



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Services Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Parks and Leisure Improvement Programme - Review of Belfast Zoo
<b>Date:</b>	15 November 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>As part of the Parks and Leisure improvement agenda the Departmental Management Team commissioned FGS McClure Watters to undertake a study of the current business model at Belfast zoo. They presented their report to the Parks and Leisure Management Team in June 2011.</p> <p>The report examined the zoo's operating model and highlighted a number of issues that should be addressed including strategic planning, income generation, organisation structure, resources and culture, tourism and marketing.</p> <p>The report therefore underlined the need for a root and branch operational review of the zoo and consequently the Organisational Development Unit were asked to carry out this review.</p> <p>Some of the areas identified through initial consultation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Management/leadership responsibility for future development of the Zoo</li><li>• Strategic development and business planning</li><li>• HR issues</li><li>• Inconsistent financial processing and procedure</li><li>• Silo culture</li><li>• Marketing approach i.e. local versus centralised unit</li><li>• Ambiguity over role clarity</li><li>• The role of the education unit</li><li>• Income generation</li><li>• The customer experience</li><li>• Increased overtime for staff</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased use of agency staff</li> <li>• Working practices - operational</li> <li>• Reliance on contractual overtime</li> </ul>
--	--

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<p>The zoo operational model is split into two sections: the operational and the business strands.</p> <p><b>Operational Strand</b></p> <p>There are currently 19 zookeepers on the establishment however over the past 4 years there has been a heavy reliance on the use of agency staff and overtime to supplement these numbers to ensure operational delivery. The role of curator is currently very operationally focused and requires support in order to realise the potential impact and remit of this post. This will be done through the creation of 3 senior working keepers (Sc6). These posts will provide day to day support to the curators in relation to supervising the zookeepers and making day to day operational decisions in relation to zookeeping staff and work.</p> <p>A team of tractor drivers is in place to support the zoo keeping staff. The review analysis showed that there was potential to combine this role with the stores/procurement function within the zoo. There is also a requirement to establish a senior post within this area to help drive efficiencies through the close monitoring of stock and introducing new working practices and provide effective supervision.</p> <p><b>Business Strand</b></p> <p>A recent internal audit of the retail operation within the zoo highlighted a number of areas at risk. The souvenir shop was recently extended however the appropriate staffing arrangements were not put in place resulting in reliance on agency staff being responsible for important financial practices. During the review process the need for permanent staff at both operational and management level became apparent. This will lead to the creation of a “Zoo Crew” post. The role of the Zoo Crew will provide a zoo presence which will help enhance the customer experience at the zoo. The role will be multi faceted and will carry out a range of duties. It is anticipated that this post will carry out litter picking duties at weekends in the busy summer months. This will negate the need for overtime to be paid to grounds maintenance staff who had been previously carrying out this duty. To manage this change the current shop manager and receptionist roles need to be changed to adapt to the new modes of working.</p> <p>Through research, benchmarking and information gathering the review also highlighted the need for a localised marketing post within the zoo to promote events, respond to every day media enquiries and work with Corporate Communications and the Parks and Leisure support team in relation to longer term marketing strategies.</p>

Currently there is a Business Support Assistant within the structure however the level of responsibility of this post will be increased with the introduction of the Zoo Crew and moving the procurement function to the business strand of the service.

This business strand will be overseen by the creation of a Commercial Support Officer who will have accountability for the finance and human resource aspects of the business strand. It will also assist the zoo Manager in business development activities; in turn this will allow the Manager to focus on the overall strategic direction of the zoo.

3	<b>Resource Implications</b>																												
	<p>The following is recommended:</p> <p><b>To create the following posts:</b></p> <table data-bbox="336 875 1171 1099"> <tr> <td>Commercial Support Officer</td> <td>PO 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Support Officer</td> <td>SO 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marketing Officer</td> <td>Sc 6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior Working Keepers x 3</td> <td>Sc 6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior Stores Person Tractor Driver</td> <td>Sc 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zoo Crew x 5</td> <td>Sc1c</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>To delete the following posts:</b></p> <table data-bbox="336 1211 1171 1379"> <tr> <td>Business Development Officer</td> <td>PO 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Support Assistant (Zoo)</td> <td>Sc 6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zookeeper</td> <td>Sc 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cleaners x 2</td> <td>Sc1c</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>To redesignate the following posts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shop Manager (Sc 3) – to Shift Supervisor Shop</li> <li>Tractor Driver (Sc 3) – Storesperson/Tractordriver</li> <li>Receptionist/Souvenir Shop Assistant x 2 (Sc 3) – Shift Supervisor Front of House</li> <li>Zoo Manager PO5 – updating of duties and responsibilities</li> <li>Education Officer SC6 – updating of duties and responsibilities</li> </ul> <p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The overall financial implications of this review are as follows:</p> <table data-bbox="323 1850 1147 2031"> <tr> <td>Cost of redesignating posts</td> <td>£14,358</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of creating new posts</td> <td>£255,858</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Savings from deleting posts</td> <td>£106,447</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total cost</b></td> <td><b>£163,769</b></td> </tr> </table>	Commercial Support Officer	PO 4	Business Support Officer	SO 2	Marketing Officer	Sc 6	Senior Working Keepers x 3	Sc 6	Senior Stores Person Tractor Driver	Sc 5	Zoo Crew x 5	Sc1c	Business Development Officer	PO 2	Business Support Assistant (Zoo)	Sc 6	Zookeeper	Sc 5	Cleaners x 2	Sc1c	Cost of redesignating posts	£14,358	Cost of creating new posts	£255,858	Savings from deleting posts	£106,447	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£163,769</b>
Commercial Support Officer	PO 4																												
Business Support Officer	SO 2																												
Marketing Officer	Sc 6																												
Senior Working Keepers x 3	Sc 6																												
Senior Stores Person Tractor Driver	Sc 5																												
Zoo Crew x 5	Sc1c																												
Business Development Officer	PO 2																												
Business Support Assistant (Zoo)	Sc 6																												
Zookeeper	Sc 5																												
Cleaners x 2	Sc1c																												
Cost of redesignating posts	£14,358																												
Cost of creating new posts	£255,858																												
Savings from deleting posts	£106,447																												
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£163,769</b>																												

	<p>However, as previously mentioned there has been an ongoing dependency on agency staff at a cost per annum of £213,088. These agency costs have been met from direct employee costs for the past four years and are included in the revenue estimates for 2013/14.</p> <p>Agency staff will still be used to cover additional casual zoo crew during peak periods and there will be additional on costs to support shift working and weekend enhancements. The net result of the review is cost neutral.</p> <p>To assure this position agency and overtime spend will be closely monitored following implementation of the review. It should also be noted that the recommendations will contribute to Council's commitment laid out in the investment programme to create job opportunities in particular at basic entry level.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u>  Consultation with staff and trade unions has been ongoing and an agreed position on the recommendations has been realised. Employee Relations have also been consulted with to discuss the proposed changes and to agree the appropriate implementation process. Normal HR policies and procedures will be applied in conducting all changes.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that all affected postholders will be required to sign and agree amendments to their JDs to take account of changes to roles, responsibilities and reporting lines.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u>  None</p>
--	---

<b>4</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>Members are asked to approve to creation, deletion and redesignation of the posts detailed above and that the outcomes of the review are implemented within the next 6 months.</p>

<b>5</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	<p>The responsible officer for overseeing the implementation of the recommendations will be the Assistant Director of Parks &amp; Leisure.</p>

<b>6</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	<p>HR – Human Resources</p>

<b>7</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1: Current and proposed structures