



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Shankill Greenway
<b>Date:</b>	14 October 2010
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Head of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to establish a position with regard to the proposal to develop the Shankill Greenway. This position would relate to:

- supporting of the concept in principle; and
- establishing a working relationship with the partnership to pursue the vision and to ensure that the potential implications for BCC are taken into account

### Relevant Background Information

The Committee is reminded that at its meeting in June 2010 it agreed to receive a presentation in respect of proposals to develop a Shankill Greenway. The Committee received the presentation from representatives of the Greater Shankill Partnership Board (GSPB) on 6 September.

Members will recall that the proposed greenway has been divided into three distinct geographical zones:

- Shankill;
- Woodvale; and
- The Hills.

Each of these zones consists of a number of bespoke standalone potential projects which when joined together will form the Greenway. There are approximately 28 key individual locations within the overall concept. The Partnership wishes to develop these individual projects in collaboration with the relevant organisation. Belfast City Council is a significant partner for a number of reasons:

- It is a major landowner and its open spaces at St Michaels, Shankill Rest Garden, Woodvale Park, Ballygomartin, Forthriver and Glencairn will be integral in the development of the greenway.
- The Committee will be aware that the Council, through the Parks and

Leisure Committee, provide financial support to the Belfast Hills Partnership and is represented on the Partnership at both elected Member and Officer level.

- In addition, the Council corporately can offer support to the project through its roles in arterial routes, tourism development, culture, arts and heritage and community safety. Further, the Council's experience in issues relating to land acquisition and disposal and the delivery of capital projects, combine to provide an important suite of skills.

### **Current context**

The Director of Parks and Leisure currently represents the Council on the GSPB Steering Group.

Through its presentation to Committee the GSPB wishes to continue its relationship with Belfast City Council and envisages that Parks and Leisure will be the primary conduit through which this relationship is maintained and developed.

However, it is important to note that Belfast City Council also engages with the GSPB on a range of matters. Of specific relevance to the development of the Greenway there are the relationships with Arterial Routes, Tourism, and the Community Safety Team and discussions with Parks and Leisure. The success of the project will require the support of these and other Officers within the Council such as from within the Property and Projects Department.

### **Key Issues**

#### Strategic fit

The project is broadly consistent with the Council's aims and objectives and proposes to deliver beneficial outcomes in areas such as:

- community cohesion
- health and well being
- the environment and
- economic growth and prosperity.

#### Deliverability and sustainability

At this time the proposal is largely conceptual in nature. It is an ambitious project and the estimated cost is in the region of £65-£78m. Issues around deliverability and sustainability remain to be worked up. However, the Partnership has identified a number of priority projects attached to each of the three main zones and it may be possible to focus on elements of these to optimise the cost benefit.

Delivery and sustainability will be largely dependent on securing appropriate levels of capital and revenue expenditure. At present there is no dedicated funding in place to deliver the project. There is some funding in existing Belfast City Council revenue budgets in respect of those sites along the greenway. Therefore, securing capital funding is a key issue and a high risk for the project as a whole.

### Support for the project

The Committee will recall that at the meeting on 6 September 2010 whilst members stressed the challenging financial times that faced Councils and funding organisations there was general support for the principle of having a vision and high level plan for the area.

### Governance

The key issue for Committee is its support in principle for the project in principal and the working relationship between Council Officers and the GSPB.

## **Resource Implications**

### Financial

There are no additional financial implications at this time.

### Human Resources

There are no additional human resources at this time.

### Asset and Other Implications

The development of a Greenway would greatly improve mobility across the city and has the potential to contribute in a positive way to other strategic outcomes including community cohesion, environmental improvement, community safety and economic growth.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Agree to support the concept of a Community Greenway located within the Greater Shankill Area stretching from the lower Shankill to the Belfast Hills and creating the potential for physical links through to the North of the City, the East and the West;
2. Agree to continue to work in collaboration with the Partnership Board through Officer involvement in discussions to develop the overall concept and individual elements of the greenway;
3. Agree that plans and proposals regarding our parks and open spaces are developed in a sensitive manner towards the greenway; and
4. Agree to receive periodic progress reports as necessary.

## **Decision Tracking**

The Director of Parks and Leisure will provide update reports to Committee as necessary.

## **Key to Abbreviations**

GSPB – Greater Shankill Partnership Board

## **Documents Attached**

None.