



Belfast City Council

Report to: Parks and Leisure Committee

Subject: **Musgrave Park Car Parking**

Date: 15 October 2009

Reporting Officer: Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure

Contact Officer: Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries
Development Manager
Ken Anderson, Estates Surveyor, Core Improvement

Relevant Background Information

The draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) contains a number of designations which relate to the preservation of Musgrave Park as open space. In its responses to dBMAP the Council raised an objection in relation to the restrictions on that portion of the park with frontage to Stockman's Way and immediately to the rear of the petrol filling station at 134/136 Stockman's Lane. The aim of the objection was to preserve the longer term asset realisation value of the portion of the park between the 'army road' and Stockman's Way.

Following a decision by the Client Services (Parks and Amenities) Sub-Committee on 10 February 2004, the Council entered into a 21 year Facility Management arrangement (dated 9 March 2006) with St Brigid's GAC, for land at Musgrave Park. The attached map (Appendix 1) shows (outlined red) the lands contained in the 2006 Agreement. St Brigid's subsequently completed development of new playing pitches within this area. As part of the development St Brigid's also sought, and were granted, planning permission to develop a car park on land which fell outside the area covered by the facility management agreement. A roughly surfaced car parking area has now been developed by the club on the portion of land between the 'army road' and Stockman's Way i.e. that portion of land upon which the Council aimed to preserve longer term asset realisation potential. No written authority or consent was sought or provided to St Brigid's GAC for development of the car park outside the boundary of the facilities management agreement.

As part of the development of facilities associated with the new playing pitches, St Brigid's GAC hope in the next few years to provide permanent changing accommodation on the site. In the interim they are also considering installation of some form of temporary changing accommodation. Subject to further study

(and potential planning approval) council officers have identified a possible location for the proposed permanent changing accommodation and associated car parking which would not conflict with the potential asset realisation as outlined above. This would involve re-location of the existing unauthorised car parking. In discussions with St Brigid's officials it is mutually agreed that the club do not require all of the lands currently contained within the boundary of the 2006 facilities management agreement. Some rationalisation of the existing facilities management boundary is anticipated following further discussions with the club.

As a stop gap measure it is proposed that the council provide St Brigid's with a short term licence agreement to cover the unauthorised car parking area and the possible provision of temporary changing accommodation (at the club's expense) thereon. The duration of this agreement would be for a maximum period of two years with detailed terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager.

Key Issues

The main issues for the Committee to consider are:

- Portion of Musgrave Park between the 'army road' and Stockman's Way identified as having some future asset realisation potential.
- Most of this area is currently used by St Brigid's GAC as unsurfaced car parking but this area falls outside St Brigid's facilities management agreement.
- Until proposals for an alternative car parking location (and potential permanent changing accommodation) are fully developed, Council officers wish to regularise St Brigid's use of the current roughly surfaced car parking through a short term licence agreement which may also facilitate the placing of temporary changing accommodation at this location.

Resource Implications

Financial

No financial implications at this stage. Potentially part financing of permanent car parking to facilitate park users as well as St Brigid's use of the site may be possibility in order to preserve any asset realisation potential on the existing temporary parking area.

Human Resources

No additional human resources required. Parks and Cemeteries, Estates Management and Legal Services resources required to take forward proposed licence agreement and consider longer term car parking and changing accommodation arrangements.

Asset and Other Implications

The purpose of the proposed arrangements is to preserve longer term asset realisation potential on a portion of land at the northern end of Musgrave Park.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to approve entering into an arrangement with St Brigid's GAC, on terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and incorporated in a suitable licence agreement to be prepared by the Director of Legal Services, to regularise use of the car parking area shown (approximately) hatched black on the attached map (Appendix 1) and to authorise the continuation of discussions with St Brigid's GAC in relation to the location etc. of longer term car parking and changing accommodation provision, subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Order 60.

Decision Tracking

A further report will be brought to Committee in 2011 regarding the licence arrangement. This report will be brought by the Estates Manager.

Key to Abbreviations

GAC Gaelic Athletic Club
dBMAP Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Map showing existing area covered by facilities management agreement (outlined red) and approximate area used as car parking by St Brigid's GAC (hatched black).

Blank Page