



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Pilot Dogs off lead enclosure at Grove Park</b>
<b>Date:</b>	9 May 2013
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011 strengthens the legislative powers available to district councils to help them deal more effectively with a range of local environmental quality problems, including dog control.</p> <p>Members are reminded that under Part 5 of the Act, Council's may create up to four separate orders to help manage issues associated with dogs in their area. Dog Control Orders can be made in respect of any land in the district council area, subject to certain exemptions, and can relate to the following four matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Dog Fouling;</li><li>(b) Requiring dogs to be kept on a lead in designated areas;</li><li>(c) Excluding dogs from designated areas; and</li><li>(d) Limiting the number of dogs a person can be in control of at any one time.</li></ul> <p>At its August 2012 meeting the Parks and Leisure Committee adopted a recommendation that a Dog Control Order be made in respect of dog fouling. The Dogs (Fouling of Land by Dogs) (Belfast) Order 2012 became operative on 1 October 2012, replacing the dog fouling provisions contained in the Litter (NI) Order 1994.</p> <p>The Order limiting the number of dogs which a person may take on to land was considered at the Health and Environmental Services Committee of 7 November 2012. The recommendation to limit the number of dogs to four was subjected to public consultation and agreement to make the order was confirmed by the Health and Environmental Services February 2013 committee. It received full Council approval on 4 March 2013 and became operative on 1 April 2013.</p> <p>At its November 2012 meeting, the Parks and Leisure Committee agreed the recommended approach to deciding whether or not to make a dog</p>

	<p>control order excluding dogs from cemeteries, children’s playgrounds and playing fields or pitches in the city. This order was subjected to public consultation at the same time.</p> <p>The Council therefore provided clarification on the meaning of “exclusions” within the draft Order and stressed that the exclusion from land Order was, in effect, repeating the terms of existing bye-laws whilst giving the Council stronger enforcement powers.</p> <p>Issues were raised about the need for facilities to allow dogs off lead. This refers to the order requiring dogs to be kept on a lead in designated areas which was still under consideration by the Dog Control group and proposals had not been brought forward at this stage.</p> <p>Due to the public response, the consultation on the exclusion from lands order was suspended to allow further clarification and consideration of the issues raised.</p> <p>The Dog Control Group considered the issues raised and in particular the need for areas to allow dogs off lead.</p> <p>To help inform the implementation of further dog control orders a pilot project was proposed to trial this approach in the North of the city.</p>
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<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Key Issues</b></p>
	<p>The proposed pilot will allow the group to ascertain the benefits of providing such a facility and provide evidence to inform a decision on future provision.</p> <p>It is proposed that the pilot will be in operation from June 2013 and will be monitored for a period of six months.</p> <p>An area within Grove Park has been identified as the location for the facility due to the number of dog issues on site, the availability of land to meet the requirements and its potential catchment area within North Belfast. The proposed area is outlined on the map attached at Appendix 1.</p> <p>The enclosed area will measure 80metres x 30metres and will be secured using 1.5m ranch style fencing with chain link attached.</p> <p>It will provide a social hub for dog walkers (a sizeable percentage of users) to exercise their dogs in a controlled environment. It will be a sustainable facility, easily maintained and attract new users to the site and help with the overall issues of controlling dogs in parks.</p> <p>Signage will be erected at the entrance to the facility advising users on the rules.</p> <p>The proposed rule are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No children under sixteen</li> <li>• Only two dogs per person allowed in.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People must be supervising their dog at all times.</li> <li>• No food permitted.</li> </ul>
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<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>												
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of 250m2 of parkland.</li> <li>• Costs (as below)</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Element</th> <th>Price</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>150 metres of 3 rail chain link attached fencing</td> <td>£4000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 gates</td> <td>£ 600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Install a gravel path to the entrance and install a 4m sq holding area.</td> <td>£2000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signage</td> <td>£400</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Cost:</b></td> <td><b>£7,000</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cost of installing the facility will be met from existing budgets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Human Resources</b> There are no implications associated with this report.</p> <p><b>Asset and Other Implications</b> It is anticipated the new facility will enhance the use of the park and improve the experience of visiting the park for all users.</p>	Element	Price	150 metres of 3 rail chain link attached fencing	£4000	3 gates	£ 600	Install a gravel path to the entrance and install a 4m sq holding area.	£2000	Signage	£400	<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>£7,000</b>
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<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
	The Friends of Grove Park and local residents will be consulted prior to implementation and during the pilot period to assess the pilot in terms of usage and effectiveness.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Committee is asked to approve the installation of the pilot dog off lead enclosure at Grove Park.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

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

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 – Plan of Park and outline proposal