

Extract from minutes of –

PARKS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

10th February, 2011

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**“Irish Football Association Grassroots Development**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1. Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 In 2006 Belfast City Council entered into a partnership with the Irish Football Association (IFA) to employ two Grassroots soccer development officers. One was based in Ballysillan to cover North and East Belfast and the other was in Andersonstown to cover South and West Belfast.

The officers were initially employed for two years. In February 2008 this partnership was extended until 6th March 2009.

A further extension was granted in February 2009 to extend the partnership until 6 March 2011

It was agreed that for the period between 7th March 2009 and 6th March 2011 Belfast City Council would meet 50% of salary costs for these two posts to a maximum of £60,760.

**2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 The IFA has informed Belfast City Council that the financial future of the Grassroots Soccer Development Programme has been secured in agreement with the Executive Board of The IFA.

This means that from 7 March 2011 Belfast City Council is no longer required to make a financial contribution to the Grassroots Soccer Development Officer posts. However given the success of the partnership between Belfast City Council the IFA wishes that Belfast City Council remains as a lead council within the IFA National Grassroots Programme.

The IFA want their Grassroots Development Officers to continue to work with the Belfast City Council sports development officers to deliver a city wide grassroots soccer programme.

To continue this partnership the IFA has asked that Belfast City Council provide a hot desk within our leisure centres for the two Belfast grassroots development officers. The remit in terms of the areas supported by the two officers will also change with one now having responsibility for North and West Belfast and the other will have responsibility for South and East Belfast.

**3 Resource Implications**

**3.1 Financial**

The new arrangements will see the IFA absorb the financial risk and cover total salary, pension and travel costs relating to the delivery of the IFA Grassroots Programme.

The only cost to Belfast City Council will be the provision of a workstation at each of the two sites. This will require a telephone and internet access.

**3.2 Human Resources**

The IFA will be the sole employers of the two Grassroots Development Officers.

**4 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

4.1 There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this issue.

**5 Recommendations**

5.1 It is recommended that the Committee accept the offer from the IFA under the terms set out above to host the two grassroots soccer development officers from 8 March 2011.

**6 Decision Tracking**

**Officer responsible:** Sports Development Officer to work with the IFA to implement the new partnership arrangements.

**7 Key to Abbreviations**

IFA: Irish Football Association.”

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor G. Robinson,  
Seconded by Councillor J. Rodgers,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendation contained within the report and, in order to develop the sport of soccer, officers investigate the feasibility of expanding the programme to include four coaches.

### **Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Mac Giolla Mhín,  
Seconded by Councillor Hartley,

That, in order to develop other sports, the £60,000 be allocated to the Gaelic Athletic Association.

On a vote by show of hands four Members voted for the amendment and five against and it was accordingly declared lost. The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor G. Robinson and seconded by Councillor J. Rodgers was thereupon put to the meeting with six Members voting for and four against and it was accordingly declared carried.”