



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Mountain Bike Trails at Barnett Demesne/Mary Peters
Date:	8 August 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Anne Reid, Countryside Officer

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Committee is reminded that the Barnett Demesne Mountain Bike Trail and Jumps Park was officially opened on Friday 26 April 2013, following approximately £475,000.00 investment, funded by Regional Development Programme (RDP), Sport NI (SNI) and Belfast City Council (BCC).</p> <p>The project has been delivered in partnership with Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI). A legal licence agreement has been entered into between BCC and ORNI with ORNI responsible for a number of tasks, the most prominent being the marketing, promotion, events management and ensuring that all data required is returned to the funders.</p> <p>All of the new mountain bike trails in Northern Ireland are marketed as a NI package by ORNI and the trail at Barnett Demesne is part of this. This maximises the promotion of the Barnett Demesne trails and incorporates BCC's product within the ORNI's brand 'Mountain Bike NI' and associated marketing platforms, thus increasing the awareness levels and in turn visitor numbers. To further enhance this potential we are keen to enter into 3 further agreements with ORNI, namely Volunteer Mountain Bike Trail Ranger Programme for NI, Annual Mountain Biking Permit and the Application Process for Mountain Biking Events. This will allow us to follow best practice and it replicates what is being done with the other trails in NI.</p> <p>Data counters recorded 14,555 cyclists and 5,731 pedestrians using the trails for the month of June.</p>

2.	<p>Key Issues</p>
	<p><u>Volunteer Ranger Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim of this programme is to maintain the high standard of trail & jumps currently in place at Barnett Demesne. • We will aim to reduce the annual maintenance costs • Empower the local riders by promoting a sense of trail ownership • Create a group of ambassadors for the trail • Promote volunteering opportunities within the City <p>ORNI will take the lead in the delivery of the programme. BCC will provide training in trail maintenance and health & safety, identify tasks and dates for repairs.</p> <p>The cost to BCC will be approximately £2,400 per year to run the Volunteer Programme (breakdown of costings are attached in Appendix 1) plus £800 per annum payable to ORNI. This covers ORNI's costs for recruiting and maintaining the volunteers, communicating information to volunteers, assisting BCC in setting up a programme of trail maintenance days, publicising any material connected with the programme, securing external funding or sponsorship for the programme and organising 'Volunteer Reward Scheme' for participants.</p> <p><u>Annual Mountain Biking Permit</u></p> <p>Organisations wishing to lead mountain biking coaching or guiding on either a commercial or non commercial basis must apply for a permit. This will entitle the holder to deliver coaching or guiding on the trail and or jumps and promote their services via the designated trail page on the official website www.mountainbikeni.com</p> <p>This allows BCC to monitor the quality of coaching being delivered and it will ensure that trail conduct is delivered to new users. Whilst it is appreciated that this is not all encompassing it is existing best practice and history has shown that over time permit holders come to know each other and it becomes self-policing.</p> <p>The cost for an annual permit will be in line with other trail centres and set at £80. It is envisaged that this income will offset the cost of the volunteer ranger scheme.</p> <p><u>Mountain Biking Events</u></p> <p>In order to satisfy the funders requirements ORNI have assumed responsibility for organising all events on the trails & jumps park as they have the responsibility to oversee outcomes. In order to monitor this an application process has been established to allow the trail to be managed in a responsible and effective way. The application incorporates our legal requirement with ORNI and our 24 point plan for events taking place in BCC parks.</p> <p>An event application is required when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the event is organised by a commercial organiser • a large event is planned, ie more than 20 applicants • the trail is to be closed to members of the public

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the event is to be held at night <p>Any events deemed to be sensitive in nature will be brought before Committee for approval.</p> <p>The charges are in line with other trail centres in NI. It is envisaged that this income will be used to help maintain the trails.</p> <p>The application process allows us to monitor events taking place on the trail and ensure that it is not over used for events thus impacting on the users.</p>
--	---

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There will be an annual charge of approximately £2,400 to run the Volunteer Ranger Scheme plus £800 payable to ORNI to partake in the Scheme.</p> <p>There will be income generated from the Permit Scheme of £80 per organisation.</p> <p>There will be income generated from the Events application scheme.</p> <p><u>Human Resource</u></p> <p>There are no additional human resources implications other than staff time. It may also be necessary to purchase additional equipment for volunteers, eg PPE.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u></p> <p>This will promote the trail network & jumps park.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	There are no equality or good relations implications anticipated.

5.	Recommendations
	It is recommended that Committee grant approval for the agreements to be entered into. Officers will liaise with Legal Services to draft appropriate documentation.

6.	Decision Tracking
	All actions will be completed by Anne Reid, Countryside Officer.

--	--

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	SNI – Sport NI BCC – Belfast City Council ORNI – Outdoor Recreation NI RDP – Regional Development Programme PPE – Personal Protective Equipment

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 Volunteer Mountain Bike Trail Ranger Programme Appendix 2 Annual Mountain Biking Permit Appendix 3 Application Process for Mountain Biking Events