

Report on	Forestry Expansion Scheme at Ballymacombs Landfill Site
Reporting Officer	Mark McAdoo, Head of Environmental Services
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Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform members of the planned Forest Expansion Scheme at Ballymacombs Landfill.
2.0	Background
2.1	Ballymacombs Landfill Site is approximately 2 miles outside Bellaghy on the A54 on route to Portglenone. The site which is approximately 7.5 Hectares made up of 5 cells (A to E).
2.2	Cells A to D are old "disperse and diffuse" cells which are complete and have been fitted with a permanent clay cap. Cell E is a fully engineered lined cell which still retains approximately 45,000m ³ of capacity to which a temporary cap has been installed.
2.3	While the landfill facility has not received waste for several years the Council continues to remove leachate from the site and operates a recycling centre at the entrance to the site.
2.4	Recently the site has been used by a few school groups as part as Heaney Tour to view Toners Bog which was one of the local landscapes which inspired Seamus Heaney.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	On behalf of the Council an application was made by Forestry Agent, Indiwoods, to the Forestry Expansion Scheme (FES) to plant trees and create a community woodland on the site of Ballymacombs landfill site between Bellaghy and Portglenone.
3.2	The FES is coordinated by The Forestry Service and will only consider applications for blocks of woodland that are over 5.0 hectares in size. Application was made to plant out just over just over 6 hectares at Ballymacombs Landfill (as shown on attached map).
3.3	We are pleased to report that the application was successful and the Council received a letter of offer to the value of £26,432.80 on 12 th January (copy attached as appendix).
3.4	The project shall involve the planting in year 1 of 13,200 native broadleaf trees on the capped cells A – D and also covers the cost of maintenance in year 2 and year 3 after which the trees should be well established.

3.5	The planting and maintenance will be carried out by approved forestry agent Indiwoods. However, to promote local involvement and ownership 10 local schools have been asked to participate in the tree planting work. Three days, from Wednesday 11 th to Friday 13 th April 2018 have been set aside for school planting and this too will be facilitated and supervised by Indiwoods.
3.6	While the landfill itself is not designated it lies alongside a large area of raised bog known locally as Toners Bog. As well as being an ASSI this area is known to have been a source of inspiration to Seamus Heaney and is named in his writings. To maintain the natural integrity of this area a 40 metre exclusion zone must be maintained between the new planting and the bog.
3.7	All of the planting and the first instalment of the grant must be claimed by 31 May 2018 so the bulk of the planting shall be completed in March and early April prior to the schools planting days.
3.8	Apart from the obvious biodiversity and environmental benefits of the project we hope that in time as the planting matures and operations on the landfill site comes to an end this will become a valuable leisure and recreational resource as a Community Woodland.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Financial: The Scheme is covered 100% by the Forestry Expansion Scheme</p> <p>Human: All planting in year 1 and maintenance in years 2 & 3 will be carried out by Indiwoods. Some officer time will be required in facilitating local schools and groups to get involved in the planting of the woodland.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>As a community woodland the finished woodland would be open to all. The scheme is fully supported by both the Woodland trust and the Conservation Volunteers N Ireland. The 10 local schools selected to take part in the tree planting have been selected on the basis of geographical proximity and are representative of both sides of the community.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>Method statements, Risk assessments and insurances will be obtained from Indiwoods prior to the commencement of planting. A risk assessment will be carried out and any necessary control measures put in place prior to the schools planting days in in April.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members are asked to note the content of this report and associated project.
6.0	Documents Attached & References

6.1	Map of Ballymacombs Landfill showing proposed planting areas
6.2	Letter of Offer from Forest Expansion Scheme.