

Report on	DAERA: Environmental Challenge Fund 2021/22
Date of Meeting	Thursday 7 th October 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	To seek Council approval for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs: Environment Challenge Competition 2020/21 successful application for the redevelopment of Ballyronan Wood and secure match funding for the redevelopment of the Wood project.
2.0	Background
2.1	Ballyronan Marina & Caravan Park has recently undergone extensive refurbishment, completed summer 2021. This was made possible from funding secured from Rural Development Programme.
2.2	Further to this development, there has been a requirement to develop Ballyronan Wood within the site. The woodland walk was first created in the early 1980s and since there has undergone minor repairs. The woodland walk is prone to seasonal closures due to flooding, given its close proximity to the Lough.
2.3	In 2020/21 Council were successful in attracting funding of £40,500 from DAERA: Environmental Challenge Fund. Unfortunately due to time related constraints the project was not initiated. Dev minute D174/20 (Appendix).
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In June 2021, a revised application was made to DAERA: Environment Challenge Competition 2021/22 to redevelop the woodland within Ballyronan as a quality off road multi-use 1km trail.
3.2	The project plans has a long-term aim is to link Ballyronan with Traad point, as land access and funding opportunities are identified. Ballyronan Wood is Phase 1 in this long-term project.
3.3	The trail will contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interpretation panel depicting the flora & fauna of the area.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - way-marking - eco-plastic boardwalk in sections where flooding is prevalent. - bench seating - art work - bird and bat boxes.
3.4	It is projected that the scheme will cost £125,000.00. The application to DAREA has been successful and a letter of offer has been awarded to Council for £77,546. This is to cover 62% of the funding required to see the project to completion.
3.5	The remaining funding will be sourced from Council's Outdoor Recreation Capital Works Programme. It is hoped that the redevelopment of Ballyronan Wood will significantly enhance and compliment the current Ballyronan Development Project.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial: DAERA: Environment Challenge Competition 2021/22 Secured funding £77,546 (62%) MUDC contribution £47,454 (38%) (Outdoor Recreation Capital Programme)</p>
	<p>Human: Human: Existing staff resources sufficient to coordinate project support. No additional staffing resource required.</p>
	<p>Risk Management: In conjunction with Council policies and procedures.</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: In conjunction with Council policies and procedures.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: In conjunction with Council policies and procedures.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members approval is sought for the allocation of match funding £47,454 to the Ballyronan Wood redevelopment from Council's Capital Programme budget allocations as part of the Councils Outdoor Recreation Five Year Strategic Plan.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Development minute D174/20