



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject	Temporary Closure of Belfast Zoo
Date:	11 April 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Heavy snowfall on the night of 21 March followed by gale force winds on the night of 22 March caused severe damage to Belfast Zoo which included: breaches to fences, fallen trees, roads and paths rendered impassable.</p> <p>Due to the damage to enclosures and fences, animals had to be shut in and only let out for short periods. The decision to close was made in the context of animal welfare, public health and safety and the imminent Easter period which because of improving weather and lighter evenings is traditionally a busy time of year for the Zoo.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>The Zoo was inaccessible from 22 March 2013 due to severe weather conditions.</p> <p>Significant damage was done to enclosures and maintenance was also hindered through the inaccessibility of roads and paths.</p> <p>Work has been ongoing involving Parks grounds staff, Property Maintenance staff and external contractors to restore the Zoo to full operation. The extent of the repair work was such that the Zoo was unable to open for the Easter bank holiday.</p> <p>The Corporate Communications team liaised with media and used all other channels such as web and social media to get the message out about the Zoo closure and the reopening.</p> <p>At the time of writing it is estimated the Zoo will reopen for business from Friday 5 April 2013.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
	<p>Finance An analysis of the impact of the closure on income and the cost of repairs will be conducted once works have been completed.</p> <p>Human Resources Significant staff resources were deployed during the weekend and bank holiday to clear roads, paths, and trees and to do repair works.</p> <p>Assets As significant damage was done to fences and enclosure, work has been ongoing to restore the site.</p>
4.	Equality and good relations implications
	No impact.
5.	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to note the report.
6.	Decision Tracking
	Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None
8.	Documents Attached
	None