

Report on	Dog Friendly Park Trial in Dungannon Park
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Paul Bailie Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreation 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>Previously in September 2022, Members at the Development Committee requested that Officers investigate the possibility of creating a Dog Friendly Park where owners can take their pets for leisure. This would be a secure area where dog owners can exercise their dogs safely off lead either in a group or on their own.</p> <p>This report provides a proposal to develop a trial Dog Friendly Park at Nunnery Hill in Dungannon Park.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	Recent data indicates 27% of UK adults have a dog, this equates to an estimated population of 10.2 million pet dogs in the UK. Anecdotal feedback suggests that local walks and paths are becoming busier with increasing conflict between the dog owning public and other facility users who may be concerned or frightened by dogs off their lead.
2.2	The aim of this proposed trial is to provide a safe place where dog owners can exercise their dogs off lead, allowing dogs to enjoy interaction with other dogs. Approximately half an acre of Nunnery Hill (which is not identified for any current development purpose) will be set aside to develop this trial park. Dungannon Park has been proposed as the location as it is a staffed site therefore meaning that staff can monitor the trail effectively, deal with any onsite issues and make tweaks where necessary during this proposed trial period.
3.0	Main Report

3.1	Dog Friendly Parks have become increasingly popular. The council's Outdoor Recreation section has been contacted on several occasions with requests to provide this type of facility. The Outdoor Recreation section also continues to receive complaints from members of the public about dogs off leads. It is anticipated the creation of a trial dog friendly park may help to bring benefits to both issues.
3.2	Dog Friendly Parks allow owners of dogs who are reactive or can't be let off the lead for certain reasons or owners who want to train a puppy to have fun with them and run around with them off the lead.
3.3	An area of Nunnery Hill can be set aside to create the enclosed park. The park will be divided into two separate sections. One for larger dogs and one for smaller dogs. Both areas will be gated to prevent accidental escapes and stop anyone else from entering the area. Seating, signage including rules and a dog foul bin will also be provided.
3.4	Usage will be monitored via a data counter for an initial 12 months to establish if a further roll out across the district will be viable. The creation of this park will also be communicated via the council's usual media channels.
3.5	Legal advice received has confirmed that this trial is in keeping with pre-legacy byelaws which novated upon RPA and remain in force.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Approx. £2,200 inclusive of gates fencing, seating and data counter. This can be funded via existing revenue budgets.
	Human: Within existing staff allocation.
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant 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	That Members note the contents of the report and grant approval to develop a trial dog friendly park in Dungannon Park.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A