

Report on	Railway Park and Ballysaggart Lough Project
Reporting Officer	Head of Parks
Contact Officer	Nigel Hill

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 update members on progress on draft development proposals opportunities for Railway Park and Ballysaggart Lough Dungannon.
2.0	Background
2.1	Railway Park and Ballysaggart Lough development plan is an imaginative collaborative project between Mid Ulster District Council and the local communities. The concept developed due to the opportunity to purchase 6.5 acres of additional lands suitable for public park development coupled with the ownership transfer of Ballysaggart Lough when it became an asset of Mid Ulster District Council from April 2015 under the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure transfer of Water Recreation facilities.
2.2	In 2014 an application for funding was submitted to Space and Place (CFNI) for the purchase and development of community greenspace which when added would have extended development boundaries for the Park. The application was not successful, however Council decided to go ahead and acquire the lands with a view to a future project. This is currently the position with council now seeking to develop a comprehensive plan to enhance leisure and recreational opportunities within the twenty acres of Railway Park and into the nearby Ballysaggart Lough for the benefit of surrounding communities.
2.3	The fifty-two acres of Ballysaggart Lough, or better known locally as the 'Black Lough' is recognised by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust as a significantly important wetland area in the District after Lough Neagh. Ballysaggart Lough is one of a large number of eutrophic (nutrient rich) lakes occurring in inter-drumlin landscapes of South Tyrone providing a distinctive element of natural biodiversity. Ballysaggart lough is of particular value for birds demonstrated with a recorded annual peak count of over 500 migratory wildfowl across 19 species. The importance of the site at Ballysaggart is recognised under the Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA 03 Ballysaggart Lough).
2.4	Public access to Ballysaggart Lough is predominately by car, even though the Lough is a short distance from the town boundary and within one quarter of a mile from Railway Park. Safe effective access improvements must be identified linking both public amenities to each other and local communities by greenway corridors/

2.5	<p>footpath or cycle way trails. The adjacent B45 Eglish Road is a busy traffic route to the bypass and therefore presents a barrier to pedestrian visitors.</p> <p>Our vision is to deliver quality public greenspace in an urban landscape through enhancement and development and to extend safe access opportunities to the countryside via green sustainable travel routes for the benefit everyone, especially those of our most disadvantaged communities.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Council have tendered for the development of a comprehensive Strategic Business Case/Feasibility Plan with options appraisal in line with Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE), for the proposed development of Railway Park and Ballysaggart.
3.2	The works will require site specific investigations in relation to access, land ownership and rights of way agreements/permissive paths. Conduct, where appropriate, terrain analysis and impact assessments associated to trail design and development in urban and environmentally sensitive landscapes.
3.3	The appointed team will be required to create public park/greenspace design proposals and micro trail design for both urban and off road locations and include indicative costings. The team will also be required to submit a first stage funding application for the design.
3.4	The appointed team will have access to previously commissioned material for example the council's Space and Place (CFNI) Business Plan 2014 and draft design concepts for Railway Park and Ballysaggart Lough. Community consultations undertaken in 2014 and current stakeholder feedback including PSNI Designing Out Crime proposals appendix 4. The timeframe for completion of the Strategic Feasibility/Business Plan is Monday 8 th January 2018.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Financial: The Strategic Feasibility/Business Plan will cost £8.000 which is available within Parks revenue budgets.</p> <p>Human: N/A</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>N/A</p>

5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	For members information only.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Railway Park PSNI Designing Out Crime proposals Appendix 1.