



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Request for a Charity Abseil on Cave Hill
Date:	9 February 2012
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 will be the second year running for this event and due to the success of the event last year and the unique location 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 19 May 2012.
1.4	Consideration has been given to the health and safety implications and environmental issues involved surrounding this area.

2.	Key Issues
2.2	Last month Committee agreed a similar request for abseiling which related to Belfast Castle building and grounds which is scheduled to take place in September 2012.
2.3	The main concern in this instance is the possible disturbance of nesting birds around the cliff faces on Cave Hill. Previously Cave Hill has been a key nesting area for peregrine falcons and kestrels and so it is essential that a survey be carried out prior to the event taking place.
2.4	The event organisers have given assurances that a survey will be carried out in the weeks running up to the event and that the results of the survey will be made available to council officers. 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.

	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.
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> There are no financial costs to Belfast City Council.</p> <p><u>Human resource</u> No additional human resources known at this time.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u> 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.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Decision of the committee to be implemented by the Community Parks Manager and Community Parks Outreach Manager.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None.

8.	Documents Attached
	None.