



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Lagan Valley Orienteers Partnership Request
Date:	13 September 2012
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure.
Contact Officer:	Lynne McCreery, Community Parks Outreach Manager

1	Relevant Background Information										
	<p>To seek committee approval to formalise an existing arrangement between the council and Lagan Valley Orienteers (LVO).</p> <p>Over the last 10 years LVO have been running Wednesday evening events (WEE) in various parks and forests over the summer months making this sport more accessible for local communities to get involved. In recent years the WEE spring and summer series attracts between 60 and 100 participants weekly with approximately one third being non-members. All age groups take part either individually or with friends or family and even the family pet can take part.</p> <p>Several years ago LVO expanded these evenings into the autumn and winter months to improve orienteering skills and keep participants active, attracting up to 30 participants. During the WEE events LVO charge members and non-members a registration fee to cover their costs for the up keep of the electronic equipment and mobile registration cabin, map printing etc.</p>										
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Belfast Parks have 12 sites with orienteering maps, although it isn't essential to have an area mapped to be able to participate in this activity.

North Belfast	East Belfast	South Belfast	West Belfast
Belfast Castle Cavehill Country Park	Belmont Park Orangefield Park	Ormeau Botanic Musgrave Lagan Meadows Clement Wilson Barnett's Demesne	Falls Park Woodvale Park

2 Key Issues

Council officers have been working with LVO and NI orienteering development officer to increase participation in this sport. In 2008 the department partnered with LVO to host a Halloween themed night event in Falls Park. In 2009 council officers facilitated a cross community orienteering discussion event in Falls Park based on the theme of changing conversations amongst young people (16-18yrs). The discussions were on health and wellbeing, education and employment, relationships and family, environment, culture and citizenship. In 2010 as part of national family week the department partnered with LVO and hosted 7 spring orienteering events with over 500 participants taking part.

We are currently working on an orienteering pack for school and youth groups to be used throughout Belfast Parks piloting it in Victoria Park and/or Ormeau Park. We are particularly keen to encourage schools to use orienteering as it can be linked into the national curriculum as an element for physical education, geography and mathematics.

The department would like to pilot new arrangements in order to develop the use of parks out of hours and where feasible free access to toilet facilities in Parks or Leisure buildings.

When park buildings are not normally staffed it is hoped that key handling arrangements could be put in place – i.e. that LVO open and close the facilities in line with the club / user requirements, under a legal agreement with the council, similar to that in place for the out of hours use of our leisure centres.

Training will be required in relation to all health and safety issues related to the management of parks pavilions and locking the park after hours.

To ensure there are no double bookings the department's outdoor leisure unit will handle all bookings.

This partnership will increase active, positive participation and improve the customers experience in parks and leisure.

3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> There may be some small additional cost to the council for additional electricity and water consumption which will be absorbed within the parks and leisure operational budgets subject to review.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There are likely to be some additional staff monitoring and planning implications which will be accommodated through our normal management process.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> All events are registered with the orienteering governing body and have public liability cover. As part of each event LVO produce a dynamic risk assessment associated with each venue. LVO have a policy for safeguarding children and young people and vulnerable adults. LVO are self-sufficient bringing their own equipment / maps and have a reputation for 'leaving no trace'.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	All of the proposals currently under consideration within this partnership project would have positive implications in terms of the promotion of equality and good relations, if undertaken in an inclusive manner.

5	Recommendations
	<p>It is recommended that the committee grant authority for free out of hours use of Parks and toilet facilities subject to satisfactory terms being agreed by the director of Parks and Leisure and on the condition that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LVO resolve all operational and health and safety issues to the council's satisfaction; • An appropriate legal agreement, to be prepared by the director of Legal Services, is completed.

6	Decision Tracking
	All actions will be completed by the Community Parks Outreach Managers. A report will be brought back to committee in due course (November 2012).

7	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>LVO - lagan valley orienteers WEE - Wednesday evening events</p>

8	Documents Attached
	None