

## Parks and Leisure Committee

Thursday, 13th June, 2013

### MEETING OF PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor McKee (Chairman);  
Aldermen Humphrey, Robinson, and Rodgers;  
Councillors Convery, Corr, Cunningham,  
Haire, Hendron, Hanna, Hartley, Kyle,  
Mallon, McCabe, Mac Giolla Mhín,  
Ó Donnghaile, 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.

#### Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors McNamee and Mullan.

#### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9th May 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 June, subject to the omission of the minute under the heading "Grove Wellbeing Centre – Provision of Pool Seating" which, at the request of Alderman Browne, and with the permission of the Council, was taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

#### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### Grove Wellbeing Centre – Provision of Pool Seating

(Alderman Browne attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee reconsidered the undernoted minute of the meeting of 9th May, which, at the request of Alderman Browne, and with the permission of the Council, was taken back to the Committee for further consideration:

***"The Director reminded that Committee that, prior to the opening of the Grove Wellbeing Centre, the Council had agreed that priority for the use for the new pool at the facility would be for public recreational swimming, rather than for the use of swimming clubs. Accordingly, the main pool in the Grove Wellbeing Centre had not incorporated spectator seating. He reported that, since its re-opening, one of the main clubs which used the pool at Grove had lobbied the Council to make provision for spectator seating which would enable gala swimming events to be held at the venue.***

*The Director pointed out that, within the context of the Investment Programme, the Council would be undertaking an extensive review of its leisure estate with a view to transforming leisure provision in Belfast. He pointed out that the requirements of swimming clubs in Belfast, insofar as they related to the hosting of swimming galas, would be considered as part of that process. In addition, he outlined the capital costs which would be incurred in providing spectator seating at the facility, together with the considerable structural works which would be required to be carried out. Accordingly, he outlined the following two options for the Committee's consideration:*

- *to refer the matter to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration as an emerging project within the Capital Programme, subject to the undertaking of a feasibility study; or*
- *to defer consideration of the request on the understanding that the future requirements of swimming clubs, insofar as it related to the provision of spectator seating for the hosting of swimming galas, would be considered as part of the Council's future review of its leisure estate.*

***After discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt option 2 as set out."***

With the permission of the Chairman, Alderman Browne provided an overview of the matter and emphasised the desire of swimming clubs to establish facilities in the City at which gala events could be staged. He suggested that, on further examination, the capital costs which might be incurred in the provision of seating could prove to be reasonable and requested that the matter be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration as an emerging project under the Capital Programme.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Alderman Rodgers,  
Seconded by Councillor Haire and

Resolved – That the Committee agrees that the matter of the provision of spectator seating at the swimming pool at Grove Wellbeing Centre be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration as an emerging scheme under the Council's Capital Programme.

### Request for the Use of the Ballysillan Playing Fields

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **1. Relevant Background Information**

Members will be aware that the Committee considered a request from the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast at its May meeting regarding the availability of the Ballysillan Playing Fields on 12<sup>th</sup> July between 13:00 and 16:00

The County Grand Orange Lodge has indicated that their intention was to consider the use of the car park space as a meeting and/or dispersal point for up to 8,000 people should the need arise. Mr William Mawhinney on behalf of the County Grand Orange Lodge had explained that this was only an enquiry on the availability of the site for hire on the day and that he would confirm their request closer to the day.

The request had been referred to the Council's Joint Group of the Party Group Leaders Forum and the Historic Centenaries Working Group. They had advised that the request be forwarded to Parks and Leisure Committee for their consideration.

The Parks and Leisure Committee at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013 agreed to defer consideration of the request until the June Committee meeting. Subsequently the Equality Screening form was distributed to the members of the Committee.

#### **2. Key Issues**

Following the May meeting the Director wrote to the County Grand Orange Lodge seeking additional information on their intentions. The County Grand Orange Lodge have indicated that they are unable to provide any further information until the Parades Commission make their determination.

#### **3. Resource Implications**

##### Financial

None – a charge would only be incurred if the use of the space was for the purposes of an event.

##### Human

No staffing implications in addition to normal provision. Stewards to be provided by County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast.

### Assets

The space likely to be used is a hard surface area and there will be no detrimental effect to the sports ground. There may be restricted access to the playground but this is unlikely to affect many users.

### Equality Implications

If the Committee grants approval for the event, and the organizers formalize their request, the mitigating actions to be put in place include:

- Action plan and risk assessment completed, in line with standard procedures, from organisers to demonstrate dispersal routes and appropriate liaison with Police Service NI and emergency services. In particular, assurance would be sought in relation to stewarding and monitoring the lower part of the open space to ensure that there are no incidents in relation to Deerpark residents or properties;
- Promotion of other facilities and open spaces in North Belfast;
- Early notice of potential disruption to service users e.g. playground;
- Communication of closure of Ballysillan Leisure Centre in accordance with standard operating practice on 12 July.”

### 5. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider the request from the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast.

Should the Committee decide to make the Ballysillan Playing Fields available for use by the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013, this would be subject to:

- An appropriate event management plan
- All statutory requirements being met
- The organisers having appropriate liability insurance
- A legal agreement being drawn up by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor

The Director reported that he had received the undernoted response on 3rd June:

*“Further to your correspondence of 16th May, 2013, seeking any additional information to our correspondence requesting the use of Ballysillan Playing Fields on Friday 12th July, 2013, from 1.00 – 4.00pm may I advise you of the following.*

***I presented your correspondence to the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast and was advised to notify you that we have no further information at this time, however as soon as the Parades Commission make their determination, if any!, then we will be in a position to advise of our intended use of Ballysillan Playing Fields or otherwise.***

***Regretfully this request is part of our wider strategic plan and we are therefore not in a position to impart any detail at this time. Trusting you will understand the rationale of this position, but it is firmly in the hands of the Parades Commission that will decide our outcome on this day."***

During discussion, a Member suggested that, given that the further correspondence which had been received from the County Grand Lodge had not provided further significant information on the plans for the event, the Committee was not in a position to take an informed decision in the matter. He added that it might be appropriate, in order to provide the organisers with additional time to submit clarification, to refer the matter to the Council for consideration at its meeting on 1st July.

A further Member indicated, in light of the disruption to local residents which might occur as a result of the event, that the Committee should be minded to refuse the application. He indicated also that, in the absence of a determination by the Parades Commission in respect of the proposed event, it would be premature of the Council to grant the use of the facility.

Further Members, however, pointed out that since the request which had been submitted was for permission merely to use the playing fields 'in principle', the Committee was in a position to take a decision and that the further information and clarification requested could be submitted by the organisers in due course.

A further Member referred to a statement which had been released by the County Grand Lodge two days prior to the meeting which provided guidance to its members regarding forthcoming parades in Belfast. She pointed out also that the statement had indicated that organisation's willingness to address issues of concern which had been raised by residents' groups and, as such, the application should be considered favourably within the context of that statement.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McCabe,  
Seconded by Councillor Cunningham,

That, given the absence of information from the organisers in respect of the proposed event, together with the potential for disruption which might occur as a result, the Committee agrees not to accede to the request from the County Grand Lodge of Belfast to grant the use of the Ballysillan Playing Fields on 12th July.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Convery,  
Seconded by Councillor Mallon,

That, in light of the lack of information which had been submitted by the organisers, the Committee agrees that it is not in a position to make a decision on the request and agrees further that the matter be referred to the Council for consideration at its meeting to be held on 1st July.

**Further Amendment**

Moved by Alderman Robinson,  
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers,

That the Committee agrees to grant permission, in principle, to the County Grand Lodge of Belfast for the use of the Ballysillan Playing Fields on 12th July.

The Committee agreed to consider Alderman Robinson's further amendment initially and on a vote by show of hands eight Members voted for and eight against. As there was an equality of votes, the Chairman exercised his second and casting vote for the further amendment and it was accordingly declared carried.

Alderman Robinson's amendment was thereupon put to the Committee as the substantive proposal and on a vote by show of hands eight Members voted for the proposal and eight against. Since there was an equality of votes, the Chairman exercised his second and casting vote for the proposal and it was accordingly declared carried.

**Year-end Finance Report 2012/2013**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update in respect of the Department's year-end finance performance for 2012/2013, a copy of which was published on the Council's modern.gov website.

**Departmental Plan – Year-end Update 2012/2013**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an overview of the progress which had been achieved in respect of the Departmental Plan for 2012/2013.

**Departmental Plan 2013/2014**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1 Key Issues**

**The content of the plan reflects the key supporting actions identified through the Corporate Plan and the Investment Programme. The plan for the Parks and Leisure Department sets out:-**

- the key actions within the corporate plan and investment programme that the department has responsibility for delivering in 2013/14
- key departmental actions in 2013/14
- the departments outcome framework and key performance indicators for 2013/14
- financial information relating to the estimates for 2013/14.

The plan provides a mechanism to enable committee and senior managers to project and performance manage the key work of the department in line with the Corporate Plan and Investment Programme. It should also assist managers and officers in the department to make decisions and allocate resources in line with the agreed objectives and activities.

Under the council's Scheme of Delegation, the Director of Parks and Leisure has been given the delegated authority to undertake the activities as well as any additional related activities. Progress update reports will be submitted to the Parks and Leisure Committee twice yearly as part of the corporate performance management framework. For the 2013-14 period, the Director intends to use delegated authority to:-

- implement the actions stemming from the departmental improvement programme;
- authorise unforeseen or reactive events in any parks or leisure facility in accordance with the events policy;
- engage any relevant professional expertise required to deliver the actions outlined in Section 6 of the plan subject to adherence to the Council's procurement protocols and the necessary budgetary allocation having been made;
- set nominal entrance fees or charges or waive fees for the Department's activities or events in those cases where an appropriate case has been made – e.g. summer schemes and interface programmes.
- approve charitable collections and fund raising activities of partner organisations who contribute to the achievement of the council's vision and objectives in Parks and Leisure facilities.

To support all the departmental planning and performance efforts, the Parks and Leisure Department will focus in 2013/14 on the introduction of a robust departmental outcomes framework). The departmental outcomes framework will be used to:

- clearly define what the Parks and Leisure Department means by inputs, outputs and outcomes;
- align with corporate themes;
- determine our contribution to inputs, outputs and outcomes as a department;
- identify the departmental projects, programmes and activities provided or supported in order to deliver inputs, outputs and outcomes, considering the linkages and connections between there;
- identify how we measure our inputs, outputs and outcomes, and
- how we develop the evidence based/ data sources around them.

## **2 Resource Implications**

### **Human Resources**

Delivery of most of the programmes and projects planned for the year ahead will require dedicated officer time which will be recorded and reflected within annual service plans, area plans and separate unit/centre level plans.

### **Asset and Other Implications**

Many of the projects and activities listed in the draft plan refer to the physical regeneration of the department's assets and physical improvements to our facilities.

## **3 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

There are no equality or good relations implications at this stage. However all activities and programmes contained within the plan will be subject to equality screening in line with the Council's process.

## **4 Recommendation**

**The Committee is requested to endorse the Departmental Plan.**

After discussion, during which the Director clarified a number of matters in respect of the Plan and answered a range of Members' questions in relation thereto, the Committee approved the document, a copy of which was published on the Council's modern.gov website.

### **Parks Events - Small Grants Scheme**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 15th November, 2012, it had delegated authority to the Director to award grants under the above-mentioned scheme. It was reported that fourteen applications had been submitted for consideration within its latest tranche, twelve of which had met the pre-agreed criteria.



Accordingly, the Committee noted the following schedule of grants which had been authorised by the Director under the scheme.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>	<u>Grant Awarded</u>
Upper Springfield Resource Centre	Springhill Millennium Park	Lark in the Park	£2,500	£2,500
New Lodge Arts	Alexandra Park/Waterworks	North Belfast Lantern Parade	£3,000	£3,000
St Agnes GAC	Woodlands	Fun in the Park	£3,000	£3,000
North Belfast Scouts	Alexandra Park	District Fun Day	£3,000	£3,000
Ligoniel Improvement Association	Ligoniel Park	Laughter in Ligoniel	£2,950	£2,945
Cumann Oige Naomh Gall	Falls Park	Celebration of the Ash	£3,000	£3,000
Newtownards Road Women's Group	Victoria Park	Coming of Age	£1,625	£1,225
New Start Education Centre	Falls Park	Cultural Diversity Fun Day	£2,150	£2,150
Beechmount Harriers	Falls Park	Children Having Fun	£2,775	£2,775
Cathedral Quarter Trust	Cathedral Gardens	Culture Night Belfast	£3,000	£3,000
Jennymount Community Association	Grove Playing Fields	Groove in the Grove	£3,000	£3,000
Small Steps Adult Education	Alexandra Park	Eco Education Event	£2,900	£2,900

### Support for Sport

The Committee considered 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 made available on the Council's modern.gov website.

In response to Members' questions, the Director outlined the procedures which the Department had put in place to provide assurance and to monitor the expenditure incurred by the organisations in the delivery of the events. In addition, he undertook to submit a report to a future meeting which would clarify a range of matters associated with the management of the submission of applications for support under the scheme, particularly those which might have been completed independently on behalf of

applicants. He undertook also, in light of the significant number of applications which had been submitted in the first two months of the financial year, to clarify the range of options available to manage the fund on a phased basis throughout the year, as opposed to the current system which was based on a 'first come, first served' basis.

After further discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Antisocial Behaviour Update**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **"1. Key Issues**

**The antisocial behaviour programme contributes to the achievement of the departmental vision of providing quality parks, open spaces and leisure environments that people value and use. In particular, it enables the delivery of the departmental objective regarding the provision of programmes and services to make people feel safer.**

**In line with the departmental plan, the objectives of the antisocial behaviour programme are to:**

- enhance the environment around Parks and Leisure facilities;**
- develop education initiatives involving creative or supportive interventions to model acceptable behaviour around Parks and Leisure facilities;**
- define enforcement as a deterrent against infraction of bye-laws or legislation; and**
- develop sustainable interagency and inter-departmental networks and leading a partnership approach to reducing antisocial behaviour.**

**The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator prioritises action and expenditure by collating evidence gathered through antisocial behaviour incident reports. This information is used to inform a coordinated partnership response, drawing on council resources, the support of local community resources, PSNI and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership.**

#### **Trends in the available ASB incident data**

**The evidence available for December 2012 to April 2013 indicates an increase in antisocial behaviour, especially in park areas in, Oldpark, Pottinger and Balmoral.**

**There is a downward trend of ASB in parks within Court, Castle and Laganbank electoral areas.**

Members will recall that the new CRM database was established to record ASB data in early 2011. Unfortunately there is no comparative data available for Upper Falls during December 2011 to April 2012. It would be difficult to estimate any trend in this area until the next quarterly report.

<b>Table 1: Comparison of ASB incidents in Parks and Leisure Facilities across electoral areas between December 2011 to April 2012 and December 2012 to April 2013</b>			
<b>Dec 2011 to April 2012</b>		<b>Dec 2012 to April 2013</b>	
Laganbank	52	Oldpark	76
Court	40	Pottinger	32
Oldpark	37	Upper Falls	25
Pottinger	29	Court	25
Castle	27	Castle	24
Balmoral	9	Balmoral	15
Victoria	4	Laganbank	9
Lower Falls	2	Victoria	6
		Lower Falls	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>

**Profiles of ASB in park and leisure facilities**

The available data provides an accurate ASB profile for each location. The locations with nine or more incident reports suffer the following ASB issues:

Alexandra Park: Setting fires, Rowdy behaviour and Drinking

Waterworks: Graffiti, Rowdy behaviour, Animal problems and Drinking

Falls Park: Damage to Property, Rowdy behaviour and Animal problems

Ormeau Park: Damage to Property and Vehicle nuisance

Glencairn Park: Fly tipping, Vehicle nuisance and Damage to the grounds

Orangefield: Damage to Property, Drinking and Rowdy behaviour

Botanic Gardens: Drinking and Rowdy behaviour

Cave Hill: Damage to Property, Animal problems and Vehicle nuisance

**Response to the trends in evidence**

The evidence available indicates that ASB has increased in Oldpark, Pottinger and Balmoral.

In Oldpark, especially in Alexandra and Waterworks parks, there is significant evidence to suggest that Alexandra and Waterworks parks require significant attention to address the reported ASB. In the near future, the use of mobile CCTV will be programmed in conjunction with joint BCC/ PSNI operations. Both resources can patrol these parks during the lighter evenings to deter fire setting, drinkers and rowdy behaviour. In the longer term, a more sustainable intervention will be required and the ASB coordinator will liaise with elected members, Park Managers and PSNI in order to identify

appropriate interventions which will respond to the particular profile of ASB in the area.

In Pottinger, ASB increased in Orangefield and Ormeau Parks. The evidence available for Ormeau indicates a need for improved access control to deter inappropriate vehicle use and a need for improved visibility to foster feelings of safety. Both Ormeau and Orangefield will benefit from the use of mobile CCTV and increased BCC and PSNI joint patrols in the summer months.

In Balmoral, ASB has increased in Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park and Musgrave Park (which includes Grovelands). The mobile CCTV resource will be deployed in both park areas during the summer period and in Musgrave the implementation of the Young Adult Association area will continue in partnership and in consultation with PSNI.

Falls Park and Botanic will benefit from further development of the Young Adult Association areas. The park areas in Glencairn and Cave hill will benefit from actions to deter Scrambler and Quad use. The 'anti Scrambler' actions will extend beyond these sites across the City during the year and will be implemented through reasonable, appropriate and cost effective actions.

#### **Planned Interventions**

This ASB update report is focused on the period of December 2012 to April 2013. As the new financial year started in April 2013, at this point, the majority of the work of the ASB programme has focused on planning for the year ahead. The actions which were planned but did not complete within the 2012/2013 financial year, have been transferred to 2013/2014. These include the establishment of the Young Adult Association areas, the City Cemetery decorative arts project and the construction of the Ballysillan ballcatch fence. These projects are progressed according to council policy regarding planning and procurement processes and therefore have yet to be fully implemented.

#### **Park Warden developments**

Park Wardens are the principal resource used to tackle and respond to incidents of ASB. They are engaged in a 'training and coaching programme' to support their understanding and implementation of the regulatory framework and processes relating to law enforcement within local government in Northern Ireland.

The deployment of the Park Wardens is informed by the ASB data and evidence captured using the CRM database. Our Park Wardens have developed valuable links with residents across Belfast and continue to liaise with the community leaders to address the ASB that they report.

In order to capture public reports of ASB on the CRM database and further improve the Park Warden service, a specific point of contact has been created for the residents of Belfast and will be called 'the Parks Antisocial Behaviour Report Line'.

Details of the Parks Antisocial Behaviour Report Line (02890 500 515) will be published and promoted through City Matters to further encourage residents of Belfast to share their experiences and provide valuable information about ASB in our parks.

2. **Resource Implications**

The development of the programme will be facilitated through the agreed antisocial behaviour budget 2013-14 which is approximately £250,000.

3. **Equality Implications**

Much of the antisocial behaviour programme work spans activities related to reducing interface tensions and bringing youth together to take part in positive programmes and activities. All of the programme work is in line with the council's equality and good relations policies and procedures.

4. **Recommendation**

**Members are asked to note the contents of this update report"**

The Director outlined the principle aspects of the report and indicated that, whilst the figures presented had represented a slight increase over the period in question, the year-on-year trend regarding antisocial behaviour within Council parks had been downward.

A number of Members requested clarification in respect of the figures presented for the Marrowbone Park and expressed concern that the statistics had not reflected accurately the extent of antisocial activity which had occurred in the vicinity. It was suggested that the method of capturing the number of incidents within the park might be re-assessed and that additional resources could be made available to address the matter.

After discussion, during which the Director undertook to investigate the issues raised, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### Playground Improvement Plan

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 **Relevant Background Information**

In August 2011 the Committee agreed to an improved independent playground inspection process. This approach has continued to be effective in prioritising playgrounds in most need of improvement. This process has again been used to audit all 73 playgrounds in the city this year.

Members will also be aware that in August 2012 the Committee agreed to a rolling two year programme of refurbishment works for 2012/13 and 2013/14. The extended programme allowed for more efficient project management and improved information sharing with local communities. Year Two (2013/14) of the programme will result in refurbishment at the following sites by the end of March 2014;

- Clara Street Playground
- Dover Street Playground
- Michelle Baird Memorial Playground
- Stewart Street Playground
- Taughmonagh Playground
- Ballysillan Park Playground
- Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon Playground

Year One (2012/13) of the improvements were complete by the end of March 2013, again proving very successful with the following playgrounds being enhanced and re-opened;

- Northlink Playground
- Clarawood Playground
- North Queen Street Playground
- Victoria Park Playground
- Ballymacarrett Playground
- Mountforde Road Playground

The average quality score for these sites prior to improvement work was recorded independently as 3.7 (classified as poor), as a result of refurbishment the new average quality score is 9.2 (classified as good) this year. This demonstrates the desired improvement in terms of overall safety, quality and play value at each of the playgrounds.

As a result of the ongoing independent inspection process and refurbishment work the percentage of ‘poor’ quality playgrounds has been reduced from 9% to 4%. Future planned improvements will continue to move the quality and safety of all selected playgrounds to that of a ‘good’ classification.

This year's inspections were again carried out by 'Play Services Ireland' in April 2013. As before, a quality score and classification for all playgrounds was derived based on European safety standards BS EN 1176 & 1177, sites have then been prioritised for improvement using their quality score. Inspection reports also continue to identify and prioritise repairs to existing equipment for ongoing maintenance purposes.

Based on this year's cycle of inspection reports a one year programme of refurbishment work has been developed for the financial year 2014 - 2015.

Members should be aware that other Council playgrounds exist within the Development Department and that a number of additional playgrounds will transfer to Belfast City Council under Local Government Review. Officers are currently considering including all of the playgrounds within the Playground Programme. A further report will be brought to Committee on the outcomes of the review.

Members should note that Community Park Managers and Parks Outreach Managers will continue to assist with the distribution of information relating to individual playground improvements to members, local communities and user groups.

## **2 Key Issues**

In April 2013 this year's cycle of independent inspections was undertaken at all 73 playgrounds across the city. Inspection reports recorded;

- 3 playgrounds classified 'poor' (quality score 0.0 - 4.9)
- 35 playgrounds classified 'fair' (quality score 5.0 - 7.5)
- 35 playgrounds classified 'good' (quality score 7.6 - 10)

Playgrounds with the lowest quality scores will be prioritised for improvement. In line with budget considerations and construction programming the following playgrounds will be refurbished during 2014 – 2015.

- New Lodge
- Queen Mary's Gardens
- Carnamore
- Lemberg Street
- Falls Park
- Cherryvale Playing Fields

Although ranked amongst the lowest scoring sites the following playgrounds have been omitted from the 2014 – 2015 programme for the following reasons;

- Belfast Zoo – to be refurbished as part of a larger capital scheme
- Willowbank – refurbished within the last three years
- Dover Street - part of the 2013 – 14 programme of improvements
- Stewart Street - part of the 2013 – 14 programme of improvements
- Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon - part of the 2013 – 14 programme of improvements

Members are also asked to note that a full planning application was submitted in March 2013 by South Belfast Sure Start for a new modular building within Stewart Street playground. The proposal for the new facility was agreed by the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2013.

Sure Start is a government led initiative which offers a broad range of services focusing on family health, early years care, education and improved well being programmes to children aged four and under. The proposal comprises the construction of a 27m x 9m modular building on the location of the existing senior play area. The estimated cost of the scheme is £250k with the target date for completion being July 2014.

Sure Start are leading on the project which has received support from the South Area Working Group. The scheme is to receive £150k of LIF funding from Belfast City Council subject to match funding being secured within twelve months.

As Members will note from the attachment, should the building be located as planned it will have an impact on the existing playground, with several items of 'senior' play equipment having to be removed. The playground will therefore require a redesign and more extensive refurbishment to ensure that detriment to the facility is minimised.

Members are asked to note that refurbishment of the playground was scheduled for 2013/14 with an estimated start date of November 2013. Owing to the Sure Start proposal the playground refurbishment work will need to be delayed until the building and associated site works are complete, or a decision is taken not to proceed with the Sure Start project.



### **3 Resource Implications**

#### **Financial**

All refurbishment work will be funded through the Playground Refurbishment revenue budget for 2014 -15 (£649,200.00 annually)

#### **Human Resources**

Staff from the Landscape Planning & Development Unit will continue to deliver the Playground Improvement Programme in partnership with City & Community Parks Managers and Parks Outreach Managers

#### **Asset and Other Implications**

As a result of refurbishment work all selected playgrounds will move to the new classification of 'good' (quality score 7.6 – 10.0) when re-inspected.

### **4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

The processes proposed in this report will be subject to the council's existing equality screening process.

### **5 Recommendations**

Committee is asked to approve;

- the list of playground sites to be refurbished during 2014 - 15 based on this year's cycle of playground inspections
- deferral of refurbishment works at Stewart Street playground until the emerging Sure Start project is completed or a decision taken not to proceed."

After discussion, during which the Director undertook to examine the current playground provision at the Willowbank Park, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

#### **Crèche Provision**

The Committee deferred consideration of a report in respect of future crèche provision to enable further consultations to be undertaken with the users of the current facilities, local communities and Elected Members.

### **Belfast Castle – Upgrade Work**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that, at the 15 November 2012 meeting of the Parks and Leisure Committee, a report outlining opportunities to generate additional income through the provision of office accommodation at Belfast Castle was considered.
- 1.2 The second floor of Belfast Castle currently consists of a number of small rooms and offices. Some of these used to house the visitor centre but the centre has become tired and is relatively inaccessible for those visiting the Castle and its grounds. The Visitor Centre has now been relocated to the Cellar area where the visitors can now use the restaurant and shop facilities in this area. It is considered that, with some internal works, there is potential to let the space as commercial office accommodation.
- 1.3 The Committee noted the proposals and authorised officers to undertake additional feasibility work to explore the viability of these proposals. As part of that work, it was agreed that consideration would be given to potential costs as well as planning issues, and that a report would be brought to the committee in due course to update on the findings and to agree a way forward.

#### **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 Facilities Management have undertaken some initial design work and have prepared estimated costs for the re-configuration of the existing visitor centre which has been relocated in the Cellar area to provide 2500 square feet of office accommodation space. The estimate for the work would be in the region of £65,000. This funding has been released from non-recurring capital funds to carry out the required works.
- 2.2 Given the listed status of the building, an application for change of use has also been submitted to the Planning Service and the necessary notifications have also been made to the council's Building Control service and Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA).
- 2.3 Alongside the capital works, some preliminary market engagement has also take place to determine potential interest in the site and to identify what level of rental income might be expected, in order to allow an assessment of the return on investment to be made and to support the business case for the works.

2.4 Estates Management Unit have carried out an initial assessment of the anticipated level of rent which might be achievable for the second floor offices on the assumption the proposed capital works have been completed. The level of rent is estimated to be in the region of £20,000 per annum, subject to agreement with the relevant prospective tenant. The tenant would also be responsible for Rates and the costs of heating, lighting and other outgoings associated with the leased area, via a Service Charge.

2.5 Arc 21 our partner organisation has expressed an interest in the office accommodation at the castle and has suggested that they would be willing to rent all of the available space. Further discussions would be required regarding the terms of any agreement.

### 3 Resource Implications

The cost of the works is likely to be approximately £65,000. The funding has been released from non-recurring capital funds to carry out the required work. It is anticipated that the accommodation will yield an annual rental income in the region of £20000 exclusive of service charges. This means a financial payback within 3 years.

### 4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

No specific equality and good relations implications. Accommodation will meet accessibility requirements and a bidding process may be undertaken to ensure equal access to apply for the rental of the facilities.

### 5 Recommendations

- Note the outcomes of the feasibility work into the costs for the change of use of the current visitor centre at the castle to be used as office accommodation
- Give authority to lease out the space for this use, subject to the relevant statutory approvals being obtained.
- Give authority to enter into further discussions with the potential tenant (Arc 21) Regarding potential lease terms (including rent).
- Provide authority to market the property in the event that suitable terms cannot be agreed with ARC21.
- Note that a further report would be brought to Committee in the event of agreement on lease terms with a third party.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**North Belfast Play Forum – Waterworks Park**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1. Relevant Background Information**

The Committee is reminded that at its meetings in December 2011 and August 2012 it received a report on proposals by the North Belfast Play Forum to convert the existing polymeric surface in to a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation facility. This request came from the Forum who had indicated increased difficulties in attracting existing users to use the facility as users preferred the newer 3<sup>rd</sup> generation facility.

At its meeting in December 2011 the Committee had been informed that the Forum had made application to BIFFA for funding and were seeking a contribution from the Council as 3<sup>rd</sup> party funder, up to £10,000. The Committee agreed to this. In August 2012 it was reported to the Committee that the Council had received notification from BIFFA that a contribution of £5,102.04 was required to meet the 10% required as a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Funding Body.

The Committee is asked to note that the cost of the works have increased since the initial application to BIFFA . The estimated cost is now £63,000. Therefore the Council is being asked to contribute the original £10,000 it had agreed to the project with the shortfall, approximately £3,000 being met by Belfast Regeneration Office.

The project has now progressed. The lease agreement has been completed and it is hoped that the works will be completed in the summer.

**2. Key Issues**

The Committee is asked to reaffirm its decision in December 2011 to contribute up to £10,000 to meet the cost of the replacement third generation carpet.

**Financial Implications**

The cost can be met from existing budgets.

**Human Resource Implications**

There are no additional human resource implications other than Officer time.

**Recommendation**

The Committee is asked to authorise the expenditure of up to £10,000 to meet the cost of the works.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Midland Boxing Club – Economic Appraisal**

The Director reported that the Council had undertaken discussions with representatives of the Belfast Regeneration Office in respect of the redevelopment of the Midland Boxing Club, which was located on Council property in Cultra Street in the Tiger's Bay area. He reported that the redevelopment of the boxing club was being considered by the Belfast Regeneration Office for capital funding and, arising from initial discussions, the Council had been requested to commission and oversee the development of an economic appraisal on the project. He indicated that the costs associated with the economic appraisal would be met by the Belfast Regeneration Office.

The Director pointed out that, within the context of the Council's recently published Boxing Strategy, together with the fact that the facility was located on Council property and leased by the club, it would, therefore, be appropriate to commission the economic appraisal as requested.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

**Land at Slievegallion Drive**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The Council currently hold 5.253 acres of land at Slievegallion Drive. The land is held on a 10,000 year lease, dated 20th Feb 1984, from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The lease restricts the use of the site to informal open space and NIHE consent is required for any assignment or sub letting.**
- 1.2 De La Salle school is located adjacent to the Council's land at Slievegallion Drive. The school have approached the Council with a proposal for the redevelopment of the Council's land at Slievegallion Drive to provide a school/community facility potentially comprising a full size GAA pitch, a smaller training pitch and a pavilion/small stand for use by the school and its three feeder primary schools during school hours and by the local community out of school hours.**

- 1.3 The school has indicated that they are seeking a long lease (25-50 years) for the land at Slievegallion Drive from the Council in order to secure the funding required for their proposals.
- 1.4 The site does not form part of the Pitches Strategy and there is currently no identified funding in the Capital Programme for the development of this land.

## **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 De La Salle is an all boys, non selective, secondary school with 1100 pupils. They have no adjoining outdoor pitches, they lease 2 pitches from St Genevieve's to which they bus their pupils.
- 2.2 The school currently make their indoor sports facilities including the gym and multi- purpose hall available out of school hours for public use and their intention would be to extend this arrangement to the proposed new pitch facilities. They advise that the indoor sports facilities are very well used by the local community.
- 2.3 Officers have requested further information to include the school's business model in terms of costs, public access and income producing capacity of the facility together with clarification from the school regarding funding from Department of Education or elsewhere.

## **3 Resource Implications**

### **3.1 Financial**

Detailed costs and sources of funding for the De La Salle's proposals are not currently available; these will form a critical part of the further discussions to be had with De La Salle.

### **3.2 Human Resources**

Staff resources in Parks and Leisure, Estates Management Unit and Legal Services.

### **3.3 Assets and Other Implications**

The land is currently used as informal open space and its development as a sports facility for use by the school and the wider community in the area could provide a more sustainable use for the land with improved outcomes in terms of increased participation in sports and health and well being.

### **4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

4.1 Equality implications will be fully considered if the proposal progresses.

### **5 Recommendations**

5.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree to officers progressing discussions with De La Salle school with a view to exploring the most appropriate arrangement (including leasing options) for the redevelopment of the informal open space at Slievegallion Drive, with a further report to be brought to this Committee in due course. Discussions to include;

- Details of the schools business model in terms of costs and income producing capacity
- Public access arrangements
- Partnership or leasing arrangements to ensure ongoing wider community use
- Sources of funding to redevelop the site”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Acquisition of Land at Black’s Road**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1 Relevant Background Information**

1.1 DOE NIEA and DRD Roads Service own adjoining sites at Blacks Road which together extend to approximately 4.49 acres. The site comprises derelict land and has been identified as an area of anti-social behaviour. The majority of the site is owned by NIEA, with Roads Service owning a smaller portion which includes the frontage onto Blacks Road.

1.2 At present, the area is within Lisburn City Council area however it is adjacent to Belfast City Council’s boundary, and will fall into Belfast City Council revised boundary post local government reform in 2015.

- 1.3 Lisburn City Council agreed at a public meeting in 2008 to take the lead in appointing a suitably qualified consultant to undertake landscape proposals for the redevelopment of the site, through consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders. Groundwork NI was commissioned who undertook community engagement and has drawn up proposals to turn this disused site into a park for the use of the local community. Proposals include new secure fencing around the site, visitor parking, wildflower meadow, paved seating area, grassed recreation area and way finding signage.
- 1.4 It is considered that neither NIEA nor Roads Service would be the suitable organisation to operate and maintain the proposed park and it is believed that it would be better to be Council operated. Belfast City Council has been approached to acquire and manage the site, given that it will shortly fall into its administrative area.

## 2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Groundwork NI has been successful in securing 'Sharing our Space' Peace III funding, comprising £315,000 within part of a wider £3.1 million package for various sites. Time constraints attached to the funding require the works to be undertaken by March 2014. It is proposed that after this date, the Council become responsible for ongoing maintenance.
- 2.2 Following discussions with Roads Service, we understand that transfer of their parcel could not occur in sufficient time to allow the proposal to be undertaken within the funding deadline, due to their requirements to undertake a trawl of the land amongst all public sector bodies in line with their land disposal requirements. Roads Service advises that they could grant a licence for works in order to facilitate works within the funding timescale. This would be on condition that the Council undertakes to acquire the site on completion of works, so that Roads Service is not left with a new park to manage and maintain.
- 2.3 Roads Service has indicated that they would transfer their site to the Council at market value, to be determined by LPS. Acquisition of the site would be conditional on agreeing satisfactory terms with LPS. It should further be subject to any necessary planning consent being in place and satisfactory title being held.
- 2.4 NIEA is seeking DFP approval to offer to transfer their parcel at nil cost to the Council. They advise that a transfer can be expedited through provisions in the Nature Conservation & Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985. An existing access right to Colin Glen Golf Club would be reserved.



- 2.5 To allow Groundwork NI to proceed as soon as possible and work within the funding timeline, either Groundwork or their contractor would enter a temporary licence with NIEA, with the Council agreeing to acquire the site after completion of works. Acquisition by the Council should be subject to any necessary planning consent being in place and satisfactory title being held and subject to agreeing terms with LPS for the acquisition of the adjoining Roads Service site.
- 2.6 Members should note that the site contains Japanese knotweed, which there is a legal duty for landowners to manage. Groundwork NI proposes to treat Japanese knotweed this Summer but as their involvement in the site would come to an end in March 2014, further treatment would become the responsibility of the Council.

### 3 Resource Implications

#### 3.1 Financial

- No acquisition cost would be payable to NIEA.
- Roads Service has indicated that there would be a cost for licence and transfer of their land, with the value to be determined with LPS. The cost is not yet known however the area of land concerned is relatively small and its current use is open space.
- The maintenance and operational cost of the park is estimated to be in the region of £31,000. This amount is not currently budgeted for Area South West and would need to be taken into account in the next budgeting round.
- Treatment of Japanese knotweed is estimated to be in the region of £100 per annum. Approximately half of the Japanese knotweed identified lies within the Roads Service site. It may be possible to offset the cost of treatment on this part of the site by seeking a reduction in the land price, which is common practice for abnormal costs.

### **3.2 Human Resources**

Resource from Estates and Legal Services is required to complete the acquisition. Thereafter Parks and Leisure staff resource will be required for ongoing management.

### **3.3 Asset and Other Implications**

A 4.49 acre site will be added to the Council's assets. The site will be held by Parks and Leisure.

### **4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

4.1 Equality implications will be considered if the proposal progresses.

### **5 Recommendations**

#### **5.1 Committee is recommended:**

- To approve in principle the acquisition of the Roads Service land after completion of works, subject to satisfactory outcome of investigations and subject to agreeing terms with LPS. Proposed terms will be reported back to Committee for approval at a later date.
- To approve in principle the acquisition of the NIEA land at nil cost, after completion of works and subject to satisfactory outcome of investigations and subject to agreeing terms for the acquisition of the adjoining Roads Service site."

The Director reminded the Committee that, should it agree to adopt the recommendations, the matter would be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for its consideration.

During discussion, a number of Members expressed concern that, prior to the Reform of Local Government, the request for the Council to acquire the land, together with any other similar requests, should only be considered within the context of an agreed policy.

Accordingly, it was

Moved by Councillor Thompson,  
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the report until the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee has established a Council policy in respect of the acquisition and development of land currently outside the Council's boundary.

On a vote by show of hands eight Members voted for the proposal and five against and it was declared carried.

### **Dr. Malcolm Brodie**

The Director reported that the Department had received two letters requesting that consideration be given to naming the Photo Finish and Public Address Booth in the new stand at the Mary Peters Track in honour of the former sports editor of the Belfast Telegraph, Dr. Malcolm Brodie, M.B.E., who had died in January, 2013. The Director provided an overview of the distinguished career of Dr. Brodie together with an outline of the honours which he had received, including a doctorate from the University of Ulster; induction into the Belfast Sports Hall of Fame and an [M.B.E.](#) for services to journalism in 1979. In addition, Dr. Brodie had served as the Vice President of the Mary Peters Trust.

The Director reminded the Committee that, in August, 2008, it had adopted a policy to oversee the naming of parks and leisure facilities within the City. He pointed out that the policy did not apply to the naming of parts of parks, buildings or facilities and, accordingly, given the significant contribution which Dr. Brodie had made to the City throughout his career, he suggested that the Committee might wish to exercise its discretion in considering the request.

After discussion the Committee agreed that, subject to the granting of permission by the Brodie family, the Photo Finish and Public Address Booth in the Mary Peters Track be named in honour of Dr Malcolm Brodie M.B.E.

### **Ligoniel Park – Creation of Path**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1. Relevant Background Information**

**The Committee is reminded that at its meeting in September 2011 and subsequently at Strategic Policy & Resources Committee in December 2012 of funding to promote access and recreation within the Belfast Hills. Work in relation to this has already started on Cave Hill Country Park (CHCP) with path improvements being made.**

**Work is due to start in Ligoniel Park to improve the path network and to try to create a walking route linking Ligoniel Dams, Ligoniel Park and CHCP. In order to create this link it is necessary to cross a section of path owned by Northern Ireland Water. It is therefore proposed to enter into a public path creation agreement with NI Water, under the Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983.**

2. **Key Issues**

The key issues for the committee to note are:

1. Once an agreement has been made the Council has a duty to carry out whatever works are needed to bring the path into a fit state for use and thereafter to maintain the path in that state.
2. The agreement shall have effect for a period of 10 years and thereafter until determined by either party giving notice to the other.
3. The Council is responsible for the maintenance of the path.
4. Any member of the public shall have the right to walk along the path for the purpose of open air recreation.
5. The public path is for pedestrian access only.
6. There will be 2 public access points onto the path, ie stiles, for which the Council is also responsible.
7. The Council shall indemnify NI Water against any public liability.

3. **Resource Implications**

**Financial**

This scheme is externally funded and is subject to the receipt of grant funding. It is anticipated that the maintenance liability will be minimal and the path will be included as part of the on-going inspection regime. The budget for maintaining the area exists within the current revenue estimates.

**Human Resources**

There are no additional human resource implications other than officer time.

**Asset and other implications**

A pedestrian pathway approx 90 m (length) by 4 m (width) will be maintainable and kept in a fit state of repair by the Council and the Council shall also indemnify NI Water against any claims on the pathway.

4. **Equality Implications**

There are no equality or good relations implications anticipated.

**5. Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the Council enter into a public path creation agreement with NI Water for a period of 10 years.”**

After discussion the Committee adopted the recommendation, subject to information being provided to residents living in the vicinity of the proposed path.

**Naming of Bridge at the Victoria Park**

The Committee considered the contents of a report which provided an overview of the process which would be undertaken in the naming of the new bridge proposed for the Victoria Park as part of the Connswater Community Greenway Project.

After discussion, the Committee endorsed the process as outlined and it was noted that an update report in respect of the name chosen for the bridge would be submitted for the Committee’s approval.

**Events Partnerships in Parks**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1. Relevant Background Information**

**Previously the Committee has provided financial support to the Ulster Bank Festival at Queen’s to deliver family-themed events during the annual festival since 2010. This has attracted audiences of over 10,000 adults and children into Council parks over that period.**

**2. Key Issues**

**Two requests have been received for large-scale events: from the Festival at Queen’s and Belfast Mela, for events in 2013. These are now both high-profile, large-scale well-organised cultural events which are now established as part of the fabric of the annual calendar of events in Belfast. They fit well across the Council’s strategic objectives related to the environment and creating attractive, vibrant neighbourhoods.**

**These events also have significant economic benefit to local neighbourhoods and the city, attracting visitors from across Belfast as well as tourists.**

**It is proposed that the Council establishes an interim arrangement with these two organisations for 2013. This would be with a view to conducting a broader review on strategic partnerships for events across the city, and with recommendations to be in place for 2014 for the delivery of an annual calendar of high-quality, large-scale (5,000+), family-orientated cultural events across the city.**

Some of the benefits to Council in growing these 2 cultural events include:

- High-profile and quality events in parks locations across the city
- Strong foundation for an annual parks events calendar
- Outreach to non-traditional parks users
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour in parks
- Positive media coverage for parks and Belfast
- Improving community relations
- Local economic spend
- Volunteering
- Bed-nights for tourists.

A partnership approach would enable both the Council and partner organisations to plan and deliver collaboratively events across the city. The partnerships would operate on a not-for-profit basis, and partners would be encouraged (as many already do) to seek financial support from the private sector to contribute to the costs of the events. Partners would also be expected to provide the events at no or minimal cost to the public.

There would also be opportunity to initiate an outreach programme to smaller parks in the city, for example, providing 'taster' events to stimulate new audiences across the city, as well as create a network of animated, connected parks. Both the Festival at Queen's and Belfast Mela would be asked to facilitate such outreach in 2013.

It is proposed that within an agreement to be drawn up with the two interim strategic partners, and that a series of targets for participation, outreach and sponsorship would be set, following discussion with the relevant organisations. The agreement would also include standard Council conditions regarding licensing, use of parks, health and safety requirements and event management planning.

A review report will be brought to Committee in late 2013 reviewing the impact of the 2013 activities and outlining a way forward in order to further strengthen and diversify the range of events and locations across the city.

3. **Resource Implications**

**Financial**

Funds of £40,000 has been provided for within budgets for 2013/14

**Human Resources**

There may be overtime required by staff to assist with the management of the proposed event which would be met by the Council.

**Asset and Other Implications**

The Legal Agreement will include a Bond Of Reinstatement (£1000) to ensure minimal impact on Council property, provided by the partner organisations.

4. **Equality Implications**

Equality and good relations implications will be considered in the course of this pilot and updates will be sent to the Equality and Diversity Officer in due course.

5. **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Members agree that the Council partner with the Festival at Queen's and the Belfast Mela for 2013/14 events, subject to appropriate legal agreements being drawn up, the organisers meeting all statutory requirements and all operational issues being resolved to the Council's satisfaction. It is also recommended that a review of strategic partnerships for large scale cultural events be undertaken with recommendations being presented at a future meeting."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Partnership Development Officer**

The Committee noted the contents of report which provided an overview of the work of the Department's Partnership Development Officer together with the programme of activity which would be undertaken in delivering an action plan which would promote Active Living, Active Leisure and Sport.

### European Heritage Open Weekend

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1. Relevant Background Information**

The Council has received an enquiry from Rosie McGivern, Marketing and Bid Coordinator for Kennedy Fitzgerald Architects (KFA), requesting permission for the inclusion of the Grove Wellbeing Centre and Falls Leisure Centre in the programme of exhibits for the European Heritage Open Weekend, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2013, in association with RSUA and NIEA.

KFA, were the architects who designed both buildings and they feel they would be of interest to the public for the following reasons:

- they display unique architectural concepts;
- relate to the local community;
- have influenced and acted as a catalyst in regeneration of the areas they are situated in; and
- have received many awards and would be of interest to the public.

If the Council agree to KFA's request to include both buildings in the European Heritage Open Weekend, their intention is to conduct a guided tour and discuss the buildings from an architect's perspective.

#### **2 . Key Issues**

If the Council agree to the request, KFA will provide the exact details of the tours in the coming months, however in initial discussions they have provided us with the following information:

- KFA would prefer to hold the tours during normal opening hours (10am-4pm) to minimise the inconvenience caused to centre staff. However, they acknowledge that weekends are a busy period for the leisure centres and are willing to work with the centres to arrange the most suitable time.
- KFA would ideally like access the all three main components of the Grove Wellbeing Centre: the Leisure Centre, the Library and the Health Centre. However, the Library and Health Centre operate limited opening hours at weekends. The Health Centre does not operate on Saturday or Sunday and the Library operates only on Saturday mornings (9.30am-1pm). Therefore special access may be required. KFA are prepared to work with the centre to ensure the event is suitable and to get agreement from the Health Centre and the Library to participate.



- KFA intends to hold one tour per centre led by the architect. A Council employee or leisure centre staff member can accompany the tour if required.

It is the intention that the tours would be pre-booked with no more than 20 visitors per tour. The booking arrangements would be handled by RSUA or NIEA, who would then advise KFA and the Council of the expected numbers.

The tours would be publicised by NIEA and we will also be able to promote them if so desired.

3. **Resource Implications**

**Financial**

Buildings participating in EHOD 2013 will be covered by an insurance policy that covers the entire programme and employers and public liability insurance will be provided.

**Human Resources**

Council employees or leisure centre staff may be required to accompany tours.

**Asset and Other Implications**

Tours will be conducted in Falls Leisure Centre and Grove Wellbeing Centre. Should special access to the Library and Health Centre be granted it would be necessary to put in place measures that would enable them to be opened for the duration of the tour.

Impact of the tours on other leisure centre users should be limited due to KFA's willingness to work with centres to ensure this.

4. **Equality Implications**

There are no equality implications associated with this report.

5. **Recommendations**

Members are asked to consider the request and agree to include Grove Wellbeing Centre and Falls Leisure Centre in the programme of exhibits for the European Heritage Open Weekend, subject to all operational issues being resolved.

During discussion, the Director clarified a number of issues in respect of the Council's policy for cultural events and, at the request of a Member, indicated that he would report back to the Committee providing information on the number and locations of events which had been held in the Councils parks over the past five years.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Irish Football Association Partnership**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1. **Relevant Background Information**

The council has over recent years strived to enhance linkages and mutually beneficial programmes with the IFA. A further opportunity has been identified which is intended to augment current partnership arrangements.

2. **Key Issues**

The IFA have advised of a health programme that they intend to roll out with a selection of clubs. Funding has been provided from DCAL which will enable health seminars to be hosted with selected clubs. Advantages will include the provision of defibrillator equipment and training, first aid equipment & training, in addition to guided seminars discussing nutrition, healthy eating, dietary and mental health issues including stress/depression. Training and delivery partners have already been sourced and the IFA are asking for council co-operation in the form of venue provision and limited marketing support.

Furthermore, 2 conferences are scheduled each year and each is afforded a specific theme. The initial conference was held at the Park Inn hotel in East Belfast. The forthcoming conference is planned for 9 October 2013 and the provisional agenda is focused upon mental health in football and raising awareness of how this can be positively managed. Officers suggested a council venue but IFA management have confirmed that the event has been booked in the Fasset International on the Springfield road. It would be our intention to offer venues for the 2 conferences being scheduled during 2014.

The aforementioned seminars / conferences are intended to target younger participants and attempt to address identified health inequalities with positive community outcomes.

The IFA are aiming to use football as an enabler to help highlight mental health issues and identify appropriate methods of management.

Council attendance on identified seminars can be used to promote our own sports development programmes and, if approved, we will provide a speaker for the October conference. This will further enhance our partnership opportunities and will provide a direct platform to influence participants on aspects of our own provision and planning.

3. **Resource Implications**

Provision of council facilities to host up to 6 seminars (approximately 3 hours each) and 2x conferences in 2014 (3 hours each), total of 8 events. Council facility provision and limited marketing support via social media would be accepted as our contribution in kind.

The cost per seminar would be approximately £75 per session (multi- purpose room x 3 hours) and therefore the potential loss of income would equate to £450.

The cost per conference would be approximately £90 (main hall x 3 hours) and therefore the potential loss of income would be £180.

Total potential loss of income = £630.

4. **Equality Implications**

None. Seminars and conferencing would be rotated throughout the city on a geographical basis.

5. **Recommendations**

Members are requested to recommend approval for the request of facility usage and limited marketing support as part of council's contribution to this partnership opportunity.

During discussion, a Member suggested that it should be ascertained whether or not the Irish Football Association intended to charge participants to partake in the programme, and, if so, then the Council should seek to recoup its investment from the Association.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt the recommendation, subject to clarification being sought from the Irish Football Association on whether or not it intended to charge participants to partake in the programme.

### **Woodvale Park – Cultural Celebration July, 2013**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The Committee will be aware of the ongoing work of the Council led Bonfire Programme which has developed into a successful programme of Cultural Networks. This brings together around fifty bonfire groups across the City, with funding being provided by both the Council as well as through the Council's Peace III programme.

The Woodvale and Cambrai Youth and Community Association has been an active participant on the programme for a number of years. In 2007 they were involved in the design of the Bonfire Beacon as an alternative to the traditional 11<sup>th</sup> July bonfire. They have run successful events since 2008 with around 1,000 people attending these events annually. For the past several years the group has successfully used a bonfire frame as opposed to a beacon. The staging of these events was approved by the Parks Committee on each occasion. This group are again intending to design and deliver a cultural event in Woodvale Park on the 11/12<sup>th</sup> July. They are seeking permission to construct a bonfire within the park and to stage associated community activities as part of their ongoing efforts to transform bonfires within the wider locality.

#### **2 Key Issues**

##### **2.1 Positioning of the bonfire**

Unlike in recent years it is not proposed to have a frame on this occasion, this is owing to the condition of the frame. It has been proposed that we use crowd control barriers to contain the bonfire and to provide a safe area within which it will be managed. The fire will be positioned on a 6 inch bed of sand to prevent damage to the ground surface.

#### **Developments within Woodvale Park**

The £2m development of Woodvale Park is nearing completion, it is anticipated that the work will be completed by the end of June 2013. In the past, including 2012, the bonfire has been constructed on the site of an old cinder pitch in Woodvale Park. However, the refurbishment scheme has seen the removal of this pitch and its replacement with a modern polymeric surfaced multi user games area. The option therefore of locating the bonfire at this spot is no longer a viable option.

As reported in previous years there are limited options for a bonfire on the site. Two possible locations have been identified. One of these options would be the site of the recently refurbished football pitches, however, these pitches are not yet ready for use and even though a sand base could be set down to protect the surface it would restrict growth and delay the use of the pitches by local clubs.

The second option is to locate the bonfire on the site of the former tennis courts, this area is behind the service yard and adjacent to one of the bowling greens. It is a small area with restricted viewing.

Discussions have taken place with community representatives and there is agreement that the 2013 bonfire be located, with Council's permission on the site of the former tennis courts. The accompanying celebratory events will take place throughout the park in agreement with Council staff.

#### **Risk Management**

As reported in previous years there are issues of risk with such an event that will be carefully reviewed. The organisers of the proposed event at Woodvale Park will be required to liaise closely with the Council and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. The proposal to permit the proposed event will be underpinned by an appropriate form of legal agreement. It is also the view of Legal Services that suitable fencing should be erected around the bonfire frame after the burn. The work of the Council in relation to the transformation of bonfires continues to be supported by the inter-agency group who assist the Council with the Programme. The Fire and Rescue Service, the PSNI, DRD (Roads Service), NIHE, NIEA and the Community Relations Unit of OFM/DFM have all supported developments thus far.

#### **Benefits of the proposal**

There is local support for the proposal to host this event, with a commitment of up to 50 local volunteers to supervise the event. These volunteers are trained in stewarding techniques and officially accredited by the Open College Network. The provision of beacons and the frame in the past has proven to demonstrate that communities can take responsibility for managing bonfires and conducting events in a responsible manner.

### **3 Resource Implications**

#### **3.1 Financial**

There are no additional financial implications.

#### **3.2 Human Resources**

There are no additional human resource implications at this time.

#### **Asset and Other Implications**

### **4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

#### **4.1 Local communities and agencies have been consulted on the proposals.**

### **5 Recommendations**

#### **5.1 That the Committee grant authority for this event to be held on Council property (Woodvale Park) in July 2013, subject to satisfactory terms agreed with the Director of Parks and Leisure and on the condition that:**

- The event organisers resolve operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- Legal agreement is entered into; and
- The event organisers meet all statutory requirements including entertainments licensing."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

### **Dunville and Woodvale Parks Update**

The Committee considered the contents of a report which provided an update on the redevelopment of the Dunville and Woodvale Parks. The Director reported that work remained on target at both facilities and that information on the formal re-opening of the parks, together with an associated programme of events and activities, would be circulated to Members in due course.

After discussion, during which tribute was paid to those members of staff who had contributed towards the success of both projects, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### Table Tennis Ulster – Use of Bowling Pavilions

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1. Relevant Background Information**

Table Tennis Ulster (TTU) is the governing body for table tennis in Northern Ireland. TTU was formed in 1937 although Table Tennis in Ulster can be traced back to the early 1920s.

Currently there are 73 clubs in Ulster with over 972 members, 400 of which are under 17 years old.

Membership of TTU has increased by approximately 20% in the past 2 years. This increase is mainly from young people in schools. A Primary and Secondary School Competition structure is in place to accommodate school children taking part in table tennis at participation level, e.g., Schools League Cup and individual championships.

Council Officers have been approached by TTU to discuss development of the sport working with local schools and working to establish and support existing clubs.

In locations such as Ormeau and Botanic bowling pavilions it would be envisaged that local primary schools would be able to ‘feed’ players into these new clubs and provide a pathway for players to continue into the sport for junior to senior level in a safe and controlled environment.

TTU has a strong focus on school and club development. The work being done by TTU’s voluntary coaches in Belfast schools is creating a demand which should translate into more players taking part outside the school environment. There is a need for clubs to have permanent residency close to the schools involved to provide the opportunity to further their development in this sport.

**2. Key Issues**

TTU are eager to increase participation from local community groups and members of Ormeau and Botanic bowling club. BCC officers have met with all four bowling clubs who play out of both pavilions. A number of them have shown interested in participating in the sport with TTU.

TTU would plan to operate at various times in each bowling pavilion to accommodate the participation of surrounding schools. TTU would also request the use of the pavilions one or two evenings per week and on Saturday and Sunday in agreement and participation with Bowling clubs.

When the bowling pavilions are not normally staffed it is hoped that key handling arrangements could be put in place – i.e. that these partners will open and close the facilities in line with the club / user requirements, under a legal agreement with the Council.

Training will be required in relation to all health and safety issues related to the management of the pavilion as well as for safeguarding children and young people also vulnerable adults.

To ensure there are no double bookings the departments Outdoor Leisure Unit will handle all bookings.

Council officers request that Ormeau and Botanic bowling clubs be made available free of charge for this pilot. This partnership working between Ormeau and Botanic bowling pavilions and TTU will promote shared space, collaborative working and will improve the use of the facilities which have become under-used over the last ten years.

3. **Resource Implications**

**Financial**

There may be cost to the council for additional electric and water which we should be able to absorb within the parks operational budget for the parks.

**Human Resources**

There are likely to be some additional staff monitoring and planning implications which should be able to be accommodated through our normal management process.

4. **Equality Implications**

Equality and Good Relations implications will be considered in the course of this pilot and updates will be sent to the Equality and Diversity Officer.

5. **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the committee grant authority for free shared out of hours use of the bowling pavilion subject to satisfactory terms being agreed by the director of Parks and Leisure and on the condition that:

- The groups resolve all operational and health and safety issues to the council's satisfaction;
- an appropriate legal agreement, to be prepared by the director of Legal Services, is completed;



**It is also recommended that Members authorise the Director, under the Scheme of Delegation for future initiatives to take place in additional bowling pavilions free of charge.**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Strangford Avenue Playing Fields – Car Park**

The Committee agreed to grant to Aiken Promotions the use of the Strangford Avenue Playing Fields for the purposes of car parking on 20th July for patrons attending a concert at the Balmoral Showgrounds. That agreement would be subject to the following conditions:

- the completion of a legally binding agreement between the Council and Aiken Promotions;
- the receipt of a bond of reinstatement of £3,000 to oversee any work which may be required at the playing fields; and
- the payment to the Council by the organisers of a hire fee of £1,400.

**British Friends of Normandy**

The Committee was informed that a request had been received from the British Friends of Normandy to acquire one of the Castlewellan Stones which were currently in storage at the Botanic Gardens. The Director reported that the stone requested would be used as a plinth for a bronze bust of the late General Sir Ian Harris and displayed within the British Garden at the Memorial in Caen, Normandy.

The Committee agreed to accede to the request and noted that there would be no costs incurred by the Council

Chairman