

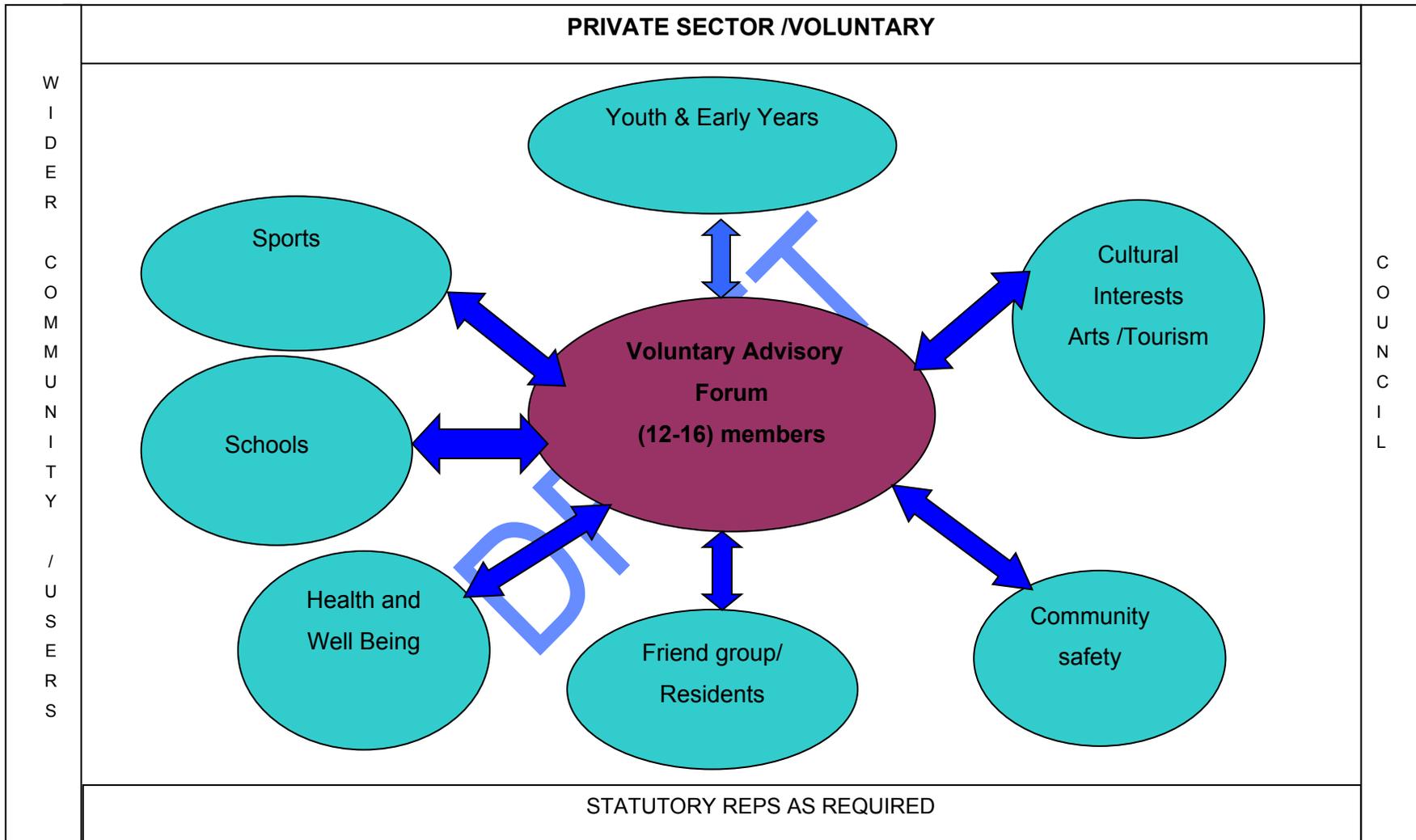
An Outline Model

- 3.1 Informed by the discussions to date the following model is proposed for consideration. This is supported by outline draft terms of reference and some proposals re supporting issues including budgets, resources and capacity building.

The underlying basis of the model is to have a structure and membership that is relevant to the desired outcomes of the park, and which is actively engaged and committed to the vision of the Park and the objectives underpinning the investment from Council and BRO and BCC's strategic themes from its Open Spaces strategy¹. A hub/network model allows for communities of interest to be included drawn from local residents, statutory, voluntary and community sector, and sporting and cultural interests as appropriate. At the centre of the model we have set out a range of issues which we believe should be the focus at this time, these may change over time and depending on resources there may be a greater focus on some than on others, although there may be an element of interdependence and / or overlap. One important element of this model is that the Park and its activities are very much part of the wider community which it serves, this could in structural terms be illustrated through a link to, for example, an area partnership board. The structure recognises the benefits from existing community structures.

¹ BCC Open Space Strategy 2005 Your City, Your Space (2005) BCC's vision of how Belfast's open spaces will develop between 2005 and 2020. Key themes of People and community, Our heritage, Healthier places and Safer Space

Diag 1: Preferred Hub/Network Model



3.2 Terms of Reference / Specification²

Name: Woodvale /Dunville Park Voluntary Advisory Group

Purpose

The purpose of the advisory group is to develop, oversee and help deliver an agreed management plan for the Parks to create a community resource and a legacy for the whole community.

Objectives

- In partnership with the Council and other partners the group is committed to;
- Enhance the sense of ownership of the park by the community
- Making the park a safer place and using the asset to contribute to a safer environment;
- Encouraging greater use of the park and contributing to improving health and well being in the neighbourhood;
- Using the asset as appropriate to help support the local economy,
- Maximising the asset to deliver across the corporate strategic managers of Council.

Responsibilities

- To help develop an annual engagement plan for the park that will support the delivery of the objectives;
- To help oversee the delivery of the plan;
- To help promote the park locally and throughout the City, working in partnership with BCC, community partners and relevant communities of interest (residents, businesses, sporting, cultural, community, leisure)
- To help develop and deliver a programme of events and activities working in partnership with BCC, community partners and relevant communities of interest (residents, sporting, cultural, community and leisure) to contribute to the vision and objectives agreed.

² Additional Governance Guidelines are set out at Appendix 2

- To ensure that there is a balanced programme of activities and events throughout the year with the recognised communities of interest having an opportunity to support and promote their interests in a manner that is transparent and equitable.
- To work with the Council to protect the environmental amenity of the park and its precincts.
- To work with the Council to promote environmental education,
- To promote a wider sense of ownership and increased usage by local residents.

Membership

The membership of the Group is open to all organisations and bodies considered to have an interest in the development and promotion of the Park and who can make a contribution to delivering the vision and objectives of the respective Parks.

It is proposed that the initial membership will be between 12-16 members to facilitate an effective structure. In securing members there are a number of options which could be considered as follows;

Option 1: Working through existing structures

The Council seek nominees working through existing community structures (Neighbourhood Renewal and or Area Partnerships) who in turn will seek volunteers from amongst its current membership drawn from interest groups. Where it is considered necessary expressions of interest will be sought from representative bodies' e.g. existing sports and arts bodies and or relevant statutory bodies. Members will be nominated and have the full support of their organisations/agencies to attend and participate. This will require the nominating organisation to formally endorse the terms of reference and protocols and have this recorded in their minutes. Only individuals formally endorsed by their nominating bodies will be permitted as members.

Option 2: Working directly with Communities of interest

The Council work directly with interested parties e.g. existing sports and arts bodies and or relevant statutory bodies and seek nominations. As above those nominated would have to have the full support of their respective nominating bodies.

As this is likely to be a period of transition it may be more practical to consider working directly through existing structures for an initial period of 18 months.

This can be reviewed.

Sub groups

It is likely that the group may establish task groups to develop and progress specific areas of work e.g. Promotion and fundraising

Time Commitment Required.

It is estimated that role will requires an estimated commitment of: 3 hours per month. During the early stages a greater commitment of time will be required, possibly a day per month. This will likely be reduced to a normal monthly meeting as the activities are implemented

The Group shall meet as necessary and at least every month for 6 months from March 2013. Thereafter meetings may be quarterly dependent upon the wishes of the group.

Quorum

All participants in the Group are encouraged to attend every meeting. The quorum is a minimum of **6 members**. Any member who does not attend 3 consecutive meetings will be deemed as no longer a member of the Group.

Secretariat

The secretariat will be provided initially by the BCC. The group may decide to offer to provide a secretariat support at a future point. The Secretariat will be responsible for ensuring that participants receive meeting agendas and appropriate papers at least five working days before the meeting.

Decision Making

The working group shall apply a consensus approach to its decision making. If in the event that consensus can not be reached a vote may be taken with a simple majority carrying the vote. In the event of a tied issue the Chair will have a casting vote. As the Parks are owned by Council all decisions taken in terms of the annual plan, events and programming are presented and agreed within the relevant Council Committee. The working group has no delegated authority and will act in an advisory capacity only.

3.3 Capacity Building

While both communities have a network of experienced community organisation and community representatives the Advisory groups represent a new departure for the Council and therefore the group and Council may need support particularly at the outset to ensure that the group functions effectively .This may include supporting the group during its formation stage e.g. supporting the group develop a shared view of the vision and mission and objectives for the parks, providing support in governance training ,supporting and providing training re the role of the Chair .

3.4 Resources

To enable the group to meet its purpose it is intended that a budget be set a side to support the delivery of the programme in year 1. It is unlikely that the budget will be sufficient to deliver a full range of events and activities and alternative funding may be required. The group will be able to make application to other sources of funding within the council providing it meets the necessary criteria as may be set

3.5 Measures of Success

Measuring the effectiveness of the new structure may be done at a number of levels.

- Is the Park achieving its stated aim and objectives in terms of the contribution to the quality of life and supporting objectives.
- Is the partnership represented by the new group working effectively and efficiently?
- Are members enthused and committed in their role of promoting and supporting the new Park.
- Is the Group fulfilling its terms of reference
- Are both parties i.e. the Council and partners around the table fulfilling their respective roles?

3.6 A Review Process

Related to the above and the experimental nature of the approach being adopted by the Council after 18-24months, a pilot period will be undertaken and reviewed in the context of wider corporate initiatives in relation to area planning.

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