



## Belfast City Council

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| <b>Report to:</b>         | Parks and Leisure Committee                                  |
| <b>Subject:</b>           | <b>Ligoniel Park – Boodle’s Dam and Community Engagement</b> |
| <b>Date:</b>              | 13 February 2014   |
| <b>Reporting Officer:</b> | Andrew Hassard, Director Parks and Leisure                   |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b>   | Caroline Wilson, Neighbourhood and Development Manager       |

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Relevant Background Information</b>   |
|           | <p>Boodles Dam is located off the Mountain Hill Road in Ligoniel Park. It is likely that the reservoir was constructed circa mid 1800’s for industrial use.</p> <p><b>Boodle’s Dam</b></p> <p>As reported in January 2014 Committee in line recommendations in the Reservoir report produced by URS Infrastructure and Environmental Ltd, works will soon be undertaken to drain, infill and re-develop the impoundment.</p> <p><b>Ligoniel Improvement Association (LIA) and Belfast Hills Partnership</b></p> <p>LIA works closely with Belfast Hills Partnership in developing education and environmental programmes both in Ligoniel Park and the area surrounding. The Chair, John Gray, has written to the Director of Parks and Leisure seeking to establish an organisational relationship with the Council to improve linkages between the Ligoniel Park and other open spaces in the neighbourhood.</p> <p>In discussion with LIA, they have indicated that they would be able to support community engagement around this urgent Boodle’s Dam issue. This would also enable the Council and LIA to examine the potential for a wider relationship on the ongoing development and management of the park.</p> |

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| 2. | <b>Key Issues</b>  |
|    | <p><b>Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>If the Committee is agreeable to this proposal, it is suggested that the Council convenes a joint working group, initially comprising BCC officers, LIA representatives and Belfast Hills Partnership. The purpose of the joint working group is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support Council officers in the communication of the safety issues at Boodle’s Dam to the public;</li> <li>– Facilitate community engagement on plans for the dam and wider development issues for Ligoniel Park;</li> <li>– Present a development proposal and annual animation plan to Committee, linking to the agreed management plan and identifying resources, where appropriate by September 2014; and</li> <li>– Establish a partnership delivery group thereafter, to oversee and support the delivery of the plan, as agreed by Parks and Leisure Committee.</li> </ul> <p>As part of the development proposal and annual plan, the group would be expected to identify necessary resources (including sourcing external funding) and seek approval from Committee on its delivery.</p> <p><b>Proposed objectives</b></p> <p>The group would be committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promoting a wider sense of ownership of the park by the community</li> <li>– Making the park a safer place and using the asset to contribute to a safer environment</li> <li>– Encouraging greater use of the park and contributing to improving health and well being in the neighbourhood</li> <li>– Encouraging inclusive and diverse participation in its community engagement and plan delivery.</li> </ul> <p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>It is proposed in the first phase the working group comprises BCC officers, Belfast Hills Partnership and LIA representatives. In the establishment of the partnership delivery group at the next stage, it is anticipated that a wider membership will be proposed to Committee for its consideration.</p> <p><b>Benefits to Council</b></p> <p>There are a number of key benefits to the Council in working collaboratively with LIA and Belfast Hills Partnership in this way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Effectively discharges its safety obligations at Boodle’s Dam with</li> </ul> |

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|  | <p>community support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Encourages local civic stewardship in Ligoniel Park, to protect the Council's asset and local biodiversity</li> <li>– Links the Council's programme of work to established LIA's existing networks e.g. with schools</li> <li>– Links the Council's programme of work to Belfast Hills Partnership's strategic plan</li> <li>– Potentially draws down additional external funding for capital and revenue proposals</li> <li>– Fulfils Green Flag standard principles for 'good' community engagement</li> <li>– Contributes to wider strategic outcomes related to promoting healthy living, protection of the environment and vibrant, safe neighbourhoods.</li> </ul> <p>It is expected that the joint working group would provide a review of its progress to Committee within 12 months of its establishment, i.e. by October 2015.</p> |
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| <b>3.</b> | <b>Resource Implications</b>  |
|           | <p><u>Financial</u><br/>Community engagement expenditure within revenue budgets.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u><br/>None</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u><br/>Boodle's Dam to be completely abandoned, in-filled and re-developed, following a community engagement process, no later than end September 2014. Allocation has been made for this within maintenance budgets 2014/15. As asset owner, any further asset-related developments will be presented to Committee for its consideration, prior to implementation.</p> |

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| <b>4.</b> | <b>Equality Implications</b>   |
|           | <p>There are no equality and good relations implications at this stage. Screening of any emerging development proposal and annual plan will be undertaken in the future.</p> |

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| <b>5.</b> | <b>Recommendations</b>   |
|           | <p>Committee is asked to agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A community engagement process to determine the re-development of the impoundment (dam) is facilitated in partnership with Ligoniel</li> </ul> |

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|  | Improvement Association (LIA) and Belfast Hills Partnership;<br>– A working group to examine a wider development plan is convened by Council officers. |
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| <b>6.</b> | <b>Decision Tracking</b>   |
|           | Responsible Officer: Neighbourhood and Development Manager.<br>Actions to be completed by September 2014 |

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| <b>7.</b> | <b>Key to Abbreviations</b>            |
|           | LIA – Ligoniel Improvement Association |

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