



Subject:	Lagan Valley Regional Park - Letter of Support
Date:	10 May 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officers:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director Agnes McNulty, Open Space & Active Living Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of the report is to inform Committee that the Board of Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP) has requested that the Council submit a letter of support on its behalf to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) who has reduced its funding to them by more than 70%, for the 2016/17 financial year.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree that a letter of support is submitted on behalf of LVRP, to the NIEA.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	Members will be aware that LVRP is a partnership between Belfast City Council, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, the Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure and the NIEA. The Council has been one of its main partner funding organisations since its inception in 1967 and LVRP has supported and enhanced the work undertaken by the Council in countryside recreation, biodiversity, promotion and community engagement.
3.2	LVRP has advised that they submitted two funding application options for 2016/17 to NIEA

	<p>for £43,000 and £51,000 respectively. NIEA has offered them £10,000 which is more than 70% less than in 2015/16. The Manager of LVRP has indicated that he will be appealing NIEA's decision given the devastating impact it will have on the Regional Park.</p>
3.3	<p>It appears that the other Non Government Organisations in Northern Ireland who also submitted funding applications to NIEA have received their requested amounts of funding.</p>
3.4	<p>It is imperative that given the uncertainty of funding to LVRP, the Council must now consider the longer term viability of the partnership and assess the merits of continuing in it. An assessment will be carried out and a report brought to Committee at a later date.</p>
	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>The Council currently provides £41,055 funding to LVRP which is allowed for in the departmental budgets.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>There are no known equality and good relation implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None.