



### Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Shore Road Playing Fields
<b>Date:</b>	16 September 2010
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Stephen Walker, Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager

#### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to make the Committee aware of a lease request from Grove United FC and Malachians FC in respect of the potential development of the Shore Road Playing Fields and to seek a decision on this matter.

#### Relevant Background Information

The Committee is asked to note that a request has been received from Grove United FC and Malachians FC in respect of the land at Shore Road Playing Fields. A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix 1.

The letter outlines that the clubs wish to undertake a development project on the playing field site. The development project will, according to the letter, provide permanent state of the art changing facilities, an indoor sports arena and multi purpose rooms for use by the club and the wider community. However, no concept or outline drawing have been provided.

The letter requests that the Council enters into a minimum of a 21 year lease with them regarding Shore Road Playing Fields and subsequently a 25 year lease was specified in order to meet the Sport NI funding requirement. The clubs would need some assurance on this to enable them to approach funding bodies to endeavour to secure funding to deliver the plan.

#### Key Issues

1. The Committee is asked to note that the Council, where possible, wish to work with clubs such as Grove United and Malachians to improve the facilities.

2. In considering the request as outlined in Appendix 1 the Committee is asked to note that:
  - a) the proposal is at a very early stage; and
  - b) no funding has to date been secured;
3. The Shore Road site is quite small, it is adjacent to a school which has right of access through the site. The entrance to the site is in close proximity to the slip road from the motorway at the Greencastle exit. These factors will combine to limit the development potential.
4. During discussions with the clubs the land adjacent to the site was mentioned. This land is currently leased, on a short term basis, to the Whitewell Tabernacle Church. This land is used as a car park and the Churches possession of it would be protected under the business tenancies legislation. Members are also reminded that this portion of land is part of the corporate land bank under the direction of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and is not part of the operational holding of the Parks and Leisure Department.
5. The clubs are seeking agreement in principle from the committee to enable them to seek funding for the proposal. However, Members should note that final approval regarding any lease for the site would be a matter for Strategic Policy & Resources Committee under Standing Order 46 (viii).

### **Resource Implications**

#### Financial

There are no financial implications at this time.

#### Human Resources

There are no additional human resource implications at this time.

#### Asset and Other Implications

The implications are unclear at this time.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Agree, in principle to enter into a lease arrangement with Grove United and Malachians for a period of 25 years subject to receipt of a business plan, sports development plan and appropriate drawings regarding the proposals; the securing of the appropriate level of funding by the clubs to deliver the plan and the securing of the appropriate approvals, including planning and building control and council agreement to making all necessary lands available;
2. In the event of the club securing the necessary funding that the Council enter into an appropriate development agreement with the club in advance of the lease being granted to safeguard the Council;
3. The club be notified of the Committee's decision in this matter, subject to ratification by Strategic Policy and Resources in line with Standing Orders (46 (viii)).

<b>Decision Tracking</b>
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Officer responsible: Principal Parks and Cemeteries Development Manager Actions to be completed by: November 2010
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<b>Key to abbreviations</b>
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None.
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<b>Documents Attached</b>
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Appendix 1: Letter from Grove United FC and Malachians.
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