not achieved – due to COVID-19 restrictions and organisational change (2 out of 8)
KNIB – Eco-Schools Programme	£14,000	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 indicators - 53% fully achieved (8 out of 15). 40% partially achieved (6 out of 15)– due to Covid-19 restrictions 0.7% not achieved due to Covid-19 restrictions (1 out of 15)
ORNI	£5,000	1.75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 deliverables - 60% fully achieved (3 out of 5). 40% partially achieved - due to Covid-19 restrictions (2 out of 5)
MPT	£5,000	1.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 deliverable – 100% fully achieved.
Belfast Mela	£20,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC
BIAF	£20,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC
Total	£240,109		46 deliverables 32 (70%) achieved 11 (24%) partially achieved 3 (6%) not achieved

Note – In all circumstances during the value for money assessment, the review concluded that the main barrier to full achievement for the majority was the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was outside the control of the respective partnerships. The review also concluded that it was highly likely in 'normal' circumstances further deliverables would have been fully achieved.