

Report on	Stewartstown Community Group Service Level Agreement
Date of Meeting	10 th April 2024
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Martin Conlan, Recreation & Countryside 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 consider a proposal to enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Stewartstown Community Group (SCG) for caretaker and cleansing duties within Drumcairne Forest.
2.0	Background
2.1	Previously in March 2016, the Development committee considered and resolved to adopt proposals for annual service levels agreements in support of leisure and outdoor recreation services (minute reference: D075/16) and each year thereafter, a report has been brought forward for Members consideration on annual service level agreements.
2.2	In May 2022, the Development Committee gained approval be granted to enter into a licence and lease agreement with FSNI to allow for the development of Drumcairne Forest. (minute reference: D082/22).
2.3	In March 2020, Members resolved to approve the MUDC Five Year Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan (minute reference: D052/20) and a key strategic action contained within this plan is to <i>“Monitor existing SLAs with Community Groups for the on-going maintenance of outdoor recreation facilities in their local community”</i> and within each year of the strategic plan there is an action to seek to <i>“develop 1 x new SLA”</i>
2.4	Previously in March 2024, Members resolved to approve the approach for annual service levels agreements in support of leisure and outdoor recreation services for the April 24 – March 25 year. Council review all Service Level Agreements annually based on a mixture of performance indicators and service provision - this ensures that service level objectives meet with Council’s satisfaction and are monitored continuously.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	During 2023, Drumcairne Forest experienced significant investment and facility enhancements. Visitor numbers have increased significantly, and this has brought about additional challenges in terms of site maintenance, cleaning, light maintenance, and inspections.
3.2	In line with one of the strategic actions contained within the MUDC Five Year Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan, Council officers commenced discussions with the Stewartstown Community Group to seek to develop a partnership that recognises the increased

	<p>accessibility of services at Drumcairne Forest and also the challenges that Council resources face in maintaining a quality service within the Drumcairne area.</p>
3.3	<p>It is proposed to enter into an SLA and to develop a close working partnership with a recognised grouping within the area. This will be of significant benefit to Council in terms of local community engagement, capacity building, commitment, support and supervision of one of our main visitor attractions within the area.</p>
3.4	<p>Proposals have been discussed with the group to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target areas within Drumcairne Forest. • Litter picking and low-level maintenance. • Removal of weeds and cutting back of undergrowth. • Reporting of issues to Council staff – ie. antisocial behaviour, defects, fallen trees or large branches etc. • The proposed agreement would seek to provide on-site support services 4 times a week equating to 6 hours per week with daily site presence. The calculated cost of this service equates to £75.54 per week/ £3,928.08 per annum. By doing this, Council staffing resource and ongoing financial outlay towards this facility can reduce proportionately and this therefore can be re-invested elsewhere within the department to help identified service pressures and enhance operational service standards.
3.5	<p>It would be proposed to enter into this agreement for the period of May 24 – March 25 and thereafter reviewed annually as part of the overall SLA report presented to Members on an annual basis.</p> <p>Initially therefore the above costings would be on a pro-rata basis and subject to review - Council review all Service Level Agreements annually based on interim performance indicators, this ensures that service level objectives meet with Council's satisfaction and monitored continuously.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial: All Service Level Agreement payments are contained within existing budgets and there is provision within the 2024/25 Health, Leisure and Wellbeing budgets allocations. In addition, this is in line with the Council's approved Five Year Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan (minute reference: D052/20).</p>
	<p>Human: Officer time to administer and monitor delivery of agreed SLA's.</p>
	<p>Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant policies and procedures.</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>

5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>That Members note the contents of the report and approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Stewartstown Community Group to provide on-site support services equating to 6 hours per week, 4 days per week on a flexible rota at an approx. cost of £75.54 per week/ £3,928.08 per annum. <p>This is for the period May 2024 - March 2024, and thereafter reviewed annually as part of the overall SLA report presented to Members on an annual basis. This will be reviewed for effectiveness and extension in line with other annual Service Level Agreements in support of Council's leisure and outdoor recreation services.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	N/A