



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Fields in Trust - The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge
Date:	10 February 2011
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Head of Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The National Playing Fields Association (Fields in Trust) has launched the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. The challenge is an officially endorsed legacy initiative to mark the two landmark events scheduled to take place in the UK in 2012; The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Olympics. The programme aims to permanently protect 2012 playing fields, parks and other open space in communities all across the country ensuring access to outdoor sport, play and recreation both now and for future generations.</p> <p>Fields in Trust are asking local authorities to consider nominating a number of outdoor recreational spaces in their area that they would be happy to see protected as a Queen Elizabeth II field. These nominations will then be put to a public vote in 2011 to allow people in Belfast to decide which site should be chosen. The eventual winner will be protected and designated a Queen Elizabeth II field.</p> <p>Frequently asked questions about the initiative are attached at Appendix 1.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>There is no financial incentive to be involved in the Fields Challenge.</p> <p>There is significant potential that the protection and redesignation of an existing space could enhance the developing 2012 programme of events and activities in the city.</p> <p>Premises that are nominated are locked in until an unknown date in 2011 when the result is announced and the council cannot effectively do anything with these properties until the result is known.</p>

Many of the council's properties have already been gifted to the council with restrictive use clauses contained within the title deeds to those properties which effectively create a trust which the council is required to adhere to.

There are many other council properties held under deeds of dedication with the Millennium Commission signed in 2000 for a period of 99 years and these could not be nominated.

Other properties gifted to the Council such as Dunville Park and Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park were named after their benefactor(s), in accordance with specific requests by those benefactors.

If the Council chooses to nominate any of its properties the title would first need to be examined to ensure that the property is not already subject to a Deed of Dedication, or to alienation provisions within the title (i.e. restrictions on assignment, or parting with possession) or certain use covenants.

The Deeds of Dedication issued by the Fields in Trust and which the Council would be required to sign are stringent and constrain what the Council can do in terms of disposal or any building works/changes of use affecting any nominated property. A Burden is required to be registered against the title of the nominated property. Any dealings with the property or works to same in the future would require the consent of Fields in Trust, and once successfully nominated this remains the case in perpetuity.

When selecting sites to go forward, the range is broad and includes gardens, children's play areas, nature reserves, sports pitches, etc.

The Fields Challenge is an opportunity to be part of a high profile national campaign that has impact and benefit to local communities and will help mark the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics in their area whilst also securing a platform to achieve key targets around increasing physical activity and promoting the sustainability agenda.

If the challenge is supported by committee, Members are asked to nominate sites for consideration.

Members will be aware that the contract for the development of the Connswater Community Greenway has been let and work has commenced. It may be appropriate to nominate sites along the Greenway to further enhance the community engagement with the process.

However there may be other sites across the city that might benefit from involvement in the fields challenge.

Nominations will have to be submitted in early March 2011 at the latest.

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> None</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> None</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> The title of nominated properties would need to be examined to ensure that they are not already subject to deeds of dedication or subject to alienation provisions or certain use covenants.</p> <p>The chosen site would be subject to a deed of dedication which would constrain council's use of the property in the future.</p>

4.	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	There are no equality implications.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Committee is asked to consider supporting the Queen Elizabeth II challenge as outlined and to nominate sites as appropriate.</p> <p>Nominations will be subject to meeting the Fields in Trust criteria for submission and satisfying council's legal commitments.</p>

6	Decision Tracking
	Nominations to Fields in Trust will be made in February 2011.

7.	Key to abbreviations
	None.

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge frequently asked questions