

Title of Report:	Lower Bann Minor Infrastructure Projects – ‘The Cutts to the Crannagh’
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	11 th June 2019
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting & enhancing our environment and our assets.
Outcome	Generating economic and social returns without compromising the sustainability of our natural assets.
Lead Officer	Head of Tourism and Recreation

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Not known at this stage
Included in Current Year Estimates	NO
Capital/Revenue	Capital
Code	Tbc
Staffing Costs	Routine Business

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	No	Date: N/A at this stage
	EQIA Required and Completed:	No	Date: N/A at this stage
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	No	Date: N/A at this stage
	RNA Required and Completed:	No	Date: N/A at this stage
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	No	Date: N/A at this stage
	DPIA Required and Completed:	No	Date: N/A at this stage

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members on the potential to avail of possible funding from Waterways Ireland to implement a number of minor infrastructural and landscaping improvements on Council owned riverside land between The Cutts and the Crannagh, Coleraine.

Approval is sought to advance this project to Stage 1 of Council's Capital Works process.

2.0 Introduction

Within the Tourism and Recreation remit officers aim, where possible, to improve accessibility and the quality of user experience for visitors enjoying riverside amenity land along the Lower Bann corridor. A potential opportunity has been presented whereby funding may become available to carry out some work in Coleraine.

Waterways Ireland have indicated that they may be in a position to offer funding from within the current financial year in an effort to progress the implementation of a number of minor projects, that contribute to the Blueway concept, on Council land between The Cutts and the Crannagh.

A 'Blueway' is similar in many respects to the 'Greenway' concept, with the emphasis on raising the profile of the river corridor principally for recreational purposes both on and off the water.

3.0 Background

The development and promotion of leisure, recreation and tourism activities along the Lower Bann corridor features in a number of strategic documents including the following:

- Council's Destination Management Plan.
- Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study for the Lower Bann.
- Council's Mountsandel Blueprint document.

Staff from Council's Tourism and Recreation Service have been working with Waterways Ireland in Coleraine to identify a number of minor projects, consisting of infrastructural and landscaping improvements on riverside land in Council's ownership between The Cutts and the Crannagh.

This stretch of riverside land currently facilitates many activities both on and off the water, and enjoys high user numbers on a year round basis. It has been identified as a key hub along the river, providing the structure and framework for connected and clustered activity and product development. Notwithstanding this, the opportunity exists to further enhance the user experience through the interventions listed below.

The possible works identified may comprise the following:

- Supply and installation of amenity lighting along the riverside path within Christie Park, from the toilet block to the pedestrian underpass, where currently there is no lighting provision, to complement existing amenity lighting within the Park from the toilet block to the town bridge.
- Supply and installation of sensitive low-level ambient lighting along the riverside path within Somerset Riverside Park, from Sandelford Bridge to The Cutts.
- Supply and installation of feature lighting within Christie Park to illuminate carefully-selected specimen trees.

- Creation of new length of riverside path (approx. 150m) at the extreme southern end of Christie Park, and associated vegetation thinning, to provide a safe, welcoming and continuous river frontage access way linking Christie Park with Somerset Riverside Park.
- Sensitive and selective thinning and clearance of dense riverside vegetation and tree cover on the land bounding the riverside path in Somerset Riverside Park, in the vicinity of the main vehicular entrance into the Riverside Regional Centre, to open up views of the river and Mountsandel Wood.
- Creation of new pedestrian and cycle access ramp into Christie Park, at its extreme northern periphery, bounding the old town bridge.
- Installation of feature seating along the length of Christie Park.
- Installation of lengths of new railings at selected points along the riverside path in Christie Park.
- Appropriate signage and interpretation.

The need for infrastructural improvements at Christie Park has been identified and is listed as a Pre Stage 1 project in Council's Capital Works Programme for 2019/20 and beyond. It was also ranked number 3 in the Leisure and Development prioritised projects as decided by Members.

4.0 Potential Costs

At this stage, no detail is available on the likely cost estimates. Officers would like to scope proposals for improvements and obtain preliminary outline design concepts and costings before bringing back to Elected Members for further consideration.

It is important to note that at this stage no confirmation or an indicative amount of funding from Waterways Ireland has been obtained.

5.0 Next Steps

With the strategic connection to the Council's Destination Management Plan and the availability of potential funding, Elected Members are asked to consider the advancement of this project under the Capital Works process. The Tourism and Recreation team would like to engage with the infrastructure team to assist with the development to Stage 1 of the Capital Works process.

5.0 Recommendation

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to provide approval for Council Officers to advance these projects to Stage 1 of the Capital Works Process.