



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Request for permanent changing facilities at Musgrave Park
<b>Date:</b>	11 November 2010
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of a request from St Bridget's GAC for the provision of permanent changing facilities at Musgrave Park and to agree a way forward.

### Relevant Background Information

The Committee will be aware that St Bridget's GAC attracted funding to provide a full size GAA pitch and smaller training area on the site of Musgrave Park. As a condition of grant the Council agreed to enter into a 21 year management agreement with the club which still has approximately 17 years to run. The pitches have been a great success and are well used. However, as members will be aware there are no changing facilities on the site and this provision was not part of the original plan / funding application.

Officers from the Council have met with officials from the Club on a number of occasions to consider the possibility of the provision of changing facilities. The discussions focused around possible locations for changing facilities. Appendix 1 identifies 6 possible locations. Realistically, only options 1, 2, 5, and 6 as indicated are practical and each has advantages and disadvantages.

During discussions the working assumption had been that the club would seek external funding to provide the changing facilities and that the Council would enter into a revised management or lease arrangement.

### Current context

The committee is asked to note the following points:

1. At a recent meeting with representatives from the Club and attended by several elected members, the matter was discussed and the position of the Club now is that they are not in a position to fund the provision of permanent changing facilities. The Club has therefore requested that the Council initiate a process with the aim of providing the necessary facilities;
2. Members will be aware that Officers are preparing a Pitches strategy and that a strand of that strategy will relate to the provision of ancillary structures such as changing facilities.

### **Key Issues**

The Committee is asked to take note of the following key points:

1. St Bridgets secured significant external funding to provide the playing fields at Musgrave Park;
2. The Club has a long term management arrangement in place with the Council in respect of the playing fields;
3. The pitches are well used;
4. The Club has indicated that it is unable to attract the necessary external funding at this time;
5. The Club has requested that the Council agree to undertake the provision of changing facilities;
6. The Council is currently preparing a Pitches Strategy which will include consideration of ancillary provision including changing facilities.

The Committee at this meeting will be giving consideration to the holding of a special meeting to consider the Playing Pitch Strategy and the process for prioritisation of investment in pitches and other facilities.

Therefore, while officers will continue to work with St. Bridget's GAC to define their need and to work up proposals it would be premature to make any decision in relation to the provision of additional facilities in advance of the wider consideration of the Playing Pitch Strategy.

### **Resource Implications**

#### Financial

There are no financial implications at this time, however the provision of changing facilities will have both capital and revenue implications.

#### Human Resources

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

#### Asset and Other Implications

The provision of changing facilities will greatly enhance the existing playing field provision.

<b>Recommendations</b>
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It is recommended that the Committee note the request and agree that it should be considered following the agreement of the Playing Pitch Strategy and prioritisation process.
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<b>Decision Tracking</b>
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An update report will be brought to the Committee no later than June 2011.
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<b>Documents Attached</b>
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Appendix 1 – Outline of Musgrave Park identifying possible locations for a changing facility.
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