

Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



Thursday, 9th September, 2010

MEETING OF PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Dear Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Thursday, 16th September, 2010 at 4.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters
 - (a) Apologies
 - (b) Minutes
2. Skegoneill Health Centre (Pages 1 - 2)
3. Quarterly Finance Report (Pages 3 - 14)
4. Parks and Leisure Department Improvement Programme Update (Pages 15 - 18)
5. Business Support Review (Pages 19 - 32)
6. Head of Parks and Leisure Post - Job Title (Pages 33 - 34)
7. Supernumerary Staff (Pages 35 - 36)
8. Acquisition of Land for Future Burial Provision (Pages 37 - 48)

9. Heritage Lottery Fund - Tropical Ravine Application Update (Pages 49 - 52)
10. Allotments Strategy (Pages 53 - 58)
11. Dunville and Woodvale Parks Update (Pages 59 - 62)
12. Shore Road Playing Fields (Pages 63 - 68)
13. Land at Slievegallion (Pages 69 - 72)
14. Animal Waste Tender (Pages 73 - 74)
15. Belfast Festival at Queens - Blackwatch (Pages 75 - 76)
16. Flood Alert Station (Pages 77 - 80)
17. Support for Sport (Pages 81 - 86)

Extract from minutes of -

PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

12th AUGUST, 2010

—
“Skegoneill Health Centre

The Director advised the Committee that, as part of the partnership arrangement with the North and West Belfast Trust regarding the development of the Grove Wellbeing Centre, it had been agreed that the site of the former Skegoneill Health Centre would revert to the Council upon completion of the scheme and the relocation of the Health Centre within the new building. He pointed out that the transfer of the land had now been completed and was currently under the management of the Parks and Leisure Department.

He advised the Committee further that the former Health Centre was located at the rear of the Grove Wellbeing Centre and that there had been no conditions attached to the transfer of the land. The Centre had been demolished and an assessment had indicated that the capital cost of landscaping the area and integrating it within the existing Grove Playing Fields would be significant. Within that context and given the current affordability limits, it was proposed that the site be transferred to the Council's corporate land bank where a planning assessment could be carried out to consider future development options. Accordingly, he recommended, due to the fact that the Parks and Leisure Department had no operational need for the site and did not have the necessary resources to develop it, that it be declared surplus to requirements and placed within the Council's corporate land bank.

The Committee adopted the recommendation, subject to notification, in accordance with Standing Order 60, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.”

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**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Financial Reporting – Quarter 1 2010/11
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Jacqueline Wilson, Business Support Manager

Relevant Background Information

It was agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 18 June 2010 that financial reporting packs would be produced for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and each Standing Committee on a quarterly basis and following discussion, that the first reports for the quarter ended June 2010 would be available for Committees in September. Monthly financial updates were also agreed to be provided to the Budget and Transformation Panel, if there were any significant issues to report.

The reporting pack contains a summary dashboard of the financial indicators and an executive summary explaining the financial performance of Parks and Leisure Committee in the context of the financial performance of the overall Council (Appendix 1). It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators covering the year to date and forecast financial position.

As was advised in the 18 June 2010 Strategic Policy and Resources Committee report, the reporting pack should be viewed as still under development and the style and information in the reports will continue to evolve, in liaison with Members.

The information within these financial reporting packs has been developed through collaboration between central finance and departmental management teams. The information for Standing Committees has therefore been reviewed and endorsed by central finance. As was outlined in the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee report of 18 June 2010, a number of practical issues have been resolved in the development of the reports. In particular, Members are asked to note the following:

- (i) the original 2010/11 rates setting exercise included a budget for a pay rise of 1.5%. The pay position of the council is determined by national negotiations and currently no pay rise has been offered for 2010/11,

which is causing significant trade union concern. The budget of £1.1m has therefore been removed from departmental budgets, for reporting purposes, so that the true departmental variances can be identified. The current unutilised pay rise budget underspend has been logged centrally;

- (ii) demand led internal charges have also been removed from the budgets and expenditure of service users and applied to the budgets of service providers (eg ISB, facilities management etc) for reporting purposes which keeps the budgetary treatment for 2010/11 in line with that agreed by Members on 18 June 2010 for 2011/12.
- (iii) capital charges are non cash items which have been removed from departmental budgets so that accurate variances can be identified.

Key Issues

Current and Forecast Financial Position 2010/11

The current year to date financial position for Parks and Leisure Committee is an overspend of some £0.2m (4%) with a forecast end of year overspend of some £0.3m (1%). The reasons for this overspend relate to:

1. An overall employee budget overspend at quarter one. The Department has in place protocols for managing overtime and agency spend. Audits are underway on the use of overtime and agency staff and a number of recruitment exercises are also underway which will reduce expenditure in both these areas. Committee will also be aware of the ongoing operational reviews within the Department which have delayed the recruitment of posts on a permanent basis. Recommendations will be provided to committee over the next number of months to finalise the structures. Operational reviews are about to commence in Leisure regarding operational requirements and it is hoped that working practices can be challenged and agreement reached on ways of achieving a more effective service provision within the right structures.
2. Utility costs, specifically in Parks are over budget. Water and sewerage charges at a number of sites are being disputed by the department however some of these costs have already hit the budgets. These additional costs have been included in the final forecast for the department as it is unclear if they will be refunded at this stage. Premises costs will continue to be monitored and CTU are reviewing processes to ensure the appropriate operational manager signs off any charges prior to the bills being processed.

The financial reporting pack contains more detail on both the overall council position and the financial performance in each of the Services within the Department.

It should be emphasised that it is very early in the financial year and therefore it is difficult to make an accurate forecast of the end of year financial position. There are considerable uncertainties which could impact on the forecast.

Nonetheless, an early forecast is helpful to Members in making financial decisions for the remainder of 2010/11 and in advance of the 2011/12 rates setting exercise.

Training

As was agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 18 June 2010, to provide training in financial management for Members. It is currently planned that this will be provided in liaison with the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DEA) and will take place in three sessions on 27 September. Members have already been advised of this training and attendance is encouraged, wherever possible.

Links to performance management

Members should note that officers are currently working on the development of performance management reporting packs which in time will become available for Members' consideration alongside the financial reporting packs. Further updates will be brought to Members as the work progresses.

Resource Implications

There is a year to date overspend of £0.2m and a forecast overspend of some £0.3m.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

1. Note the above report and associated financial reporting pack; and
2. note that financial training is to be provided to Members on 27 September and attendance, wherever possible, is to be encouraged.

Decision Tracking

N/A

Key to Abbreviations

CTU: Central Transactions Unit

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Financial Reporting Pack

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Parks and Leisure Committee



Quarterly Finance Report

Report Period: Quarter 1 2010/11

Dashboard: Quarter 1, 2010/11

Strategic Element: Financial Planning	£'000 (under)/ over	Indicator %	Page no
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Year to date % variance

BCC	(1,123)	(4%)		3
• Parks and Leisure Committee	183	4%		
○ Leisure	(6)	(0%)		
○ Parks and Cemeteries	211	9%		
○ Parks and Leisure Directorate	(21)	(5%)		

Forecasted % variance

BCC	(2,877)	(3%)		4
• Parks and Leisure Committee	259	1%		
○ Leisure	114	1%		
○ Parks and Cemeteries	171	1%		
○ Parks and Leisure Directorate	(27)	(1%)		

Note: Negative variances represents an under spend

Executive Summary

Year to Date % Variance

The current performance of the Parks and Leisure department shows an over spend of £183k or 4% over the estimated net expenditure for the first quarter. The key contributor to this position is the 9% (£211,000) over spend in Parks and Cemeteries.

There are 3 key reasons for the current over spend within the department:

The overall employee budget is showing a £359k (7%) overspend at quarter one. £218k in Parks & Cemeteries; £176k in Leisure Services and an under spend of £34k in Directorate. The Department has in place protocols for managing overtime and agency spend. Audits are underway on the use of overtime and agency staff and a number of recruitment exercises are also underway which will reduce expenditure in both these areas. Committee will also be aware of the ongoing operational reviews within the Department which have delayed the recruitment of posts on a permanent basis. Recommendations will be provided to committee over the next number of months to finalise the structures.

Utility costs, specifically in Parks are over budget. Water and Sewerage charges at a number of sites are being disputed by the department however some of these costs have already hit the budgets. These additional costs have been included in the final forecast for the department as it is unclear if they will be refunded at this stage.

Members should note, however, income from services within the department is showing a favourable position with income up on budget by 8%. Leisure Centre income from fees and charges is on target although other sales are down e.g. sports consumables. Parks & Cemeteries income is up on the projected position due to additional income for Belfast in Bloom and events in the parks. Cemeteries/crematorium income is 8% up on the budget.

Forecasted % Variance

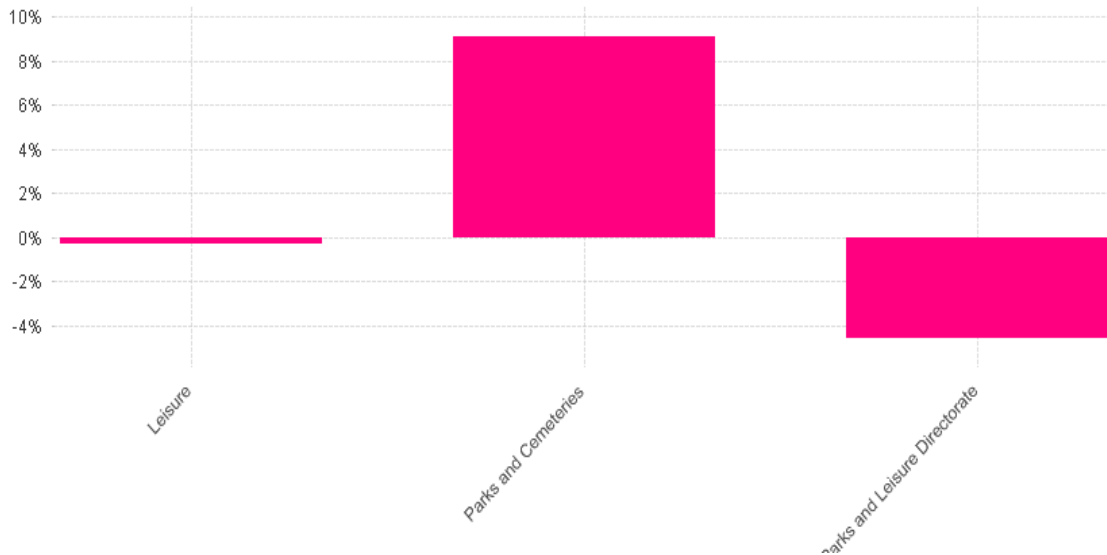
The forecast year end position for the department is estimated at £258k or 1% over budget. This forecast has been made on the basis that a number of the recommendations emanating from the current operational reviews will be implemented during 2010/11.

Parks and Leisure - Year to Date % variance

Source: SAP

PI definition:

This indicator calculates the difference between the budgeted net expenditure and the actual net expenditure as a percentage. It is reported for the year to date.



Commentary and action required

The overall employee budget is showing a £359k (7%) overspend at the end of quarter one.

Leisure's slight under spent on year to date budget can be attributed to the leisure development unit and the timing of areas of spend including marketing activities and Support for Sport grants. The Support for Sports grant process is currently under review and recommendations will be reported back to committee separately.

The key variance for leisure centres is the employee costs which are currently 8% overspent. The agency and overtime budgets are over spent due to the operational and health and safety demands of the service. Audits are underway on the use of overtime and agency staff and an operational review is due to commence which will look at issues regarding employee terms and conditions; flexibility, provision of facilities and opening hours. Recommendations of the review will be presented to committee at a latter date.

Parks & Cemetery Services budget is showing an overspend of £211k (9%). Parks & Cemeteries income is up on the projected position due to additional income for Belfast in Bloom and events in the parks and an increase in income for the use of facilities. The Zoo shop has sales of £58k less than expected however the Zoo itself is largely on target. This situation will be monitored by the manager marketing activities and regular stock takes put in place to proactively address

this. Belfast Castle is not performing as expected at this stage in the year and income is down by £44k specifically in relation to internally generated business. This will be continually monitored by management. Cemeteries/crematorium income is 8% up on the budget with an increase on budgeted income of £32k.

Parks & Cemeteries employee budgets are 9% overspent in quarter one. The majority of this overspend relates to the operation of Parks and Open Spaces which is currently under review and a separate report will provide recommendations on structures and operational efficiencies. Seasonal activities impact on this area particularly in relation to events, the opening of bowling pavilions and additional customer support staff at the zoo. Audits are underway on the use of overtime and agency staff and recommendations to reduce spend in this area will be made.

Parks & Cemeteries premises budgets are 38% overspent in quarter one against the estimated position. There have been charges for water and sewerage at the Waterworks; £54k and Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park; £37k both of which the service is disputing with NI Water. However these have been paid and at this stage it is not clear if they will be refunded. These costs have therefore been reflected in the final year end forecast.

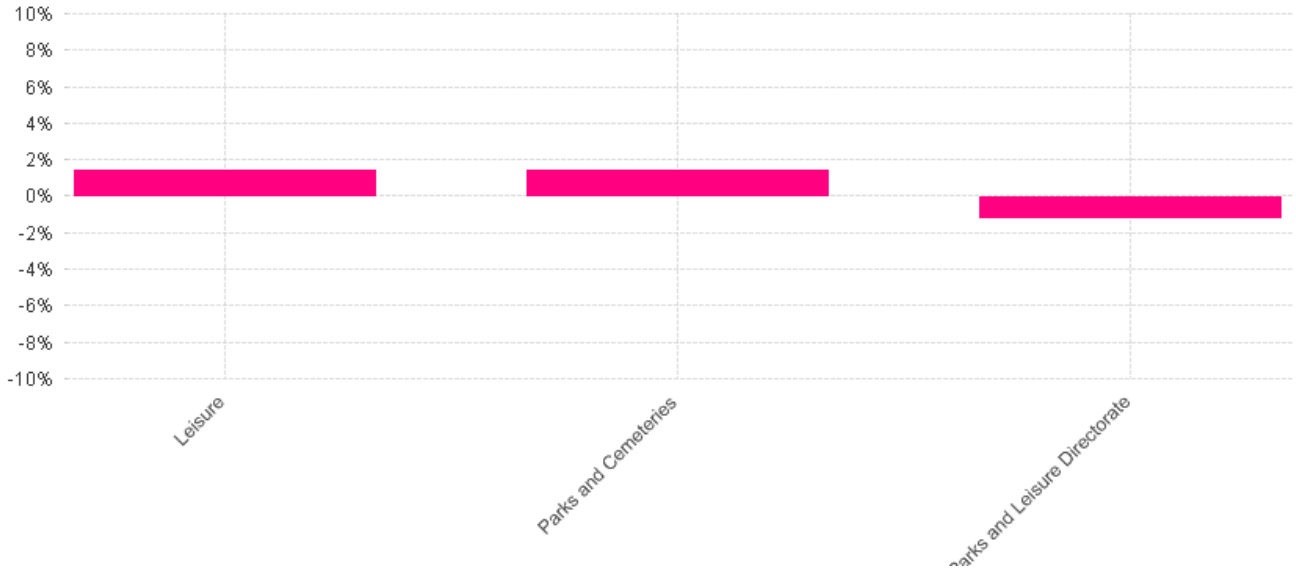
Directorate Supports overall position is showing an under spend of 5% or £21k. This is mainly due to the ongoing review of business support and the budget provision of a new business support structure which is yet to be filled. Recruitment exercises are currently underway to fill these posts. However an under spend of £26k for the year is being projected due to the impact of these posts being vacant for a number of months.

Forecast % variance

Source: SAP

PI definition:

This indicator calculates the difference between the planned net expenditure and the forecasted net expenditure as a percentage. It is reported as a forecast for the end of the financial year.



Commentary and action required

The year end forecast for the department is projecting a £259k (1%) over spend which reflects the position at quarter 1. Controls are in place regarding overtime and agency and audits will be carried out to identify hot spots and ensure compliance with the process to reduce the actual level of usage. Operational reviews are currently underway in Parks and about to commence in Leisure regarding operational requirements and it is hoped that working practices can be challenged and agreement reached ways of achieving a more effective service provision within the right structures.

Premises costs will continue to be monitored and CTU are reviewing processes to ensure the appropriate operational manager signs of any charges prior to the bills being processed.

Parks and Leisure Committee - Main Items of Expenditure

	Variance YTD £'000	% Variance	Plan 10/11 £'000	Forecast for Y/E at P3 £'000	Forecast Variance £'000	% Variance
Parks and Leisure Committee	183	4%	22,328	22,587	259	1%
Leisure	(6)	(0%)	8,099	8,213	114	1%
Leisure Development	(150)	(67%)				
Leisure Centres	143	8%				
Parks and Cemeteries	211	9%	12,079	12,250	171	1%
Parks & Open Spaces	92	6%				
Zoo	8	35%				
Landscape & Planning	(50)	(26%)				
Estates Management	70	69%				
Cemeteries & Crematorium	10	11%				
P&C Services Unit	77	24%				
P&C Development Unit	(28)	(15%)				
Conservation & Education	32	27%				
Parks and Leisure Directorate	(21)	(5%)	2,150	2,124	(27)	(1%)
Antisocial Behaviour	1	5%				
Directorate Support	(22)	5%				

Note: Negative variances represents an under spend

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Parks and Leisure Improvement Programme
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Head of Parks and Leisure

Purpose

To provide committee with an overview of the Parks and Leisure improvement programme and an update on progress and ongoing work.

Relevant Background Information

The Parks and Leisure improvement programme is focused on building capacity and delivering better services and better outcomes for communities in Belfast. This is being achieved through:

1. reviewing management arrangements and operational efficiency
2. bringing the Parks and Leisure functions of the department together to integrate community development and to work more closely in planning and service delivery.

The programme has a number of work streams; Parks Improvement, Leisure Services Improvement, Review of Business Support, and a Marketing and Communications Review. Given the scale of the reviews the following phased approach to streamlining management arrangements and achieving operational efficiency has been adopted:

Phase I

- agreement and implementation of the Parks Management operational structural tier; and
- agreement and implementation of Parks and Leisure Business Support management tier.

Phase II

- operational review of Parks and Leisure Business Support including the leisure centre staff;
- parks operational review to include: the review of the role of Team Leaders or "Parks Supervisors"; review of boundaries and numbers of staff; development of processes; quality monitoring; and implementation of systems.
- operational review of the Outdoor Leisure function

- development of a Parks Community Resource (i.e. Community Park Attendant);
- review of the estates function including Belfast Castle and Malone House (this will include the exploration of a coordinated estates/commercial function across the Parks and Cemeteries Service);
- review of Landscape Planning and Development Unit; Review of Parks Services and Support unit; and Review of the Conservation and Promotion Unit. This will be conducted as one review; however they are in reality three concurrent reviews which will streamline functions and identify efficiencies and improvement leading to more effective development functions; and
- review of Bereavement Services.

Phase III

- Review of the management strand within Leisure Services; and
- review of the operational strand in Leisure Services.

Key Issues

Progress to Date

Phase I

- The review was completed in January 2010 with agreed management side and trade union positions on the way forward. Proposals from Phase I of the structural reviews were approved by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in February 2010 and recommendations are being implemented.

Phase II

- A review of Bereavement services had been completed in conjunction with the review of management arrangements and operational efficiency for Parks.
- A review of parks operational boundaries has been completed which includes more efficient deployment of staff and use of equipment. There is a focus on how flexibility is increased and to ensure that resource is best used to achieve a balance between static and mobile staff whilst improving customer focus and providing a staff presence in parks. Proposals on presence in parks will be brought forward to committee in October 2010.
- Work on reviewing the staffing allocation in each parks operational area is nearing completion and will be reported to committee in October 2010. This work has been extended to include the demand required to take on the future management and maintenance of the Connswater Community Greenway.
- Recommendations from the review of the development strand of the Parks operation were made to committee in June 2010 with proposed further work to be done on the post of Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager, the Landscape Planning and Development Unit, Parks Estates and a proposed Departmental Development Strand. Recommendations are to be made to the November 2010 committee.
- Work on reviewing and defining roles and responsibilities for the Parks operation is well progressed. This includes the development of a Community Park Supervisor and Community Park Attendant roles.
- The Green Flag standard has been adopted and a framework has been developed to improve all parks and open spaces.
- Phase I of the review of Business Support has been completed and implemented. The first stage of Phase II has been completed and extensive

consultation has been carried out with the trade unions, management and staff.

- The second stage of Phase II of the review of business support will examine the provision of business support within leisure centres. A Pilot Review will commence in three leisure centres (Grove Well Being Centre, Shankill LC and Andersonstown LC) whereby we will identify any areas where there may be additional capacity in business support which could then be utilised across other areas of the department. It is anticipated the pilot review will run for a three month period.
- Communication and engagement has been an ongoing priority delivered through staff briefings, the production of a newsletter, staff representation on task forces and reference panels and frequent engagement with trade unions.

Phase III

- The Leisure Improvement programme has been initiated with staff briefing sessions and engagement of Trade Unions to set the context for the review. We are in the process of planning and establishing task forces to carry out the work of the programme. Initial focus will be on the review of management arrangements and operational efficiency in line with the Parks stream.
- The review of marketing and communication in the department is nearing completion and proposals for change are at the consultation stage. It is envisaged that proposals will be brought to the October committee.

Summary of Future Reports:

October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing and Communications • Efficiency review of Parks Operational Resource • Proposals for improved staff presence in parks
November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departmental Development Strand • Landscape Planning and Development Unit • Parks Estates
December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation for leisure management arrangements
February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation from pilot review of business support in Leisure Centres
February/March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure Operational Efficiency Review

Resource Implications

Financial

Phase I

Deletion of 7 posts including 2 business support posts with a net saving of **£217,685** per year.

Deletion of Parks and Cemeteries Senior Manager and Leisure Manager posts and the creation of a Head of Service post resulting in a net saving of **£50,797** after an initial payback period of 1.6 years.

Phase II

Deletion of 2 posts with the creation of a new Open Spaces and Active Living Coordinator giving a net saving of **£43,018** after a payback period of 2.13 years.

The outcomes of phase II of the Business Support review are being reported to the September committee. It should be noted that the terms of reference for the review were to ensure that any changes would be achieved within current budget.

Human Resources

Consultation relating to the recommendations has been undertaken with the postholders, Human Resources and the Trade Unions.

All affected postholders will be subject to the normal HR policies and procedures relating to the offer of voluntary redundancy or suitable alternative employment.

Asset and Other Implications

None.

Recommendations

Committee is asked:

- to note the progress of the Parks and Leisure Improvement programme
- to note decisions to be brought forward to future committee meetings.

Decision Tracking

Responsible Officer – Head of Parks and Leisure. Further report to be brought to October committee.

Key to abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

None.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Services Committee
Subject:	Phase II Review of Business Support
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Manager

Purpose of the report

To update the Parks and Leisure Committee on phase II of the review of the department's business support function and to set out recommendations for its approval.

Relevant Background Information

At the Parks and Leisure committee on 11 February 2010 approval was given for a new centralised business support structure. The review referred to Phase II of the process which would address the posts at Scale 6 and below within the structure including those posts considered to be in Directorate Support.

As part of the Parks and Leisure Improvement programme, and specifically the review of business support across the Department, a review of Directorate Support was also undertaken to assess the impact of the ongoing change programme and the appointment of the Head of Parks and Leisure (HOS).

As reported to Members in February 2010 this stage of the review is considered Stage I of Phase II in order to address structural and operational anomalies with the staff based centrally graded at Scale 4 to Scale 6.

Key Issues

The key issues are outlined in detail in the report attached (Appendix 1) and include:

- Clarification of roles and responsibilities around the HR and Finance functions;
- Provision of a more effective management support structure including support to the Director and Senior Management Team.
- Full integration into one departmental resource to provide a greater

- degree of flexibility within the team;
- Effective communication; and
- Improved management decision making.

An assessment of the business support requirement within leisure centres is also included as part of the review of Business Support. A 3 month pilot will assess the support requirements in leisure regarding receptionist, clerical and Business Assistant duties, including membership management, key performance and management information and the linkages with business support in the centre of the department. It is essential to address the anomalies within the central business support team before the start of the three month Leisure pilot in order to fully realise the potential efficiencies to be achieved.

Committee should note that all parties have been consulted throughout this process to date including the Trade Unions and are all in agreement with the recommendations contained in the review.

Recommendations for Phase II stage 1

In respect of the posts within the centralised business support unit the following recommendations are made:

- Delete the post of Finance Assistant (Income) Scale 4
- Delete the post of Finance Assistant (Expenditure) Scale 4
- Delete the post of Business Assistant (Creditor and Income) Scale 6
- Create three new generic posts of Business Assistant (Finance/Systems) Scale 6
- Delete the post of HR and Quality Officer, Scale 6
- Delete the post of HR Assistant, Scale 6
- Delete the post of Administrative Assistant, Scale 6
- Create three generic posts of Business Assistant (HR/Admin) Scale 6
- Extend the FTC of the post of Business Assistant (Income) until such times as the Pilot review within Leisure has been completed and review the status of this post at that time.
- Re designate the existing MSA Sc4 to a Secretarial Assistant Sc6

In addition, the job description of the MSA Sc4 reporting to the BSA Sc6 should be amended to better reflect the departmental responsibility and therefore the section of the job description be re-titled to read "Directorate" to ensure consistency with the other posts within the section and any reference made to reporting to the "Human Resources/Administration Officer" or "Human Resources/Administration Manager" be changed to reporting to the "Business Support Assistant". The job description of HR Assistant Sc 4 should be amended to better reflect the departmental responsibility and the updated reporting lines.

The duties that the BSA Sc6 is carrying out are in accordance with the duties that are detailed in the post holder's job description with some additional staff supervision and work planning. Therefore no change is required. The duties that the PA/Secretary is carrying out are in accordance with the duties that are detailed in the post holder's job description and no change is therefore required.

In line with the corporate agenda and the desire to move to more flexible and generic job descriptions, BIS would recommend that a generic job description is developed for the **Business Support Assistant** role which will enable greater flexibility between the support posts across the new unit in the two key functions i.e. Finance/Systems and HR/administration. Two new generic job descriptions will cover all aspects of each strand and will therefore enable staff to be trained in the full range of the role which will provide greater flexibility to the service. Draft job descriptions have been developed and an indicative job evaluation has shown this grade to be Scale 6.

Resource Implications

Human Resources

Consultation will continue with all relevant stakeholders including HR, trade unions and staff to develop an implementation plan which is fully in accordance with all HR policies and procedures. The affected post holders will be subject to the council's categorisation procedure and it should be noted that all affected post holders should sign and agree the new job descriptions prior to implementation.

Financial Implications

Whilst there is a cost associated with the proposed structure, this will address the anomalies with grades that currently exist across both services and are currently having a detrimental effect on the daily operations of the service. Furthermore, within the recommendations there remains an **opportunity to reduce the headcount by one** with the potential removal of the additional Business Assistant which has been recruited on a fixed term contract. This will be subject to the recommendations of the Leisure Pilot.

Savings:

Business Assistant Sc6 (4 months savings following the end of the Leisure pilot)
£7,902

Costs

3 X Sc4 to Sc 6 grades: £13,746
Total cost: £5,844

However although there is a cost associated with Stage I of Phase II it is essential to address the operational issues that are prevalent due to the grading differences between staff previously based in the separate Parks and Leisure Services.

By addressing these issues it is anticipated that savings over and above the cost of Stage I will be achieved following the Leisure pilot and therefore provide overall savings as a result of the Phase II review. Members will be presented with this information at the end of the Leisure Pilot.

Additionally, the creation of two generic job descriptions i.e. that of the Business Assistant (Finance/Systems) and the Business Assistant (HR/Admin) has

reduced the number of designations within the structure from seven to three.

A copy of the proposed structure is attached at Appendix 1.

Recommendations

Committee is asked to approve the recommendations as listed above.

Decision Tracking

The responsible officer for overseeing the implementation of the recommendations will be the Business Manager

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: BIS report including:

- Parks and Leisure Services Directorate current structure
- Parks and Leisure Services Directorate proposed structure



Parks and Leisure Services

Review of Business Support

August 2010

Project No. 05/010/09/45

Review of Parks & Leisure Business Support

Phase II stage 1

Introduction

As reported to Members in February 2010 this stage of the review is considered Stage I of Phase II in order to address structural and operational anomalies with the staff based centrally graded at Scale 4 to Scale 6.

As part of the Parks and Leisure Departmental Change programme, and specifically the review of business support across the Department, a review of Directorate Support was also undertaken to assess the impact of the ongoing change programme and the appointment of the Head of Parks and Leisure (HOS).

An assessment of the business support requirement within Leisure Centres is also included as part of the review of Business Support. A 3 month pilot will assess the support requirements in leisure regarding receptionist duties, membership management, key performance and management information and the linkages with business support in the centre of the department. It is essential to address the anomalies within the central business support team before the start of the three month Leisure pilot in order to fully realise the potential efficiencies to be achieved.

Current Situation

Directorate Support consists of the Personal Assistant/Secretary (PA) to the Director, a Management Support Assistant (MSA) Sc4 who reports to the PA, a Business Support Assistant (BSA) Sc6 who reports to the Business Manager and a MSA Sc4 who reports to the BSA in parks & cemeteries services.

The remainder of the structure is comprised of:

- HR and Quality Officer (Scale 6) x 1
- Business Assistant (Creditors and Income) (Scale 6) x 1
- Business Assistant (Income) FTC (Scale 6) x 1
- HR Assistant (Scale 6) x 1
- Administration Assistant (Scale 6) x 1
- Finance Assistant (Income) (Scale 4) x 1
- Finance Assistant (Expenditure) (Scale 4) x 1
- HR Assistant (Scale 4) x 1

A copy of the current structure is included in **Appendix 1**

Findings

Profiling exercises were carried out with each of the members of staff to ascertain the exact details of the post; the areas around responsibilities, work allocation and planning; an analysis of the main issues; and suggestions for improvement within the Unit.

Each point which was raised by the post holder was rigorously challenged and evidence was provided to confirm what had been stated.

This permitted the profiling information to be evaluated and cross-analysed with the duties that are expected to be carried out in accordance with the post holder's job description.

Accordingly, the following conclusions were reached about the posts within **Directorate Support**:

PA/Secretary

The duties that the PA/Secretary is carrying out are in accordance with the duties that are detailed in the post holder's job description and no change is therefore required.

MSA Sc4 (reporting to the PA/Secretary)

An analysis of the post holder's duties revealed an element of differentiation between what the post holder is currently doing on a regular basis and what is expected in terms of the current job description. The main issues identified were the following:

- Work is directly allocated to the post holder by the Director, Head of Service, Business Manager and the Policy and Business Development Manager as well as the PA/Secretary;
- The post holder covers for the PA/Secretary at all occasions when they are out of the office;
- A regular aspect of the job involves arranging meetings, answering calls on behalf of the Director/Head of Service, servicing internal meetings where the Director/HOS is present; opening mail, dealing with elected members both in person and on the telephone;
- The post holder collates information relating to the development of monthly committee reports; and
- The post holder is responsible for filing for the Director, HOS and Business Manager in the absence of the PA/Secretary.

Therefore the duties that are consequently being carried out by the MSA are more relevant to those that are expected to be carried out by a Secretarial Assistant Sc6.

It is therefore recommended that the post of MSA Sc4 is re-designated to that of a Secretarial Assistant Sc6.

BSA Sc6

The duties that the BSA Sc6 is carrying out are in accordance with the duties that are detailed in the post holder's job description with some additional staff supervision and work planning. Therefore no change is required.

MSA Sc4 (reporting to the BSA in Parks & Cemeteries)

The duties that the MSA Sc4 is carrying out are in accordance with the duties that are detailed in the post holder's job description and no change is therefore required. However the job description should be amended to reflect the departmental responsibility of the post and therefore the Section heading should be re-titled to "Directorate" and any reference made to reporting to the "Human Resources/Administration Officer" or "Human Resources/Administration Manager" be changed to reporting to the "Business Support Assistant".

The following conclusions were reached about the remainder of the posts within the **centralised business support unit**:

Finance Assistants – Income and Expenditure (Scale 4)

BIS have assessed the role of these posts and would recommend that these duties are similar to the Business Assistants (Scale 6) which had previously been located within Leisure Business Support.

In line with the corporate agenda and the desire to move to more flexible and generic job descriptions, BIS would recommend that a generic job description is developed which will enable greater flexibility between the financial support posts across the new unit. The new generic job description will cover all aspects of the financial support required and will therefore enable staff to be trained in the full range of the Business Assistant role which will provide greater flexibility to the service. A draft job description has been developed and an indicative job evaluation has shown this grade to be Scale 6.

It is therefore recommended that the posts of Finance Assistant (Income) and Finance Assistant (Expenditure) be deleted from the structure.

It is recognised that all substantive post holders must sign and agree the amended job descriptions prior to implementation.

In order to effectively implement the proposals, management must ensure that processes are developed in order to ensure probity and to minimise any potential risk associated with staff dealing with income and expenditure.

Business Assistant (Creditor and Income) Scale 6

BIS would recommend the post of Business Assistant (Creditor and Income) be deleted from the structure and be replaced with the generic post of Business Assistant (Finance) (Scale 6). This new generic job description will better reflect the duties and responsibilities of the post and again is in support of the wider corporate agenda to create more generic and flexible job descriptions. Furthermore, the creation of a generic post of Business Assistant (Finance) will be conducive to the sharing of knowledge and best practice across the two units and should therefore promote a more joined up and integrated approach in the operational working of the section. Additionally, it will facilitate the approach to continuous improvement in the development of common financial procedures and processes within both services.

The affected postholders will be subject to the council's categorisation procedure and it should be noted that all affected postholders should sign and agree the new job descriptions prior to implementation.

Business Assistant (Income) Scale 6 – Fixed Term Contract

This post is currently a Fixed Term Contract. It was created as a FTC following the Interim Restructuring exercise and was created under the

Directors delegated authority. The postholder is currently on secondment and this is being renewed on a month by month basis.

BIS would recommend this post is continued on a month by month fixed term contract basis in order to assist with the additional work from the Pilot exercise being conducted within Leisure Centres regarding business support functions. Once the pilot is completed and the results analysed and evaluated the need for this post to be retained should be reviewed.

HR Assistant (Scale 6) and HR and Quality Officer (Scale 6)

These two posts are derived from the previous Parks structure (HR and Quality Officer) and Leisure structure (HR Assistant). As with the Finance posts it is recommended that both posts should be working on the same job description to ensure consistency across the department. This will allow both members of staff to work across the two services (i.e. Parks and Leisure) and will provide the department with increased flexibility. Furthermore, it will facilitate opportunities for the sharing of knowledge between the two postholders in terms of disseminating best practice across the two services.

BIS would therefore recommend the deletion of the post of HR and Quality Officer and the HR Assistant (Scale 6) and the creation two new generic posts of Business Assistant (HR) Scale 6.

A draft job description has been developed and is currently with management for comment.

A job evaluation has indicated no increase in the grade of the post. All affected postholders will be dealt with under the council's categorisation procedure.

Prior to implementation, all affected postholders should sign and agree the new job descriptions.

Administrative Assistant (Scale 6)

The post of Administrative Assistant has existed in the section from the Client/Contract split. This post provides general administration to the section. It is recommended that this post should be deleted and be replaced with the new generic post of Business Assistant (HR/Admin). This will allow for greater flexibility in the delivery of HR and administrative support across the department.

HR Assistant (Scale 4)

Having reviewed the job description for this post, BIS would recommend that the duties and responsibilities adequately reflect this post. However the job description should be amended to reflect the departmental responsibility of the post.

CWPO/Messenger

The final numbers and remit of the CWPO and Messenger will be determined following the evaluation of the Leisure pilot project which will be presented to

Members in November 2010. It is anticipated that any capacity identified could be utilised to provide more administrative support to the new Parks Managers and the provision of a more effective Business Support service.

Conclusions

The adoption of the recommendations contained within this report will result in one postholder being re-designated from a MSA Sc4 to a Secretarial Assistant Sc6. (It should be noted that the MSA Sc4 reporting to the PA/Secretary has a different job description to that of the MSA Sc4 reporting to the BSA.)

In addition, the job description of the MSA Sc4 reporting to the BSA Sc6 should be amended to better reflect the departmental responsibility and therefore the Section of the Job Description be re-titled to read "Directorate" to ensure consistency with the other posts within the section and any reference made to reporting to the "Human Resources/Administration Officer" or "Human Resources/Administration Manager" be changed to reporting to the "Business Support Assistant". The job description of HR Assistant Sc 4 should be amended to better reflect the departmental responsibility and the updated reporting lines.

Recommendations

In respect of the posts within the centralised business support unit the following recommendations are made:

- Delete the post of Finance Assistant (Income) Scale 4
- Delete the post of Finance Assistant (Expenditure) Scale 4
- Delete the post of Business Assistant (Creditor and Income) Scale 6
- Create three new generic posts of Business Assistant (Finance) Scale 6
- Delete the post of HR and Quality Officer, Scale 6
- Delete the post of HR Assistant, Scale 6
- Delete the post of Administrative Assistant, Scale 6
- Create three generic posts of Business Assistant (HR) Scale 6
- Extend the FTC of the post of Business Assistant (Income) until such times as the Pilot review within Leisure has been completed and review the status of this post at that time.

In addition, the job description of the MSA Sc4 reporting to the BSA Sc6 should be amended to better reflect the departmental responsibility and therefore the Section of the Job Description be re-titled to read "Directorate" to ensure consistency with the other posts within the section and any reference made to reporting to the "Human Resources/Administration Officer" or "Human Resources/Administration Manager" be changed to reporting to the "Business Support Assistant". The job description of HR Assistant Sc 4 should be amended to better reflect the departmental responsibility and the updated reporting lines.

The duties that the BSA Sc6 is carrying out are in accordance with the duties that are detailed in the post holder's job description with some additional staff

supervision and working planning. Therefore no change is required. The duties that the PA/Secretary is carrying out are in accordance with the duties that are detailed in the post holder's job description and no change is therefore required.

Committee should note that all parties have been consulted throughout this process to date and are in agreement with the recommendations contained in the review.

It is acknowledged that the affected postholders will be required to sign and agree an amended job description to take account of the above changes.

Resource Implications

Whilst there is a cost associated with the proposed structure, this will address the anomalies with grades which currently exist across both services and are currently having a detrimental effect on the daily operations of the service. Furthermore, within the recommendations there remains an **opportunity to reduce the headcount by one** with the potential removal of the additional Business Assistant which has been recruited on a fixed term contract

Savings:

Business Assistant Sc6 (4 months savings following the end of the Leisure pilot) £7,902

Costs

3 X Sc4 to Sc 6 grades: £13,746

Total cost: £5844

However although there is a cost associated with Stage I of Phase II it is essential to address the operational issues that are prevalent due to the grading differences between staff previously based in the separate Parks and Leisure Services.

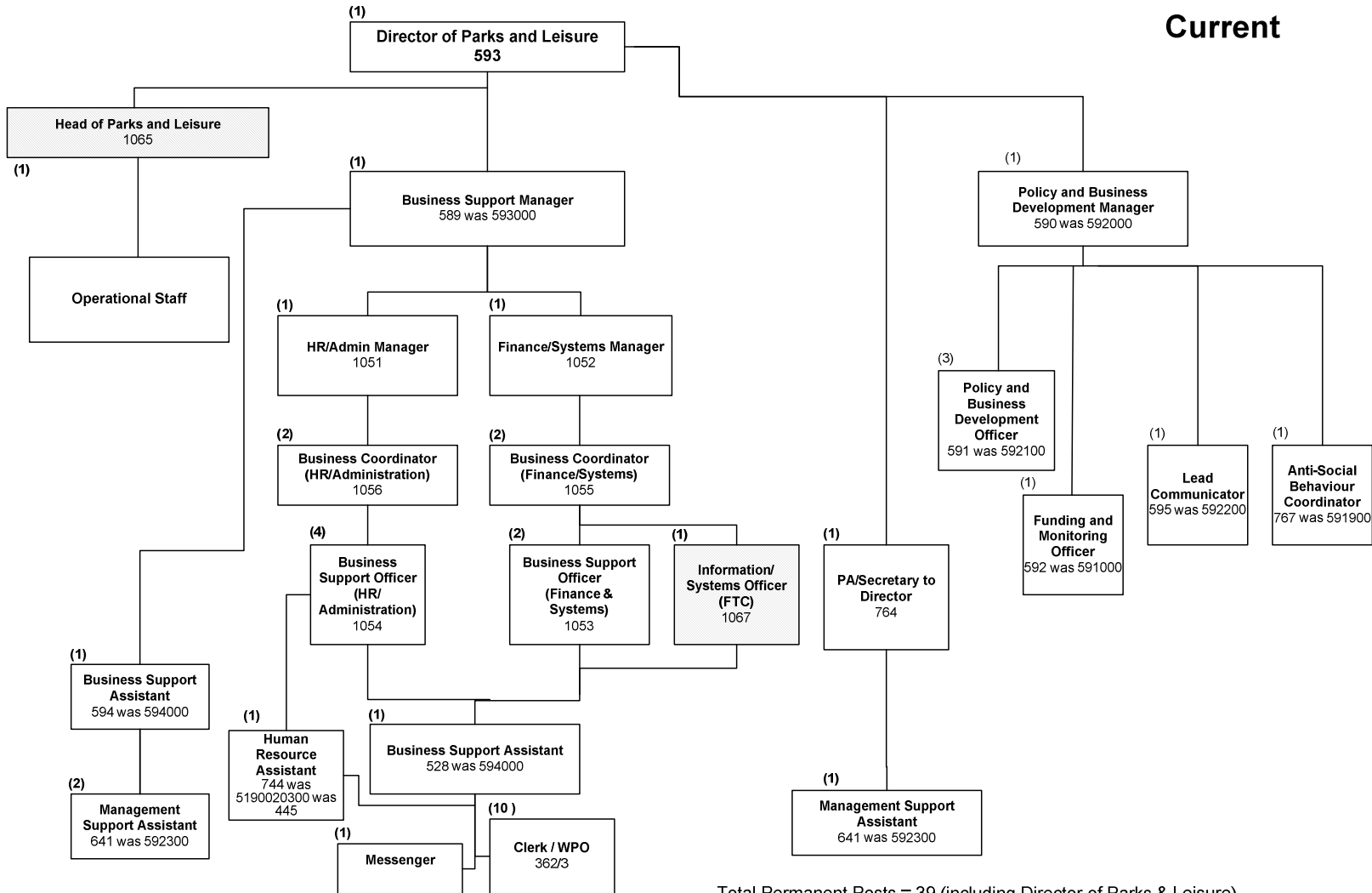
By addressing these issues it is anticipated that savings over and above the cost of Stage I will be achieved following the Leisure pilot and therefore provide Members with overall savings as a result of the Phase II review.

Additionally, the creation of two generic job descriptions i.e. that of the Business Assistant (Finance) and the Business Assistant (HR) has reduced the number of designations within the structure from seven to three.

A copy of the proposed structure is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Appendix 1 - Parks and Leisure Services - Directorate

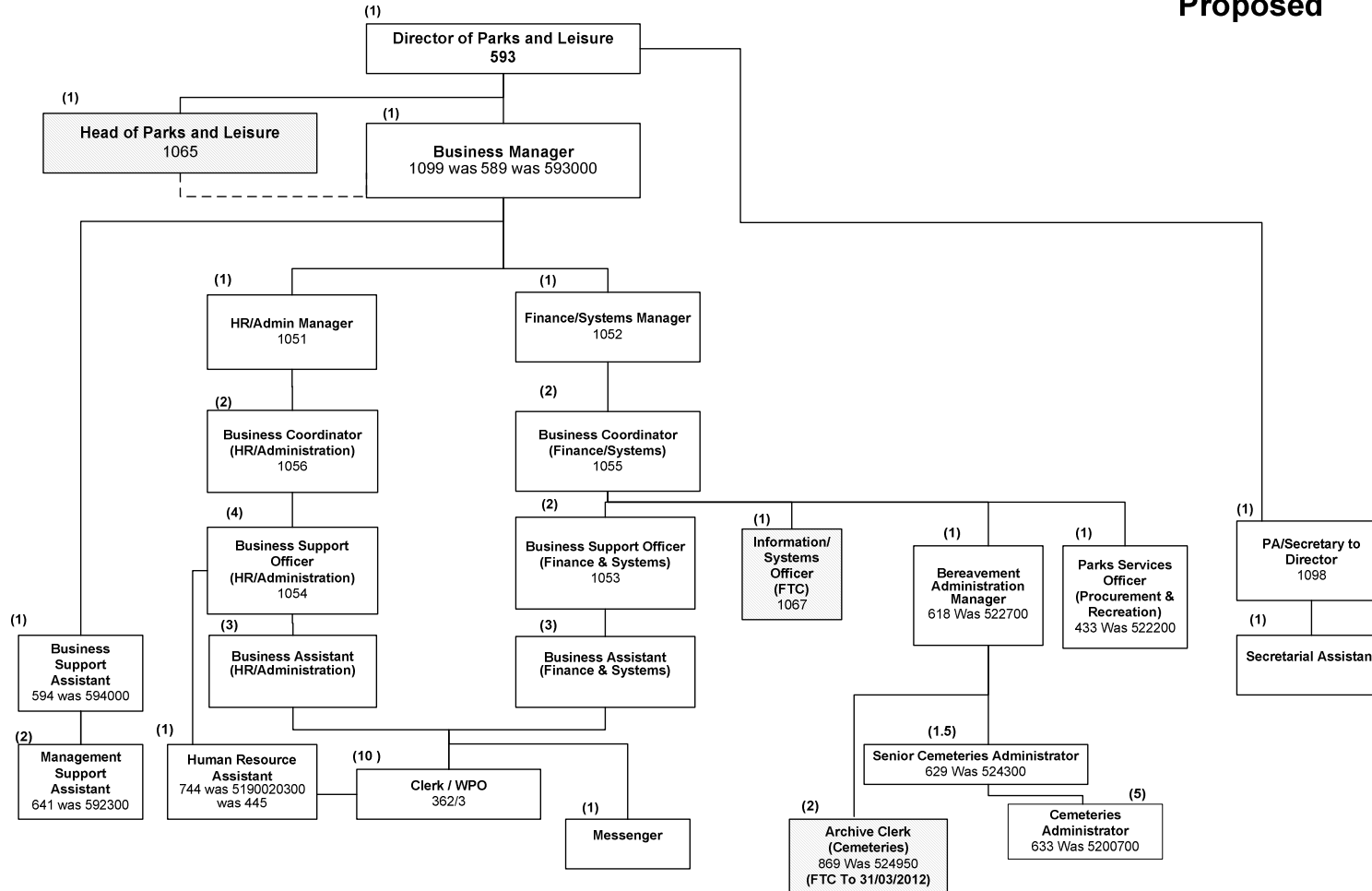
Current



Total Permanent Posts = 39 (including Director of Parks & Leisure)
 Fixed Term Contract = 2 (including Assistant Director of Parks & Leisure)

Appendix 2 - Parks and Leisure Services - Directorate

Proposed



Total Permanent Posts = 45.5 (including Director of Parks and Leisure)
 Fixed Term Contract = 4 (including Head of Parks and Leisure)

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Head of Parks and Leisure - Job Title
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officers:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure

Relevant Background Information

The Council approved the creation of a Head of Service post for the Parks and Leisure Department in March 2010 as part of the restructuring and rightsizing exercise which had been approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

When considering the recruitment of the post at the May meeting of the Parks and Leisure Committee the recommendation was made that the post should be given the designation of Assistant Director given that it was to cover both the Parks and Cemeteries and Leisure Services and was to provide a focus for the integration and delivery of services across the Department and to ensure the delivery of the Improvement Programme.

Following discussion, the Committee decided that the post should be designated as Head of Parks and Leisure.

At the meeting of the Parks and Leisure Committee in August 2010 it was suggested by a Member that the job title was leading to some confusion regarding who was managing the Department in that there is a considerable degree of similarity between the job designations of Director of Parks and Leisure and Head of Parks and Leisure and a report on the issue was requested to a future meeting of the Committee.

Key Issues

Similarity between the job titles of the two most senior posts in the Department, i.e. Director of Parks and Leisure and Head of Parks and Leisure, is becoming increasingly apparent, particularly to outside organisations.

Consideration has been given to possible alternative job designations for the

Head of Service Post however it would appear that there are currently only two viable options, these being the current designation of Head of Parks and Leisure or the previous suggestion of Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure, i.e. assistant to the Director.

Any change to the designation of the post would be to the name only and would result in no change to the job description or remuneration.

Resource Implications

None.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to give consideration the most appropriate designation for the Head of Service post in the Parks and Leisure Department.

Decision Tracking

Officer responsible: Director of Parks and Leisure
Actions to be completed by: end of October 2010

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

None.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Supernumerary Staff
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Manager

Relevant Background Information

Under the strategic review of Council indoor leisure facilities in 2004, the transfer of the site at Beechmount Leisure Centre to Colaiste Feirste and Fobairt Feirste was agreed.

Members will be aware that Beechmount Leisure Centre closed to the public on 31 December 2008.

At Parks and Leisure committee on 11 September 2008 leisure management set out the impact this would have on existing staff and how it was proposed to manage this situation. At the time the staff establishment at Beechmount included 6 permanent staff and the closure plan involved deploying the same principles and guidelines that it had done for previous redeployments within the service. This would involve carrying a number of staff over establishment until the situation normalised through staff turnover.

Key Issues

Over 15 months since the closure, two members of staff have been identified as additional to establishment at the centres where they have been temporarily placed. As Beechmount was a centre without a swimming pool, these staff can't work at the poolside. There are no posts available within Leisure Services for 'dry' centre attendants and vacancies at 'dry' centres were rejected previously as being unsuitable. One individual is currently undertaking meaningful work in relation to the gym induction process, however, this is to be reviewed shortly and is unlikely to be sustainable.

We are therefore not in a position to offer sustainable long term positions within Leisure Services to these employees. Redeployment offers to other locations in the council have also been rejected by one of the individuals to date. Redeployment offers will be made to the other individual as the

meaningful work they are currently undertaking is due to come to an end.

The options going forward in relation to these staff would be to continue to offer retraining and redeployment. However in line with Council policy agreed by SP&R Committee the individuals are now supernumerary and further offers of alternative employment within the organisation will be time bound for three months. At the end of this period the individuals would be made compulsorily redundant.

Resource Implications

Financial

There will be some additional costs from carrying staff over establishment because of redeployment as a result of the closure of Beechmount. There would be the potential for redundancy costs.

Recommendations

Committee is asked to approve the identification of the remaining Beechmount staff as supernumerary and time-bound alternative offers of employment to a three month period. At that stage they would be made redundant.

Decision tracking

Officer responsible: Business Manager. Actions to be completed by December 2010.

Key to abbreviations

None.

Documents attached

None.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Update Report: acquisition of land for burials for Belfast City Council
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Claire Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- (i) provide Members with an update on the burials land acquisition project;
- (ii) seek the Committee's approval of the recommendations made by the Cemeteries Working Group
- (iii) seek the Committee's approval for officers to commence the process to appoint a suitably qualified consultant to carry out the site investigations at the Dundrod sites;
- (iv) seek the Committee's agreement that the Nutts Corner site is not suitable as a potential site for a new cemetery; and
- (v) seek the Committee's approval that an update newsletter is sent to all potentially affected landowners and other key stakeholders.

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware of the ongoing project to select a site for a new cemetery for Belfast and that update reports are brought to Committee on a regular basis, the last of which was in June 2010.

It was reported at this Committee meeting that a number of pieces of work had been completed and the key findings of the final draft report for the Tier 3 tests at Lisleen, the draft interim report for Nutts Corner and the final report on the Review of Burial Capacity were presented.

We have now also received the final draft report for the economic appraisal of a new crematorium facility and its key findings were presented to the Cemeteries Working Group at their meeting in August 2010 and in a paper that was circulated to all Members prior to the party group briefings (copy attached at Appendix 1).

Members agreed at Parks and Leisure Committee meeting in June 2010 that the findings of the various pieces of work be referred for discussion at a meeting of the burials working group and that party group briefings be carried out on this issue during August.

Key Issues

The Cemeteries Working Group met on 9 August 2010 and was presented with the key findings from the tier 3 tests at Lisleen and Nutts Corner, the Review of the Burial Capacity and the economic appraisal for a new crematorium facility.

A summary of the findings of these pieces of work show that:

- If the council proceeds with the original approach of cemetery only provision, a site of 72 acres will be sufficient to meet the council's burial needs.
- The site at Lisleen is suitable for burial provision.
- Applying a weighting for sites which would serve the North and West of the city resulted in the two sites at Dundrod coming to the top of the rank order. However no site investigations have been carried out on either site. One of these sites came forward through the expressions of interest approach.
- There are a number of options available for the development of additional crematorium facilities. Based on current trends, additional facilities would impact on the requirement for additional burial land.

Based on the new information now available there are a number of options open to the council and the Cemeteries Working Group was asked to consider these.

The options are:

1. Stay with the original approach and agreed to acquire and develop all or part of the site at Lisleen.
2. Given that the priority for new cemetery provision is in the North and West of the city, agree to commence site investigations into the two Dundrod sites to assess their suitability with a view to acquisition and development.
3. Abandon the current process to acquire a new cemetery and rely on the existing provision at Roselawn supplemented with additional crematorium provision in the city.
4. Option three as above but agree to commence site investigations into the Dundrod sites to assess their suitability with a view to acquisition and land banking to meet future cemetery needs.

Recommendations of the Cemeteries Working Group

Following a discussion around the options for going forward the Cemeteries Working Group proposed:

1. That the issue of providing additional crematorium facilities needs to be addressed and work needs to be undertaken to identify what is required, where facilities would be located and the options for financing it.
2. That abandoning the current process to acquire a new cemetery and rely solely on the existing provision at Roselawn was not a feasible option.
3. That further consideration is given to tests at the Dundrod sites, to assess their suitability as cemetery sites, and that legal advice is sought on the implications of keeping Lisleen as an option while these are ongoing.
4. That further work should be taken to investigate the provision of natural

burials.

5. That burial and cremation charges should be reviewed.

Members are asked to note that the provision of additional crematorium facilities does not include refurbishment to the current crematorium at Roselawn. If a new crematorium were to be developed consideration would have to be given to the refurbishment of Roselawn to bring it up to the current requirements of a modern crematorium.

If the Committee agrees to accept the recommendations of the Cemeteries Working Group it is proposed that arrangements are made to undertake initial site investigations at both Dundrod sites. It is suggested that, given that one of these sites come forward through the expressions of interest process, it should be given priority for site investigation. If these investigations show that either site has the potential to be used as a new cemetery the Council will then be required to undertake more detailed tier 3 tests. A further report will be presented following these investigations.

Nutts Corner site

Members are advised that the tier 3 tests have shown that two thirds of the Nutts Corner site is unsuitable in its current form for the proposed development. For this reason it is recommended that the site at Nutts Corner no longer be viewed as a potential site for a new cemetery.

Lisleen site

No specific decision is required regarding the site at Lisleen at this time and Legal Services has indicated that this has no implications for any duties that might be placed on the council by the legislation regarding blight.

However if there is going to be a potential change to the council's policy on burial provision further legal advice will be required on the implications for a compulsory purchase order proposal.

Communication with landowners

Members will be aware that an update newsletter has been sent on several occasions to potentially affected landowners at both Lisleen and Nutts Corner and to other key stakeholders. It is proposed that a newsletter be produced providing an update on the Committee's decisions and this also be sent to potentially affected landowners at the Dundrod site.

Resource Implications

Financial

There is provision of £13.9M in the Council's capital programme for new cemetery provision for Belfast City Council.

Human Resources

There are no human resource implications at this stage.

Asset and Other Implications

None at this stage although the final phases of the project will inevitably increase the Council's land ownership and associated liabilities.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

1. note the contents of this report;
2. agree to the recommendations made by the Cemeteries Working Group;
3. agree that officers make appropriate arrangements for site investigations at the Dundrod sites, with priority to be given to the site offered through the expressions of interest process;
4. agree that the Nutts Corner site is not suitable as a potential site for a new cemetery;
5. agree to seek legal advice on the implications for potential future compulsory purchase; and
6. agree that an update newsletter is sent to all potentially affected landowners and other key stakeholders.

Decision Tracking

The next update report on the new cemetery process will be brought to Committee in November 2010 by the Policy and Business Development Officer.

A report on Natural Burials will be brought to Committee in November 2010 by the Policy and Business Development Officer.

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Paper circulated to all Members prior to the August party group briefings



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Party Group Briefings
Subject:	Acquisition of land for burials for Belfast City Council
Date:	August 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Claire Conroy, Policy and Business Development Officer

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- (i) update Members on the project to acquire lands for burials for Belfast City Council;
- (ii) ask Members to agree to the recommendations of the Cemeteries Working Group and that these be brought to the Parks and Leisure Committee for consideration; and
- (iii) ask Members for any additional views they have on this issue.

Relevant Background Information

The review of the cemetery provision in Belfast dates back more than nine years with the original DTZ Piedad consultant's report being presented in 2001. This recommended two large sites; one at Hightown and another at Drumbeg.

In September 2005 the council appointed Ferguson McIlveen (now Scott Wilson) to re-visit the search for suitable sites in order to provide the council with a robust case in the event of a public enquiry. Scott Wilson prepared a new methodology which resulted in the council looking for a site of 168 acres (68 hectares). A long list of sites was established within a list of pre-determined criteria and in May 2007 a shortlist of four sites was agreed at:

- Hightown
- Nutts corner
- Drumbeg
- Lisleen

This list was shortened to the two most viable sites following initial site investigation which indicated the presence of rock close to the surface at most

of the Hightown site and that Drumbeg was too sandy to allow for the digging of graves.

The Environment Agency has published guidance on the assessment of cemetery developments. This provides a framework for the appraisal of risks posed by cemetery developments. Following discussion with the Planning Service and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, it was agreed to carry out a tier 3 risk assessment at the Lisleen and Nutts Corner sites. This assessment required detailed site investigations over a 12 month period followed by modelling against an outline cemetery layout design.

There have been a number of developments since this project started, ie:

- Acquisition of additional land at Roselawn which provides additional burial space for a period in excess of thirty years at current burial rates.
- The increasing shift in the trend towards cremation with total burials down from 1900 in 1996 to 1300 in 2008 and cremations up from 2050 to 2600 over the same period.
- The crematorium is now operating close to maximum capacity.

Given these changes together with the interim indications of the Tier 3 assessment for the site at Nutts Corner, which that indicated that two thirds of the site was unsuitable for development as a cemetery in its current form, and the exclusion of any consideration of cremation in the original policy, the Parks and Leisure Committee agreed to:

- Review the planning assumptions.
- Reassess the requirements for a new cemetery on the revised assumptions.
- Invite expressions of interest from land owners with potential sites not identified in the original long list of sites identified by the consultants;
- Compile a long list of potential sites using the new site requirements and rank order them with a specific weighting applied to sites serving the North and West of the city.
- Undertake an economic appraisal into options for further crematorium provision in the city.

The final draft report for the Tier 3 tests at Lisleen, the draft interim report for Nutts Corner, the final report on the Review of Burial Capacity and the final draft economic appraisal for a new crematorium facility have now been received and the key findings are detailed below.

Key Issues

Tier 3 tests

The Tier 3 tests suggest that the ground conditions at Lisleen would provide one of the best potential cemetery sites in the wider Belfast area although if it were to be selected as the new burial ground for Belfast, work would have to be carried out to put in place a management system to minimise the impact on the water environment in the area. Discussions would have to take place with the

Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to determine their position.

An interim report on the Tier 3 tests at the Nutts Corner site indicated that the majority of the site at Nutts Corner was unsuitable for the proposed development in its current form but that the south eastern proportion of the site, 36% of the total site, may be suitable for development subject to the issues of groundwater being resolved.

The interim report also suggested that there is the potential that the area to the east of the current boundary of the proposed site may be similar to the eastern part of the site and therefore suitable for development as a cemetery. Intrusive investigation of this land would be required in order to demonstrate this, and further assessment carried out, particularly with regard to any alternative receptors that may become relevant.

The final Tier 3 report for the Nutts Corner site is currently being produced by the consultants but they have advised us that it is considered unlikely that the additional data will change the conclusions drawn in the interim report.

Review of Burial Capacity

Scott Wilson were commissioned to undertake a review of burial capacity to determine the minimum size of a new burial site required to service the residents of Belfast over a period of 50 years. Following this exercise, expressions of interest were sought from landowners who would have a site of a suitable size for a new burial ground which would service the residents from the North and West of the city. The third stage of the project was to score the sites identified from the request for Expressions of Interest and the original long list of 12 sites (Scott Wilson 2007 Stage 2 report) and recommend which if any sites may be suitable for future testing as a new burial ground for the residents of Belfast.

To determine the size of site required up to date data was combined with a number of other factors including:

- the recent acquisition of additional burial land at Roselawn to provide additional capacity;
- the availability of a small number of remaining graves in Council cemeteries; and
- an apparent decline in burial rates in the Greater Belfast Area.

This study did not take into account the potential impact of additional crematorium provision.

Based on this information it is now recommended that the area for our new cemetery site should be 72 acres (29 hectares) to provide sufficient burial capacity for a 50 year period. This compares to the previous study which suggested a site of 168 acres (68 hectares).

The advertisement requesting expressions of interest resulted in correspondence from one landowner with land in a potentially suitable area (Dundrod 'B'). This site was added to the original long list of sites established in

the Scott Wilson 2007 Stage 2 report to create a new long list.

The scoring criteria used in the original exercise were revised to reflect the need for a much smaller site than in the original study. The criteria for accessibility from City Centre was changed so that those sites located to the North and the West of the city received a 5 point bonus. All other scoring criteria remained the same.

The search area has remained consistent with the original study and in the original sites that were larger than 72 acres, a site of this size was selected to ensure the scoring remains fair.

The main difference in the outcome from the original scoring is that Drumbeg B has dropped out of the top 4 and is replaced by the site at Dundrod 'A'. In relation to the top 3 sites, the original report found that Hightown appeared to show considerable areas of near surface rock; the Tier 3 tests at Nutts Corner have shown rock close to the surface and high groundwater levels; the Tier 3 tests confirm Lisleen to be suitable.

The report recommends therefore that the Dundrod sites would be the most appropriate sites for further detailed assessment. No other sites on the long list serving the north and west would be considered suitable for detailed testing.

Economic Appraisal of a New Crematorium Facility

BDO were commissioned to carry out an economic appraisal to explore the various options for the development of new crematorium facilities for the Belfast City Council area. The economic appraisal sought to:

- determine the most appropriate option for new crematorium facilities within Belfast; and
- ensure that value for money is being achieved in the provision of new crematorium facilities.

The economic appraisal considered a number of options as outlined below:

Option 1: Do nothing.

Option 2: Refurbishment and extension of the current Roselawn Crematorium facility.

Option 3a: Demolishing of existing crematorium and creation of a new crematorium at Roselawn.

Option 3b: Demolishing of existing crematorium and creation of a new crematorium at Roselawn (inc. mezzanine floor).

Option 4a: Continuation of the Roselawn Crematorium (in its current capacity) and creation of a new crematorium (with 1 chapel and all supporting crematorium facilities) at another site in Belfast.

Option 4b: Continuation of the Roselawn Crematorium (in its current capacity) and creation of a new crematorium (with 1 chapel and all supporting crematorium facilities) at another site in Belfast (inc. mezzanine floor).

The options were all appraised in relation to both monetary and non-monetary indicators and option 2 was identified by the consultant as the preferred option.

Option two is based on refurbishment and extension at the current Roselawn Crematorium facility. The report noted that full market testing has not been undertaken in respect of the private sector and made the following recommendations:

- The appraisal team would recommend that prior to undertaking any decision to fund the preferred option; BCC undertakes a review of the marketplace (and a call for expressions of interest) to identify other potential providers of cremation facilities in BCC and NI.
- In the event that the Council decide to develop a crematorium at a site other than Roselawn, the appraisal team recommends early implementation of site searches by the Council, in consultation with the Planning Service, to identify an appropriate site for new crematorium facilities. Moreover, any land acquisition would be subject to planning permission.
- There should be an assessment by the Council of the rates charged for cremations, to local ratepayers, to those from other NI Councils, and beyond, to ensure that market rates are in place, or are introduced. This will also impact upon the private sectors' willingness to engage in this service.
- Further market testing could be undertaken to the options for financing the project and the service.

Summary of findings

Based on all the pieces of work we now know that:

- If the council proceeds with the original approach of cemetery only provision, a site of 72 acres will be sufficient to meet the council's burial needs.
- The site at Lisleen is suitable for burial provision.
- Applying a weighting for sites which would serve the North and West of the city resulted in the two sites at Dundrod coming to the top of the rank order. However no site investigations have been carried out on either site. One of these sites came forward through the expressions of interest approach.
- There are a number of options available for the development of additional crematorium facilities. Based on current trends, additional facilities would impact on the requirement for additional burial land.

Natural Burials

Members will be aware that a member of the public has recently sent a letter to Councillors asking that the Council consider the providing the option of natural burials (also known as woodland burials). Natural burials are when the body of the deceased is returned to the earth to recycle naturally in an environmentally sustainable way. The first natural burial site opened in the UK in 1993 and there are now over 250 around the UK, although there are currently none in Northern Ireland. There is an Association of Natural Burial Grounds which has a code of conduct for members including requirements around flora and fauna conservation, the use of biodegradable coffins and financial matters.

In a natural burial area graves are dug to a single depth and the body (preferably not embalmed) is buried in a bio-degradable coffin. Following an interment, the ground would be allowed to settle and would then be grassed over and a small native species tree planted in it. The area would over time become a woodland, under planted with wild flowers and would be managed for

the benefit of wildlife. The area would not have the appearance of a traditional cemetery although irregular winding paths are included to allow for visitor access. Graves are marked with a wooden marker and no other form of marker or memorial would be allowed. Fresh cuts flowers would be accepted but without any wrappings or ribbons nor as an arrangement in a container.

Further work is required to investigate the suitability of providing this type of burial at Roselawn and consideration could be given to it in the development of the new section which is currently being planned.

Options

With the new information now available there are a number of options open to the council to consider:

1. Stay with the original approach and agreed to acquire and develop all or part of the site at Lisleen.
2. Given that the priority for new cemetery provision is in the North and West of the city, agree to commence site investigations into the two Dundrod sites to assess their suitability with a view to acquisition and development.
3. Abandon the current process to acquire a new cemetery and rely on the existing provision at Roselawn supplemented with additional crematorium provision in the city.
4. Option three as above but agree to commence site investigations into the Dundrod sites to assess their suitability with a view to acquisition and land banking to meet future cemetery needs.

Meeting of the Cemeteries Working Group

Following a discussion around the options for going forward the Cemeteries Working Group proposed:

1. That the issue of providing additional crematorium facilities needs to be addressed and work needs to be undertaken to identify what is required, where it would be located and the options for financing it.
2. That abandoning the current process to acquire a new cemetery and rely solely on the existing provision at Roselawn was not a feasible option.
3. That further consideration is given to tests at the Dundrod sites, to assess their suitability as cemetery sites, and that legal advice is sought on the implications of keeping Lisleen as an option while these are ongoing.
4. That further work should be taken to investigate the provision of natural burials.
5. That burial and cremation charges should be reviewed.

Resource Implications

Financial

There is provision of £13.9m in the Council's capital programme for new cemetery provision for Belfast City Council.

Human Resources

There are no human resource implications at this stage.

Asset and Other Implications

None at this stage although the final phases of the project will inevitably increase the Council's land ownership and associated liabilities.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i. agree to the recommendations of the Cemeteries Working Group and that these be brought to the Parks and Leisure Committee for consideration.

Decision Tracking

A report outlining the recommendations of the Cemeteries Working Group and the view from the Party Group Briefings will be brought to the Parks and Leisure Committee in September 2010.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Tropical Ravine Heritage Grant Application
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Ian Nuttall, Funding and Monitoring Officer

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the status of the proposed application to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a Heritage Grant to allow the restoration of the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens, as agreed in the departmental plan 2010/11.

Relevant Background Information

The Parks and Leisure Committee agreed to a review of Botanic Gardens to explore how it might be better integrated with the other physical developments in the area. This was to include commencing an application for appropriate funding to refurbish the Tropical Ravine.

Heritage Grants is HLF's main programme offering grants of more than £50,000 for projects relating to the national, regional or local heritage of the UK, with aims which relate to learning, conservation and participation. To be eligible, projects must demonstrate how they will:

- help people learn about their own and other people's heritage;
- conserve heritage for present and future generations; and/or
- help more people, and a wider range of people, to take an active part in and make decisions about heritage.

The Heritage Grants programme has a two stage application process. The first round submissions are accepted by HLF on a quarterly basis. If successful at the first round stage, HLF allows applicants up to two years to develop a full application – during which grant assistance may be awarded to cover certain development costs.

Applicants to the Heritage Grants programme are expected to contribute as much as they are able to project costs. In any case, if applying for a grant of £1 million or more, applicants must provide at least 25% of costs (with at least 5% of the total costs of the project coming from the organisation's own resources,

either in cash or in kind).

Following the decision of the Committee, discussions with HLF have indicated that a project in Botanic Gardens including the restoration of the Tropical Ravine would be an appropriate candidate for application to the Heritage Grants programme.

Key Issues

Following discussions with HLF, a working group of relevant officers was established to commence the application process. In March this year, a pre-application form was submitted. This included the following aims:

- To realise the potential heritage value of the Tropical Ravine including development of linkages with other areas of Botanic Gardens and the surrounding institutions;
- To engage the local community and relevant stakeholders in determining the approach taken;
- To restore the unique Victorian features of the Tropical Ravine House, both external and internal;
- To incorporate similar construction methods to those used in the original building, in particular the roof structure;
- To improve and extend the educational potential of the Ravine, providing programmes and information for the wider community including the general public, education sector and tourists, so promoting local Victorian heritage and global natural heritage (both of which aspects would complement information in the nearby newly refurbished Ulster Museum); and
- To provide a valuable cultural tourism feature within the Botanic Gardens.

An initial estimated project cost of £3,000,000 was proposed – of which the Council would be required to provide at least £750,000 as a match contribution.

The pre-application submission formed the basis of a meeting with representatives of HLF. At this meeting, they advised the undertaking of a building condition survey of the Tropical Ravine, investigating the heritage value of both the building and the plant collection, and consulting with key stakeholders to agree in principle appropriate programming activities.

Work is underway to procure appropriately qualified architectural services to undertake the first of these steps. The specification for invitations to quote for this work is provided in Appendix 1. The key initial required output will be a report recommending options (with costs) for repair/improvement to the Ravine ranging from remedial action and the restoration necessary to meet the requirements of an HLF Heritage Grant.

It is expected that this work will be initiated by early October. Once completed and reviewed, the report will form the basis of the full application to HLF.

Resource Implications

Financial

The total cost for project will be determined as part of the building conditions survey. It is expected that the Council will make a match contribution likely to be

in the region of £750,000. In part this would be met 'in kind' (for example, through the time of existing officers), however it is likely that a contribution would be necessary from the Capital Programme and a Preliminary Strategic Business Case has been submitted for approval through the Gates Review process. A further report on the match contribution will be brought to Committee in due course, and will be subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, in accordance with the agreed governance arrangements for the capital programme.

Officers will also seek grant-aid support from HLF to cover the costs of technical and professional services for the development of the full application.

Human Resources

There will be no additional human resources required at this stage.

Asset and Other Implications

A successful Heritage Grant application would protect and enhance the Tropical Ravine as a valuable Council asset.

Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

Decision Tracking

Report on the match contribution of the Council to the HLF application - by Funding and Monitoring Officer in November 2010.

Key to Abbreviations

HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund

Documents Attached

None.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Strategic Approach to Allotments and Community Gardens
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officers:	Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager Caroline Wilson, Policy and Business Development Manager

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to outline a review and determine a strategic approach to the provision of allotments and community gardens within the Belfast Council area.

Relevant Background Information

1. Allotments

The Allotments Act (Northern Ireland) 1932 allows local authorities in Northern Ireland to *'if they think fit, provide allotments under and subject to the provisions of this Act for persons resident in the ... district of the local authority.'*

The Act outlines the provisions for the letting of allotments, the conditions applying to tenants of allotments and the duty of the local authority to make regulations around a number of things including the cultivation of allotments provided by them and for the preservation of good order in such allotments.

The current provision by Belfast City Council is as follows:

Site	No of full plots (full plot equivalents)	Waiting list
Annadale	88	134
Ballysillan	35	23
Belmont	38	124
Blythefield	12	3

As stated above, provision of allotments in Northern Ireland is discretionary. The National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners suggest that there should be a minimum of 20 standard allotments per 1000 households. This would equate in Belfast to approximately 171 acres of land; currently we provide 11 acres for allotments.

2. Community Gardens

Community gardens are a relatively new and growing demand within Belfast. Community gardens are community-managed projects working with people, animals and plants. In practice, they range from tiny wildlife gardens to fruit and vegetable plots on housing estates, from community poly-tunnels to large city farms. The emphasis is as much about growing people and communities, as it is about growing plants.¹

Community gardens are often initiated to promote access to green space, to encourage community relationships and to build an awareness of gardening. Some projects provide food-growing activities, training courses, school visits, community allotments and community businesses. Most are run by a management committee of local people and some are run as partnerships with local authorities, whilst retaining strong local volunteer involvement.

They are considered to have several benefits which distinguish them from traditional allotments:

- **Social aspect** – the group of people who rent the garden (generally food-based) can be very diverse in terms of income, ethnic and community background and age. This promotes a sense of belonging and common purpose amongst a diverse group of people, including those who are newcomers into communities;
- **Health aspect** – the interaction in a community garden has a positive impact on mental well-being, as well as the traditional benefits of working outside;
- **Educational aspect** – the organised educational function of the community garden, enables people to learn from one another, often between generations, sharing knowledge on vegetables, flowers, animals and birds. This includes an increased awareness of sustainability issues, through re-using and composting;
- **Neighbourhood attractiveness** – there is a joint responsibility for the maintenance of the plot, allowing people to seek assistance from others in the upkeep of the site. This improves the overall tidiness and visual appearance of the site, aiding the overall attractiveness of a local neighbourhood.

In terms of the Council's current provision, the Committee has given approval to community gardens at:

- several school projects in the west of the city;
- Waterworks;
- derelict land adjacent to Ballysillan allotments;
- Glenbank (Peace III);
- Glen Community Centre (Peace III); and
- Suffolk (Peace III).

In addition, a number of other sites have been identified as potential community gardens, including three within the Connswater Community Greenway and one at Grove.

Key Issues

At the present time, there has been a surge of interest in allotments, primarily as a result of increased environmental awareness and the current economic climate. As a consequence, more people are requesting an allotment plot.

As the demand for 'growing your own' increases, at the same time there is a limit to the availability of suitable land for allotments. Communal gardening potentially offers a way around this by maximising the number of people who can share one large plot rather than smaller individual plots.

Officers have been approached by a number of community groups in relation to sites for allotments and community gardens across the city; these include:

- Seaview allotments;
- Whiterock;
- Andersonstown Leisure Centre;
- Woodvale Park; and
- Musgrave Park.

The current position is that site layout plans have been prepared for four of the above sites. At two sites, additional survey work will be required to determine contamination issues and establish their suitability for food production. It is anticipated that further requests will emerge within neighbourhoods as the success of current community gardens expands.

Way forward

In light of the above issues, and in the context of the emerging Active Belfast and Open Spaces Strategy, it is proposed to review our current policy regarding the provision of allotments. A review would include:

- a review of the management model, including charges and tenancy agreements;
- potential provision of temporary allotments;
- plot size and standards of adequate provision;
- facilities including toilets, parking and storage;
- accessibility and security issues; and
- bio-diversity considerations.

As part of the review, it is also suggested that the Committee gives further consideration to the provision and management of community gardens. Given the substantial strategic fit with the Council's quality of life agenda, there may be merit in developing a 'community garden' model for Belfast.

Amongst others, the NI Housing Executive and the Public Health Agency have both expressed a preliminary interest to work in a partnership with the Council.

It is therefore proposed that a seminar is held towards the end of 2010, with a range of statutory and community partners. The purpose of the seminar would be:

1. To examine good practice in community garden provision and promote its benefits;
2. To establish an agreed approach to the provision of community gardens;
3. To identify opportunities for collaborative working, including the Peace III City of Neighbourhoods project (tbc).

The seminar will be for up to 50 persons including elected Members. It may be of benefit to invite some established practitioners from England to explain the challenges and opportunities of successful community gardens.

In advance of the outcome of the review, and in order to meet growing community demand, it is proposed that the Director is granted delegated authority to facilitate straight-forward requests from communities for in-kind support towards the establishment of a community garden. The Director will determine with officers the viability, deliverability and sustainability of the relevant community garden, in advance of any decision.

Any larger requests, such as asset transfer or leasing arrangements, will be brought to Committee for their consideration.

Resource Implications

Financial

There will be a small cost for the autumn seminar including travel expenses for speaker(s) from England. This is covered in revenue budgets and will not exceed £3,000.

In-kind costs for the establishment of new community gardens can be covered through revenue budgets.

Human Resources

Officer time.

Asset and Other Implications

n/a

Recommendations

That the Committee agrees to:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the review process as outlined above, including the organisation of the community gardens seminar; and2. grant delegated authority to the Director to facilitate in-kind requests from communities for the establishment of a community garden. |
|---|

Decision Tracking

A report outlining the findings and recommendations from the review will be presented to Committee by January 2011 by the Policy and Business Development Manager.
--

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

None.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Refurbishment of Dunville and Woodvale Parks
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officers:	Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the Report is to update the Committee on the proposals to refurbish Dunville and Woodvale Parks.

Relevant Background Information

The Committee will be aware that the emerging from the Parks Improvement Programme it was previously agreed that we would undertake the refurbishment of two parks. After consideration it was agreed that the parks would Dunville and Woodvale.

Over the course of the past two years there has been ongoing discussion with the respective communities and Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO) with regards to the proposals.

Steady progress has been made and the purpose of this report is update the Committee on the key issues.

Key Issues

Economic Appraisals

The Economic Appraisals for both Parks have now been completed and there is a recommended option for both parks. These appraisals were undertaken on behalf of the Belfast Regeneration Office to inform their decision making process. The Appraisals are now with the Department of Finance and Personnel and we await a decision from them.

The Committee will be aware of the ongoing budgetary constraints being applied to Government Departments and at this time, while we remain optimistic that funding will be forthcoming from BRO, we cannot be certain and must await

the decisions arising out of the comprehensive spending review. There is no timescale for the decision but it is hoped that there will be an indication from BRO after initial announcements on the spending review in October 2010.

Design work and Planning Approval

The Council has continued to work at a calculated risk and has prepared a design for Dunville Park. This will be submitted to the Planning Service by the end of September, following final consultation with representatives from the community.

Officers have met with the Planning Service and the NI Environment Agency to ensure that the planning application reflects any concerns the organisations might have. Planning approval might take between 6-8 months.

Work on the Woodvale proposal is marginally behind Dunville. There were a number of design options which required further discussion with the community representatives and this has delayed the more detailed work required for Planning. This work has now commenced and it is the intention to submit a planning application by the end of October.

Next Steps

Design Work

In relation to Dunville, it is intended to proceed with detailed design and contract documentation. This is necessary to facilitate getting on site in the summer 2011, subject to funding.

Once the Woodvale Planning Application has been submitted it is proposed that a similar approach be taken.

Involvement with the community

A governance structure involving BCC, BRO and the Community has been established for Dunville Park and this will be replicated for Woodvale. The purpose of this structure is to oversee progress in respect of both schemes and to secure the buy in of the main stakeholders.

These groups will meet every six to eight weeks, but frequency will depend on the stage of the project.

Funding

The Committee will be aware that the Council has agreed that both parks be included on its Capital Programme. This was agreed in February 2010 and ratified by Council in March 2010. The Council has included £1m for each park in the programme. The estimated cost of the refurbishment of each is £2m, the remaining £1m per park to come from BRO. As outlined above, given the financial constraints the decision from BRO has been delayed and we are awaiting a determination from them.

Resource Implications

<u>Financial</u>

There are no additional financial implications at this time.
--

<u>Human Resources</u>

There are no additional human resource implications.
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<u>Asset and Other Implications</u>

There are no implications from this report.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the report.
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Decision Tracking

There are no actions arising from this report.
--

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

None.

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**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Shore Road Playing Fields
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officers:	Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to make the Committee aware of a lease request from Grove United FC and Malachians FC in respect of the potential development of the Shore Road Playing Fields and to seek a decision on this matter.

Relevant Background Information

The Committee is asked to note that a request has been received from Grove United FC and Malachians FC in respect of the land at Shore Road Playing Fields. A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix 1.

The letter outlines that the clubs wish to undertake a development project on the playing field site. The development project will, according to the letter, provide permanent state of the art changing facilities, an indoor sports arena and multi purpose rooms for use by the club and the wider community. However, no concept or outline drawing have been provided.

The letter requests that the Council enters into a minimum of a 21 year lease with them regarding Shore Road Playing Fields and subsequently a 25 year lease was specified in order to meet the Sport NI funding requirement. The clubs would need some assurance on this to enable them to approach funding bodies to endeavour to secure funding to deliver the plan.

Key Issues

1. The Committee is asked to note that the Council, where possible, wish to work with clubs such as Grove United and Malachians to improve the facilities.

2. In considering the request as outlined in Appendix 1 the Committee is asked to note that:
 - a) the proposal is at a very early stage; and
 - b) no funding has to date been secured;
3. The Shore Road site is quite small, it is adjacent to a school which has right of access through the site. The entrance to the site is in close proximity to the slip road from the motorway at the Greencastle exit. These factors will combine to limit the development potential.
4. During discussions with the clubs the land adjacent to the site was mentioned. This land is currently leased, on a short term basis, to the Whitewell Tabernacle Church. This land is used as a car park and the Churches possession of it would be protected under the business tenancies legislation. Members are also reminded that this portion of land is part of the corporate land bank under the direction of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and is not part of the operational holding of the Parks and Leisure Department.
5. The clubs are seeking agreement in principle from the committee to enable them to seek funding for the proposal. However, Members should note that final approval regarding any lease for the site would be a matter for Strategic Policy & Resources Committee under Standing Order 46 (viii).

Resource Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications at this time.

Human Resources

There are no additional human resource implications at this time.

Asset and Other Implications

The implications are unclear at this time.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Agree, in principle to enter into a lease arrangement with Grove United and Malachians for a period of 25 years subject to receipt of a business plan, sports development plan and appropriate drawings regarding the proposals; the securing of the appropriate level of funding by the clubs to deliver the plan and the securing of the appropriate approvals, including planning and building control and council agreement to making all necessary lands available;
2. In the event of the club securing the necessary funding that the Council enter into an appropriate development agreement with the club in advance of the lease being granted to safeguard the Council;
3. The club be notified of the Committee's decision in this matter, subject to ratification by Strategic Policy and Resources in line with Standing Orders (46 (viii)).

Decision Tracking

Officer responsible: Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager Actions to be completed by: November 2010
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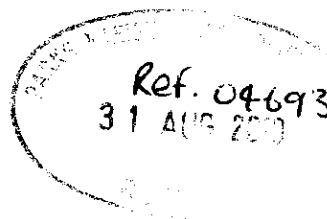
Key to abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Letter from Grove United FC and Malachians.

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Mr Andrew Hassard MSc FCIEH
Director of Parks and Leisure
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Hall
BT1 5GS

30 August 2010

Dear Andrew,

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF SHORE ROAD (GREENCASTLE) PLAYING FIELDS

Further to our recent meeting we are writing, on behalf of the Committees of Grove Utd and Malachians Football Clubs, to seek the agreement of the Council to a lease of at least 21 years on the above mentioned playing fields. Such a lease is needed to allow the clubs jointly to pursue a development project which would be of great benefit to the future of the 2 clubs and to local schools and the wider community in North Belfast.

As you will be aware the playing fields are currently subject to an ongoing facilities management arrangement. The changing facilities for both clubs have been upgraded recently to meet IFA standards and we are very grateful for the assistance provided by the Council to allow our clubs to retain Intermediate Status in the Amateur League.

Grove Utd and Malachians have been sharing the Shore Road facilities for almost 20 years on a cross-community basis and our management committees are now wishing to consolidate the future of our clubs and to develop the facility to provide permanent state-of-the-art changing rooms, an indoor sports arena and multi-purpose rooms for use by the 2 clubs, local schools and the wider community. This is an exciting cross-community project but in order to avail of the necessary grant-aid funding from various sources the clubs require a lease of at least 21 years.

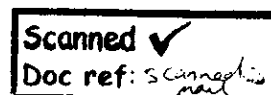
We should be grateful if you would arrange to have our request submitted to the relevant committee within the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. We would of course be happy to provide any further information you may need.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Boyd
for Grove Utd FC

Kevin Shiels
for Malachians FC

David McDonald
Total Respect Foundation
Chairperson of MalGrove



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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Acquisition of Land at Slievegallion Drive
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure.
Contact Officer:	Ken Anderson, Estates Management, Property and Projects Department Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to receive Committee approval to proceed with the acquisition of land at Slievegallion open space.

Relevant Background Information

The Committee is asked to note that the Council currently holds 4.975 acres of land at Slievegallion Drive (shown shaded green on the attached map (Appendix 1). The land is held on a 10,000 year lease, dated 20 February 1984, from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The lease restricts use of the site to open space.

A small portion of land at the northern end of the site was omitted from the original transfer and remains in NIHE ownership. To allow rationalisation of the site boundary Council officers contacted the NIHE and requested the transfer of the previously omitted portion to the Council. The transfer would be on terms similar to those of the original lease i.e. a long lease at nominal rent. The NIHE has agreed to this request.

The land to be acquired comprises approximately 0.173 acres and is shown hatched black on the attached map (Appendix 1). The land is currently in grass. A Preliminary Risk Assessment to increase understanding of any potential contamination on the site indicates there are no greater contamination risks associated with the portion being acquired than with the other portions of the site which are already held by the Council.

Key Issues

The key issue for the committee to note is that the transfer of the portion of land hatched black on Appendix 1 would rationalise the existing site boundaries and 'square off' the Council's land holding. This would simplify any future pitch or other recreational development at this location. Acquisition of the land would be at no cost to the Council.

Resource Implications

Financial

The acquisition would be at no capital costs to the Council. Minimal additional revenue costs incurred for grass cutting of the additional portion of land which measures approximately 20 metres x 30 metres.

Human Resources

There are no additional human resources required.

Asset and Other Implications

Acquisition would rationalise site boundaries which are currently undefined around this portion of land. i.e. there are currently no fences or other structures which separate the Council's existing land from the portion to be acquired.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee approve the acquisition from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive of approximately 0.173 acres of land shown hatched black on Appendix 1 to this report, on the basis of a long lease at a nominal rent, with use restricted to open space, subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Order 60 and appropriate legal documentation to be approved by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor.

Decision Tracking

The Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager will monitor acquisition to ensure completion by 31 March 2011.

Key to Abbreviations

NIHE: Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Map showing the land to be acquired hatched black. The Council's existing land holding at Slievegallion Drive Open Space is shaded green.



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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Intention to seek tenders for the collection and treatment of animal waste from Belfast Zoological Gardens
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Mark Challis, Manager of Belfast Zoo Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek delegated authority for the Director of Parks and Leisure to undertake a tender process for the collection and treatment of animal waste from Belfast Zoo.

Relevant Background Information

The Committee will appreciate that significant quantities of waste are produced at the Belfast Zoo as a consequence of both its high visitor numbers and from the animal collection.

The majority of the waste generated by visitor activities, mainly litter, is removed by Cleansing Services. A portion of the waste from the animal collection, including for example dead remains and quarantine waste, is removed for incineration, while some hazardous materials, such as sharps, are removed by the Zoo's consultant veterinary surgeons for disposal.

As Members will further appreciate, the animals themselves generate significant quantities of waste, such as used and soiled bedding, faeces and food remains. This waste is removed from the enclosures by staff and stored in an area adjacent to the car park. These materials are then removed by a contractor and stored to allow for biodegrading and composting. This contributes to the Council's green agenda.

The current 3 year contract for this service expires at the end of October 2010. It is therefore necessary to advertise this tender for the period 2010 – 2013. The documentation has been prepared and is currently with procurement. It is intended to invite tenders for the removal of compostable waste products from the zoo, for a period of one year which would be renewable annually up to a total period of three years.

Key Issues

The Committee is asked to note that the provision of such a service is essential as the specialist facilities needed for this process are not available on site.

The current tender expires at the end of October 2010. It is envisaged that the new tender will be in place by the end of October, though permission to extend the current contract briefly should the tender process become overly complicated or slow could be beneficial.

The Committee is also asked to note that the evaluation criteria will be based on both cost and quality. The tender will be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender.

Resource Implications

Financial

The cost of this service to the zoo each year is in the region of £14,000, and adequate budgetary provision is made annually in zoo expenditure budgets.

Human Resources

There are no additional human resource implications.

Asset and Other Implications

The removal of waste by appropriately qualified and certified handlers is an essential service requirement of the zoo.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. note the contents of the report;
2. approve the proposed tendering exercises using the evaluation criteria set out above and authorise the Director under the scheme of delegation to award the successful tender; and
3. approve the brief extension of our current contract arrangements for one month, up to the end of November, should it be necessary .

Decision Tracking

All the actions will be completed by the Zoo Manager by December 2010.

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

None.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Belfast Festival at Queen's – event update
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Caroline Wilson, Policy and Business Development Manager

Background

Members may recall at their April 2010 Committee meeting, they approved the use of Shankill Leisure Centre for the Belfast Festival at Queen's staging of internationally acclaimed play *Black Watch*. The National Theatre of Scotland's large-scale production has won awards across the world and it is a prestigious event for Belfast to host as part of the 2010 festival.

The Committee had granted support in-kind from the Council by offering a significant discount on the market value of hiring the space.

Key Issues

Prior to signing a contract with the Council, the Belfast Festival at Queen's and the National Theatre of Scotland further examined the logistics of bringing the *Black Watch* play to the Shankill Leisure Centre.

Disappointingly, despite concerted effort by the Director and other officers, the National Theatre of Scotland has finalised their choice of location as the Girls' Model School. Belfast Festival at Queen's regrets that it has not been possible on this occasion to use Shankill Leisure Centre but hopes to continue its partnership work with the Council in future years.

The Festival production of Cahoots *Leon and the Place Between* in Botanic Gardens is still proceeding in partnership with the Council.

Resource Implications

Financial

Loss of income £7,500 – the discounted rate agreed by Committee. However, some of this will be off-set by normal public bookings in the Main Hall.

Human Resources

None

Asset and Other Implications

None

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report.

Decision Tracking

A closure report on the Botanic Gardens Cahoots event will be presented to Committee by February 2011.

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

None.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Installation of Flood Alert Station, Knock River, Orangefield
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure.
Contact Officer:	Celine Dunlop, Estates Surveyor, Property and Projects.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee to the request from the Rivers Agency to install a flood alert station at Orangefield Park.

Relevant Background Information

The Committee will be aware of the sporadic flooding which has occurred across the city over the past few years. To help tackle the problem the Rivers Agency has initiated a programme of installing flood alert stations at various key areas throughout Belfast to enable early warning of potential flooding.

Key Issues

The Rivers Agency has sought a licence from the Council by way of exchange of correspondence for the installation of data logger equipment and a water level gauge board on the masonry wall and fence of the Knock river near the entrance to Orangefield Park as indicated on the attached plan and photograph at Appendix 1.

The data logger is contained within a 100 mm rigid PVC pipe with the top end capped. Both pieces of equipment will be fixed to the masonry wall and fence. The equipment is battery powered and the data gathered is relayed by a SIM card telemetric communication system. The equipment can be installed in less than a day and will require routine maintenance once or twice a year. Installation and maintenance of the equipment will be undertaken by the Rivers Agency engineering staff.

The Flood Alert Station will be a permanent fixture until such time as the proposed realignment of the Knock River is completed as part of the Connswater Community Greenway project.

Rivers Agency will indemnify the Council against any loss or claim of damage to the Flood Alert Station during installation, operational presence and maintenance, caused by any unauthorised person or persons or injury to same during such an event.

Members are asked to note that the Rivers Agency has powers under the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973, which permit it to undertake such installations as of right. However, the Agency prefers to seek agreement with landowners on a voluntary basis.

Resource Implications

Financial

There will be no cost to Council.

Human Resources

There are no additional human resource implications

Asset and Other Implications

This work will not enhance the facility but will provide a valuable resource to the community as it will enable greater warning to be given to local residents.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee grant approval for the Rivers Agency's proposal.

Decision Tracking

The actions will be completed by the Estates Surveyor, Property and Projects Department by October 2010.

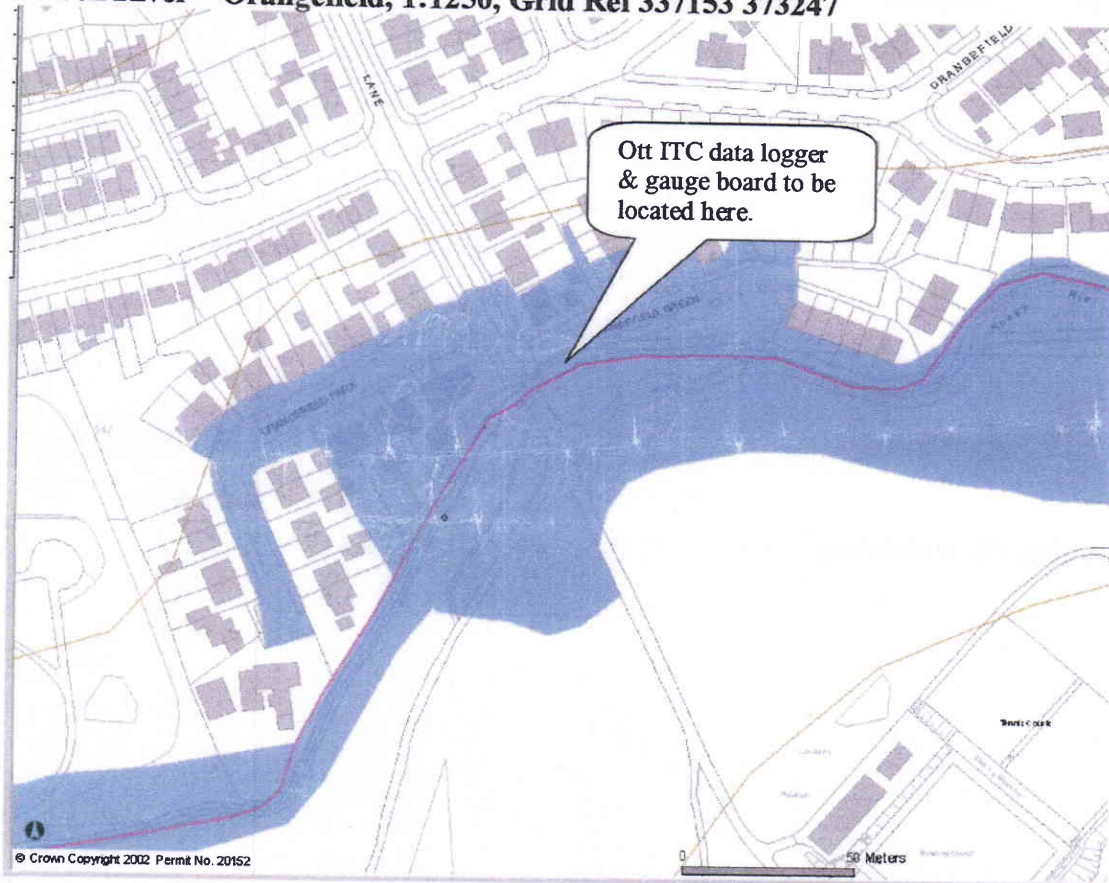
Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Plan and photograph

Knock River – Orangefield, 1:1250, Grid Ref 337153 373247



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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Support for Sport Development Grants
Date:	16 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Claire Moraghan, Sports Development Officer

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the decision taken by the Director of Parks and Leisure under delegated authority regarding Support for Sport small development and hospitality applications received during August 2010.

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that delegated authority was given to the Director of Parks and Leisure for Hospitality and Development applications requesting up to £3,000 and £1,250 respectively, including a one off equipment grant of £250.

Current context

The Director and relevant officer met on Thursday 26 August 2010 to discuss Small Development applications and Hospitality applications under delegated authority.

The Small Development applications are listed in Appendix 1.
The Hospitality applications are listed in Appendix 2.

Detailed applications are held in the Parks and Leisure Department and can be forwarded to Members on request.

A copy of each application will be available at Committee.

Resource Implications

Financial

The table below indicates the amounts allocated from the 2010/2011 budget.

Area	Total available	Allocated to date	Proposed allocation for September	Remaining after allocation
Small Development	£120,000	£52,573	£4,003	£63,424
Hospitality	£31,000	£24,285	£0	£6,715
<u>Human Resources</u> N/A				
<u>Asset and Other Implications</u> N/A				

Recommendations

That Members note the content of this report with regard to Support for Sport development and hospitality applications.

Decision Tracking

Sports Development Officer to arrange the award of all Support for Sport Small Grants by 30 September 2010.

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Table of Recommendations

Appendix 1: Small Development Applications September 2010

Appendix 2: Hospitality Applications September 2010.

ID	Club/ Organisation	Activity details	Amount Requested	Recommendation and reason	Breakdown
D-524-11	Belfast Kronk ABC	Boxing event for 11-20 year olds at Dockers Club- Date TBC after release of Ulster Boxing Fixtures.	£1000	To support up to a maximum of £1000, not representing more than 75% of the total running costs.	Facility Hire : £250 Medals/Trophies: £283 Marketing Materials: £400 MC & First Aid: £400 Total: £1333-75%=£1000
D-525-11	The Central Catholic Club Football Team	Newly formed soccer team within the club for senior men based out of Ballysillan Leisure Centre. Play in Sunday League and aim to establish a Youth Team. 16 Weeks support eligible. Constitution & Bank Account details submitted.	£1000 + £250 Equipment Grant	To support up to a maximum of £840, not representing more than 75% of the total running costs + £250 Equipment Grant	Facility Hire : £1120 Total: £1120-75%=£840 +£250 Equipment Grant
D-526-11	Beann Mhadaghain FC	New team established in 2010 and have just joined division 3 targeting men aged 16-45 years. They want assistance with a coaching programme at the Waterworks. 16 weeks support eligible.	£1250	To support up to a maximum of £600, not representing more than 75% of the total running costs + £250 Equipment Grant	Facility Hire: £800 Total: £800-75%=£600 +£250 Equipment Grant
D-527-11	Eire Og	U8 Hurling Tournament at Woodlands 25 Sept for Boys & Girls. Expecting 65 children.	£146	To support up to a maximum of £110, not representing more than 75% of the total running costs.	Facility Hire: £200 Medals/Certs:£100 Total: £146-75%= £110

Appendix 1 Support for Sport Small Development Grants September 2010

ID	Club/ Organisation	Activity details	Amount Requested	Recommendation and reason	Breakdown
D-528-11	Setanta Waterpolo Club	Hosting a weekly challenge tournament for 6 weeks at Falls Swim Centre for 9-28 year old males. To assist with competition, coaching and refereeing skills	£1000	To support up to a maximum of £953, not representing more than 75% of the total running costs.	Facility Hire: £540 Coaching Costs: £731 Total: £1271-75%= £953
Total Amount Allocated to Date			Total Amount Allocated this month		Over all Total
£52,573			£4,003		£56,576

Appendix 2 Support for Sport Hospitality September 2010

AREA	ORGANISER / EVENT	REF.	EVENT DATE	SUMMARY	RECOMMENDATION	REASON
Hospitality	Irish Strength Association	H-67-11	27 August 2010	UK Strongest Man 2010	Do Not Recommend	Application late - received 2 days before the event.
Total amount allocated to date				Amount allocated September 2010	Total Amount allocated	
£24,285				£0	£24,285	

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