



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Request to Rename Lower Oldpark Community Park (Alloa Street)</b>
<b>Date:</b>	15 March 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Emer Boyle, Policy and Business Development Manager Claire Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>Members will be aware that in August 2008 the Committee agreed a policy for how to manage requests from the public and community groups for the re-naming of Parks and Leisure facilities.</p> <p>There are three main types of naming situations that the policy was intended to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) The opening or reopening of parks and leisure facilities;</li><li>(ii) Providing recognition of major financial contributions;</li><li>(iii) Requests for “Memorialisation”/honouring individuals in recognition of “significant” contributions to the area or particular location.</li></ul> <p>The Committee agreed that the policy would apply only to local parks and leisure facilities and that the Council would not wish to have its City, District and Country Parks re-named.</p> <p>The criteria agreed is as follows:</p> <p>1.1 Where the request made is to memorialise a person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The person must be deceased for a minimum of five years;</li><li>• If the nominee is deceased then appropriate relatives or friends will be contacted asking if they approve of the request. If the relatives or friends do not approve, the naming process will not be pursued.</li><li>• The person must have made a “significant contribution” to the life of the area / City / made a significant positive contribution to parks and leisure objectives within the community where the facility is located;</li><li>• The person must have lived within the locality / district electoral area</li></ul>

(DEA) of the Park or Leisure facility for a significant or formative period;

1.2 It is recommended that a park not be named for a living person, except in the event that the person / family have made a significant financial contribution to improvement / development of the park or facility.

1.3 Where the name requested relates to a specific unique location:

- The name should provide a sense of place, reflecting the geographic location, community, neighbourhood or street where the park, facility or amenity is located;
- The name should reflect the historical significance of the area or reflects unique characteristics of the site (unique flora / fauna).

1.4 In ALL (re)naming cases:

- The applicant will bear the cost of the (re)naming in terms of consultation, signs, plaques etc;
- The name, once bestowed, is permanent;

1.5 Names should not be considered which:

- Cause confusion due to duplication or names sounding similar to existing named facilities / locations within the City;
- Unlawfully discriminate within the meaning and scope of the provisions of the Council's equality and good relations policies and the Shared Future agenda;
- Are party-political in intention or use.

1.6 Existing names will not be changed without consideration of the historical significance of the existing name, the cost and impact of changing existing signs, rebuilding community recognition and updating records (i.e. letterhead, databases, and promotional materials).

1.7 Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

1.8 All signs that indicate the name of a park and/or recreational facility shall comply with Belfast City Council's Parks and Leisure design standards. Specialised naming signage should not be permitted.

A management framework was developed and this is attached as appendix 1. In summary all requests for a name change would be sent to the Director of Parks and Leisure and an internal officer working group would assess the request against the criteria outlined above. The findings of this group and the recommendation of whether it met the criteria would then be brought to Committee for information.

	If the request meets the criteria the applicant will then be required to undertake consultation following guidelines agreed by the Committee (attached as appendix 2). The applicant will have to demonstrate that 66% of the sample i.e. 50% of the catchment area population agrees with the proposed name change.
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<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>										
	<p>A request has been received from Lower Oldpark Community Association to rename Lower Oldpark Community Park (Alloa Street) the 'John Hewitt Park'.</p> <p>The Association wish to rename the park to tie in with the local history of the area and the site. John Hewitt was born in a house on the site of the park.</p> <p>Officers have assessed the application and believe that it meets the criteria of the renaming policy for the following reasons:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Criteria</th> <th>How the request meets the criteria</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The person must have made a "significant contribution" to the life of the area / City / or made a significant positive contribution to parks and leisure objectives within the community where the facility is located.</td> <td>John Hewitt was a renowned poet, art historian, collector and political activist. He was appointed in 1976 as the 1<sup>st</sup> Write in Residence in the Queens University of Belfast and in 1983 he was made a Freeman of the City of Belfast.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The person must have lived within the locality / District Electoral Area of the Park and Leisure facility.</td> <td>John Hewitt was born in a house on the site of the park.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The person must have been deceased for a minimum of five years.</td> <td>John Hewitt died in 1987, 25 years ago.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>If the nominee is deceased then appropriate relatives or friends will be contacted asking if they approve of the request. If the relatives or friends do not approve, the naming process will not be pursued.</td> <td>A copy of a letter from a representative of John Hewitt's surviving relations supporting the name change was attached to the application.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Association have also undertaken an exercise to obtain signatures of support for the proposed name change and have gathered 207 signatures. In light of the work they have undertaken to date it is therefore recommended that on this occasion Members agree that the Association are not required to carry out any further consultation on the proposed</p>	Criteria	How the request meets the criteria	The person must have made a "significant contribution" to the life of the area / City / or made a significant positive contribution to parks and leisure objectives within the community where the facility is located.	John Hewitt was a renowned poet, art historian, collector and political activist. He was appointed in 1976 as the 1 <sup>st</sup> Write in Residence in the Queens University of Belfast and in 1983 he was made a Freeman of the City of Belfast.	The person must have lived within the locality / District Electoral Area of the Park and Leisure facility.	John Hewitt was born in a house on the site of the park.	The person must have been deceased for a minimum of five years.	John Hewitt died in 1987, 25 years ago.	If the nominee is deceased then appropriate relatives or friends will be contacted asking if they approve of the request. If the relatives or friends do not approve, the naming process will not be pursued.	A copy of a letter from a representative of John Hewitt's surviving relations supporting the name change was attached to the application.
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	<p>name change.</p> <p>In line with the policy Lower Oldpark Community Association will be required to pay for any signage associated with the name change.</p>
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<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p><u>Financial</u> The applicant will be required to cover any costs associated with the changing of signage to reflect the name change.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> None at this stage.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> A council asset will be renamed.</p>

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
	The request will be subject to equality screening but it is anticipated that it will be screened out as there are no known equality implications.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Members are asked to agree that the request from Lower Oldpark Community Association to rename Lower Oldpark Community Park (Alloa Street) to “John Hewitt Park” proceeds and that in this instance further wider community consultation is not required.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	The Director of Parks and Leisure will inform the applicant of the recommendation in line with the policy.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	None

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Framework for managing requests</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Consultation guidelines</p>