

<b>CC&amp;GB Interagency Bonfire Management Framework</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> November 2016</b>
<b>To: Leisure and Development Committee For Information</b>	

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities
<b>Outcome</b>	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Head of Community & Culture Good Relations Manager
<b>Cost: (If applicable)</b>	n/a

**The purpose of this report to provide members with information on the planned development of a framework for bonfire management.**

### **Background**

The statutory responsibility for public authorities is set out in Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act. The Act states ‘a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group’.

‘Together Building a United Community’ (TBAUC) is the Executive’s Strategy, led by The Executive Office (Formerly OFMDFM) which focuses on the delivery of Good Relations, including providing support to Local Authorities in delivering their statutory duty.

The resulting Good Relations Strategy for Council has subsequently identified a number of key outcomes it aspires to achieve, including both an increase the use of shared space and services and the development of shared and accessible space.

As a result, Good Relations staff have been working alongside Environmental Services to co-facilitate a working group to progress issues around traditional bonfires. A report regarding Council’s approach to promoting safe bonfire management was brought to the Environmental Services Committee for information in September.

Following 2016 activity, and in line with the Good Relations Action plan, Council and its key partners, including the NIHE, PSNI and NIF&RS are working to develop a proposed framework and action plan for the safe management of bonfires within the Borough.

### **Approach**

The overarching purpose of the framework will be to promote safer, stronger and healthier communities while ensuring that both the natural and built environment is safe, respected and valued.

The framework and resulting action plan, facilitated through the Good Relations Programme, will seek to address environmental issues around bonfires i.e. the location of bonfire sites, early collection of materials; fly tipping and widespread burning of tyres; with a secondary focus on addressing the anti-social and cross community issues that sometimes arise as a result of bonfires, including the burning of flags and emblems.

Activities will include:

- A review of existing practice within CC&G area.
- Identification best practice initiatives that may be implemented.
- Identify and agree roles and responsibilities of Council and its partners in the management and implementation of the CC&GBC Interagency Bonfire Management Initiative.
- Carry out the necessary research, including local consultation and facilitate the production of an agreed interagency framework in relation to Bonfire management; specifically with the aim of working with communities to better manage bonfires in terms of fly tipping, materials burned and flags and emblems being burned.
- Facilitate the group to develop an action plan to enable the practical outworking's of the agreed framework, focussing on collaborative and practical approaches to manage bonfire safety, while clearly identifying resources and responsibilities in terms of delivery.
- Production of an agreed community engagement and communications protocol and plan.

The longer term outcomes that the process seeks to deliver include:

- Safer bonfires.
- A robust multi-agency action planning and collaborative working.
- Increased support and signposting to partner operations / initiatives.
- Increased engagement from and co-operation between local communities, Council and other key partners.

### **Timescale**

The working group will be commencing the process in November with the target completion date of a draft framework and action plan for consideration in March 2017.