

Report on	Lough Fea Footbridge
Date of Meeting	13 th June 2024
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	John Howard, Open Spaces & Recreation Development Manager

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	<p>Recently during May 2024 Development Committee, Members requested an update be brought back to the next available committee on the replacement of the footbridge at Lough Fea.</p> <p>This report seeks to outline the background of the current situation, detail the actions taken to date, and offer the high level timelines for the next steps in the project.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	The wooden footbridge at Lough Fea, which has been in place for over 20 years, has undergone several minor repairs by the council in recent years. The bridge is visually inspected weekly by the Park Inspector. Recently, a survey conducted by NI Water revealed that the footbridge was in poor condition, necessitating further investigation by the council as per the current lease agreement.
2.2	A structural survey, conducted by a competent third party on behalf of the council, instructed that the bridge should be closed immediately and recommended the installation of a new bridge. Consequently, the bridge was closed, and the planning process for its replacement commenced.
2.3	Signage has been installed around the site to inform users that the circular route is not available as part of the walking path. The councils communication team has provided information on councils social media platforms and will do so on a periodic basis to ensure users of this site are kept up to date.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Council officers have engaged a structural engineer to design a new footbridge. A design brief has been agreed and the working drawings are currently being finalised. These drawings are required to enable production of costs estimate for the fabrication, delivery, and installation of the new bridge, ensuring compliance with our procurement processes. It is essential to expedite the completion of these drawings to facilitate accurate costing and adherence to procurement guidelines.
3.2	Council officers continue to collaborate with Councils framework contractor, NI Water and local fishing clubs to facilitate the removal of the old bridge. The removal of the existing bridge is crucial for clearing the existing bridge abutment of any overgrowth and to

	therefore allow a detailed condition survey and accurate measurements to be obtained to determine the span and support conditions for the replacement bridge.
3.3	The new structure will consist of two steel trusses with connecting steel joists to support Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) deck panels. The bridge can be clad in fence boards to match the original look. To address transportability and galvanizing challenges, the bridge will be divided into three sections, each approximately 5.4 meters long. Although segmenting the bridge at the mid-span point is not ideal due to maximum stress points, dividing it into three sections is a practical solution for this remote site.
3.4	Upon finalising the working drawings over the next few weeks, the next steps include proceeding with the procurement process for the fabrication and delivery of the new bridge sections. Meticulous planning for the installation is essential to avoid issues related to mid-span division. Regular progress review meetings are established between Property Services and Health, Leisure & Wellbeing departments to monitor the project's advancement and address any arising issues promptly.
3.5	The timeframe to complete the design, procurement, and installation process for the new bridge is projected to be 3 to 4 months. Given the complexity of the site and the intricate design requirements, this period will allow for a more accurate cost estimate for fabrication, delivery, and installation, contingent upon the completion of the working drawings. This timeframe encompasses the procurement process, ensuring that all necessary materials and services are sourced efficiently and effectively, as well as the installation process, guaranteeing timely and proper construction. The ongoing work over the next two – three weeks aims to precisely determine the procurement route and establish a detailed schedule for the replacement, ultimately facilitating the reconnection of the circular walkway for public use.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: The project will be an unanticipated expenditure and therefore funds will be required to be released via Council's capital programme as the works required are extensive and exceed the scope and definition of revenue expenditure.
	Human: The project will require the involvement of several Council officers to oversee its progress and ensure it is delivered without any delays.
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant council policies and procedures.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A