



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Apprenticeships in Parks Scheme</b>
<b>Date:</b>	14 March 2013
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	John MacFarlane, Parks Quality Manager

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>In 2006 the Council had an apprentice training scheme for gardeners that ran until 2011. There were 19 apprentices trained over a three year period of which only three did not to complete the apprenticeship.</p> <p>The apprentice gardeners were trained to National Vocation Qualification level 3 in horticulture attending Greenmount college on day release. They had placements of six months duration at various parks to gain experience of the different functions involved in providing the Parks and Cemeteries Service.</p> <p>On completion of the apprenticeship all of the apprentices were guaranteed a job at Grade 4.</p> <p>As part of the Council's Investment Programme there is a commitment to training and development and improving the employability of citizens. The apprenticeship scheme has been reviewed and will be revised and implemented to meet the objectives of the Investment Programme.</p>

<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The number of apprentices to be recruited will be three, based on affordability, and levels of supervision.</li><li>• The length of the apprenticeship will be three years.</li><li>• The recruitment of apprentices will include written and practical assessment.</li><li>• It is planned that the apprentices will start work in July 2013 in time to enrol on the National Vocational Qualification Level 2</li></ul>

	<p>Horticultural course at Greenmount College which starts in September 2013. Apprentices will be required to make their own travel arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The apprentices will be based in one park managed by the same Community Park Manager and Community Park Supervisor for the three years of their apprenticeship. They will however be required to move to other parks for short periods to gain the full experience of all the operations they cannot gain experience of in their assigned park.</li> <li>• The apprentices will be monitored throughout their employment on their performance including time keeping, sickness and progress with their Level 2 course. Failure to keep up with their course work may lead to their apprenticeship being terminated.</li> <li>• There will be no guarantee of a job at the end of their apprenticeship. They will however be able to apply for any vacancies in the Parks and Cemeteries Service.</li> <li>• The scheme will be reviewed half way through year three and recommendations will be made on the future roll out of the programme and if there should be a further scheme delivered.</li> </ul>
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<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	£37.5K has been budgeted for the scheme in the estimates for 2013/14 and this will be maintained for the duration of the scheme. The budget will cover wages, training and development needs.

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
	None

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>The Committee is asked to note the appointment of 3 horticultural apprentices for a three year apprenticeship which supports the Investment Programme objectives.</p> <p>During this period the apprentices will be trained to level 2 in Amenity Horticulture and Turfculture and receive vocational training.</p>

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	Parks Quality Manager

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

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None