



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Review of the Support for Sport grant scheme
Date:	15 April 2010
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Ian Nuttall, Funding and Monitoring Officer

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- (i) Seek Members' approval of draft terms of reference for a review of the Support for Sport grant scheme, and
- (ii) Seek Members' approval to request quotations for appropriate external assistance to carry out this work.

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that since 2005 the Director of Parks and Leisure has held delegated authority to approve support for sport hospitality and small development grant awards and that Members may, each year, approve a limited number of large development grant awards.

At the Parks and Leisure Committee meeting on 10 September 2009, Members granted officers authority to undertake a review of the Support for Sport Scheme in line with the Council's updated corporate thematic objectives. This seeks to maximise the impact of this funding in delivering the goals of the Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy and Departmental plan whilst aligning with other funding opportunities.

Key Issues

Records would indicate that the Support for Sport scheme has made a valuable contribution to sports development in Belfast. This is broadly in line with the goals of the Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy and the Parks and Leisure Departmental Plan, as well as other Council thematic areas including health and well-being, good relations, community safety and engaging children and young people.

Given the length of time the scheme has been operating and the developments in Departmental and Council strategy which have taken place during this period, it is now timely to undertake a comprehensive review of the Support for Sport scheme. In particular, there is a need to ensure the scheme's alignment with the developing strategy for leisure.

It is proposed that a suitably qualified external provider is commissioned to undertake the review, in order to ensure a fully independent perspective can be brought to any recommendations made on changes to the scheme.

To this end, draft terms of reference (Appendix 1) have been prepared which will form the basis of any request to provide quotations for undertaking the review. In summary, key elements include the following:

Review aims

- To determine the scheme's effectiveness as a means of promoting participation in physical activity and providing support to sports clubs and relevant community organisations, and
- to ensure the scheme aligns with current and future Council and Departmental strategies, aims and objectives.

Key activities

- Review of similar funding to establish best practice;
- review of the scheme's fit with existing strategies and plans;
- assessment of the impact of Support for Sport to date;
- review the distribution of grants awarded;
- assessment of the relevance of the scheme to the needs of clubs;
- review of the current governance and administration of the scheme;
- assessment of the level of complementarity/conflict with other relevant funding streams;
- engagement with user groups, elected representatives and other relevant stakeholders on the review; and
- consideration of the alignment of the scheme with emerging leisure strategy.

Key outcomes

- Recommendations on any necessary changes to Support for Sport taking into account the requirement that grant provision should reflect future leisure strategy objectives.

Resource Implications

Financial

It is estimated that there will be a cost to the Department of no more than £30,000 in consultancy fees for carrying out this work, which would be provided from 2010/11 revenue budgets.

Human Resources

There will be no additional human resources required at this stage. Direction of any selected provider would be conducted using existing officers' time.

Asset and Other Implications

Any proposed changes to the existing scheme as a result of the review, and the implications of these, would be subject to Members' approval.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- (i) Consider the draft terms of reference for a review of the Support for Sport grant scheme, and to approve these subject to any required amendments, and
- (ii) Authorise officers to invite quotations for external assistance to carry out this work.

Decision Tracking

It is proposed that a further report will be brought updating Members on the outcome of the request for quotations once this has been undertaken.

Key to abbreviations

None.

Documents attached

Appendix 1: Draft terms of reference