

Parks and Leisure Committee

Thursday, 11th December, 2014

MEETING OF PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Newton (Chairman);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Hendron);
Aldermen Robinson and Rodgers;
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Convery,
Corr, Cunningham, Hanna, Kyle,
Mac Giolla Mhín, McCabe, McNamee,
Thompson and Verner.

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

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Haire, O'Donnghaile, and Mullan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 16th October 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 November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Amateur Boxing Strategy - Start-Up Club Funding

The Committee considered further the minute of the meeting of 9th September, under the heading "Amateur Boxing Strategy - Start-up Club Funding", which, at the request of Alderman Stoker, and with the permission of the Council, at its meeting on 1st October, had been referred back to the Committee for further consideration. A copy of the minute in that regard is set out:

"1 Background Information

1.1 In October 2012, the Committee approved the draft budget and workplan for the Amateur Boxing Strategy 2012-2022.

1.2 Members will be aware that within the Strategy, under the theme of Club support and development, an action of providing

start-up funding to allow for the development of new clubs across the city was included.

- 1.3** *At its meeting in June 2014 Committee agreed to revisions to the budget area with £10,000 per annum allocated to support and develop new clubs. It was agreed that a further report would be brought to Committee to agree the mechanism and guidelines in providing this support.*

2 *Key Issues and Update*

- 2.1** *The support and development of new clubs complementing existing clubs especially in under-represented areas such as East and South Belfast will be an essential element in the successful legacy of the Amateur Boxing Strategy and key to providing a citywide service to all who may wish to enter the sport.*
- 2.2** *The programmes being delivered by our Boxing coaches and clubs citywide are increasing the demand for coaching provision and in-turn this will raise the demand for new clubs especially in areas of underrepresentation such as East and South Belfast. It is anticipated that a number of new club start-up requests for support will be received annually. The programme is actively promoting the sport through after schools activities across the city in liaison with existing clubs in each area.*
- 2.3** *Recently we have received enquiries for new club start-up support from potential clubs in Oldpark and on the Upper Ormeau Rd. A further enquiry has been received from a Castlereagh Boxing club interested in relocating to the Braniel area. More enquiries are anticipated to be received as amateur boxing develops as a mainstream sport citywide and as such an adopted start-up club fund and criteria for funding is required. A fund of £2500 per applicant has been allocated with £10,000 for new start-up grants in the current financial year.*
- 2.4** *The application form for funding has been developed by the Steering Group for new club support funding. Funding will be allocated on a first come first serve basis. The Steering Group following the support of the Sports Development Officer will assess the applications received within the specified guidelines for funding. The Director of Parks and Leisure will approve the proposed grants to new clubs under delegated authority as is currently the process for Support for Sport grants.*

2.5 *The table below indicates the proposed breakdown of new club funding with some examples of anticipated application requests*

<i>Item detail</i>	<i>Available Funding</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Coach Education</i>	<i>£500</i>	<i>Coaching course associated to delivery of Boxing in club. Eg Level 1 /2 /1 star courses</i>
<i>Equipment</i>	<i>£1000</i>	<i>Equipment deemed suitability by IABA for the delivery of Boxing in a club environment</i>
<i>Facility Development</i>	<i>£500</i>	<i>Support for other club goods or equipment necessary for delivery</i>
<i>Other misc</i>	<i>£500</i>	<i>Other items or services required for clubs set up.</i>
<i>Total available</i>	<i>£2500(max)</i>	

2.6 *The following criteria have been recommended by the Steering Group in order to ensure best practice adherence:*

- 1. Applicants must submit a letter/email of support from County Board or higher within boxing along with this application.*
- 2. Provide evidence of governance documents (constitution and assorted policies) plus sign-up to Clubmark via IABA and / or BCC prior to acceptance of application.*
- 3. Identify their catchment area for club and prove that other clubs are not necessarily affected by the new clubs establishment.*
- 4. Not be established more than 6 months.*
- 5. Not be a commercial venture of any nature.*
- 6. Be established as a Boxing club (not MMA or other activities) and be affiliated to IABA or a recognised Nation GB).*

3 Programme Plan and Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The budget for the Amateur Boxing Strategy has been agreed.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 *There are no equality and good relations impacts from this grant scheme*

5 Recommendations

5.1 *That Members note the content of this report with regard to the current implementation of the Amateur Boxing Strategy 2012-2022.*

5.2 *The Committee is asked to agree the proposed mechanism and guidelines for allocation of grants up to £2500 towards the support of new clubs.*

In the absence of Alderman Stoker, the Director outlined the issues which he [Alderman Stoker] had identified in respect of the start-up funding, specifically the stipulations regarding club affiliations.

The Committee re-affirmed its decision of 9th September.

Evaluation of Summer Camps

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1. Background Information

In June 2014, the Committee approved four environmental based youth development camps across the City. The item was discussed at July 2014 Council meeting and an evaluation report was requested after the completion of the camps. The camps took place during July and August 2014. The camps were aimed at various age groups with a maximum of 15 per camp and run over 5 days. Each camp had the following objectives:

- To develop skills and knowledge of the local environment**
- To develop personal skills and complete different adventurous activities**
- To build new relationships, both within a team environment and across the City.**

Each camp had different aspects and projects based both on local opportunities and options to visit and experience other parts of the City and develop and learn new skills. A typical day of activity included a walk through a forest or up a glen or mountain and an opportunity to learn new skills such as compass reading, basic navigation, lunch on a mountainside, learning about the local fauna and the natural local history.

The anticipated benefits of the youth development camp were:

- Increased participation in leisure activities and assist in reducing childhood obesity;
- Reduced potential of anti social/community behaviour by engaging and educating the youths of Belfast on the positives that our parks and open spaces have to offer;
- Increased awareness of our youth on the importance of enhancing biodiversity in our city and surrounding area;
- Increased capacity for participants as 'Young leaders' by developing leadership skills, decision making skills, team working, skills and hazard awareness/avoidance skills.

2. Key Issues

An independent evaluation report was commissioned and a report was submitted to the department in October 2014. The report, provides an overview of how the aims and objectives of this unique style of Environmental Youth Development Programme were met.

Each of the camps had a range of objectives and outcomes because they were based in different parks of the city with different age ranges of children/youths, facilities, volunteers etc. As a pilot, the Council worked through a number of avenues to recruit participants to the programme, including BELB's Area Youth Projects, some schools and established youth providers.

The report concludes that all of the programme's original aims were met, and in particular highlighted that new relationships were built between Parks staff and young people and relationships restored, where there had been conflict and anti social behaviour. Young park users are now on first name terms with park attendants, wardens, supervisors and managers. Some quotes from young people include:

- I really enjoyed the parkies being with us; nicest men ever; good banter off them; they have a hard job getting people out of the park at closing time.
- The young people in East picked up on the enthusiasm of the Outreach Manager; she communicated her love of the job to them.
- I met the park wardens; I thought they would have been boring but they're not.
- It was good for the young people to see a woman in the role of Community Park Supervisor in South Belfast; she was a good role model'

The report also indicates there are a large number of positive outcomes from the camps and highlighted a number of key impacts:

- Young people developed new interests, new knowledge of things to do in parks and open spaces including cycling, woodwork, pond dipping, walking, photography
- Young people reported the programme changed their attitude to park staff and changed their awareness of and increased sense of belonging in parks alongside other park users.
- Young people gained an interest in and understanding of the natural environment which is present on the doorstep – flowers, trees, birds, pond life.
- In terms of team-building and leadership skills, the young people learnt to work as a team and gained experience and training as youth mentors, as well as hazard awareness / avoidance skills.

The report makes 9 recommendations including:

1. Train and up-skill Parks Staff. The enthusiasm and professionalism of Parks Department staff, including attendants and wardens, as demonstrated by their success in engaging with young people and their passion for the natural environment, should be harnessed and developed through a citywide programme of training and up-skilling
2. Sustain the learning. The learning impacts of the youth development camps should be sustained. Outreach Managers have a range of ideas and plans for activities at school holidays and weekends to sustain and build on the impact of the learning achieved through the camps. These include (a) Saturday clubs enabling pathways and progression such as Wilderness Clubs, Green Teenz, Junior Ranger Corps and Conservation Corps.
3. Widen access to the camp experience. Ways of resourcing more young people to benefit from the camp experience should be identified such as School holiday camps throughout the year and increasing the number of summer camps in each area.
4. Ensure Council gets recognition. The concept of the city summer camp should be promoted, ensuring that Belfast City Council, and their partners, are recognised for this initiative. The Council should publicise the

5. uniqueness of their camps,' run by your Council, in your local area in the green spaces on your doorstep, by your local Council workers'.
6. Recruitment. Recruitment of young people should be started in May/ June.

The implementation of the camp across the city demonstrated that the model for the camps is flexible. The same aims and benefits can be achieved in different local contexts and with young people from a range of backgrounds, interests, ages and confidence.

3. **Resource Implications**

Each of the 4 camps had different requirements based on local area needs. As indicated in the report the total cost of the camps was £20,589. This is lower than the estimated amount of £28,000 referred to in the June 2014 report and, as stated in the evaluation report, some of the equipment purchased has already been used for other groups and activities and will continue to be 'recycled' for any further activities or camps.

4. **Equality Implications**

There are no equality implications concerning this report.

5. **Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to note the evaluation report and authorise officers to develop the recommendations contained within the report and in particular to explore options to widen access for younger people to this unique style of Environmental Youth Camp whilst taking into account any financial implications.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Lagan Valley Regional Park Funding

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1. **Background Information**

The Committee is reminded that at its meeting on 6 December 2012 approval was given to provide an annual grant of £26,360 to £27,370 to Lagan Valley Regional Park for the period April 2013 until March 2016. Members will be aware that LVRP is a partnership between Belfast City Council, Castlereagh Borough Council, Lisburn City Council, Department of Culture Arts & Leisure and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. Belfast

City Council has been one of the main partner funding organisations for LVRP since its inception in 1967.

The Council has benefited significantly from the work of LVRP through organised events, use of LVRP Rangers, additional signage, community engagement; education and from other partnerships developed through the LVRP.

2. Key Issues

The Review of Public Administration has resulted in the Regional Park funding moving from a split between three councils (Belfast City Council, Castlereagh Borough Council and Lisburn City Council) to a split between two Councils: Belfast City Council and the new Lisburn and Castlereagh Council. A request for BCC to increase its level of funding from £27,370 to £41,055 has been received. This contribution would represent an increase from 18% of the overall costs and to 27% for 2015/16.

LVRP have also highlighted that other funding streams are potentially under threat due to central government cuts; i.e. from the NIEA funding which is currently 34% of the overall contribution. They have highlighted that if this funding is cut by 50% or cut completely the funding requirement requested from the Council would increase to 36% and potentially up to 44%.

This core funding to LVRP will help deliver a number of key projects that will complement and support Belfast City Council including:

- complete a strategic review of the Regional Park and update the Management Plan for the next five years including sustaining the legacy of the Lagan-scape
- organising and delivering an events programme offering a broad range of interests and activities that will enhance our own Council events' programme
- continue to provide a Ranger Service along the towpath which complements and supports our parks that lie within the boundary of LVRP and develop a towpath initiative focusing on issues raised by park users
- continue to engage the local community in projects in the Park encouraging them to manage their environment as well as the associated physical and mental health benefits.

Funding the LVRP 2015/16 will support the work being done by the Council and will enhance many other areas of work including biodiversity, education, community engagement, countryside recreation and promotional activities. If the Committee agrees to this request, it will be necessary to review and update the Funding Agreement between the Council and LVRP. However the future arrangements for the partnership will have to be reviewed in line with the funding available and the key activities aligned to the resources available. The long term funding of the partnership may not be sustainable and BCC should assess the merits of continuing in this partnership against the operational requirements of the areas transferring that fall within this arrangement.

3. Resource Implications

Financial

Currently there is an amount of £27,370 within the departmental estimates for 2015/2016 which are yet to be approved. However due to the impact of Local Government reform an increased amount of £41,055 has been requested which has not been provided for in the estimates. The report highlights that this level of funding could be required to be increased to up to £66,555 depending on other funding available. This level of funding is not currently available nor would it be sustainable for the department.

4. Equality and Good Relations Implications

None

5. Recommendations

Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and to agree the level of funding that should be provided for 2015/16 for the LVRP subject to the relevant agreements being amended where necessary.”

The Committee affirmed its decision of 6th December, 2012, and agreed that £27,370 be allocated to the LVRP for the financial year 2015/2016.

Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland

The Committee considered two requests for financial assistance which had been received from Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI).

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to grant a sum of £9,000 to ORNI) as the Council’s contribution to assist it in the management of the Mountain Bike Trail at the Barnett Demesne; and grants financial support in the sum of £5,000 to enable ORNI to market and support the Mountain Bike Trails and Dirt Jumps at the Barnett Demesne and at the Mary Peters Track.

Bereavement Services

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1. Background Information

Following a recent review of Bereavement Services carried out independently by the Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management (ICCM), an improvement programme has been developed to improve operational practices in line with industry best practice and to focus more strategically on future development. This paper focuses on one element of the operational reviews which is the disposal of metals from cremated remains. A further report on the improvement programme will be presented to committee in early 2015.

Operational Reviews - Recycling of metals from cremations

Metals remains from the cremation process are principally those used in orthopaedic implants and ferrous metal used within the construction of a coffin. Precious metals, which may be left with the deceased prior to cremation, melt during the cremation process and are dispersed throughout the remains within the cremator and are reduced to tiny granules. Precious metals therefore cannot be recovered and returned to the family so it is recommended that funeral directors advise families to remove jewellery prior to the final closure of the coffin. There may also be some other small residues of non-precious metals remaining from clothing and personal effects with the deceased.

Previously the practice at the City of Belfast Crematorium was that metal implants along with remaining ferrous metals from the construction of the coffin were removed from the cremated remains and stored in a container until there was sufficient quantity to be buried in the grounds at Roselawn - to the detriment of the environment.

Since 2010 the City of Belfast Crematorium as a corporate member of the Institute of Crematorium and Cemetery Management (ICCM) has recycled these recovered metals by arranging for an approved provider (OrthoMetals) to collect the metal. OrthoMetals sorts, smelts and recycles the metal with the proceeds after costs going back to ICCM for distribution to nominated death related charities. The Council receives no

funding from this arrangement. Since starting the scheme in 2010 metals collected from the Council has resulted in donations of approximately £7,000 per annum to charity.

2. **Key Issues**

As part of the review of the disposal of metals from cremations a new process will be introduced to seek acknowledgement of understanding that any metal retrieved from remains will be recycled. The bereaved families should be made fully aware of the sensitive recycling of these metals rather than their disposal in the grounds of the crematorium. The metals can be returned to the family if they so wish but this would be considered an exceptional request.

In addition as part of this scheme the money raised from the recycling is donated by the cremation authority if they so wish to a charity of their choice. It is proposed that further consideration is given to the process for selecting a charity or charities and that a further paper is brought to committee outlining options and recommendations. Council officers will work with the National Association of Funeral Directors regarding the proposed changes to forms and the information about recycling of metals to be made available to bereaved families.

3. **Resource Implications**

No resource implications at this stage.

4. **Equality Implications**

No equality implications at this stage.

5. **Recommendations**

- to note the development of the Bereavement Services Improvement Programme
- to agree to continue the arrangement with ICCM for the collection of metals from cremations and subsequent donations to charities
- to note that a further report will be brought to committee on the process for donations to charities.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Donations to Societies and Hospitality

The Director reminded the Committee that the Department had hosted the Spring and Autumn Fairs in 2014 and that 26,000 visitors had attended those events. He reported that, in previous years, the Committee had granted a small donation to each of the societies which had assisted in the organisation of the shows in recognition of their support. He recommended, therefore, that a donation of £100 be made to each of the following organisations in 2015:

- Friends of Bonsai
- Northern Ireland Daffodil Group
- Belfast and District Beekeepers' Association
- Belfast Wine Makers' Circle
- British Cactus and Succulent Society
- Federation of Women's Institutes of Northern Ireland
- Irish Fuchsia and Pelargonium Society
- North of Ireland Dahlia Society
- Northern Ireland Bonsai Society
- Northern Ireland Group of Flower Arrangement Societies
- Northern Ireland Orchid Society
- Northern Ireland Vegetable Association
- Rose Society of Northern Ireland
- Ulster Alpine Garden Society

In addition, the Director was granted approval to provide appropriate hospitality, to a maximum of £7,600, at a range of associated meetings and events with key stakeholders during 2015.

Cliftonville FC - New Grandstand

The Committee was advised that the Council had met with representatives from the Cliftonville Football Club regarding its proposals to redevelop the existing South Stand at Solitude, and had discussed the possible development of an adjacent woodland area within the Waterworks Park, which would be subject to a successful funding application to the Department for Culture Arts and Leisure. The Assistant Director outlined the possible implications to the Council of such a development, which included the possible use of the Council-owned laneway to the rear of Solitude during the construction phase, and indicated that the Committee would be updated as the project developed.

The Committee noted that the information which had been provided.

Drumglass Park - Refurbishment Update

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update on the enhancement works which were ongoing at the Drumglass Park.

Development of Land at Slievegallion Drive

The Committee considered the following report:

“1. Background Information

The Committee is reminded that at its meeting in June 2013 it received a report outlining a proposal from De La Salle College in West Belfast to construct an artificial turf pitch and smaller pitch and associated changing pavilion on Council land at Slievegallion Drive. The Committee agreed to officers progressing discussions with De La Salle School with a view to exploring the appropriate arrangement (including leasing options) for the development of the informal space. Discussions were to include:

- Details of the school’s business model in terms of costs and income producing capacity
- Public Access arrangements
- Partnership or leasing arrangements to ensure wider community use
- Sources of funding for the development of the site.

In March 2014 a further report was submitted which highlighted concerns by some residents regarding the proposal; these concerns focused around lack of consultation by the school and the loss of open space. At the meeting it was noted that the Member of Parliament for West Belfast had indicated that he would facilitate a community consultation with a view to resolving the issues. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report to enable the member of Parliament to conclude the consultation.

In the interim, Council officers have continued to meet with representatives from the College in relation to the pitch proposal. While there are number of issues that require further discussion it is necessary to establish a position at this time to enable progress to be made within the timescales for the project.

2. Key Issues

Members are asked to note the following key points:

- The College has approximately 1,100 pupils aged 11-18 years and has inadequate space to provide for sporting activities and opportunities;
- Whilst the Council is sympathetic to this situation it is not sufficient in itself to warrant the transfer of the land

and it is primarily a matter for the Department and the Board to address;

- However, this location has been subject to quite serious anti social behaviour over the years;
- The Council has no plans to refurbish the site and bring it into productive use; this would require significant capital investment on the part of the council;
- By investing in the asset and bringing positive interventions and programming to the site there is the possibility that the site can be reclaimed and the level of anti social behaviour reduced;

The College is currently working to bring to a conclusion to following:

- The business case and supporting Sports Development Plan, to include wider community use;
- Securing the necessary funding to deliver the scheme
- Securing planning consent and other statutory approvals; and
- Agreement around lease arrangements.

There are a number of technical issues to be resolved in relation to the management and maintenance of shared areas; car parking; entrance routes etc. However, the main issue to be resolved relates to the area of land that is outside of the pitch proposal. It has been proposed that this area be landscaped with a view to enabling its use by residents. A preliminary scheme has been prepared as part of the College's proposal at an estimated cost of £110,000; however, this cost is subject to review and further scrutiny. The Department has advised that as this outside of the pitch proposal it is not able to fund the works. The Department has, through its draft Heads of Agreement proposal, asked that the Council undertake this work. It is suggested that a portion of the fee for the land be used to fund this work.

Should members be minded to agree to the landscaping of the area outside the pitch proposal, it is proposed that the Council's Landscape Planning and Development Unit undertake the design element of the work with a view to ensure that the scheme reflects similar Council developments and to take into account cost considerations.

The Council has been advised by the College that a consultation exercise has been carried out in the immediate vicinity of the open space. The survey indicates that there is significant support for the development of the pitch and there is some opposition to it. We have been advised by the College

representatives that they had hosted a public meeting on 23 October 2013 and propose to hold further meetings on 15/16 December 2014 to enable the public to view the revised proposal prior to submission of a planning application. We have also been advised that the Member of Parliament for West Belfast has also met with both those who support the proposal and those who are opposed to it. However, we believe that no agreement was reached and that there remain those opposed to the development.

A planning application is yet to be submitted and at that time the issue around the loss of open space can be raised in representation to the Planning Service together with other issues of concern which residents may have.

3. **Resource Implications**

Financial Implications

This report has no financial implications at this time, however, there may be capital implications at a future date.

Resource Implications

There are no additional human resource implications at this time; the work on the project will be carried out within existing resources.

4. **Equality Implications**

There are no equality implications

5. **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee agrees that:

1. Officers continue to meet with the College representatives to progress the matter;
2. Agree in principle to the leasing of the land subject to obtaining the necessary statutory approvals; securing the funding and reaching agreement with Council Officers regarding terms and conditions including a community use clause;
3. Agree to make recommendation to Strategic Policy and Resources that the Council fund the refurbishment of the land outside of the pitch proposal using the land fee; and that the Landscape Planning and Development Unit be tasked to undertake the design element of this work.

During discussion, a Member made the point that the Council should seek to undertake further consultation with local residents prior to it adopting the recommendations as set out to ensure that all of the conflicting views in respect to the proposal had been ascertained.

Moved by Councillor Attwood,
Seconded by Councillor Convery,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the report to enable officers of the Council to undertake further consultation with local residents to ascertain all of the relevant local viewpoints in respect of the proposals.

On a vote by show of hands, eight Members voted for the proposal and eight against.

There being an equality of votes, the Chairman exercised his second and casting vote in favour of the proposal and it was accordingly declared carried.

Proposed Disposal of Land - Orangefield Playing Fields

The Committee agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 60, to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it would approve the disposal of approximately 54 square metres of surplus land to the owner of 116/118 Orby Drive, for the sum of £1,500, subject to the drawing up of an appropriate legal agreement by the Town Solicitor. The Committee agreed to recommend also that the Wayleave Arrangements between the Estates Management Unit and Northern Ireland Electricity in connection with the existing cable at the site be incorporated within any amended legal agreement.

Connswater Community Greenway

The Committee agreed to request that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would, in accordance with Standing Order 46, grant permission to Farrans Ltd. to erect a site compound on local land at Severn Street for the duration of its contract with the Council for the construction of Phase 2 of the Connswater Community Greenway.

Open Space at Lower Skegoneill

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting in December, 2013, it had agreed that the site of the former Skegoneill Health Centre be transferred into the Corporate Land Bank, subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. The Assistant Director outlined the situation as it pertained currently to the site and indicated that officers were examining a range of options for the future development of the site and that the Committee would be updated in due course.

Noted.

Sewer Installation at the Ormeau Park - Impact on BMX Track

The Committee noted the contents of the report which outlined a number of issues relating the installation of a storm sewer by Northern Ireland Water at the Ormeau Park which had resulted in a temporary delay in the redevelopment of the BMX Track.

Proposed Bike Docks

The Committee agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 46, to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it would grant a Licence Agreement to permit contractors working on behalf of the Lagan Valley Regional Park to access a range of locations within the Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, the Clement Wilson Park and at the Mary Peters Track to install bicycle stands and docks. It was noted that the ownership of those stands would transfer to the Council upon their successful installation.

Shankill Memorial Garden - Suicide Awareness

The Director advised the Committee that the Department has received a request from the Shankill Suicide Awareness/Prevention Group seeking a donation to assist in the erection of a plaque in the Shankill Memorial Garden to those who had committed suicide within that area. He reported that the plaque would be placed on a bench within the Garden and added that the group had requested approval to host an annual memorial event in the Gardens.

The Committee agreed to contribute a sum of £200 towards the plaque, subject to the Council approving the associated wording, and granted approval, in principle, to the Shankill Suicide Awareness/Prevention Group to host an annual memorial event.

Extension to Tender

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 10th April, it had granted approval to award a number of contracts, including that for the supply of grounds maintenance machinery, as part of the Council's planned procurement process. The Director indicated that, given the service convergence requirements under Local Government Reform, it would be necessary to extend the scope of that contract to ensure that effective maintenance could be extended to those sites which would be transferring from Lisburn and Castlereagh to Belfast on 1st April, 2015.

The Committee agreed to extend the scope of the contract for the purposes as outlined and noted that the additional cost would be approximately £25,000, provision for which had been included within the financial estimates for 2015/2016. It was noted that the matter would be considered also by the Transition Committee.

Tennent's Vital Event

The Committee granted authority for MCD to hold up to four concerts at the Boucher Road Playing Fields from early August, 2015 until early September, 2015 and in

the same period during 2016, 2017 and 2018 – with the dates to be agreed with the Council subject to satisfactory terms being established and agreed with the Director of Parks and Leisure and on conditions that:

- the event organisers resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- an appropriate legal agreement is completed, to be prepared by the Town Solicitor; and
- the event organisers meeting with all statutory requirements including entertainment licensing.

Following discussion, it was also noted that the Council would discuss with the promoters the feasibility of enhancing the hire fee for the Playing Fields and that a report in that regard would be submitted in due course.

Proposed Playground at Sliabh Dubh

The Committee considered the following report:

"1. Relevant Background Information

The Committee was reminded that, in October 2008, it had considered a report related to playground provision at 2 locations in Belfast, Eversleigh Street in East Belfast and Sliabh Dubh estate in West Belfast. The report sought authority to accept the transfer of land from DSD / Fold Housing Association respectively and to accept the ongoing management and maintenance of these facilities both completion of the works. In both cases the land was to be transferred at nil cost and the capital cost was to be incurred by the Department for Social Development.

In relation to Eversleigh Street the scheme was completed and is now a Council asset. However, the Sliabh Dubh scheme was not completed. A Planning Application had been submitted; however the contamination survey was inconclusive and left a number of issues unresolved; as a result the Planning Application was withdrawn and proposed funding from DSD was also withdrawn. The project has remained under consideration in the interim and a number of meetings with representatives from Sliabh Dubh have taken place; Fold Housing Association and the Council to attempt to move the project forward.

Fold Housing Association has received a contamination survey which has clarified the issues around ground water movement and gas dispersion. In essence, the development of a playground scheme could procure and the contamination could be remediated as part of that development.

The Council has now been asked to re-affirm its original position from October 2008 regarding the site. That position is as follows:

- BCC agrees to acquire the land at nil cost, subject to reaching agreement with Fold; and subject to the other statutory approvals being in place and external funding being secured for the delivery of the project;
- BCC agrees to support the development of the project, including planning consent and project management;
- BCC agrees to undertake the maintenance and management of the facility post completion, including adding it to its Insurance Schedule of assets;
- BCC agrees to recommend that the project be added to its capital programme at no cost to the council subject to external funding

2. Key Issues

The Committee is asked to note that historically the Council has looked sympathetically at similar requests providing the capital cost can be met by an external source. Therefore it is proposed that this approach be continued in this instance and the decision from October 2008 be reaffirmed.

There are three main issues for the Members to note:

- There is currently no funding source identified;
- The land is owned by Fold Housing Association who have indicated that they would transfer the land to the council at nil cost, although that has not been confirmed in writing;
- There is no planning approval in place.

To progress the scheme it is proposed that the previous planning application be resubmitted by BCC together with the revised contamination survey. In addition it is proposed that:

1. The land is not transferred until funding has been secured;
2. planning approval has been obtained; and
3. written confirmation from Fold HA that they will transfer the land at nil cost and meet the cost of remediation

3. Resource Implications

Financial Implications - none

5. **Recommendations**

To re-affirm its position from October 2008 and agree to:

- acquire the land at nil cost; subject to reaching an appropriate agreement with Fold Housing Association regarding the transfer of the land; the necessary statutory approvals being obtained and external funding secured; and on condition that any remediation is undertaken by Fold HA prior to construction or in the case of the remediation being undertaken as part of the construction works that the cost is met in full by Fold HA;
- undertake the development of the project, including submission for planning consent;
- undertake the maintenance and management of the facility post completion, including adding it to its Insurance Schedule of assets;
- recommend that the project be added to its capital programme at no cost to the council subject to external funding.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Patrick Carlin VC - Blue Plaque

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th October, it had granted permission to the Ulster Covenant and Historical Society to place a marker close to the site of the grave of Private Patrick Carlin V.C., which was situated in the Friar's Bush Cemetery. The Council, at its meeting on 3rd November, agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Ulster History Circle requesting that consideration be given to erecting a Blue Plaque at the site of the former cemetery at Abingdon Street, off the Donegall Road, to mark the original burial place of Private Carlin.

The Democratic Services Officer reported that the Ulster History Circle was currently considering the Council's request and he indicated that further updates in this regard would be submitted in due course.

Noted.

Chairman