



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Request for Charity Abseil on Cave Hill
Date:	14 February 2013
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 event has become an annual occurrence on the hill as this will be the third year running for this event. 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 14 September 2013.
1.4	All proceeds raised as a result of the event will be donated to Meningitis Research.
1.5	Consideration has been given to the health and safety implications and environmental issues involved in the surrounding area.

2.	Key Issues
2.2	In previous years the main concern has been the possibility of nesting birds around the cliff faces on Cave Hill and indeed last year the event had to be postponed following a pre-event survey detected nesting birds. It is for this reason that the event organiser has decided to change the date for this year's event to September.
2.3	Holding the event in September minimises the risk of nesting birds being disturbed as a result of the abseil, however the event organiser is still required to carry out a survey in the weeks leading up to the event and the results will be made available to Council officers. As with in the past 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.

2.4	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.
2.5	The event organiser has expressed an interest in holding several abseiling events on Cave Hill throughout the forthcoming year. It is proposed therefore that authority to do so be granted by the Director under the scheme of delegation. Future consent will be granted by the Director of Parks and Leisure on confirmation from the Park Manager that all event management criteria have been met and following consultation with the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign.

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There are no financial costs to Belfast City Council.</p> <p><u>Human resource</u></p> <p>No additional human resources known at this time.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u></p> <p>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. 3. Any future abseiling requests for Cave Hill are permitted by the Director of Parks and Leisure under the scheme of delegation.

6.	Decision Tracking
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	All actions will be completed by Michael Largey Community Parks Manager and Paula Irvine, Community Parks Outreach Manager.
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7.	Key to Abbreviations
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8.	Documents Attached
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