



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Update on Refurbishment of Woodvale and Dunville Parks
Date:	15th October, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure, ext 3400
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Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to update the committee on the DSD timetable for the economic appraisal of the proposals for the refurbishment of Woodvale and Dunville parks.

Relevant Background Information

At its meeting in September 2008 the Parks and Leisure Committee agreed as part of the parks improvement agenda to undertake design work for the redevelopment of two parks in the city.

It was subsequently agreed that Woodvale and Dunville parks be selected for this process because of existing funding commitments by Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO) to them as part of the neighbourhood renewal action plan and that:

- officers work up scheme designs; project plans and detailed costings in relation to each of the parks;
- officers continue to liaise and work with BRO and undertake, in conjunction with BRO, an economic appraisal on each of the parks;
- the two parks be put forward to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration for inclusion in the council's capital programme.

Current context

Council officers have worked with representatives from both communities to prepare concept drawings in respect of each of the parks. There is broad agreement on the design at Dunville Park and the economic appraisal has commenced and should be completed by the third week in December.

Agreement on the design drawing for Woodvale is expected within the next 3 weeks, consultants have been appointed to undertake the economic appraisal

and completion of this is expected also around the middle of December.

Discussions have continued with BRO who are still keen to support the refurbishment of both parks, subject to the findings of the economic appraisals. However, the committee will be aware that owing to the review of public administration BRO has a time constraint and must incur all expenditure by the end of March 2011.

The proposals for both parks have been submitted for inclusion in the Council's capital programme but are currently uncommitted. On completion of the economic appraisal and a firmer commitment from BRO regarding both schemes the Council will have to consider these proposals relative to other priorities and determine whether they should be elevated to committed status within the capital programme, subject to affordability limits.

Key Issues

The Committee is asked to note the following key points:

- It has been previously agreed that as part of the parks improvement programme there be advanced design work on two major parks in the city.
- It was agreed that the redesign of parks should include continuous involvement of the local community.
- Work has been ongoing in conjunction with local community groups, political representatives and BRO in respect of the refurbishment of both Dunville Park and Woodvale Park;
- Both parks are included within the neighbourhood renewal action plans for Falls/Clonard and Greater Shankill.
- Economic appraisals are currently underway for both parks to be completed by mid December, the results of which will determine which proposals are feasible.
- Both parks have been proposed for inclusion in the capital programme but have not been prioritised for capital investment.

Resource Implications

Financial

The proposal to refurbish Dunville and Woodvale Parks will have capital and revenue implications for the council. The Council's capital expenditure requirement for these two proposals would be in the order of £2m. There would also be revenue implications to determine once the scheme is approved.

Human Resources

To undertake major refurbishment of the parks will require significant effort on the part of officers from across the Council; this work can be carried out within existing resources.

Asset and Other Implications

The refurbishment of the parks will make a significant contribution to the quality of life of the community and will support neighbourhood renewal through delivery of the action plan.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report and commend the proposals to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for advancement into the “*committed*” section of the capital programme.

Decision Tracking

A further report will be brought by the Landscape Planning and Development Manager by February 2010 at the latest to update the Committee on the outcomes of the economic appraisal exercise.

Key to Abbreviations

DSD Department for Social Development
BRO Belfast Regeneration Office

Documents Attached

None.

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