



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Proposal to refurbish Waterworks Park
Date:	11 November 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to inform the committee of a proposal from the Friends of the Waterworks to work up a plan to refurbish the Waterworks Park.

Relevant Background Information

The Committee is reminded that the Waterworks Park is located in North Belfast and is adjacent to the Antrim Road and Cavehill Road. An aerial illustration is attached as Appendix 1.

The park is largely comprised of water; the upper pond has been populated with fish and is popular with local fishermen who have established an interest group within the park. In addition to the water features, the park comprises:

- a multi user games areas at the Antrim Road end, this is managed by the North Belfast Play Forum;
- two playgrounds, one at the lower end and one at the upper end;
- a grass pitch at the upper end of the park which has been refurbished;
- a community garden and temporary community building at the upper end;
- and
- a second community garden has been established towards the middle of the park.

The facility is well used although it is subject to anti social behaviour and parts of it are described as contested space.

In 2008 the council prepared a master plan for the park, this was an aspirational piece of work but was based on the views of council officers and members of the various interest groups involved with the park. A copy of the master plan is attached as Appendix 1.

The park has an active Friends Group which is anxious to work with the council to progress physical enhancement of the park. To do so it has been proposed that the group in conjunction with Groundwork NI work up specific elements of the

master plan, identify potential sources of funding and consider management options.

The intention would be to report back to the Parks and Leisure Committee in the early Spring outlining:

- proposals for the development of the park;
- a funding strategy;
- management issues and options; and

implications for the council in terms of capital and revenue spend and staffing / management issues.

Key Issues

The key issues for the Committee to note are:

1. this approach will be heavily reflective of a community led approach to the development of the park;
2. the work is undertaken 'at risk' by the friends group;
3. it in no way commits the Council to the specific proposals worked up;
4. it in no way commits the Council to expenditure;
5. the process could raise local expectations if not properly managed; and
6. any capital works contained within the proposal would be subject to the council's 'gates' process and would need to be included in the capital programme for prioritisation.

Resource Implications

None.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee give consent to the Friends of Waterworks to prepare development plans for the park.

It is further recommended that the Committee make clear that this permission in no way commits the Council to any of the proposals or to incur expenditure as a consequence of the proposals and that the work is carried out at risk by the group.

Decision Tracking

The Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager will provide a follow up report no later than April 2011.

Key to abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Waterworks location plan
Appendix 2: Waterworks masterplans