

Report on	Outdoor Recreation Strategy Update
Date of Meeting	Thursday 11th February 2021
Reporting Officer	N Hill Head of Parks
Contact Officer	A Reid Parks & Countryside Development Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	Interim update in relation to Outdoor Recreation Five Year Strategic Plan.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Mid Ulster District Council approved the current Outdoor Recreation Strategy in March 2020. The Outdoor Recreation Strategy provides a clear direction for the sustainable development, management and promotion of future outdoor recreation facilities, programs, infrastructure, resources and investment over the period 2020-2025 within the Mid Ulster District Council area.</p> <p>MUDC area covers an area of some 1714 km², straddles two counties, running from Swatragh in the north to Fivemiletown in the south and from the Sperrin Mountains in the west to the shores of Lough Neagh in the east. The MUDC area is divided into 7 District Electoral Area (DEA) namely; Carntogher, Clogher Valley, Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt, Moyola and Torrent.</p> <p>Within the area, the key providers of outdoor recreation are Forest Service NI (FSNI), MUDC, NIEA, Waterways Ireland, DAERA, RSPB, Woodland Trust, National Trust and the Ulster Wildlife Trust. In addition, a significant contribution to the provision of outdoor recreation within the Mid Ulster area is made from community associations, private sector activity providers and through initiatives such as the Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership, the Blackwater Regional Partnership and the Lough Neagh Partnership.</p> <p>A programme of actions and works based on key recommendations was identified. The strategy has identified a projected spend of £4,763,047 over the five year period of the action plan. The strategy will be reviewed in year three (2022-23) to assess progress and profile the remaining two years.</p>

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Work has been progressing on many sites. The following outlines the exact nature of works undertaken to date:

Brantry Wood 2019 – refurbishment of Brantry Lodge (bookable for community events) and upgrade of forest trails, walk includes wooden animal sculptures and balance beams/stepping logs at several points along the length of the trail. The trail also includes a link to Brantry Lough and between the two sites there is just over 5km of off-road walking trail. This project is well received & is being heavily used. A data counter has been installed and early indications predict 9,000 users annually.

Total cost: £170,930



3.2 **Knockmany Forest 2020** – creation of a new amenity facility which include a changing places toilet, toilet block and a meeting room (bookable for community events) new all-ability Lake side path, upgrade of carpark and signage throughout the Forest. Knockmany Forest is a hub in the Clogher Valley region and this forest received heavy footfall. The addition of the amenity block and creation of new trails is being well-used.

Total Cost: £298,386



3.3 **Davagh Archaeology Trail 2020** – works progressing in the upgrade of forest trails to explore an ancient Cairn within the Forest.
Total Cost: £78,620

3.4 **Davagh Solar Trail 2020** – works progressing to create a walking trail linking Davagh Forest and Beaghmore Stones. This will be a boardwalk and will use augmented reality to bring the solar system to life along the trail.
Total Cost: £447,950

3.5 **Davagh Mountain Bike Trail 2021** – the creation of 7km red and 4km blue mountain bike trails within Davagh Forest, to include an all-ability gravity trail suitable for 4-wheeled trail bikes.
Total Cost: £336,000

3.6 **Moydamlaght Forest 2021** – path upgrades and creation to include new parking area, new Riverside trail to include balance beams/stepping logs etc. Work also includes path creation behind local community centre.
Total Cost: £255,000

3.7 **International Appalachian Trail (IAT) 2021** – new way-marking, signage and seating along the IAT linking Co Donegal to Co Antrim
Total Cost: £14,397

3.8	<p>Portglenone Riverside Walk and Fishing Stands 2019/21 – creation of new walking trail & fishing stands linking the Glenone Riverside Trail to the town of Portglenone. Upgrade of existing trail and fishing stands along the edge of the River Bann alongside Glenone Wood. Total Cost: £259,668</p>												
3.9	<p>Washing Bay 2019/20 – creation of new 1km around the Community Centre and sports pitches. This is a high volume use resource for the local community. Total Cost: £328,137</p>												
3.10	<p>Ballyronan Wood 2021 – plans underway to refurbish the existing woodland walk. This will include boardwalk, interpretation, seating and sculptures. Work will commence on this project February 2021. Total Cost: £81,000</p>												
3.11	<p>Scoping Studies for Dunmoyle, Drumcairn and Altmore Forest 2021 – Appointment of consultancy team completed. Schedule presented below. Total Cost: £27,900</p>												
3.12	<p>Forest Scoping Study Timeline</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="327 952 1332 1220"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="327 952 821 996">Item</th> <th data-bbox="821 952 1332 996">Timescale</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 996 821 1030">Closing date for quotations</td> <td data-bbox="821 996 1332 1030">Monday 18th January 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 1030 821 1108">Notification of successful/unsuccessful tenders</td> <td data-bbox="821 1030 1332 1108">Monday 25th January 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 1108 821 1142">Options Paper submitted</td> <td data-bbox="821 1108 1332 1142">Friday 26th March 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 1142 821 1176">Draft report submitted</td> <td data-bbox="821 1142 1332 1176">Friday 23rd April 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 1176 821 1220">Final report submitted</td> <td data-bbox="821 1176 1332 1220">Friday 14th May 2021</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Item	Timescale	Closing date for quotations	Monday 18 th January 2021	Notification of successful/unsuccessful tenders	Monday 25 th January 2021	Options Paper submitted	Friday 26 th March 2021	Draft report submitted	Friday 23 rd April 2021	Final report submitted	Friday 14 th May 2021
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3.13	<p>Community Trails Development 2021 – Research and present concept proposals for potential trails in each DEA. Draft Terms of Reference completed, consultancy for phase one will be progressed in 2021 as per strategy action plan.</p>												
3.14	<p>Horse Riding Opportunities 2021 - Research and present concept proposals for potential Off-Road Horse Riding Trails. Draft Terms of Reference completed, consultancy for this work will be progressed in 2021 as per strategy action plan</p>												
3.15	<p>Marketing & Communication 2021 – based on the publication of the new Corporate Plan, a new, updated Parks and Outdoor Recreation Marketing Strategy 2021 – 2024 is progressing as per strategy action plan.</p>												
4.0	Other Considerations												
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: The Outdoor Recreation Five Year Strategic Plan is resourced from central capital budget allocations and external funding streams as presented and approved by Council in March 2020.</p>												

	<p>The Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan may be subject to variables associated to opportunities of additional external funding that may enhance or change the delivery objectives over the life of the strategy.</p>
	<p>Human: Current staff structure sufficient to deliver on Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan in conjunction with the appointments of appropriately qualified and experienced consultancy (ICT) and Integrated Supply Teams (IST).</p>
	<p>Risk Management: The strategic plan will be managed and monitored by the Parks Services in line with Council's risk management governance procedures</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: An extensive process of consultation was carried out with individual Council Officers, Council elected members, national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), public and statutory agencies, community associations and groups, sporting clubs and the general public.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: In line with the Mid Ulster Council Community Plan, one the 15 outcomes is to 'give our children and young people the best chance in life'¹. Within this Strategy, it is the aim of Council to address this deficiency and ensure citizens of all abilities are adequately provided for across rural areas.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members are invited to note the content of the report as presented for updates and information purposes.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A
