

## **Briefing paper from Belfast City Council re The Reservoirs Bill**

Presentation to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development on 25 February 2014

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A detailed oral statement will be made to the Committee; the following is a summary of key points in relation to the Bill.

### Current position

- Belfast City Council currently own and manage 5 reservoirs across the city. These are Waterworks Upper and Lower, Alexandra Park Pond, Boodles Dam in Ligoniel and Half Moon Lake.
- In November 2011 the Council agreed to the establishment of an inspection process in line with current best practice for all appropriate water retaining structures.

### Associated Costs

- To date the Council has spent in the region of £57,000 on the preparation for and inspections of our reservoirs.
- Based on the recommendations made within the inspection reports we anticipate that there will be initial works costing in the region of £24,000 and annual maintenance costs of approximately £10,000 across all 5 sites.
- Inspections will also be required every 10 years which will require expenditure in the region of £20,000.

### Size of reservoirs that should be included

- Belfast City Council has 2 reservoirs that are less than 10,000 cubic metres but we have taken the position due to their location within an urban area and the potential impact if there was to be a breach to include them within our inspection process.

### Maintenance of reservoirs in other ownership

- The Council believe that the other 5 reservoirs within our Council boundary, not in our ownership, should be maintained to a high standard to ensure that the risk to all our residents is minimised. However there is a need to balance risk minimisation with a process that is not overly bureaucratic and it is our opinion that a grant scheme should be developed to assist reservoir owners meet any legal obligations which are placed on them.

### Emergency Planning

- The Council is a key member of the Belfast Resilience Forum, the multi-agency emergency planning forum for the City of Belfast and in light of the new reservoirs bill the intention of Belfast City Council's Emergency Planning team is to request the forum's steering group to allocate a further task to the Flood working group for the development of multi-agency reservoir flood plans.