

Parks and Leisure Committee

Thursday, 10th October, 2013

MEETING OF PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor McKee (Chairman);
Aldermen Robinson and Rodgers;
Councillors Beattie, Convery, Corr,
Cunningham, Haire, Hendron, Hanna,
Hussey, Kyle, McCabe, McNamee,
Mallon, Mullan, Ó Donnghaile,
Thompson and Verner.

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

New Members

The Chairman welcomed Councillors Beattie and Verner to their first meeting of the Committee.

Apology

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Mac Giolla Mhín.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 12th September were taken and read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Incident at Alexandra Park

The Director provided the Committee with an overview of the circumstances surrounding the discovery of a body within the Alexandra Park that morning.

After discussion, during which the Director undertook to review the manner in which Members were advised of serious incidents within the Department's properties, the Committee noted the comments of the Director.

Support for Sport

Small Development Grants and 'Clubmark' Awards

The Committee noted a schedule of Support for Sport applications which related to development and hospitality grants, together with a schedule of 'Clubmark' awards,

which had been approved by the Director in accordance with the authority delegated to him, information on which was available on the Council's Mod.gov website.

Individual Development Grants

The Committee noted a schedule of Individual Development Grants, a copy of which is set out hereunder, which had been approved by the Director in accordance with the authority delegated to him by the Committee at its meeting on 11th October, 2012.

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Sports Club</u>	<u>Forename</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>Recommend</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Archery	City of Belfast Archery Club	Mel	Lawther	Recommend	£1,000
Canoeing	Canoe Slalom Northern Ireland	Matthew	McKnight	Recommend	£1,000
Athletics	Unattached	Stephen	Scullion	Recommend	£1,000
Cycling	Baku Cycling Project	David	McCann	Recommend	£1,000
Athletics	North Belfast Harriers	Breege	Connolly	Recommend	£1,000
Archery	City of Belfast Archery Club	Stuart	Wilson	Recommend	£1,000
Cycling	Synergy Baku	Connor	McConvey	Recommend	£1,000
Tennis	Belfast Boat Club	Laura	Reid	Recommend	£500
Table tennis	Ormeau TTC Anneccy TTC	Keith	Knox	Recommend	£500
Golf	Shandon Park Golf Club	Chloe	Weir	Recommend	£500
Tennis	Windsor Tennis Club	Karola	Bejenaru	Recommend	£500

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Sports Club</u>	<u>Forename</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>Recommend</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Cycling	Team IG - Sigma Sport	Peter	Hawkins	Recommend	£500
Cycling	East Antrim Cycling Club	Daniel	Stewart	Recommend	£500
Climbing	Northern Ireland Youth Climbing Team	Eoin	Action	Recommend	£500
Trampolining	Andersonstown Trampoline Club	Ryan	Devine	Recommend	£250
Judo	Murakwai Judo	Daniel	Mayhew	Recommend	£250
Judo	Murakwai Judo	James	Reid	Recommend	£250
Judo	Murakwai Judo	Skye	Sands	Recommend	£250
Boxing	St George's A.B.C	James	McGivern	Recommend	£250
Boxing	Holy Family GG	Michaela	Walsh	Recommend	£250
Boxing	Holy Family GG	Aidan	Walsh	Recommend	£250
Climbing	NI and All Ireland Climbing Team	Jamie	Rankin	Recommend	£250
Climbing	NIYCT also Irish Team Member	Carson	Carnduff	Recommend	£250
Climbing	Sticky Feet	Megan	Foreman	Recommend	£250
Table tennis	Glenburn Table Tennis Club	Owen	Cathcart	Recommend	£250

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Sports Club</u>	<u>Forename</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>Recommend</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Taekwondo	Cheol Taekwondo Academy	Damian	Duffy	Recommend	£250
Taekwondo	Cheol Taekwondo Academy	Emma	McCartney	Recommend	£250
Hockey	Lisnagarvey HC	Gavin	Adams	Recommend	£250
Athletics	City of Lisburn	Megan	Marrs	Recommend	£250
Athletics	City of Lisburn	Ronan	Jenkins	Recommend	£250
Squash	Ballynafeigh	Emma	McGugan	Recommend	£250
Squash	Ballynafeigh	Hannah	McGugan	Recommend	£250
Boxing	St. Paul's ABC	Brendan	Irvine	Recommend	£250
Boxing	Clonard ABC	Conor	Quinn	Recommend	£250
				<u>Total</u>	<u>£15,500</u>

In response to a Member's query regarding the awarding of grants to applicants residing outside the City boundary, the Director agreed to review the eligibility criteria and to submit a report in this regard to a future meeting of the Committee. In addition, it was agreed that a report outlining the benefits which had been achieved through the Scheme would be submitted to a future meeting.

Parks Events - Small Grants Scheme

The Director reminded the Committee that the Parks Events Small Grants Scheme, which had been established in 2006, had sought to encourage community-based groups to host a range of events in local parks. He explained that the initiative had proved to be a success and indicated that funding of £100,000 had been allocated for groups in 2013/2014, with a maximum grant of £3,000 available to successful applicants. He indicated that a total of 44 applications for assistance had been received

in the current year, of which 36 had been deemed eligible for funding. He added that a total of 50 events would be held in 26 separate locations across Belfast.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed:

- that the Department would continue the Scheme in 2014/2015;
- that the funding would be maintained at £100,000; and
- to delegate authority to the Director to make future awards.

Future Management of Parks

Arising from discussion on the foregoing report, the Director agreed to submit a report to a future meeting which would outline the feasibility of the area management of parks being undertaken on a north, south, east and west basis, as opposed to the current arrangements which separated the areas on a north, east and south/west basis.

Fees and Charges

The Committee agreed to defer, until its meeting on 14th November, consideration of a report in respect of departmental fees and charges for the financial year 2014/2015. It was noted that, during the interim period, briefings on the proposed fees and charges would be provided to those parties who wished to receive them.

Study Visit to Crematoria

Arising from discussion on the proposed fees and charges, insofar as they related to the City of Belfast Crematorium, a Member referred to a proposed study visit to view crematoria in England, which had been organised by Cogent Consulting, and which would take place on Thursday and Friday 16th and 17th October. He reminded the Committee that it had been anticipated that the visit would involve Elected Members from both Belfast City Council and Newtownabbey Borough Council. However, he expressed concern that the date which had been chosen by the consultants for the visit had not proved to be suitable for the Members of Belfast City Council and, given that the purpose of visit was to examine models which might be utilised in the joint management of a new crematorium in the Newtownabbey area, he emphasised that it was important that the Council was represented at a political level.

In response, the Director reminded the Members that the Department had written to each of the Party Leaders in July seeking nominations for the study visit and, in addition, the Committee had considered a report in this regard at its meeting on 8th August. He pointed out that the dates for the visit had been determined not by the consultants, but by the host crematoria in England. He indicated that any Member of the Committee who so wished to attend would be accommodated should they contact the Department at the earliest opportunity.

Noted.

Belfast Zoo - Adoption Package Review

The Committee considered the undernoted report and noted that the schedule of charges in respect of the above-mentioned matter had been published on the Council's Mod.gov website:

“1. Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The Committee will recall the report presented at the September 2013 meeting regarding the review of the Zoo's animal adoption package. Following the Committee's consideration in September, a further review has taken place and officers have made further enhancements to the various adoption packages, taking into account Members comments.**

2. Key Issues

The adoption package costs remain unchanged from the original proposal in September and include a new package for our younger visitors. This includes a gift bag, a free child entrance ticket, a fact sheet and certificate. This is priced at £25.00 and is aimed at the gift market.

The bronze package has been enhanced, and now includes one free entrance ticket, and the chance for the adopter and one guest to attend an exclusive behind the scenes evening tour of the Zoo, as well as a number of features that were previously outlined.

The silver package now includes four free entrance tickets to the Zoo, a personalised guided tour of the zoo during the summer for the adopter and one friend, and the chance for the adopter and three guests to attend an exclusive behind the scenes evening tour of the Zoo, as well as a number of features that were previously outlined;

The gold package now includes eight free entrance tickets to the zoo, a personalised guided tour of the Zoo during the summer for the adopter and up to ten guests, the opportunity to meet the zookeeper who manages the adopter's chosen animal and learn more about how it is looked after (including the chance to access areas normally restricted to visitors), and the chance for the adopter and three guests to attend an exclusive behind the scenes evening tour of the Zoo, as well as a number of features that were previously outlined.

- 2.2 Further work is ongoing to consider enhancements to the adoption packages through offers at the Zoo's gift shop and catering outlets and proposals will be brought forward in due course.**

- 2.3 Work is also in progress to review the current names of the four packages with a view to considering options regarding their branding.

3. **Resource Implications**

Financial

The Zoo's income has been under pressure for the last few years and it is hoped that the review of the adoption packages and the promotion around these can help to stimulate their use. A new package aimed at children has been recommended and the price of the Bronze package has been reduced to reflect the benchmarking information.

All these changes will be reflected in the fees and charges for the Zoo which will be brought to committee in the autumn. The new prices will be effective from April 2014 however the use of previously agreed delegated authority from the Director may be required for any special promotions and in particular to launch the new basic package in time for the Christmas period. A review of membership packages is also underway and will be included in the fees and charges report.

Human Resources

The adoption scheme is overseen by the Zoo's commercial and marketing team and there are no additional human resource needs following the review.

4. **Recommendations**

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to approve the new adoption packages”

The Committee adopted the recommendation and endorsed the associated schedule of charges.

Review of Creche Provision

The Committee agreed to defer, until its meeting on 14th November, consideration of a report on the Department's Review of Crèche Provision to enable further information to be provided.

Belfast Community Sports Development Network

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 **Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 12 February 2009 the Committee supported an application for funding to Sport NI to participate in the

Active Communities Programme. This was successful and the programme has been running since 2011.

- 1.2 Active Communities is an investment programme delivered by Sport NI that seeks to employ, deploy and train a network of full time and part time sports coaches and leaders to deliver activities in community and club settings across Northern Ireland, with a view to increasing participation in sport and physical recreation, especially among underrepresented groups.
- 1.3 A package of funding and business a plan was put together to support BCSDN (Belfast Community Sports Development Network) as the lead delivery partner for Sport NI's Active Communities programme under the auspices of the Active Belfast Consortium (ABC).
- 1.4 The Committee gave approval for the Director of Parks and Leisure, in consultation with the Chair of Parks and Leisure, to agree the Council's contribution to the overall package of funding up to a maximum of £50,000 per annum.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 As lead partner Belfast City Council is responsible for the management of the project including monitoring and evaluation and managing the overall investment in the project by all consortium members.

In keeping with this effective governance of the project a Value for Money Audit was commissioned in May 2013 to:

- review the extent to which BCSDN is complying with the terms of the contract; and to review the value for money provided by the contracted service.
- 2.2 Significant levels of inconsistencies and areas of non-compliance, which could lead to the potential for irregularities, were identified through the review. In particular there were issues with:
 - 35% of targets per the ABC Action Plan Report 2012/13 were not achieved
 - Delivery of the programme has become less cost effective in 2012/13 compared to 2011/12 as the cost per new participant has increased from £20 to £22
 - BCSDN is not compliant with BCC requirements to deliver the Active Communities Programme consistently across Belfast
 - Active Communities Programme does not appear to be contributing more than the minimum requirements

of the school curriculum. This is not compliant with the strategic aims of the Active Communities programme to contribute added value to schools.

- Only 52% of coaches achieved the target of 14.5 coaching hours per week. In our opinion this is an unsatisfactory level of performance
- 54% of the data contained errors; this is an unsatisfactory level of compliance and calls into question the reliability of the AC Database for performance monitoring.
- When the cost per participant is adjusted for the 54% error rate, cost per new participant increases to £47, which is above the benchmark figure of £30, thereby indicating that BCSDN does not provide value for money.

- 2.3 The report has been shared with the Board of BCSDN and officers will engage with BCSDN on the findings of the VFM Audit recommendations and to consider any proposals that they have regarding the issues raised. BCSDN have now provided an initial view of the findings of the audit.

In addition the audit indicates that this is an appropriate time to review the options for future delivery and have recommended that an options report be prepared, considering the cost, benefits and risks associated with the options currently available to the Council. They suggest that this should include consideration of:

- The status quo
- Bring in-house maintaining the delivery partner structure
- Bring in-house
- Alternative provider

3 Resource Implications

An annual contribution of £50k has been provided for in 2013/14 and a decision will be required on the commitment to the project going forward.

Currently the Director chairs the consortium and the Leisure Development Manager and his team manage the contract with BCSDN.

4 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to agree that officers engage with BCSDN on the development of an improvement plan and that a review of the options for the future delivery be undertaken with

a report being prepared for a future meeting of the Committee.”

After discussion, during which a number of Members stressed that the Department should seek to monitor closely the performance and compliance figures reported in respect of the Programme, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Tendering Exercises

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

<u>Tender</u>	<u>Cost</u>
• Supply and Delivery of Lucerne Hay to the Zoo	- £16,000
• Supply and Delivery of Confectionery to the Zoo (income)	- £30,000
• Provision of Gritting Service	- £20,000

The Committee noted that the duration of each of the contracts would be for a three-year period, subject to satisfactory performance and annual review.

Cherryvale Playing Fields - Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

The Committee will recall that the Pitches strategy was formally agreed at Council in March 2012. Members are reminded that a central strand of the strategy was the need to intensify use owing to the shortfall in the number of pitches across the city. Given the lack of open space in the city and the desire to avoid using further open space for pitches, it was agreed that the construction of artificial turf pitches was the preferred method of increasing use. Members will be aware that these are suitable for greater use as opposed to the limited use of natural turf which requires recovery time between games and at the end of each playing season.

Members are reminded that Cherryvale Playing Fields were prioritised as part of the evaluation process based on an assessment matrix agreed by Committee. This process took into account several factors one of which was partnership funding. In this case there had been an offer of funding from GAA to help improve provision for GAA on a number of sites across the city, one of which was Cherryvale Playing Fields. The Committee will recall that at its meeting in April 2013 it noted the approach with GAA and agreed that Officers continue to meet with the GAA in order to reach agreement.

In essence, Officers were tasked to deliver a 3rd generation artificial turf pitch in Cherryvale Playing fields.

During the past year there has been a series of meetings between Council Officers and representatives from GAA with the aim of agreeing a scheme layout. This was proved to be challenging owing to the constraints of Cherryvale itself and the use of the facility by other sporting codes, including rugby and association football. Whilst Cherryvale is designated as Playing Fields, the facility also contains a children's playground and is regularly used by dog walkers, joggers etc.

A number of options have been examined with a view to minimising the impact on the playing fields and the detriment to each of the sporting codes and other users. The main options are set out below. Members will note that all of the options contain an artificial turf pitch which was the agreed position approved by Committee.

Option 1 – Replace existing GAA natural turf to 3G

Disadvantages

1. GAA will lose an existing grass pitch
2. Some residents have voiced concerns re: additional use, lighting and noise
3. Some non-sports affiliated users have expressed concern that use of the playing fields will be restricted owing to the inclusion of fencing; and
4. Funding from GAA may be at risk.

Advantages

1. This would intensify use;
2. There would be no detriment to rugby or soccer;
3. Lighting and noise would be further removed from the immediate vicinity of the residents.

Option 2 – Proposed Agreed Option from Sporting Codes

Disadvantages

1. There is detriment to rugby, soccer and GAA;
2. Some residents have voiced concerns against additional use, lighting and noise;
3. Some non sports affiliated users have expressed concern that use of the playing fields will be restricted owing to the inclusion of fencing.

Advantages

1. GAA will retain the existing grass pitch;
2. All sporting codes will gain use of the artificial turf pitch through a pre-agreed management plan; and
3. Artificial turf pitch will permit intensification of use.

Option 3 – Reduced Scale Artificial Turf Pitch

Disadvantages

1. A more limited artificial turf pitch will not meet the needs of GAA;
2. Some residents have voiced concerns against additional use, lighting and noise; and
3. Some non sports affiliated users have expressed concern that use of the playing fields will be restricted owing to the inclusion of fencing

Advantages

1. There will be intensification of use; and
2. There is no detriment to rugby or soccer.

Discussions have been widened out and there have been several meetings with residents who live immediately adjacent to the park as well as users from the wider community which would include dog walkers. A group of residents and other non sports affiliated users of the playing fields have expressed concern about a number of issues:

1. The lack of consultation with the residents;
2. The proposal to install a floodlit artificial pitch in the playing fields adjacent to residents accommodation with the associated increase in noise and light levels and increased use of the facility;
3. The inclusion of fencing will restrict use of the playing fields by non sports affiliated users.

The strong view from those objecting is that they do not want any form of 3rd generation artificial turf pitch located in Cherryvale.

For this reason a 4th option is presented to Committee, this option excludes the artificial pitch.

Option 4 – Do nothing and leave site as is

Disadvantages

1. There will be no intensification of use;

2. Funding from GAA will be at risk; and
3. Sporting groups at Cherryvale are likely to object.

Advantages

1. The concerns of those residents and non sports affiliated users will have been removed.

2 Key Issues

The Committee is asked to consider the following:

1. Cherryvale is essentially playing fields;
2. Council has through the Pitches Strategy taken a decision to support local sports through increasing the capacity for use of its facility by installing artificial turf pitches, floodlighting and fencing;
3. Cherryvale, owing in part to the partnership funding, has been identified as a site;
4. Following significant discussions with sporting codes Option 2 is presented as a proposed way forward to deliver this project within the Pitches Strategy;
5. A group of residents and other non sports affiliated users have stated their opposition to the proposal owing to concerns around opening times; lighting, noise and increased use;
6. Consideration has been given to the needs of other users and a trim trail around the perimeter of the site has been added to the proposals;
7. Representatives from the residents and non sports affiliated users read out a prepared statement and asked if it could be presented to the Committee;
8. It is likely that should the members agree to the proposed option 2, there will be opposition to this in the planning process;
9. The Committee is asked to note that whilst there is opposition to the proposal not all residents are of this view and a number spoke out at the recent public meeting in support of the proposals. In addition, one of the local schools located immediately adjacent to the pitches openly supported the proposals on the basis that it provided an opportunity for the school to gain access to improved facilities in the area. The school currently has no playing field provision of its own.
10. The importance of the views of those who live immediately adjacent to our facilities and those who use them cannot be understated and it is important to address these concerns through locality sensitive management of the facility;

11. It is equally important that the development and improvement of our facilities to meet the needs of other users be progressed;
12. Officers are confident that through sensitive management of the facility the impact of the concerns can be minimised;
13. Members are asked to note that as part of the planning process Council will be required to submit ecological survey; Lux (lighting) surveys and noise surveys to satisfy planning requirements on these matters;
14. If Committee decides not to support the proposals for investment in Cherryvale and to support Option 4, consideration would be given to investing in the next sites identified through the Pitches Strategy which were Northlink Playing Fields and Boucher Road Playing Fields.

3 Resource Implications

Financial

There are no additional costs at this time.

Human Resources

There are no additional human resource implications at this time.

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 its contents; to consider in particular the concerns highlighted in the report and to direct officers to the preferred approach."

The Assistant Director outlined the principal aspects of the report and provided an overview of the consultation exercises which had been undertaken by the Department in respect of the proposals. A number of Members indicated that they had been contacted by residents living with the vicinity of the Playing Fields, particularly from Knock Eden Park, who had requested that further consultations be undertaken. A further Member suggested that, prior to any decision being taken by the Committee, it would be prudent to undertake a site visit to the Playing Fields and, given the localised nature of the objections, to extend an invitation to Members representing the Laganbank District Electoral Area to attend that visit also.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to defer, until its meeting on 14th November, consideration of the matter to enable a site visit, to which Members

representing the Laganbank District Electoral Area would be invited to attend, to be held on Saturday, 19th October at 10.00 a.m.

It was agreed further that deputations, primarily from residents from Knock Eden Park, would be received by the Committee at a special meeting to be held in the Lavery Room on Tuesday, 5th November at 4.30 p.m., prior to any decision being taken in respect of the proposals.

Environmental Improvement Scheme - Lower Shankill

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1. Relevant Background Information

The Committee is asked to note that Officials from the Department for Social Development have met with Council Officers to update them on proposals to undertake a significant environmental improvement scheme in the Lower Shankill. The indicative cost of the scheme at this time is in the region of £1.8m which will be met by the Department.

Discussions are ongoing between the Housing Executive and the Roads Service, each organisation owns part of the land, although the Housing Executive is the main landowner in this instance.

Members are asked to note that no capital money has been committed to this project by the Department. However, it is the Department's intention to seek the necessary allocation. Preliminary discussions with Officials from the Department have intimated the cost of maintenance for 12 months, post completion, will be included.

Whilst the Housing Executive is the main land owner Officials have indicated that the Executive is not in a position to undertake the operational maintenance post completion. The Council has been asked to consider whether it is prepared to accept the transfer of land and the associated maintenance and public liability associated with the project. The Executive has indicated that low level maintenance will underpin the design.

Members will note from the attached drawing that the proposal includes a multi user games area and a playground. The remainder of the area will incorporate grassed areas, paths and some hedging. It is not intended that bedding will be included.

2. **Key Issues**

The key issue that the committee is being asked to consider at this stage is whether the Council is willing to accept the land transfer from the Housing Executive and to undertake the maintenance and public liability associated with the scheme post completion and after the first year. In considering its position the Members may wish to consider the following points:

1. The project is at its early stages in development;
2. There has been limited consultation with the community;
3. The funding from DSD has not yet been committed;
4. It is likely that it will be a further 2-3 years before the project is completed;
5. Council Officers have not yet commented on the proposals;
6. There are a number of management issues which have not been worked through such as the management of the MUGA or the need for an additional playground in area which already has three such facilities in close proximity at the Hammer, at Dover Street and at Brown Square;
7. The revenue costs are not available at present, however, a preliminary estimate based on the playground and the MUGA might be in the region of £30,000 per annum;
8. It is unlikely that this work could be absorbed within the existing budget and staffing structure;

3. **Resource Implications**

Financial Implications

Whilst there are no capital expenditure requirements the initial estimated revenue cost may be the region of £30,000 per annum, subject to further review.

Human Resource Implications

Consideration will be required to be given to the impact of this on overall workload of the current establishment.

Asset and Other implications

This will increase the Council's asset holding and will also increase the council's liability.

From a community perspective this project will improve the aesthetic appearance of the area and minimise the potential for

anti social behaviour through incorporating secure by design principles.

4. **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

There are no equality or good relations implications.

5. **Recommendations**

Committee is asked to support the proposed in principle at this stage subject to:

- capital funding being secured by the Department;
- the land is transferred at nil cost to the Council and the Department meeting the cost of maintenance in the first year; and
- the details of the scheme being agreed by the Council.

The Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to the endorsement by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of the proposal to acquire the land in accordance with Standing Order 60.

Connswater Community Greenway - Bridge Naming

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 13th June, it had approved the process by which a name would be chosen for a new bridge which would link the Airport Road with the Victoria Park as part of the Connswater Community Greenway. The Assistant Director reported that the panel appointed for this purpose had shortlisted five names for consideration by means of a public vote, viz., The Island Bridge, The Victoria 'Vicky' Bridge, The Avalon Bridge, The Cranes Bridge and The Sam Thompson Bridge.

She tabled for the Committee's information the result of the vote, which had closed the previously day, and pointed out that the name The Sam Thompson Bridge had been the winner by securing 44% of the 1,441 votes cast. She added that the name The Avalon Bridge, which was in recognition of Van Morrison's 1989 album 'Avalon Sunset', had finished in second place with 29%, or 408 of the votes. The name The Victoria Bridge had received 189 votes, while The Island Bridge had finished in fourth place with 107 votes and The Cranes Bridge had received 79 of the votes cast.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the bridge be named in honour of the local playwright Sam Thompson, subject to the endorsement by the Council at its meeting on 4th November.

Business in the Community (BITC) - Community Garden

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1. **Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 **The Council received a request in July 2013 from Business in the Community (BITC) for support with the development of a**

new community garden on the Albertbridge Road, as part of a cross-community growing project adjacent to a key interface area.

- 1.2 BITC is a not for profit membership body working with private and public sector organisations to address local community and wider sustainability issues in Northern Ireland. Belfast City Council has engaged in a range of activities with BITC over several years and is currently a BITC member organisation.
- 1.3 In 2012, BITC applied to Biffa Award, the Landfill Communities Fund distributor, for funding to support a new community garden project. BITC has been offered a £44,000 grant, (to which BITC has already made a 10% match funding contribution) by Biffa Award, subject to securing full planning permission by 30 September 2013. To date, a landscape architect has been engaged, outline design proposals for a garden with costings have been prepared and a Phase 1 Contaminated Land Survey completed. The proposals have now received full planning permission.
- 1.4 In summary, the project will do the following:
 - Convert part of a car park adjacent to BITC's offices, located on Albertbridge Road between Cluan Place and Paulett Avenue, to a community garden. The site is owned by BT (BITC's landlords) who have already formally given permission for the project. The community garden will exist on approximately half of the 800m² site, whilst the remainder of the site will retain a number of parking spaces.
 - The plan retains nine BT parking spaces which is in agreement with their requirements (all of the current spaces are for BT's use rather than public parking).
 - Engage the local community in planning, development, maintenance and ongoing use of the garden – as a resource for programmed cross-community horticultural activities, as a means of improving local health and well-being, and as a shared space for relaxation and play, and interaction between local residents;
 - Provide an opportunity to enhance biodiversity in the area, integrating native species of trees, grass and shrubs, and using bird and bat boxes to encourage wildlife to the garden; and
 - Contribute to regeneration efforts in an area of low social and economic wealth, acting as a regeneration catalyst for the Albertbridge Road in

line with current work on the Newtownards Road and the Connswater Community Greenway.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The aims of the project are in line with Growing Communities Strategy 2012 - 2022. In particular the project closely aligns with the following strategic objectives:

- To support healthier lifestyles by providing growing opportunities to people of all ages;
- To support and develop communities by building and encouraging ownership of and pride in the city's growing spaces;
- To work to support environmental sustainability by ensuring that growing spaces and activities contribute positively to the local environment and support the attainment of sustainable development targets set for local government; and
- To engage the wider community through inclusiveness in the development of shared growing spaces.

2.2 Throughout the process so far, BITC has engaged with, and secured the support of, the local community and stakeholders, including the following processes:

- Face to face consultation - with a range of stakeholders including representatives from the following: Belfast City Council Parks and Leisure Department, Department for Social Development, Connswater Community Greenway, East Belfast Partnership, East Belfast Community Development Agency, East Belfast Mission; Community Change, East Belfast Sure Start Centre, PSNI and local political representatives.
- A questionnaire survey - of local businesses, organisations and community groups (20 out of 30 questionnaires issued were completed) with the following results:
 - 100% of the organisations and individuals said that they would support the project;
 - No one indicated that they would not be interested in using the park;
 - 40% said they would use it monthly;
 - 40% said they would use it weekly;
 - 20% said they would use it daily; and
 - 95% said they would like to be updated on the project.

- 2.4 It is recognised that taking on responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of a new asset by the Council is likely to be unsustainable. Based on the outline design discussed with BITC, it is suggested that a sustainable option would be for the Council to assist for an initial period by developing the necessary local knowledge and skills to allow ongoing maintenance of the garden by its users. It is proposed that, through the Council's current contract with The Conservation Volunteers for community growing facilitation, in kind support is provided for a period of one year, to a maximum value of £3000, working alongside BITC and one or more nominated garden users through a programme of facilitated horticultural and community engagement activities.
- 2.5 It is proposed that the development of the garden will be led initially by a BITC project team working in conjunction with a Community Garden Action Group (CGAG) who will move forward with the garden's maintenance and ongoing management. It is proposed that the CGAG will comprise representatives from the local community stakeholder groups as well as individual residents of Cluan Place and the local environs.
- 2.6 BITC will conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the project in order to ensure that any support provided contributes to the aims of the Growing Communities Strategy, appropriate evaluation measures will be agreed with BITC.
- 2.7 It is expected that the project will begin garden construction on October of this year aiming to be completed by March 2014, during which time a programme of community engagement and activity planning will be undertaken.

3. Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

In-kind support would be provided to the value of £3000 maximum. This is in keeping with the level of support which may be allocated by officers to individual groups through the Growing Communities Strategy.

It is expected that financial support to the value of £3600 would be allocated from an allowance made in existing revenue budgets. This is to meet the additional unforeseen cost for planning fees, professional design fees and survey fees.

3.2 Human Resources

No requirement for officer time additional to that already allocated to managing the contract with The Conservation Volunteers is expected. BITC project team working in partnership with a CGAG will manage the community engagement and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the project.

3.3 Asset and Other Implications

The Council's involvement with the community garden would be for a limited period in a facilitation role, in line with the aims of the Growing Communities Strategy; the physical asset would remain under external ownership, management and public liability insurance; however it would contribute to the resources available to the residents of Belfast in line with the Council's wider aims and objectives.

4. Equality and good relations implications

4.1 There are no implications at this stage. However, equality and good relations factors will be taken into account in any activities delivered at the community garden or through the project.

4.2 The proposed project has been planned with cross community consultation and involvement and will meet the relevant requirements placed upon it by the Government's Landfill Community Fund scheme.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to –

1. approve BITC's request for Council support for the community garden project, and
2. approve that officers provide BITC with in kind support to a maximum value of £3,000 and financial support to a maximum value £3,600, subject to BITC through monitoring and evaluation satisfying criteria to adhere to the Council's Growing Communities Strategy,
3. A legal agreement is drawn up to support the arrangements."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Active Belfast - Update

The Director submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that the Council is currently leading on the development of the Active Belfast approach, as part the Belfast Strategic Partnerships work to address inequalities within the city.

The Active Belfast approach is also a key strand of the Council’s Leisure Transformation Programme, providing significant opportunities to work collaboratively with a range of partners, with the outcome of improving the health and wellbeing of people in Belfast.

At the meeting of the Parks and Leisure Committee on Thursday 12 April 2012, the Committee agreed to allocate match funding of £90,000, (£70,000 from Council’s thematic budget and £20,000 from the Parks and Leisure revenue budget) towards the Active Belfast Investment Fund. Similar allowance was made in the 2013/14 revenue estimates.

This report summarises the work completed between April 2012 and March 2013, including outputs of the Active Belfast Investment Fund and identifies for Members several priority areas for the development of Active Belfast over the next period.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Active Belfast Investment Fund

A total of 33 projects received support from the Active Belfast Investment Fund in the financial year 2012/2013. The projects ranged across the priority areas of play, travel, schools and workplaces.

More than 9,600 people directly benefited from activities delivered through the Active Belfast Investment Fund with many others indirectly benefiting as a result of increasing community capacity through the development of 255 people as physical activity leaders and champions across the city and through the investment in new equipment for community based facilities.

2.2 Active Outdoors

Supported by the Public Health Agency (PHA) through Active Belfast, council have installed outdoor fitness equipment in 8 parks across the city. This equipment has increased the opportunities to be active which are available to park users.

Work is currently underway to develop coach-led programmes to promote the all year round use of the equipment.

2.3 Physical Activity Referral Programmes

Physical Activity Referral Programmes (PAR) are a key area of regional work for our partners in the PHA. Through the Active Belfast approach additional support for this work has been secured through both Sport NI (£132,000) and the Local Commissioning Group (£45,000).

This additional support has allowed for the creation of 7 full time equivalent posted dedicated to the improvement of PAR Programmes across the city. This has allowed for work to be undertaken in supporting people recovering from, and living with a range of conditions including coronary heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes and cancer.

2.4 Community awareness programmes

A range of community awareness programmes have been delivered to increase the understanding of what being active means and to raise the profile of the Active Belfast approach. These have included programmes targeting sedentary women, young children and their parents and people experiencing low levels of mental health. In total more than 500 people have take part in these programmes.

2.5 Priorities for developing the Active Belfast approach

The Active Belfast Partners have identified the following key actions for the development of the Active Belfast approach:

- the development of an Active Travel action plan for the city, which will be one of the BSP's key demonstration projects in 2014;
- the continued support for programmes targeted at under-represented groups, including the Active Belfast Investment Fund;
- the development of communication channels for the Active Belfast message, brand and programmes including a dedicated website;
- to undertake an ongoing process of mapping and scoping all physical activity opportunities available in the city;
- to develop appropriate engagement and representation with local communities.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The provision of match funding to the Active Belfast Investment Fund includes provision of £90k from the Parks and Leisure revenue budget with a further £7k required for the development of an Active Travel Action Plan for Belfast. Provision has been made in revenue budgets for these programmes of work.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that Committee note the current position regarding Active Belfast and notes the provision of funding to the work of the Active Belfast Partnership as outlined in the report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Chairman