



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Woodvale Park cultural celebration
Date:	14 April 2011
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officers:	David Robinson, Good Relations Officer Fintan Grant, City Parks Manager

1. Relevant Background Information
<p>Members will be aware of the work of the Bonfire Management Programme, led by the Council's Good Relations Unit. The bonfire work has developed into a programme of cultural networks which has brought together 40 bonfire groups on a North, South, East and West basis across the city. The funding for this programme is borne by the council and through funding under the Peace III programme.</p> <p>Woodvale and Cambrai Youth and Community Association have been active participants on the programme for a number of years. In 2007 they were involved in the design of the bonfire beacon with a view to developing an alternative to the traditional 11 July bonfire. They ran successful beacon events, which included a range of community activities, in 2008 and in 2009 with over 6,000 people attending these events each year. The staging of these events was approved by the Parks and Leisure Committee on each occasion. In 2010 a bonfire frame was used which was an alternative to the beacon and was considered a successful alternative to the traditional bonfire.</p> <p>The Woodvale and Cambrai Youth and Community Group are again seeking permission to use Woodvale park for a cultural event on 11 July 2011. The event is similar to last year, with the use of family based recreation activities and the festival includes a music event. The festival is designed to be a family friendly event, open and welcoming to all.</p> <p>As part of this event they will be using a bonfire frame, as part of their ongoing efforts to transform the bonfire event within the wider locality. This proposal refers to a bonfire frame as opposed to a traditional bonfire. The proposed frame structure was tested and piloted by Ards Borough Council in 2009 and used last year in Woodvale Park with considerable success. Like the beacon, it is placed on a bed of sand, and has proven to cause no damage to the ground surface.</p>

	<p>The bonfire frame is a simple design, which aims to regulate the size and height of the bonfire and is a less complex structure than the bonfire beacon. The presence of the frame enables greater regulation of the bonfire and is a middle-ground between the traditional bonfire and the bonfire beacon.</p>
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2.	Key Issues
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	<p><u>Event Management</u> The event will require an event management plan and will have to comply with all statutory requirements. The organisers will be required to liaise closely with the council, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the statutory agencies. Furthermore, the proposed event will be underpinned by an appropriate form of legal agreement.</p> <p>The work of the council in relation to the transformation of bonfires continues to command the support of the inter-agency group who assist the council with the programme. The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, the Police Service for Northern Ireland, Department of Regional Development (Roads Service), Northern Ireland Office, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Community Relations Unit of OFMDFM have all supported developments thus far.</p> <p><u>Benefits of the proposal</u> There is significant local support for the proposal to pilot the bonfire frame as part of the cultural event, with a commitment of up to 50 local volunteers to supervise the event. These volunteers are trained in stewarding techniques and officially accredited by the Open College Network.</p> <p>The provision of beacons in 2008 and 2009 and the use of the bonfire frame in 2010 have proven to demonstrate that communities can take responsibility for managing bonfires and conducting events in a responsible manner. The proposal to use a bonfire frame seeks to develop a structure, to take the best of what the beacon process has delivered and amalgamate this with the traditional bonfire in order to provide a ‘middle-ground’ option to communities in their bonfire celebration.</p>
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4.	Resource Implications
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	<p><u>Financial</u> None. Current approved budgets within council will support the initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of sand base: £100 (through existing Parks Area North budget) • Fencing for after the burn: £200 (through existing Parks Area North budget) <p>There are no post event clean-up costs envisaged.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Continued Parks and Leisure as well as Good relations staff engagement with developing the proposed event.</p>
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4. Equality and Good Relations Implications
None.

5. Recommendations
<p>It is recommended that the Committee grant authority for this cultural event to be held in Woodvale Park on 11 July 2011, subject to satisfactory terms agreed with the Director of Parks and Leisure and on the condition that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the event organisers resolve all operational issues to the council's satisfaction; • an appropriate legal agreement is signed and adhered to; • The event organisers meet all statutory requirements including entertainments licensing.

6. Decision tracking
Officers responsible: David Robinson, Good Relations Officer and Fintan Grant, City Parks Manager for North. All actions to be completed by end of July 2011.

7. Key to abbreviations
OFMDFM: Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

8. Documents Attached
None.