

Parks and Leisure Committee

Thursday, 11th April, 2013

MEETING OF PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor McCabe (Chairman);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Corr, Garrett, Haire, Hartley,
Hendron, Kelly, Kyle, Mallon, McKee,
McNamee, Mac Giolla Mhín, Mullan, A. Newton,
Ó Donnghaile, O'Neill, Spence and Thompson.

In attendance: Mr. A. Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks
and Leisure; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apology

An apology was reported on behalf of Alderman Humphrey.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 14th March were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd April.

Declarations of Interest

In respect of item 3, viz., 'Stadia Update', Councillor Mullan declared an interest in that she was related to an individual associated with the contractor appointed by the Irish Football Association; and Councillor Hartley declared an interest in item 17, viz., 'Feile an Phobail – Request for the use of Council Facilities', in that he conducted tours of the City Cemetery as part of that festival's programme of events.

Support for Sport Development Grants

The Committee noted a schedule of Support for Sport applications which related to development and hospitality grants and which had been approved by the Director in accordance with the authority delegated to him, information on which was available on the Council's Modern.gov website.

Stadia Update

(Ms. C. Wilson, Neighbourhood and Development Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.1 Windsor/Olympia

The Committee had agreed that ‘option 2’ was the Council preference; which includes moving leisure provision into the new stadium; relocation of community centre provision into the Village area; redevelopment of the Olympia site to provide a new alignment and replacement for Midgely Park; a new pitch; play provision; some commercial development and new public realm and access to the stadium from Boucher Road. Two community engagement sessions have taken place and during debate option 2 is closely aligned to public response although further consultation will be necessary on detail.

DCAL/Linfield and the IFA also favour this option as the Council use of stadium space for leisure in the widest sense meets the sustainable community benefit criteria and of course it provides a much better setting and access for the new stadium adding to its offer. Discussions are ongoing with the IFA regarding leasing arrangements and mutual benefits, as well as with Linfield Football Club regarding their provision.

Currently an economic appraisal is underway to test the extent of leisure offer available in the stadium space, the cost of the overall option as opposed to replacing Olympia as is, including IFA rental agreements with Linfield on Midgely Park etc. This will be presented to SP&R Committee in April/May, for their consideration.

1.2 Casement/Andersonstown

Options for collaborative leisure at Casement/Andersonstown essentially were one of three broad options:

- i. Development of leisure space within the stadium equivalent in space terms to the existing leisure centre and redevelop the leisure site in some other way;
- ii. Share leisure provision with between the stadium and a replacement of the Andersonstown Leisure Centre site;
- iii. Provide all new leisure facilities at the Andersonstown Leisure Centre site and have a different form of community benefit associated with the stadium.

A number of meetings took place with the GAA integrated design team to test option (i) and after some difficulties about available space, proposals were identified that could provide equivalent floor space within the stadium to include both wet and dry facilities.

A public meeting was also held in Andersonstown Leisure Centre which was very well attended in regard to the three

options and there was overwhelming support for option (iii). Although one public meeting does not represent everyone, the view from political representatives in the area is also that a replacement of Andersonstown on the existing site is preferable. Officers have continued engagement with DCAL officials as to how best to ensure community benefit for the public money associated with Casement.

SP&R Committee agreed to refocus the economic appraisal at the Casement/Andersonstown development on the Andersonstown site and maximise regeneration benefits of both the Leisure Centre and Stadium, for presentation to Committee in April/May.

1.3 Overall

Members have stressed the major physical, social and economic regenerative impacts of stadia development and the consequent economic multiplier effect. To this end, Council officers have also been in contact with DSD who have a high level South West Gateway Masterplan which they are about to begin to operationalise. There are keen to work with the Council on this, particularly in regard to traffic management for both stadia. To inform this work, a wider traffic impact study for South West Belfast in conjunction with DSD will be commissioned shortly.

DCAL have also had one meeting of an interdepartmental group intended to create comprehensive regeneration plans which a Council officer attended. Council officers have begun developing comprehensive regeneration plans, for future consideration by Committee.

1.4 Conclusion

At its meeting in March, SP&R Committee agreed to continue the in principle decision to move both the Olympia and Andersonstown Leisure Centres to stage 2 of the Capital Programme as the first phase of the Citywide Leisure Estate Review; and to develop both regeneration plans concurrently as far as possible working toward an investment decision in May with a completion date in 2016.”

During discussion, a Member pointed out that it was essential that the costs estimated by the Council for the delivery of any projects associated with the stadia developments to be managed prudently to ensure that budgets would not be exceeded. A further Member indicated that the Ulster Unionist Party would be opposed to the corporate hire and use of consultants to oversee the financial management of any Council investments which would be undertaken in conjunction with the stadia developments.

After discussion, during which the Director clarified a number of matters in respect of the report, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Update on Delivery of Pitches Strategy

The Committee considered the undernoted report, together with the associated appendix, which provided an update on the progress achieved to date with the strategy:

“1. Background Information

1.1 The Committee will recall that its meeting in March 2012 following the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment it approved the Pitches Strategy. In the interim, work has progressed towards the:

- Identification of preferred locations for the additional / upgraded facilities, including discussions with end users and residents as appropriate; some of these discussions have resulted in a review of the initial preferred locations, however discussions have now been largely concluded;
- The appointment of a design team has been completed and work has commenced to complete the necessary site investigations to inform the design process and move towards the submission of planning applications; design work is underway on all 10 projects;
- Current estimates indicate that the delivery of the physical element of the strategy will be delivered by October 2015 in line with the Investment Programme.

Members will recall that the strategy identified 10 sites across the city which would benefit from investment through the strategy with the aim of improving facilities and greater intensification of use. The Pitches Strategy identified shortfalls of provision for some sporting codes e.g. Gaelic Football. In order to maximise use of new provision, it was also agreed that new 3G hybrid pitches would significantly intensify use and provide new opportunities across sporting codes.

Members are reminded that during the prioritisation process to identify sites for investment reference was made to a potential partnership with GAA who had indicated a willingness to invest financially in a number of the sites. The Committee received a report on the establishment of a Joint Management Board with GAA at its meeting in December 2012.

The current position is that GAA has offered to invest £1m to support the Council in its decision to improve sports facilities through the pitches strategy. The GAA has

indicated that the investment would be split across 4 sites, Cherryvale Playing Fields, Cliftonville Playing Fields, Musgrave Park and Woodlands Playing Fields.

In addition, St Bridget's GAC has indicated that it would meet the cost of including a meeting room within the proposed new build at Musgrave Park at a cost of approximately £43,000. Agreement has been reached with GAA in respect of each of the four sites above. This is subject to a letter of offer from GAA regarding the funding.

2. Key Issues

1. Steady progress is being made in terms of the delivery of the pitches strategy and it is anticipated that the works on all the sites will be completed by October 2015. In line with the Investment Programme; Planning applications have been made in respect of three sites (Dixon Park; Musgrave Park and Waterworks Park) applications are pending in a further three sites (Victoria Park; Woodlands and Cliftonville Playing Fields) and work is underway on the preparation of drawings in respect of the four outstanding sites;
2. It has been necessary to review each site to identify all necessary works including provision of services, pitches, car parking etc. This has had consequential cost implications which were reflected to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in March 2013 and a capital budget of £14.1 million has been agreed. Members will be aware that the GAA has also committed to invest £1 million at four sites across the city to support the Council's investment.

During discussions with end users a number of management issues have been raised. These will be progressed in the coming months, however Members are asked to note the following:

- Owing to the construction works it may be necessary to displace teams. Work will be undertaken in the coming months to estimate the needs of the clubs affected and efforts will be made to minimise the disruption and displacement.
- The issue of cost of use of 3G pitches has been raised during the public consultation exercise. Members will be aware that the cost of hiring a 3G pitch is £70 per hour as compared to the cost of natural turf pitch which is £38 per match. Clubs and sporting associations have raised the issue of cost and have asked that the Council review its pricing schedule in relation to 3G pitches. This piece of work will be progressed in the coming months and again a report will be brought forward at a future date.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The estimated cost for the delivery of the agreed pitch developments is £15.1 million. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee has committed £14.1 million as part of its capital programme. The Committee is asked to note that the GAA has agreed to invest £1m at four sites across the city to support the Council in the delivery of the strategy. This is subject to receipt of a letter of offer from GAA.

3.2 Asset and Other Implications

The development of the new pitches and associated ancillary structures and changing pavilions will greatly enhance provision in the city and will enable greater levels of participation in sport and contribution to improved health and well being.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 The pitches strategy has been subject to Equality Impact Assessment.”

Appendix 1 – Update

Site	Proposal	Current position
Ballysillan Playing Fields	8 changing room pavilion	Outline drawings prepared with a view to submitting a planning application by summer 2013.
Cherryvale Playing Fields	3rd generation hybrid pitch and associated 4 room changing pavilion, floodlighting and fencing.	GAA has indicated that it wishes to invest £350k in the site. The proposal is to provide a floodlit natural turf pitch, the cost of which will be met by GAA. In addition a 3G artificial pitch for GAA training and association football will be provided. The existing pavilion will be refurbished to meet the needs of the site. A planning application incorporating drawings will be prepared and submitted following the finalisation of the detail.

Cliftonville Playing Fields	3rd generation GAA pitch and associated 4 room changing pavilion, floodlighting and fencing.	This scheme will be progressed by the Department of Education. GAA has indicated that it will invest £100k in the site.
Dixon Park	4 changing room pavilion	Planning application has been submitted.
Falls Park	3 rd generation hybrid pitch and associated 4 room changing pavilion, floodlighting fencing and associated car parking	Drawings will be prepared with a view to submitting a planning application following the finalisation of the details around the location of the changing pavilion.
Musgrave Park	Construction of a 4 room changing pavilion	Planning application has been submitted. This scheme at the request of GAA and St Brigid's GAC include an extension to the existing natural turf training pitch, the cost of which will be met by GAA - £100k, it also includes an additional reception room, the cost of which will be met by the club, £43K.
Ormeau Park	3 rd generation hybrid pitch and associated 4 room changing pavilion, floodlighting fencing and car parking.	Drawings are currently being prepared for submission of a planning application which is scheduled to be lodged by June 2013
Victoria Park	Construct a 10 room changing pavilion	A planning application has been prepared, however, submission has been deferred to enable discussions with the NI Environment Agency and the Airport Authorities to be completed to determine access arrangements in advance of planning. It is intended to lodge a planning application by June 2013. Members are asked to note that progress on this site is dependent on completion of this section of the Connswater Community Greenway Scheme.

Waterworks (Westland)	Construction of a 2 room changing pavilion and associated car parking.	Planning application has been lodged.
Woodlands	3 rd generation hybrid pitch and associated 4 room changing pavilion, floodlighting fencing and car parking.	Drawings are currently being prepared with a view to lodging a planning application by June 2013. GAA has indicated that it wishes to invest on the site and has indicated a figure of £450,000. It is therefore proposed to increase the changing pavilion to an 8 team facility with the additional cost being met by GAA.

A lengthy discussion ensued during which several Members sought clarification on issues raised regarding the proposals for the individual sites. The Director provided clarification in respect of the individual sites, timetables for delivery, the planning and consultation processes, together with the future management arrangements for those sites being part-funded by the Gaelic Athletic Association. He agreed also to meet with individual Members, as required, and to make available and clarify the plans for individual sites.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and noted further the updated position in respect of the proposals as outlined in the above-mentioned table.

Avoniel Leisure Centre - Update

The Director updated the Committee on the progress which had been achieved thus far in the refurbishment of the Avoniel Leisure Centre and reported that work remained on target to be completed for the summer period.

After discussion, during which a number of Members welcomed the progress which had been achieved in respect of the work at the facility, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Wilmont House Development Brief

The Committee was advised that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 22nd March, had been informed that one proposal had been submitted in response to a Development Brief exercise for the disposal by way of lease of Wilmont House in Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park.

The Director reported that the proposal submitted, which had envisaged the refurbishment of the property over a seven-year period, had not fulfilled the criteria as set out within the Development Brief and, accordingly, it had been rejected. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had, therefore, authorised officers to

undertake further discussions with the range of parties which had expressed previously an interest in the development of the property and a report in this regard would be submitted at the conclusion of the exercise.

Noted.

Dunville and Woodvale Parks- Future Management Arrangements

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

The Committee is reminded that at its meeting on 10 May 2012 it received a report which considered future management arrangements in respect of Dunville and Woodvale Parks. The report highlighted these projects as the first major refurbishment schemes within the Parks estate for many years profiled in the Investment Programme. It was further noted that the projects had been progressed as regeneration schemes with the aim of improving the quality of life of those who live within the surrounding neighbourhood. It was suggested in the report that following the completion of the physical works that it was important to sustain the progress. It was proposed that central to the delivery of improved quality of life was how we manage the parks in the future.

It was noted that there had been significant engagement and collaboration between Council Officers and community representatives during the development phases of each scheme and that relationships had been established and formed over the period. It was suggested to further secure the relationships and help to build capacity that we consider a range of management options. Underpinning this proposal is the desire to involve the community more positively in the management of the park and the delivery of its outcomes. A series of options were considered:

- Option 1 – Council undertake the management of Park without Community involvement;
- Option 2 - A Community based organisation undertakes the Management of the park – this may take the form of a social enterprise company;
- Option 3 - Management is outsourced to an external organization other than the council such as a Joint Venture Partnership or Private Sector Provider;
- Option 4 - Council Management with a Reconstituted Friends Group; and
- Option 5 - A Neighbourhood Management Committee with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

Following on from this, Blueprint Consulting was appointed through a competitive procurement process to carry out consultation with a range of user groups / individuals from each area. The consultation essentially sought views on the options presented above, sought additional options and considered how we might move towards a management model which involves the community more in the delivery of the outcomes associated with parks.

In short, there was a strong consensus in favour of Option 5 above. There was strong view that a partnership between the council and the community could help realise the potential offered by the refurbishment of the parks.

There was a sense that the communities wished to create a 'Peoples Park', a 'living space' and that the refurbishment works created an opportunity to foster ambition for the parks. The consultation highlighted a range of opportunities. These included:

- General social use – passive recreation;
- Sporting and health related activities;
- Promotion and use of the grounds;
- Cultural activities;
- Community use;
- Educational links such as environmental projects;

There was recognition that there were two broad generic management roles; there was an operational element which included general maintenance and opening and closing the facility; it was agreed that this would remain the responsibility of the Council. There was a wider management role which related to promotion of the park and the facilities and programming around encouraging use of the park. Whilst it was accepted that the Council had a central role to play it was noted that the community could make a valuable contribution.

2 Key Issues

The critical issue for Members to consider is how we give effect to the concept of a neighbourhood management approach which gives the community an active input to the delivery of the outcomes associated with the parks. Discussions with the community representatives have led us to conclude one way forward may be in the form of a central advisory group with the aim of representing a wide range of interests from within the community as outlined in the background section above. Within the discussions a number of issues arose, these included:

- The importance of the role of local residents and within that specific reference was made to those who live immediately adjacent to the parks;
- Clear terms of reference for the group and clear governance;
- The need to avoid duplication with other groups in the area; sustainability was highlighted and the need to link in with existing structures was emphasised, whilst at the same identifying gaps, such as for examples local schools and businesses;
- The need to define clearly roles and responsibilities with the community group and to build capacity.

Underlying principles which emerged included:

- The need for inclusivity to ensure a wide range of interests are represented;
- The need for balance to ensure that no single view can dominate;
- Strong and proactive communication and engagement with the wider community;
- The need for resources to be put to support the development of the model; initially this was seen as the allocation of a budget to support activities in the parks at least during the first year following the works;
- The need for programming of activities in the park;
- The need for a review of the approach within 18-24 months, to inform and align with a view to corporate planning

3 Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is asked to note the report and to agree that:

- 1. The proposed approach be piloted for 18-24 months and be subject to review;**
- 2. The membership be drawn from the respective Neighbourhood / Area Partnership Boards, local schools, businesses and residents as appropriate;**
- 3. The group is chaired by an appropriate Council Officer;**
- 4. A development programme is put in place to support the work of the group during its first year.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations and, at the request of a Member, the Director undertook to provide further information in respect of cycling facilities at the Ormeau Park.

Promoting Urban Sports for All

The Committee considered the undernoted report.

“1. Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that the Departments Leisure Development Unit has a previous track record of engaging in projects funded through the EC Preparatory Actions in the Field of Sport. This is fundamental to the Council building transnational partnerships and positioning itself for the new round of EU Structural Funds which will include a dedicated programme for sport, for the first time.

1.2 As a result of prior European engagement, Council was approached in July 2012 to maintain its links with Milan through the 2012 call for applications under the above mentioned funding stream. This newly approved project is entitled PRO-US-ALL and is lead by the Comunita Nuova ONLUS, a not-for profit organisation which works with disenfranchised and problematic youth.

1.3 The project partnership consists of 14 partners coming from 10 Member States and over an 18 month period from 2013 – 2014 they will work on methods to promote sports in local communities and for strengthening the visibility of the role of sports for social welfare and local development. The work programme will include a series of workshops, seminars, local sports days, capacity building exercises and the use of social media to develop innovative approaches to promoting sport.

2. Key Issues

2.1 In line with the main objective of the call, the project ‘PRO US ALL’ aims at creating a transnational partnership of Municipalities, local authorities and organisations operating in the fields of sport at a municipal level, for developing, sharing experiences and testing an innovative approach (Municipality Action Plans) for promoting sports in local communities and for strengthening the visibility of the role of sports for social welfare and local development.

2.2 The Lead Partner will be in charge of project management and coordination and is also responsible for the laying down the Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) which sets out the main responsibilities of the LP and project partners, financial provisions and governance issues. As a project partner Belfast is required to sign the partner agreement which enables partnership activity to proceed and the release of any associated grant.

2.3 Belfast's participation in the project will contribute to improving the quality of life and well being of citizens, encouraging healthy safe and active lifestyles. It also presents an opportunity to showcase best practice projects and programmes delivered by Belfast City Council.

3. **Resource Implications**

The total project cost is €240,000 and Belfast will receive a direct financial intervention of €20,000 to implement this local programme of which €4,000 is a contribution in kind from Belfast City Council via officer salaries, €4,000 private sector investment which has been secured by the lead partner and €12,000 EU grant.

4. **Recommendations**

Committee is asked to approve the Council's involvement in the promoting Urban Sports for All European Programme."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

City Cemetery Decorative Arts Project

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1. **Relevant Background Information**

Members will recall the proposal to develop a decorative arts mural which was presented to the Parks and Leisure committee in the City Cemetery Improvement Programme report, dated August 2012.

The proposal made by local community representatives, requested resources to develop a mural project to address ongoing reports of youths gathering, drinking, littering and daubing the City Cemetery wall and gravestones with graffiti. The cost of the project was initially estimated at £6,500. Design suggestions included covering the wall with images of a secular nature connected and respectful to the environment. The proposal was approved contingent upon the involvement of cross community groups and organisations.

2. **Key Issues**

An internal officer group was established and tasked with:

- Coordinating the project,
- Establishing a stakeholder group and,
- Identifying an appropriate procurement process.

The internal officer group reviewed similar council projects to identify lessons learnt. They recognised that procurement for this project would present a challenge as resources were limited to £6,500. The wall is approximately 350 metres long and costs were estimated at £100 per linear metre which indicates costs of £35,000 for the entire wall.

Officers from the Parks and Leisure department and the Development department met and considered the procurement of an organisation that could:

- Seek further funding to ensure the entire wall was included in the finished product,
- Engage cross community groups and organisations and,
- Deliver a high quality public arts project on the theme of 'City Cemetery and its place in the history and development of Belfast City'.

A specialist arts production organisation was identified, which could be procured as a proprietary service provider. However, as the project neared the end of the 2012/13 financial year, the combination of limited time and resources presented an obstacle to initiating the project. The allocated budget of £6,500 remained unspent.

Following consultation with local members, the project was halted until the following options have been considered by the Committee.

Available Options:

1. End the project and leave the City Cemetery wall in its current state.
2. Allocate the same amount of £6,500 from 2013/14 budgets and proceed with a low cost painted decorative arts project on a small portion of the City Cemetery wall using images of a secular nature connected and respectful to the environment which facilitates the involvement of cross community groups and organisations.
3. Support a decorative arts project in the City Cemetery using the theme of 'City Cemetery and its place in the history and development of Belfast City'. Design and implement the project with cross community consultation and participation, using a variety of creative arts media to encompass the majority (or the

entirety) of the City Cemetery wall. Establish that responsibility for raising funds to cover a significant portion of costs for the project will rest with the procured artist. In order to mitigate the risks to the procured artist, the department can underwrite the costs of the project up to the value of £29,000.

Options Appraisal:

Option one does not address the issue of antisocial behaviour and graffiti on the wall and gravestones. This option does not engage the community in a response to concerns about youths gathering and is not a preferred option.

Option two repeats a difficult process that was ultimately unsuccessful. This option provides a response to the issue of antisocial behaviour and graffiti. However, once the costs for cross community consultation and repairs to the wall have been taken into account, there are limited resources available for the community to participate in placing artwork on the wall. Procurement of this option is hampered by the limited budget which further increases the risks to achieving a high quality outcome.

Option three is the preferred option, as it provides adequate resources to:

- Address the underlying issues and removal of an eyesore and,
- Engages the community in the provision of a significant and unique public art attraction.

Option three provides most flexibility in producing a large scale public art installation. Financial support from the department can be released in managed stages across 12 months. In doing so, procurement of the project can proceed unabated and the procured artist can source funding with support of the underwritten financial resources from the Parks and Leisure department. This option provides the most support for community groups to take ownership of the work and for achieving a high quality outcome.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is requested to consider the report and members are asked to approve option three.”

A prolonged discussion ensued in respect of the recommendation and the view was expressed that the costs presented to the Committee had risen significantly and it would be inappropriate to allocate such an amount from the Council's Anti-Social

Behaviour budget since it would impact adversely on the Department's ability to address anti-social activity in other areas of the City. Other Members suggested that the costs proposed were reasonable and would provide a much-needed enhancement to a facility which had suffered from anti-social activity over a prolonged period.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Thompson,
Seconded by Councillor Spence and

Resolved - That the Committee agrees to contribute a sum of £15,000 towards the project on the understanding that the groups proposing to undertake the work would seek to secure additional funding from other bodies and agencies and, should there remain a shortfall in the finance secured from other sources, the Committee would be requested to reconsider the matter with a view to meeting any remaining shortfall in funding.

New Attraction at Belfast Zoo

The Committee agreed to defer, to its meeting in May, consideration of the above-mentioned report to enable further consultations to be undertaken with local Members and additional information to be provided to the Committee.

Temporary Closure of Belfast Zoo

The Director reminded the Committee that the Zoo had been forced to close over the Easter period following heavy snowfall on the night of 21st March and gale force winds on 22nd March. He explained that significant damage had been caused to fences, and roads had been closed due to fallen trees which had also rendered paths impassable. He explained that the damage had forced the closure of the Zoo over the busy Easter period and he outlined the steps which had been taken to manage the situation, in conjunction with the Council's Corporate Communications Section.

During discussion, a number of Members congratulated officers on the manner in which the issue had been managed over the Easter period and referred specifically to the timely updates and information which had been received from the Corporate Communications Section.

After discussion, during which the Committee requested that its appreciation be conveyed to the staff at the Zoo, and to the staff of the Department for Regional Development, for their work during the adverse weather, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Procurement of Supplies and Services- Tendering Exercises

The Director sought and was granted approval to undertake tendering exercises and to award, under the Scheme of Delegation, contracts to the most economically advantageous tenders submitted for the undernoted services:

<u>Tender</u>	<u>Cost</u>
• Animal Healthcare at the Zoo	- £90,000
• Bitumen Macadam/Small Engineering Works (all Council contract)	- £400,000
• Pool Treatment Chemicals - Indoor Leisure and Zoo	- £28,000
• Cash Collection Service at Departmental Locations	- £18,000
• Supply and Delivery of Live Food to the Zoo	- £15,000
• Provision, Servicing and Maintenance of Vending Machines at Leisure Centres (income)	- £60,000
• Fun Fair at Boucher Road Playing Fields (income)	- £20,000

Improvement Programme – operational reviews

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

As part of the Departmental Improvement Programme operational efficiency reviews have been ongoing since January 2012 and have resulted in a number of recommendations being approved by Committee.

2 Key issues

In September committee approved the creation of the Neighbourhood and Development manager post to ensure the strategic management and oversight of delivering the development functions for the department as well as delivery of key strategic programmes of work (such as the Council’s Investment Programme).

This post is now recruited and the following functions are now reporting through this post on an interim basis until the full findings of the review are brought back to committee:

- Policy and Business Development Unit
- Leisure Development Unit
- Open Spaces and Active Living Unit
- Landscape Planning and Development Unit
- Capital Projects.

Priority will be given to this review with further work being undertaken to bring together the Parks and Leisure operations and to establish management of the Departments’ commercial businesses, i.e. Belfast Castle, Malone House and Belfast Zoo.

Within Parks Operations, a number of reviews have been completed including those aligned to the efficiency agenda. A recommendation has been made to operationally re-designate

the four existing Part time Leisure Car Park attendants into the new role of Mobile Facility attendants. This will allow cover to be provided by existing staff for both outdoor pitch facilities and indoor bowling facilities. The role also has flexibility built into it to cover parks events and mobile playground duties on an ad hoc basis. The current structure includes 16.5 FTE bowling pavilion cashiers on a seasonal basis and this will now be Mobile Facility Attendants and provide an FTE of 18.5 which will be a mixture of part time, seasonal and casual cover.

Other seasonal posts have also been reassessed and currently there are 11 seasonal Gardener Scale 3 posts which we would propose is increased to 15. There are currently 4 seasonal Park Operatives and we would propose these are increased up to 10 posts.

3 Resource Implications

Financial

The post of Commercial Development Manager has been provided for in the 2013/14 revenue estimates. The funding for the Mobile Facility Attendants is provided for within the leisure operations budget however there is a cost to re-designate these four posts - Cost of re-designating Scale 1c – Scale 3 - £9,710 approx (This amount will be provided for by a reduction in the Parks overtime budget).

Currently there is funding for 16.5 FTE bowling cashiers at scale 3 which is currently provided for by agency staff. It is recommended that this budget is used to provide the Mobile Facilities Attendants on the same grade. The funding for the additional seasonal Gardener and Parks Operative posts set out above will be provided for from reallocating existing agency budgets.

Human Resources

Staff and trade unions have been consulted throughout these reviews and will continue to be involved in the Development review and any post review assessments. It is acknowledged that the affected post holders will be required to sign and agree amended job descriptions to take account of the changes to roles, responsibilities and reporting lines.

4 Recommendations

Committee is asked to approve:

- The interim structure for the development strand subject to final review
- The re-designation of part time Car Park Attendants scale 1c to part time Mobile Facility Attendants scale 3
- The current FTE and budgets for bowling cashiers to be reallocated to the Mobile Facilities Attendants posts
- The reallocation of agency budgets to create additional seasonal parks Gardener and Park Operative posts.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

St Patrick’s Day Operations 2013

The Committee considered the undernoted report.

“1. Relevant Background Information

The following report provides outline detail of the actions and activities over the St. Patrick’s weekend and bank holiday in relation to keeping our Parks and Leisure spaces safe and free of anti-social behaviour. In the last number of years the council has been working closely with its partners to coordinate resources to effectively tackle any antisocial behaviour occurring during St. Patrick’s Day across the city. This year, as before, preparatory meetings were held with the PSNI, NIFRS, Ambulance Service, Queen’s University and Ulster University and a comprehensive operations plan was drawn up to support effective communications during the St. Patrick’s Day bank holiday weekend.

2. Key Issues

The aims of the St. Patrick’s Day operation were to:

- Communicate with local communities, elected representatives and revellers about the St. Patrick’s celebration 2013 operation;
- Provide a safe environment for residents, communities and revellers to enjoy and partake in St. Patrick’s Day Celebrations across the city;
- Tackle crime, on-street drinking and antisocial behaviour;
- Enforce breaches of local bye laws and other legislation;
- Improve the public image of Belfast as a safe city to socialise in.

The principal areas given attention included the Holylands, the City Centre (during the St. Patricks Day parade and concert) and the parks throughout the city over the long weekend. The

Parks and Leisure Department ensured officers were contributing to the development of a city wide plan for the St. Patrick's Day operation. The coordinated operations in Parks began at 7:30am on 16 March and ended at 7:30pm on 18 March 2013.

Parks operations were based at the City Hall Emergency control room on St. Patrick's Day from 7:00am and continued until 7:30pm. Hourly updates on the situation in parks were gathered and collated by two City Parks Managers. These updates were shared amongst the agencies and informed decisions on where to deploy resources were taken using this information.

The mobile CCTV van was deployed throughout parks across the city on 17 March and was very effective in identifying and quantifying antisocial behaviour hotspots within park areas. Evidence collated from previous years indicated where groups would consume alcohol in parks and leisure facilities across Belfast. There were a total of 17 incidents involving youths arriving at parks with alcohol and they were not given any opportunity to settle or continue drinking. The early coordinated intervention of council officers was extremely effective in keeping parks free from drinkers gathering. Following reports from the public or Councillors, the mobile CCTV van was deployed to a number of parks to broadcast live images back to the Emergency control room in the City Hall. This resource provided an extremely versatile asset, as council officers and PSNI could make decisions on deploying a response using 'real time' images to assess and respond to any reports of antisocial behaviour. As a result there were a number of successful responses which utilised the coordinated resources of Park Wardens, Community Safety Wardens, Get Home Safe Officers and the PSNI to tackle drinking in Parks across the city. The Mobile CCTV van was also deployed in parks during the bank holiday on 19 March 2013.

3. Resource Implications

Finance: The mobile CCTV was supplied under a contract sourced by the Community Safety unit and jointly resourced by the Parks and Leisure Department's safer Neighbourhoods Antisocial behaviour programme budget.

4. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report."

The Committee noted the contents of the report and, at the request of a Member, it was agreed that the Director would convene a meeting involving the Chairman of the Committee, the Chairman of the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership, together with a range of statutory bodies and agencies, community and voluntary groups, to discuss the problem of anti-social activity in the Greater West Belfast area and specifically issues relating to the Woodlands Playing Fields, with a view to identifying diversionary activities which could be put in place to address the issue.

Green Flag Awards

The Assistant Director reminded the Committee that the following Council facilities had received accreditation under the Green Flag Awards Scheme, viz., the Cavehill Country Park, the Musgrave Park, the Barnett Demesne, the Botanic Gardens, the Falls Park, the Ormeau Park and the Roselawn Cemetery. She explained that the Scheme set standards for quality management and community engagement which placed significant emphasis on stakeholder experience and involvement in site development and improvement. As part of the Department's Improvement Plan for 2012/2013, it was reported that both the Grove Playing Fields and the Lagan Meadows would be assessed under the Scheme during the summer period.

The Committee was advised that the Department was recommending that the Knocknagoney Linear Park, the Dunville Park and the Woodvale Park would be put forward for assessment under the Scheme in 2014. The costs associated with submitting the sites for consideration would be approximately £2,100 and, if necessary, provision had been made within the Department's Improvement Budget to enable any associated work to be carried out at the sites.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the three additional sites be put forward for accreditation under the scheme in 2014.

"Just Jesus"- Christian Outreach Mission

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Ballygomartin, the Clifton Park Avenue, the Antrim Road and the Shankill Baptist churches seeking permission to host a Christian Outreach Mission in the Woodvale Park from 8th till 15th June. It was reported that the event would consist of a programme of activities which would include outreach work, religious services and coffee mornings. All activities would be concluded by 9.30 p.m. each evening and all guests would have vacated the park by 10.00 p.m.

The Committee granted the use of the Woodvale Park as outlined, subject to:

- the event organisers resolving all operational issues to the satisfaction of the Council;
- an appropriate legal agreement being prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor; and
- the event organisers meeting all the statutory requirements.

Feile an Phobail – request for use of Council facilities

The Committee was informed that a request had been received from the organisers of Feile an Phobail seeking permission to the use of the Falls Park and the City Cemetery for a range of events which would form part of the West Belfast Festival in 2013. The Director reported that the Festival would take place from 2nd till 11th August, however, the actual dates for the undernoted events had, as yet, to be finalised:

- Carnival Parade – the Falls Park;
- Teddy Bears' Picnic – the Falls Park;
- Feile Family Entertainment Day – the Falls Park;
- Ulster Wildlife Demonstrations – the Falls Park; and
- Guided Historical Tours – the City Cemetery (which would be charged for by the tour operator).

The Director reported also that occasional licences would be sought by the organisers for the sale of alcohol, together with an entertainments licence for the period of the Festival. In addition, it was anticipated that further requests would be received to host additional events in other departmental properties, such as the Andersonstown Leisure Centre.

Accordingly, the Director recommended that the Committee grant approval for the events, as set out, and agree also to delegate authority to him to consider and approve, if appropriate, any further requests received for the use of departmental properties in relation to Feile an Phobail 2013, subject to the undernoted:

- that the event organisers resolve all operational issues to the satisfaction of the Council;
- that an appropriate legal agreement be prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor; and
- that the event organisers meet all the statutory requirements.

The Committee granted the approval sought and granted also delegated authority to the Director as outlined.

Event at Boucher Road Playing Fields

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 6th December, 2012, it had granted the use of the Boucher Road Playing Fields to MCD Productions for two, and possibly three concerts, between 19th and 22nd August, 2013. It was reported that the organisers had since requested that the dates for the concerts be changed to between 14th and 17th August.

After discussion, during which concerns were expressed that the promoter had announced publicly the amended dates for the concerts prior to the Committee's authority being sought, the Committee granted permission for the change of dates for the concerts.

Northern Ireland Barrio Fiesta Committee

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Northern Ireland Barrio Fiesta Committee, which represented Filipino volunteers across the island of Ireland, seeking to use the Lower Botanic Gardens for the holding of an event on 29th June. The Director reported that the family-orientated event would celebrate Filipino culture and would attract approximately 1,000 people. It was anticipated that the set-up and dismantling period would encompass three days, viz., 28th till 30th June and he reported that prior consultations would be undertaken with local residents and stakeholders in the area.

The Committee agreed to grant the use of the Gardens, subject to:

- the event organisers resolving all operational issues to the satisfaction of the Council;
- an appropriate legal agreement being prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor; and
- the event organisers meeting all the statutory requirements.

Cremation and Burial Conference and Exhibition

The Director informed the Members that the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management would be hosting the above-mentioned event in Stratford-upon-Avon from 1st till 3rd July. The Committee was provided with an overview of the relevance of the conference programme, together with a summary of the range of exhibitors who would be in attendance. Accordingly, it was recommended that the Committee authorise the attendance at the event of the incoming Chairman and the incoming Deputy Chairman, together with the Director of Parks and Leisure (or their nominees). The costs associated with attendance at the event would be approximately £495 per delegate.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Glasgow Rose Trials- August 2013

The Committee was informed that the Glasgow International Rose Trials would be held on 23rd and 24th August. The Director pointed out that the Council had participated in the event in recent years and it had proved to be beneficial in promoting, to an international audience, Rose Week at Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park. Therefore, he recommended that the Committee authorise the attendance at the event of the incoming Chairman, the incoming Deputy Chairman and the Director of Parks and Leisure (or their nominees), the costs of which would be approximately £300 per delegate.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Chairman