



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Probation Board for NI Community Service Projects in Parks</b>
<b>Date:</b>	16 October 2014
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Pete Murray, Antisocial Behaviour Programme Coordinator

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>Members will recall the SP&amp;R Committee report on “Work Experience for Ex-Offenders” 22 August 2008, seeking approval to widen the scope of the council’s work experience scheme, to include the provision of unpaid work experience placements for ex-offenders serving out community service orders which range from 40 to 240 hours.</p> <p>Through the North Belfast DPCSP, the Parks and Leisure Departments ASB Coordinator has been asked by the Probation Board for NI (PBNI) to support the rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders by offering suitable unpaid Community Service (CS) work experience placements for ex-offenders within parks in North Belfast.</p> <p>PBNI wish to use North Belfast parks on a pilot basis, for supervised CS projects. This pilot is part of a wider programme to tackle anti social behaviour in parks.</p>

<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<p>The role of the PBNI is to reduce crime and the harm it does by working with the courts, other agencies and partners to reduce re-offending and assist in integrating offenders successfully back into the community.</p> <p>During the development of this pilot, PBNI have confirmed that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. PBNI officers will supervise and escort CS workers to and from the placement (under normal circumstances). Attendance on a CS project</li></ol>

	<p>will likely involve working for one day per week between the hours of 10am to 4pm to carry out a defined programme of work.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. PBNI will be solely responsible for managing the CS workers while on the park placement. They are contracted as part of their Court order to behave in a reasonable fashion and any breaches result in sanctions, including removal from placement, formal warnings, and in some circumstances a return to Court.</li> <li>3. In addition to the Public Liability cover which the Council have in place, PBNI will be responsible for dealing with any claim from a CS worker resulting from an accident directly attributable to carrying out CS tasks. CS workers are provided with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and clear instructions on how to carry out tasks from trained PBNI Officers.</li> <li>4. Appropriate and low risk tasks such as litter picking, painting, planting and any other environmental work can be carried out by CS teams. These tasks will be agreed prior to the start of the work programme with BCC Park Mangers and the ASB Coordinator.</li> <li>5. PBNI clients will be under PBNI supervision at all times while working in the park. The PBNI supervisor will ensure that CS workers do not enter any previously agreed areas.</li> <li>6. PBNI will undertake all risk assessment in relation to CS workers assigned to a park project including all activities undertaken while on park placement.</li> <li>7. PBNI will ensure that all CS workers on park placements are not considered to present a significant risk of harm to others. Where an offender with a past history of violence is being considered for a placement, a discussion will take place with the ASB Coordinator to establish if their participation is appropriate.</li> <li>8. Offenders convicted of any sexual offence will not be considered for park placements.</li> </ol>
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<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p><b><u>Financial</u></b> As CS placements are unpaid there is no direct financial implication although there is a potential financial risk from any accident occurring in parks during the CS pilot. This risk will be managed through the development of a legal agreement between BCC and PBNI and through stringent risk assessments being carried out by PBNI.</p> <p><b><u>Human Resource</u></b> There are no human resource implications as the CS projects are supervised by PBNI officers.</p> <p><b><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></b> There are no assets and/or other implications contained within this report.</p>

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
	<p>There are no adverse equality or good relations aspects to this report. A focus on providing placement opportunities may assist in re-integrating offenders successfully back into the community and potentially reduce the risk of reoffending.</p>

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Members are asked to note the request from PBNI and the proposed use of North Belfast parks for Community Service projects on a pilot basis.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	An update report will be presented to the appropriate committee following the completion of this pilot.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	ASB: Antisocial behaviour CS: Community Service DPCSP: District Policing and Community Safety Partnership PCSP: Policing and Community Safety Partnership PBNI: Probation Board for Northern Ireland SP&R: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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