



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy for the City of Belfast – Partnership Development Manager
Date:	10 April 2008
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Phil Kelly, Leisure Services Manager

Relevant Background Information

Sport Belfast is a partnership organisation established in 1999 with the key objective of promoting sport and physical activity within the city of Belfast. A number of key partner organisations make up this group including Belfast City Council, SportNI, Queens University Belfast, Belfast Education and Library Board, Belfast Community Sports Development Network, Coaching NI and WISPA.

Over the past number of years the partnership has been building the development of a citywide Physical Activity & Sports Development Strategy for the City and in 2006 Members of the Belfast City Council offered its support to the principles contained within the strategy.

The strategy encourages a close working relationship between all of the partner organisations towards the common goals of promotion of physical activity and development of sport. The partnership will ensure that this is achieved in a planned a coordinated way within available resources, targeted for optimum benefit to the citizens of Belfast.

Over this past year, the various Sport Belfast partner organisations have been working together to develop actions plans under the seven key initiatives contained within the strategy and these initiatives are:

1. Targeting schools and 3rd level institutions for promotion of physical activity and sports development
2. Building sustainable club and community sports development
3. Raising the profile of sport and physical activity in the City
4. Promotion of health and physical activity
5. Developing coaches and volunteers
6. Supporting leisure centres in working with communities to develop physical activity and sports development programmes
7. Developing pathways to improved performance

The aims of the strategy are obviously very closely aligned to those of the Council in promoting the health and wellbeing of the citizens of the city and the strategy also reflects wider compliance with for example the draft Northern Ireland Strategy for the Development of Sport and Physical Recreation.

The Strategy has also supported our bid to the Big Lottery's 'Live & Learn' fund which potentially could result in an award of £1m to the Council for the promotion of physical activity within local communities. The Council has been successful at stage one of this bidding process and our stage two application will be submitted by September 2008.

Key Issues

A key role within the Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy is the building and promotion of partnership arrangements essential to ensure delivery of the strategy's objectives. In order to meet the strategy's commitments in this area it will be necessary to establish a 3 year fixed term post to enable the required partnership development to be attained.

For a number of years, up to 2007, the Council has offered funding amounting to £15,000 per annum to Sport Belfast in support of a Projects Officer post, with the post holder being accommodated within the Leisure Services section at the Cecil Ward Building. As part of a restructuring of Sport Belfast and to enable delivery of the Strategy it is proposed to replace this Project Officer post with a 3 year fixed term Partnership Development Manager post and again it is proposed that this post holder be accommodated within Leisure Services.

In terms of funding for the proposed Partnership Development Manager post, SportNI have offered substantial additional funding for the post; however have also asked that, as the Council is the lead organisation within the strategy project, the post be line managed through Belfast City Council. The Council would also be required to make a financial contribution as in previous years to fund this post. This will be in the amount of £20,000. Council Officers would recommend support for this proposal as such an arrangement would also afford opportunities for development of wider partnership arrangements between the Parks & Leisure Department and other organisations in the promotion of sports and physical activity.

Resource Implications

Financial

It is envisaged that salary, administration and minimum programme costs associated with this post will be in the region of £40,000 per annum.

Our partners within Sport Belfast and SportNI are committed to supporting the post to the value of £20,000 per annum for the duration of the 3 year fixed term, pending approval by elected Members of equivalent funding from the Council.

The required supporting funding from the Council can be made available from within existing budgets.

Human Resources

It is proposed that this fixed term post be placed within the Leisure Development Unit of Leisure Services.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members approve the appointment of a Partnership Development Manager for a fixed term period of 3 years, pending availability of match funding from SportNI/Sport Belfast of £20,000 per annum.

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

None.

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