



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Woodvale Park – Cultural Celebrations July 2014
Date:	12 June 2014
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Fintan Grant, City Parks Manager, Area North

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Committee will be aware of the ongoing work of the Council led Bonfire Programme which has developed into a successful programme of cultural networks. This year the scheme has seen applications from approximately 43 bonfire groups across the City. The bonfire scheme this year will be funded by the Council, OFMDFM, DPCSP and the NI Housing executive.</p> <p>The Woodvale and Cambrai Youth and Community Association have been an active participant on the programme for a number of years. In 2007 they were involved in the design of the Bonfire Beacon as an alternative to the traditional 11 July bonfire. They have run successful events since 2008 with around 1,000 people attending these events annually. For the past several years the group has successfully used a bonfire frame as opposed to a beacon. The staging of these events was approved by the Parks Committee on each occasion.</p> <p>This group are again intending to design and deliver a cultural event in Woodvale Park on the 11 and 12 July 2014. They are seeking permission to construct a bonfire within the park and to stage associated community activities as part of their ongoing efforts to transform bonfires within the wider locality.</p>
2.	Key Issues
	<p>Positioning of the bonfire</p> <p>Last year it was proposed not to use the frame unlike in recent years, this was owing to the poor condition of the frame. It was instead proposed that</p>

	<p>crowd control barriers were used to contain the bonfire and to provide a safe area within which the fire could be managed. The fire was positioned on a six inch bed of sand to prevent damage to the ground surface.</p> <p>Developments within Woodvale Park The £2m development of Woodvale Park is now completed. Prior to the redevelopment of the park the bonfire had been constructed on the site of the old cinder pitch in Woodvale Park. However, the refurbishment scheme has seen the removal of this pitch and its replacement with a modern polymeric surfaced multi user games area. The option therefore of locating the bonfire at this spot is no longer a viable option. As reported in previous years there are limited options for a bonfire on the site. Last year following discussions with community representatives a decision was agreed to locate the bonfire on the site of the former tennis courts and for the accompanying celebratory activity to take place throughout the park in agreement with Council staff. The positioning and management of the fire last year was successful with minimal to no damage caused to the surface. It is therefore proposed that the same methods are used again this year.</p> <p>Risk Management As reported in previous years there are issues of risk with such an event that will be carefully reviewed. The organisers of the proposed event at Woodvale Park will be required to liaise closely with the Council and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. The work of the Council in relation to the transformation of bonfires continues to be supported by the inter-agency group who assist the Council with the Programme. The Fire and Rescue Service, the PSNI, DRD (Roads Service), NIHE, NIEA and the Community Relations Unit of OFM/DFM have all supported developments thus far.</p> <p>As with all such events, health and safety issues with regard to the holding of the event will be addressed through the preparation of an event management plan by the organisers to the satisfaction of Council officers. The event organisers will be required to undertake all the necessary risk assessments and to ensure that all health and safety requirements are met. There is local support for the proposal to host this event, with a commitment of up to 50 local volunteers to supervise the event. These volunteers are trained in stewarding techniques and officially accredited by the Open College Network.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> Currently there are no financial implications for the department, however as in previous years there may be a requirement for some expenditure to minimise the impact on the park and to ensure that the event runs to the Council's satisfaction.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no significant Human Resource implications, however some</p>

	resources will be deployed during the event to ensure it is organised and runs to the Council's satisfaction. <u>Asset and Other Implications</u> The use of Woodvale Park for the July 2014 cultural celebrations
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4.	Equality Implications
	Local communities and agencies have been consulted on the proposals

5.	Recommendations
	It is recommended that the committee grant authority for this event to take place in Woodvale Park in July 2014, subject to satisfactory terms agreed with the Director of Parks and leisure and on the condition that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The event organiser ensures that all health and safety requirements are met to the council's satisfaction, including an event management plan, risk assessments and public liability insurance. 2. The event organisers meet all statutory requirements including entertainments licensing

6.	Decision Tracking
	All actions will be carried out by Michael Largey, Community Parks Manager.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	PSNI – Police service of Northern Ireland DRD - Department of Regional Development NIHE – Northern Ireland Housing Executive NIEA – Northern Ireland Environment Agency OFMDFM – Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

8.	Documents Attached
	None