

<b>Development of walking trails at Fair Head and Glendun</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> February 2017</b>
<b>To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Decision</b>	

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities
<b>Outcome</b>	Citizens will have access to our natural environments to help develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health.
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Head of Tourism and Recreation Coast and Countryside Manager
<b>Cost:</b> (If applicable)	Maximum Estimation £762 per annum for duration of 10 year agreement

**The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to proceed with Permissive Path Agreements at Fairhead and Glendun.**

### **Background**

Provision, development and access to quality walking opportunities throughout the Borough is an important objective for the Council's Tourism & Recreation Service. The Council manages and maintains many miles of coastal, rural and urban pathways which provide our citizens and visitors with access to our natural outdoor assets and promotes physical exercise and engagement with nature.

Whilst the majority of the Council managed walking experience is on Council owned land, some is jointly maintained with bodies such as the National Trust, Forest Service and TransportNI and in some cases through licence and management agreements with private land owners.

A number of walking trails have recently been developed at 2 locations in the Borough namely Glendun and Fairhead, through a programme of activities delivered by the Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme, in conjunction with private landowners and Council Officials.

### **Permissive Path Agreements**

The provisions of The Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 allow Council to make use of Permissive Path Agreements as a means to secure quality recreational access to private land. This has been used to great effect with respect to certain sections of the Causeway Coast Way and a number of other trails and sites of interest. A permissive path is not a public right of way and can be provided with terms and conditions, can operate under limitations and can endure for whatever period of time the council and landowner are willing to agree. Most agreements are for a period of 10 years. As part of Permissive Path Agreements, Council undertake regular inspection of the trails and provide Insurance cover to indemnify the landowner.

## **New Developments**

### **Fair Head**

Trail development at Fair Head will see quality access to one of the most iconic landscapes in the area. Two Permissive Path Agreements are required with Mr Vincent McNeill and Mr Frank McCarry which will allow for the provision of five new trails. Officers are recommending that both agreements with Council are for a period of 10 years.

### **Glendun – Ronan’s Way**

At Glendun the agreement will be with Mr John McAuley and will provide three routes with 3 kilometre, 5 kilometre or 8 kilometre options including farm lane and open mountain. Officers are recommending that this agreement should be for a period of 10 years.

The development of these trails provide additional hillwalking opportunities for residents and visitors to the Borough in areas of high scenic value.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee approve the Permissive Path Agreements between Council and Vincent McNeill and Frank McCarry at Fair Head, and with John McAuley at Glendun for a period of ten years. These agreements will be administered and managed by the Tourism and Recreation Coast and Countryside Unit.