



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	DCAL Inland Waterways: Water Recreation Grant Programme: 2013/14
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Emer Boyle, Policy and Business Development Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to inform Members that the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's (DCAL) Inland Waterways Water Recreation Grant Programme 2013/14 is currently open for applications. Appendix 1 refers.
1.2	The objective of the grant programme is to provide funding to assist in creating and / or improving access to inland waterways on publicly owned land, which is free for the public to access and use. This is an opportunity for the Parks and Leisure Department to submit applications, to access external funding which will assist in enhancing inland waterway sites within the Department's responsibility.
1.3	Criteria which will be of particular merit in the application process are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• improving access to inland waterways to encourage increased use of facilities;• developing and enhancing facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities or have mobility problems; and• targeting social need by addressing issues surrounding social exclusion or contributing to improved social inclusion.
1.4	The total grant budget available from DCAL for 2013/14 is £90,000 across Northern Ireland and individual projects can attract funding up to a maximum of £20,000. DCAL has advised that, given the level of interest in the programme, funding will only be considered for one project per Council. Projects must be delivered and completed during the period 1 April 2013 and

	<p>31 March 2014. Project proposals must demonstrate match funding, both financial and in-kind, from Council and associated partners.</p>
1.5	<p>The application process required interested parties to submit an initial expression of interest to DCAL by 31 January 2013. The Parks and Leisure Department forwarded an expression of interest to DCAL on 25 January which identified its intention to explore the following Council sites as options for project proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lagan Lands East • Lagan Meadows • Sir Lady and Dixon Park • Half Moon Lake
1.6	<p>The completed application for a project proposal is due to be submitted to DCAL no later than 15 February 2013.</p>
1.7	<p>Council, through its Corporate Plan, is committed to improving access to services and facilities, ensuring as many people as possible within the city can connect to all opportunities available and which improve their quality of life. The Parks and Leisure Departmental Plan supports Council's objectives by committing to work with partners to integrate services, creating links across the city whilst making facilities accessible and valued by citizens which contribute to improving social and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>The Council's Investment Programme demonstrates a commitment to maintaining and enhancing vital community facilities and assets whilst ensuring everyone has access to high quality green spaces and good leisure opportunities. The DCAL Inland Waterways funding opportunity will assist Parks and Leisure Department to directly contribute to these aims and objectives, through delivery of its programme themes people and communities and the environment.</p>

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The Parks and Cemeteries Services planning process includes key actions to improve customer experience in parks and open spaces. The DCAL Inland Waterways Funding Programme is an opportunity to attract external funding, which will supplement in-house financial resources to support the key actions identified in the planning process.</p>
2.2	<p>Following further consideration of the sites detailed in paragraph 1.5 it was identified that Half Moon Lake was likely to be the most suitable location to meet the criteria specified in DCALs funding programme. Additionally, consultation with DCAL has suggested that Half Moon Lake is a site that has attracted its attention and one which DCAL is keen to see developed and improved.</p>
2.3	<p>The proposed project at Half Moon Lake would predominately involve creating permanent, structured, safe viewing platforms, incorporating disability and</p>

	<p>mobility access. Building these platforms and completing mobility improvements will create enhanced access and improve opportunities for greater use of the lake and surrounding area for everyone.</p>
2.4	<p>Project proposals within DCAL's funding programme will connect with planned work identified in the Parks and Leisure Departmental Plan and Council's Investment Programme, thus maximising all available resources and avoiding potential duplication.</p>
2.5	<p>To comply with the funding criteria, the Parks and Leisure Department must demonstrate sufficient in-house resources, matched with partnership funding to complete the project within the designated timescale. It would be Parks and Leisure Department's intention to evidence its commitment through in-house financial and in-kind resourcing. This will be supplemented in the longer term with funding from Council's Investment Programme. Given the direct link with Public Health Agencies strategies around health and wellbeing and active lifestyles, external partner funding is currently being explored with the Public Health Agency. Additional in-kind contributions from relevant voluntary and community organisations including Friends of Half Moon Lake is ongoing.</p>
2.6	<p>As the project proposal is presently a work in progress, a final budget has not yet been completed. The budget will be included in the funding application submitted to DCAL and presented to Parks and Leisure Committee in a further report to be presented to Committee in March 2013.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u> As outlined above, it is a requirement of the funding criteria to demonstrate partnership funding and options are currently being explored with Public Health Agency. The project proposal is still a work in progress therefore a final budget has not been prepared. A financial contribution will however be required by Council and this will be provided from the Parks 2013/2014 budget, in line with current planning and estimates processes.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Human Resources</u> Officer time will be required for coordinating and submitting funding applications, liaison with DCAL officers and planning, managing and delivering project activities.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None at this stage.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	<p>There are no known associated equality considerations at this stage however, should the application process progress, Equality and Good Relations factors will be taken into account in the development of the project.</p>

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the contents of this report;• Agree that the funding application as outlined in paragraph 1 is submitted to DCAL by 15 February 2013;• Agree that a further report is submitted to the Parks and Leisure Committee in March 2013, which will include a detailed budget illustrating partnership funding attracted to the projects, together with the financial investment required by Council.

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	<p>A report providing a detailed budget together with the outcome of the application submitted to DCAL under the programme will be presented to Committee in March 2013 by the Policy and Business Development Manager.</p>

7	Key to Abbreviations
7.1	<p>DCAL: Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure</p>

8	Documents Attached
8.1	<p>Appendix 1: DCAL Letter notifying Council of Inland Waterways funding opportunity.</p>