



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Environmental Based Youth Development Camps, Summer 2014
Date:	10 April 2014
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director, Parks and Leisure Department
Contact Officer:	Ricky Rice, City Park Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>A trial Youth Development Project was held last year in West Belfast which was based on an environmental theme for young people. The aim was to provide youths with an opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge in an outdoor environment. The project included organised visits to various Council Parks properties, River Lagan, Bog Meadows and the Colin Glen Forest. Parks staff, along with various community partners delivered 2 separate weeks of summer camps. Each camp lasted for five days and each day had a different environmental or geographical learning theme relating, for example, to the environmental aspects of the Lagan Valley Regional Park. The project was very favourably received by both parents and young people who stated it was a very enjoyable and challenging week.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>Following the success of the trial project, it is proposed to provide 4 summer camps for children and young people in North, South, East and West of the City during the period July and August 2014. The camps will last for five days and will be aimed at various age groups with a maximum of 15 per camp. Each camp will have the following objectives;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To develop skills and knowledge of the local environment• To develop personal development skills and complete different adventurous activities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build new relationships, both within a team environment and across the City. <p>Each camp will have different aspects and projects based both on local opportunities and options to visit and experience other parts of the City and develop and learn new skills.</p> <p>A typical day of activity may include the following; A walk through a forest or up a glen or mountain and an opportunity to learn new skills such as compass reading, basic navigation, lunch on a mountainside, learning about the local fauna and the natural local history.</p> <p>Parks Officers are keen to promote the Parks and open spaces across the whole of the city and to make our parks a focal point for leisure, education, adventure, physical and mental well-being along with youth engagement activities.</p> <p>It is intended this type of youth development camp will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation in leisure activities and assist in reducing childhood obesity. • Reduce the potential of anti social/community behaviour by engaging and educating the youths of Belfast on the positives that our parks and open spaces have to offer. • Increase the awareness of our youth on the importance of enhancing biodiversity in our city and surrounding area. • Encourage young people to become “Young leaders” by developing leadership skills, decision making skills, team working skills and hazard awareness/avoidance skills. <p>The camps would be subject to the preparation of an in depth event management plan including health & safety, child protection and relevant risk assessments.</p> <p>If this project is supported by Committee, staff will engage with local schools and youth groups to devise a registration/selection process. It is anticipated that age groups may vary from 10 – 17 years old, dependent on the local area needs.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> Each camp will have different requirements based on local need and availability and it is estimated each camp will cost £9,000. This cost will include the hire of buses, facilities at various sites including Belfast Activity Centre, purchase of camp uniform (clothing) food costs and the hire of specialist environmental consultant/contractor to facilitate the events. The cost of the 4 camps (£36,000) is planned for within the Parks area and outreach budgets.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Community Parks Outreach Managers will be required to be involved in</p>

	<p>the camps and at times Park staff may be needed to assist with delivery of projects at parks sites.</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u> None.</p>
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4.	Equality Implications
	There are no equality implications as the project is aimed at providing a positive environment for all children to enjoy and learn about their natural surroundings.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Committee is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant approval for Parks Officers to proceed and organise 4 summer camps during period July and August 2014 in East, North West and south Belfast.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Ricky Rice, City Parks Manager, South West Belfast

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	None