



<b>Subject:</b>	Proposed Forest School Awards Programme
<b>Date:</b>	10 May 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The Northern Ireland Forest School Association (NIFSA) has approached Council with a proposal seeking support for the delivery of a Forest School Awards programme in parks, working in partnership with the Council and local schools/organisations.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	The Committee is asked to:
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree to support the proposal with a contribution of £8,000 from existing budgets and to agree to work in partnership with NIFSA and four schools/organisations across the city to deliver the programme.</li></ul>
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subject to Members supporting the programme, recommend that the Chair and Deputy Chair or their nominees participate in the Judges' panel to select participants in December 2016.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	NIFSA is a charitable organisation established in 2008 to develop and deliver a sustainable environmental education programme. The organisation has trained teachers and youth leaders from all over NI as Forest School Leaders and has supported over 15,000 children in outdoor activities. They have developed the nationally recognised

	Forest School Leader Award.
3.2	The award encourages and inspires local schools and organisations to become accredited Forest School Practitioners. It is supported by local councils and every year schools and organisations have the opportunity to participate in the process to win entry to the programme. Forest school sessions are held in Council Parks, encouraging young people to develop an appreciation of their local area and open space environment.
3.3	NIFSA have partnered with ni4kids who will feature the NI Forest School Awards in their magazine, (10 issues) which has a wide circulation via Primary Schools, Nursery Schools, Retail, etc. within each council area. This is complemented by a bespoke monthly ezine with over 19,000 subscriptions, on line activity and social media following.
3.4	The programme fits with the Council's objective to encourage active living and positive use of our outdoor spaces and complements other existing outreach programmes such as Parklife.
3.5	NIFSA are seeking support from the 11 Local Councils in the region and plan to launch the scheme in September 2016. Organisations will be invited to participate in September – November 2016 with selection by a panel of judges taking place in December 2016. Each participating council is asked to nominate 2 judges.
3.6	NIFSA will deliver the training programme which involves participating schools/ organisations visiting their local park 1 day per week for 6 weeks between January and June 2017.
3.7	The programme will end with a final celebratory event of all participants at one big Forest School event.
	<u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u>
3.8	The proposals are provided for within existing budgets. Council contribution will be £8,000 however the value of the programme for Belfast is estimated to be over £15,000.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>
3.9	The proposal will be Equality Screened.

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
4.1	None