



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Environmental Based Youth Development Camps</b>
<b>Date:</b>	12 June 2014
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ricky Rice, City Parks Manager.

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>A trial Youth Development Project was held last year which was based on an environmental theme for youths. The aim was to provide youths with an opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge in an outdoor environment.</p> <p>The project included organised visits to various BCC Parks properties, River Lagan, Bog Meadows and the Colin Glen Forest. Parks staff, along with various community partners delivered two 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 youths who stated it was a very enjoyable and challenging week.</p> <p>Committee in April 2014 agreed in principle to grant approval subject to a re- evaluation of the costs involved and clarification of the selection procedure and age range.</p> <p>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"><li>• To develop skills and knowledge of the local environment</li><li>• To develop personal skills and complete different adventurous activities</li><li>• To build new relationships, both within a team environment and across the City.</li></ul>

	<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 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>The benefits of the youth development camp will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation in leisure activities and assist in reducing childhood obesity.</li> <li>• Reduced 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.</li> <li>• Increased awareness of our youth on the importance of enhancing biodiversity in our city and surrounding area.</li> <li>• Increased capacity for participants as “Young leaders” by developing leadership skills, decision making skills, team working skills and hazard awareness/avoidance skills.</li> </ul> <p>The camps would be subject to the preparation of an in depth event management plan including health and safety, child protection and relevant risk assessments.</p>
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2.	<p><b>Key Issues</b></p>
	<p><b>Age range and selection process</b></p> <p>Outreach Officers have built up relationships across the city with different age ranges of youths. On this basis the proposed age range of 10 years – 17 years is suitable, based on consultation with various existing youth groups. However, it is not intended that each camp will cover this complete age range, due to child protection issues.</p> <p>In order to facilitate an effective recruitment process, with the appropriate checks in place, it is recommended that the existing Youth Development Forums which are linked to Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB), be involved in the selection process. The Youth Development Forums have the relevant experience and knowledge of the local needs of youths. Outreach managers will work with the Forums to ensure that there is a broad representation of local young people in each environmental based youth camp and will ensure there is a balanced selection process, based on, for example, gender and background.</p> <p>The Outreach Managers will seek nominations from the Youth Development Forums and their associated local youth groups to determine the final group of fifteen. By working with the Forums, Council will be given assurance regarding the suitability of the young people to</p>

	<p>participate in this pilot programme, as well as ensuring that there is appropriate support for the young people pre and post-camp.</p> <p>An evaluation report on the programme will be brought to Committee in the autumn.</p>
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<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>	
	<p><b>Re- evaluation of costs</b></p> <p>The April 2014 committee report indicated that costs will be in the region of £9,000 per camp. This estimate of cost was considered to be the maximum cost and after further review it is likely the cost will be reduced to £7,190. See attached table of costings.</p> <p>Each camp will have different requirements based on local requirements and a typical environmental based camp will include the following;</p>	
	Hire of 3 approved child protection youth leaders	£450 per day £2,250 for 5 days
	Hire of bus	£200 per day £1,000 for 5 days
	Hire of any facilities, for example, Belfast activity centre for 15 youths.	£300 per day £900 for 3 days
	Hire of specialist environmental consultant	£300 per day £1,500 for 5 days
	One off purchase of camp equipment, pond dipping kits, maps, compasses, utensils and uniforms	£1,500 £1,500
	<b>Total for one week</b>	<b>£7,190 per week</b>
	<p>As previously stated, this cost is planned within Parks Area and Outreach budgets. The ratio of leaders to young people is determined by good practice guidelines.</p>	

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
	<p>There are no equality issues as the project is aimed at providing a positive environment for all children to enjoy and learn about their natural surroundings.</p>

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>Committee is requested to grant approval for Parks officers to proceed and organise four summer camps during period July and August 2014 in East, North, South and West Belfast.</p>

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
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	Ricky Rice, City Parks Manager
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<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	BELB – Belfast Education and Library Board

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