

# Parks and Leisure Committee

Thursday, 12th September, 2013

## MEETING OF PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

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

### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 8th August were taken and read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2nd September.

### Declarations of Interest

In respect of item 2 viz., 'Support for Sport - Large Development Grants', Alderman Rodgers indicated that he was associated with the Orangegroove Athletics Club, which would be partaking in one of the events which had been considered by the Director.

### Support for Sport Large Development Grants

(Mrs. C. Moraghan, Sports Development Officer, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **"1.0 Relevant Background Information**

**1.1 Members will be aware that 12 Support for Sport large development grants of £5,000 are awarded annually.**

**2.0 Key Issues**

**2.1** The Director and relevant officer met on Tuesday 13 August to discuss the large grant applications received in July.

**2.2** The assessment of the large development grants is a comprehensive process set against a range of criteria which take into account;

- the club's development plan;
- how the club's plan links to the sport's governing body's plan;
- the sustainability of the initiative; and
- how it contributes to improving the quality of life, promoting good relations and increasing opportunities for participation particularly among children and young people, women and girls, ethnic minorities', people with a disability or older people.

**2.3** 32 clubs applied in the first stage of the application process with 18 returning the second stage application. Of the 18 clubs only 7 passed the minimum threshold for funding.

The standard of application was disappointing this year with many clubs falling down because of weak club development plans and missing supplementary information which was required to support their application.

Support was provided to clubs by officers from the Leisure Development Unit. However given the standard of the applications this year more work with clubs is required to increase their capacity to make applications to this grant programme.

If Members accept the recommendations as outlined there will be £25,000 not allocated from the grant programme. It is proposed that this should be allocated to the Support for Sport Small Development Grants Programme which is currently closed to applications because the 2013/14 budget has already been allocated. Detailed applications are held in the Parks and Leisure Department and can be viewed by Members on request.

**3.0 Resource Implications**

The table below indicates the amounts allocated from the 2013/2014 budget.

Area	Total available	Allocated to date	Proposed allocation for August	Remaining after allocation
Large Development	£60,000	£0	£35,000	£25,000

#### **4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

4.1 All applications have been assessed in line with the current Support for Sport scheme. Following the review of Support for Sport, the revised scheme has undergone equality screening in accordance with Council requirements. This process has 'screened out' the revised scheme, identifying only minor, positive equality impacts, and determining that there is no requirement to proceed to Equality Impact Assessment.

#### **5.0 Recommendations**

5.1 Members are asked to approve the undernoted Large Development Grants awards – totalling £35,000 - to the 7 sports clubs scoring above the 50% threshold and to agree that the remaining £25,000 be reallocated into the Small Development Grants Programme.

NAME	AREA	SCORE	RANK	DECISION	TOTAL	SYNOPSIS
North Belfast Harriers	North	86%	1	Recommend	£5,000	"Jog Belfast" taking place in 4 locations across Belfast in partnership with Orangegrove AC, Shaftsbury Recreation & Beechmount AC. Promoting activity amongst sedentary people specifically females, over 50's and children. Programme will link to Parkrun.
Cathal Brugha Swimming and Waterpolo Club	West	84%	2	Recommend	£5,000	High performance coaching programme targeting junior players and bringing in GB Waterpolo coach and NI Athletics coach. Also implementing an "Apprentice Coach Scheme" for parents and volunteers encouraging them to get involved with the club.

Holy Trinity Amateur Boxing Club	West	73%	3	Recommend	£5,000	Introducing boxing and health and fitness initiatives to 300+ females in the local area. The project will provide classes to improve fitness, agility, strength, muscle definition as well as improving mental health and health awareness. Participants will be encouraged to take a journey into personal development to improve self esteem, confidence, discipline and social inclusion.
St. Oliver Plunkett FC	West	64%	4	Recommend	£5,000	Coaching support programme. Specialised coaching for 46 coaching in the club and focusing on future "in-house" support for future coaches in an aim to reduce costs. Looking at diet and nutrition, speed and agility and age specific session planning.
City of Belfast Amateur Swimming Club	Citywide	58%	5	Recommend	£5,000	"Swim Well: Live Well" Programme to encourage more children into swimming and provide opportunities for non-competitive older swimmers to stay fit and involved in the sport.
Donegall Diamonds Waterpolo Club	North	54%	6	Recommend	£5,000	Strength and conditioning training for females competing at Division 1 level. Funding will introduce sports specific and individual training to improve strength, core stability and flexibility in order to be a strong contender in the All Ireland Women's Division 1 League.
St John Bosco Amateur Boxing Club	West	50%	7	Recommend	£5,000	Coaching support, mentoring programme and community outreach. Offering the local community Zumba, Pilates and health and fitness classes. Developing coaches knowledge on disability awareness e.g. autism and sports science.
Orangethrope Athletics	East	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not return full application
Crusaders Youth	North	42%		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not meet threshold following assessment
Cairn Lodge Amateur Boxing Club	North	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Application missing information.
Belfast Star Basketball Club	North	40%		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not meet threshold following assessment.

Crumlin Star FC	North	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not return full application
Windsor Lawn Tennis Club	South	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Application received late.
Suffolk Swifts Youth Academy	South	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not return full application
Sydenham United FC	East	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Application missing information.
Instonians Rugby Football Club	South	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not meet threshold following assessment
Northern Ireland Youth Climbing Team	South/ East	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not return full application
Shamrock Football Club	North	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Missing information. Venue outside City boundary.
St. Agnes Amateur Boxing Club	West	39%		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not meet threshold following assessment
Immaculata Football Club	West	42%		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not meet threshold following assessment
Friends of Grosvenor Fencing Club	East	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Application is exactly the same as last year. Project must be a new initiative.
Falls Bowling Club	West	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Club development plan out of date and sections missing.
Andersonstown Tigers Basketball Club	West	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not return full application
Belfast Boat Club	South	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.
Grosvenor Youth	West	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.
Sparta FC	Citywide	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.
Queens University Ruby Football Club	South	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.
Ligoniel Working Men's FC	North	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.

Ligoniel Amateur Boxing Club	North	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.
Grove United FC	North	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.
Shankill Judo Club	North	N/A		Do not recommend	N/A	Did not proceed to 2nd stage.

The Committee endorsed the award of the grants as outlined.

### **Support for Sports Grants – Proposed Centralised Approach**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

- 1.1 At the Committee’s meeting on 13 June 2013, Members expressed concern that the high volume of applications so early in the financial year meant that all of the Small Support for Sport grants had been allocated within 4 months. It was agreed that a report on possible phasing of the grants would be presented to Members in the Autumn.**
- 1.2 In August 2013, Committee agreed a series of mitigating actions in relation to the use of third parties to complete funding applications. This in line with the Good Relations policy of making a declaration that the application was completed by the club members and a series of checks are to be carried out by the Sports Development Officers.**
- 1.3 Previously, in November 2012 the corporate Central Grants Unit (CGU) took over the administration of four grants within the Tourism, Culture and Arts Multi-Annual Funding and the Small Grants Tranche as part of a pilot scheme. The Support for Sport Grants did not enter into the centralised approach in the pilot phase.**

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

- 2.1 Members have raised concerns about the need to increase the developmental support available to assist sports clubs to develop their capacity and capability to submit successful applications. Sports Development Officers spend a significant amount of time supporting the administration of the Support for Sport grant scheme, particularly in relation to verification checks pre- and post-award. There is some evidence that**

clubs are using paid consultancy expertise to support their grant applications. Other clubs are submitting applications which do not meet the minimum standards for applicants.

**2.2** Members have also expressed concern that all of the Small Development Grants funding was allocated within four months of opening. This means that many clubs who have not confirmed their programmes in the second half of the year are unable to receive support.

**2.3** A review of the pilot phase of the corporate Central Grants Unit (CGU) has taken place. The review notes:

- The centralised system improved the experience for customers/grant recipients, by reducing the need to produce organisational documentation (constitutions, accounts, etc.) multiple times;
- The 'routine' funding process tasks conducted by the CGU allow functional area staff more time to focus on development work / relationship building with organisations. This is generally considered to be a better use of functional area staff's expertise and time and to maximise the expertise of both parties
- Supports segregation of duties, as applications are considered by different people at different stages under the CGU-led approach, for example, eligibility checks conducted by CGU, assessment by functional area experts, review by independent assessment panels. This provides a better defence against allegations of bias in the award of funding i.e. award of funding is not just one person's decision.
- There are efficiencies in a corporate approach to advertising, funding administration and enables better information to be obtained of the amount of funding being awarded to individual organisations and to particular geographic areas. Improved funding data also enables the Council to better detect cases of duplicate or overlap funding

**2.4** It is therefore proposed that the administration for the Support for Sport grants (small and large development grants) transfer to the CGU. This would enable Sports Development Officers to support clubs to plan effectively and develop stronger applications. Support for Sport (small grants) would be open 2 times a year, and a report would be brought to P&L Committee

for information. The larger development grants would be brought to P&L Committee for their approval.

- 2.5 Discussions are ongoing related to bringing the Support for Sport events fund under the management of Parks and Leisure, currently managed by the Development Department. Based on the nature and scale of many events, the Leisure Development Unit is better placed to offer the type of support needed by event organisers. It is likely that a change in focus with the funding would lead to better strategic outcomes linked to improving community health and wellbeing through sport. A further report on this matter will be brought to Committee in due course.

3. **Resource Implications**

- 3.1 **Financial: The existing Support for Sport budget allocation of £240,000 will remain unchanged and continue to be managed by leisure Development**

4. **Equality Implications**

- 4.1 **There are no equality or good relations implications at this stage. Equality and good relations implications will continue to be monitored in a centralised approach and regular updates will be sent to the Equality and Diversity Officer.**

5. **Recommendation**

- 5.1 **The Committee is asked to authorise the transfer of the administrative responsibility to the Central Grants Unit for the Support for Sport grants scheme to commence in the new financial year.”**

After discussion, during which the Director clarified that the recommendation would apply to all Support for Sport Grants which were administered by the Department, the Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Leisure Transformation Programme – Update**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update on the progress which had been achieved in the Council’s Leisure Transformation Programme, which was being overseen by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. The Director outlined the principal aspects of the report and answered a range of Members’ questions in relation thereto. In addition, he undertook to submit further progress reports to the Committee for information.

Noted.



### Paisley Park- West Circular Road

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of a proposal emerging from discussions between officials from the Department for Social Development and Council Officers regarding the facility at Paisley Park; and to seek Committee authority in relation to progressing the discussions.

Paisley Park is located on the West Circular Road and is owned by the Department for Social Department. The site contains a number of sporting facilities:

- A soccer pitch which is a home ground for Albert Foundry and which also contains a small spectator stand;
- A bowling green and associated pavilion;
- An artificial turf pitch (Astroturf) and associated prefabricated changing pavilion;
- A small galvanised building which is used by a local boxing club.

There have been discussions spanning a number of years regarding the future management of the site and its facilities. Reaching a shared and agreed position has been a challenge for the Department but it would appear that a consensus has now been reached. The Department has sought the Council's view on undertaking the maintenance of the site on behalf of the Department. The Department has asked if the council would be prepared to enter into a service level agreement to undertake this work.

#### **2 Key Issues**

1. The facilities within the site offers a diverse range of opportunities to take part in physical activity;
2. The site is well established however it is in need of investment to upgrade the existing facilities and ensure that they remain fit for purpose;
3. The site will remain under the ownership of the Department and will be managed through a Joint Committee comprising representatives from the sporting organisations / groups involved with the site as well as the Department and the Council;
4. The Council has been asked to provide a maintenance schedule and associated costing to

maintain the green areas within the site, this excludes the buildings and the artificial pitch; the proposal is that the Department will enter into a service level agreement wherein it would effectively employ the council to undertake the agreed and specified works;

5. In the context of the wider discussions regarding the transfer of assets under Local Government Reform it is likely that Paisley Park will form part of that discussion and the likelihood is that the asset will transfer to the council under Local Government Reform; this therefore provides an opportunity for the Council to become familiar with the asset and build relationships with the various stakeholders.

### **3 Resource Implications**

The cost will be met by the Department for Social Department and there will be no additional cost to the Council at this time.

#### **Human Resources**

This will increase the workload of staff in the area but it is anticipated that the work can be carried out within existing resources. The cost of any additional resources would have to be met by the Department.

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

- 4.1 There are no equality implications

### **5 Recommendations**

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to consider the report and to authorise officers to:

- Continue to meet with Officials from the Departmental for Social Development;
- Prepare and cost a maintenance schedule in relation to the grounds of the site;
- Enter into an appropriate service level agreement with the Department on condition that there is no financial cost to the Council.”

After discussion, during which the Director confirmed that it was not anticipated that the Council would incur any costs in entering into an agreement with the Department for Social Development, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Business in the Community – Community Garden**

The Committee agreed to defer, until its meeting on 10th October, consideration of a request from the Business in the Community organisation for financial assistance to enable the establishment of a Community Garden on land off the Albertbridge Road, which was situated between Cluan Place and Paulette Avenue. It was noted that the deferral would allow for further consultations to be undertaken within the neighbouring communities and with locally Elected Members.

### **Belfast Festival at Queen's – Events in the Belmont and Falls Parks**

The Committee was advised that, as part of the 'Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queen's', a request had been received from the organisers to host circus-type events at the Belmont and Falls Parks in late October, 2013. The Director indicated that the performances would be provided by Tumble Circus, a Belfast-based circus group which specialised in theatre and comedy. The shows, he advised, would be family friendly and would include trapeze artists, acrobats, juggling and comedy. He reported that the dates which had been proposed by the organisers were as follows:

- **The Belmont Park** – Saturday, 19th October at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, 20th October between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and
- **The Falls Park** – Saturday, 26th October at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, 27th October between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

He outlined the management arrangements which would be put in place by the organisers to oversee the hosting of the events in both parks and pointed out that consultations would be undertaken with local residents and steps would be implemented to minimise any disruption which might be caused.

Accordingly, the Director recommended that the Committee grant the free use of both parks for the holding of the events as outlined, on the condition that the organisers:

- liaise with the Council to ensure that all health and safety requirements would be met to its satisfaction and that event management and risk assessment plans were submitted prior to the event;
- resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction; and
- agree to enter into an appropriate legal agreement and meet all the statutory requirements, including entertainment licensing.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

### **Party in the Park - Botanic Gardens**

The Director reported that a request had been received from Mr. C. Wasson, representing RCW Live Events Limited, to hire the upper portion of the Botanic Gardens – primarily the Great Lawn area – for the hosting of 'Party in the Park' in June, 2014.

He indicated that the event would be held over three days, viz., Friday 20th, Saturday 21st and Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, between 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m., with live music commencing at 6:00 p.m. It was reported that work on the erection of the staging would commence in the park on 16th June, with dismantling work being completed by 25th June.

The Committee was informed that the event would seek to attract an audience aged between 25 and 55 years and that the capacity on each evening would be limited to 5,000 patrons. A liquor licence would be applied for by the organisers and entrance to the event would be via the Stranmillis Road and the Botanic Avenue. The Director pointed out that the upper portion of the Botanic Gardens would be closed to the general public whilst the event was ongoing and he indicated that the organisers had agreed to carry out prior consultations with local residents and organisations which were situated in the vicinity of the Gardens. In addition, an event management plan would be formulated by the organisers in consultation with the Council and other stakeholders.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to grant the use of the upper portion of the Botanic Gardens for the event as outlined, subject to satisfactory terms being agreed between the Director and the organisers and on the condition that:

- the organisers pay a Bond of Intent of £600 and also a Reinstatement Bond of £3,000 within 28 days of their request being made;
- the organisers pay a hire charge of £4,050 for the use of the park;
- an appropriate legal agreement be drafted by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor; and
- the organisers meet all statutory requirements, which would include health and safety and entertainment licensing.

#### **Replacement Mural Artwork at Ormeau Park**

The Committee agreed to accede to a request, which had been submitted by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Community Cohesion Unit, to replace, at no cost to the Council, an existing mural in the Ormeau Park with a new mural which would celebrate the diverse mix of cultures within the Ormeau area. A copy of the proposed design for the mural had been circulated at the meeting for the information of the Committee.

#### **Lease of Office Space at Belfast Castle**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**"1. Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that, at the 13 June 2013 meeting of Parks and Leisure Committee, a report was considered in relation to the leasing of commercial office accommodation on the second floor of Belfast Castle.**

1.2 An update on the outcome of the feasibility work into costs for the change of use from the current visitor facility was provided and members agreed to lease out the space, subject to the relevant statutory approvals being obtained.

1.3 It was noted that a further report would be brought to the committee in the event of agreement on lease terms with a third party.

## 2. Key Issues

2.1 Facilities Management have now completed the work at the Castle and this area is now ready for occupation.

2.2 Negotiations have taken place with Arc 21 and the Estates Management Unit in Property and Projects Department about the possibility of Arc 21 renting out the office space as a whole. Arc 21 currently rent office space at Duncrue Industrial Estate from a private landlord and their lease is coming to an end.

2.3 On advice from Legal Services and Estates Management Unit, the following lease terms are proposed:

- The proposed term of rental is for 5 years with an options by either party to terminate at the end of year 3 and the end of year 4 subject to a suitable notice period
- The rent is proposed at £17,000 reviewable after 5 years to then market value
- Rates are payable by the tenant and a rating assessment will be carried out by Land and Property Services (LPS)
- The maintenance of the building will continue to be the responsibility of the Council. The tenant will indemnify the council in respect of any damage caused by the tenant or their invitees etc
- The letting will remain subject to Council obtaining all the necessary Planning and other statutory consents
- The tenant will pay a proportionate amount of any shared services, including heating, cleaning and electricity.

## 3. Resource Implications

3.1 The overall cost of the refurbishment work at Belfast Castle was £65,000. This has been funded from non-recurring capital

funds. The rent for the office accommodation is proposed at £17,000 pa excluding rates and service charges.

4. **Equality Implications**

4.1 No specific equality or good relations implications.

5. **Recommendations**

5.1 Members are asked to agree to the lease terms for the office accommodation at Belfast Castle, as set out above and to proceed with the letting subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Orders and to an appropriate legal agreement to be drawn up by Legal Services.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Belfast Zoo- Adoption Package Review**

The Committee agreed to defer, for a period of one month, consideration of the above-mentioned report to enable further information to be provided.

**Belfast Zoo 80th Anniversary Celebrations**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1. **Relevant Background Information**

As Belfast Zoo was opened on 28 March 1934 by Sir Crawford McCullough, the then Lord Mayor of Belfast, 2014 thus represents the Zoo’s 80th Anniversary. A range of activities are being planned to celebrate this significant milestone in the Zoo’s history. These include:

- Working to create an 80th anniversary sub-brand. This will include a modified logo, modified branded handouts, etc. The aim of this will be to make our celebrations an identifiable entity.
- The Zoo’s archives are limited, therefore research will be undertaken to successfully build the public relations campaign surrounding the 80th anniversary. It will be necessary to perform both primary and secondary research to successfully capture visitors’ imaginations and encourage engagement and interaction with the campaign. Such research will include searches of relevant

historical archives, and requests to visitors for historical photographs and anecdotes.

- Work with NI television companies on the potential for a renewed 'fly-on-the-wall' documentary series or a one-off special programme about the history of the Zoo and our work in 2014.
- Frequent release of information throughout the year. This will help to build momentum and 'buy-in' for the campaign. This will involve the initial launch, coverage of celebrations, visitor memories, etc.
- In conjunction with Corporate Communications, in 2014, the Zoo's advertising campaign will be based on celebrating the Zoo's birthday and also on the changes which the Zoo has progressed through, including the brand new play park.
- Use of a range of e-marketing tools, including Belfast Zoo website, E-newsletter, social media, and onsite screens. The e-marketing will support the 80th anniversary campaign as part of an integrated communications strategy. Specifically the website will link into the public relations 'call to action' and engagement aims, through the following: a memories online form for visitors to submit their stories and photos, a memories page with visitors' stories, photos, videos, etc, history wallpapers and local celebrity's and VIP Zoo stories.
- A semi-permanent exhibition will be developed at a suitable location in the Zoo. This will be a year-long exhibition '80 years of Belfast Zoo' and will feature the Belfast corporation, opening of Bellevue Zoo in 1934, Bellevue Pleasure Gardens, the Zoo through each decade, the role of a modern Zoo, Floral Hall and famous animal characters.
- Branded flags at entrance and at the lake area.
- Items to compliment the 80th anniversary sub-brand will be on sale in the Zoovenir Shop, including old Zoo photos, and a new edition Zoo guide book.

- The 80th anniversary will be supported with an annual calendar of events which will focus on the Zoo's heritage/history and also celebrate the current success.

2. **Key Issues**

A range of events and other marketing concepts are being planned as part of the year's celebrations.

3. **Resource Implications**

**Financial**

All the activities being planned for the celebrations will be deliverable from annual Zoo revenue budgets.

There are no additional human resources needed at present, though the planning and delivery of the celebrations will increase the workload of staff in the Zoo.

5. **Recommendation**

The Committee is asked to approve in principle the range of activities currently being planned for the Zoo's 80th celebrations."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**European Association of Zoos and Aquaria: Annual Conference**

The Director reminded the Committee that the Belfast Zoo had been a long standing member of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (E.A.Z.A.) and outlined the work which that organisation had carried out to protect endangered species through its conservation and breeding programmes. He reported that the E.A.Z.A. conference was hosted annually by a member of that body and indicated that Belfast had been invited to host the conference in 2016. The Director outlined the principal aspects of the conference and indicated that it was anticipated that 800 delegates would attend the four day event, which, it was estimated, would contribute approximately £1.3 million to the local economy.

After discussion, the Committee agreed, in principle, that Belfast would host the 2016 E.A.Z.A. Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting, subject to the consideration of a further report which would outline the full cost implications.

Chairman