



## Belfast City Council

**Report to:** Parks and Leisure Committee

**Subject:** **Synthetic Cricket Wicket at City of Belfast Playing Fields**

**Date:** 15th October 2009

**Reporting Officer:** Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure, ext 3400

**Contact Officer:** Ricky Rice, Area Manager, North

### Relevant Background Information

The Committee is reminded that it received a deputation from the Northern Ireland Cricket Union on 13 March 2008 relating to the provision of cricket facilities throughout Belfast. A copy of the minute is attached as Appendix 1. Based on that meeting committee received a report on 14 May 2009 requesting approval to supply and install a synthetic cricket wicket at City of Belfast playing fields. This was agreed on the basis that Cliftonville Cricket Club would receive a grant of £3,000 from the Lord's Taverners charity and the council would provide £4,500 towards the supply and installation received. A copy of the minute is attached as Appendix 2.

However the Council has been informed by Cliftonville Cricket Club that their application for funding of £3,000 has been unsuccessful. This is because the location of the artificial wicket will be on Belfast City Council land.

In the interim, officers have been in contact with a major supplier of artificial cricket wickets. The supplier has inspected the site location and confirmed the lower base of the existing sub base is in good condition and does not need replacement as originally thought necessary. This has reduced the estimate to supply and install from an original estimate of £7,500 to an estimate of £6,000. This still leaves a shortfall of £1,500 from the original Belfast City Council committee approval to finance £4,500. It was highlighted that there was not sufficient finances in the budget for the site and that the shortfall would need to be found from within other elements of the Parks and Cemeteries overall budget.

## **Key Issues**

The Committee will be mindful that:

- It has previously received a presentation on the issue of the under provision of facilities for cricket; and
- It will be receiving a report on the issue of playing field provision across a range of sports in due course.
- It had agreed on 14 May 2009 to fund £4,500 towards the cost of an artificial cricket wicket.

There is an opportunity to increase provision for cricket clubs at a relatively modest cost. In addition to the request by Cliftonville, the proposal has received support from:

- The Northern Cricket Union;
- Academy Cricket Club;
- Belfast International Cricket Club; and
- Cricket Ireland

All have expressed willingness and a desire to use such a facility.

## **Resource Implications**

### Financial Implications

The cost of the works would incur a total expenditure in the region of £6,000 which has not been provided for in the revenue estimates for 2009/10. There is a property maintenance budget which could be used, however, this would further reduce the budget and would have an impact on other projects during the course of the year. The Parks and Leisure Committee has already approved expenditure of £4,500 for this purpose at its meeting on 14 May 2009.

There would be minimal revenue implications in terms of maintenance.

The life of the pitch would be in the region of 8 -10 years and would require replacement at the end of its useful life. This would be at an estimated cost of £6,000 based on 2009 figures.

The provision of the wicket will provide a modest source of income which would offset any small increase in revenue costs. At this time there is no pricing schedule and no firm figure on usage levels which would enable an estimated income to be established.

### Human Resource Implications

There are no additional human resource implications, other than officer time.

### Asset and other implications

The installation of the synthetic surface would improve provision.

<b>Recommendation</b>
-----------------------

It is recommended that the Committee agree to the request to meet the shortfall of approximately £1,500 to install a synthetic cricket wicket at City of Belfast playing fields.
--

<b>Decision Tracking</b>
--------------------------

Recommendations to be implemented by the Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager by June 2010.
---

<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
-----------------------------

None.
-------

<b>Documents Attached</b>
---------------------------

Appendix 1 – Committee minute from 13 March 2008 Appendix 2 - Committee minute from 14 May 2009
--

BLANK PAGE