



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Suffolk Football Club
<b>Date:</b>	13 October 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio Programme Manager

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>The Committee is reminded that at its meetings in March and April 2011 it received reports regarding a request from Suffolk Football Club. The football club had sought, and subsequently received, approval from the council to bring an existing unused pitch at Suffolk Playing Fields into use through the provision of new drainage. The club further proposed to erect a spectator rail and enclose the new pitch with a security fence. It was noted that the pitch would be used by Suffolk Football Club. The council did not make a financial contribution to the works which were undertaken with Alpha funding obtained through Groundwork NI. It was agreed that the council would enter into a 7 year management agreement with the club in respect of the pitch and that the club will at its own expense undertake the management and maintenance of the pitch and fencing.</p> <p>This work has now been completed and the pitch will be available for use in advance of the new season in August 2012.</p> <p>In the report in April 2011 it was reported that the club had aspirations to further develop the site and construct separate changing facilities to service the new pitch. This would mean that the facilities would meet the ground requirements of the Intermediate League. The report noted that this would be a separate issue.</p> <p>The club has now been given an opportunity to acquire two modular buildings, one would provide changing facilities and the other would function as a meeting room and for pre and post match entertainment for travelling teams. These buildings are not new and have been in use by another club. Suffolk Football Club is seeking permission to locate temporary changing facilities on the site. It is their proposal to locate it adjacent to pitch and close to the former school site.</p>

<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<p>There are a number of issues associated with the proposal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The club has recently applied for planning approval for its proposal. It is hoped that this will be through within 4-6 months, however, as the building is temporary in nature it is likely that the planning approval, if granted, will be time limited.</li> <li>2. A request has been made to the Property and Projects Department to inspect the buildings to determine their condition and fitness for purpose, the survey is yet to be completed, however providing the report is positive this shouldn't be an impediment to progress.</li> <li>3. The club has stated that it will undertake the management and maintenance of the new facility at its own expense.</li> <li>4. The club will also acquire the structure and undertake the installation at its own expense; there will be no financial cost to the council.</li> <li>5. The proposed location for the changing facilities is currently subject to a right of way agreement with NIE. Preliminary discussions with NIE have indicated that the matter can be resolved, however this is subject to further discussion and confirmation is awaited.</li> <li>6. Should these issues be resolved the club is seeking agreement to locate the facilities on the site for a period of 7 years, consistent with the agreement regarding the refurbishment of the pitch. Following discussions with Estates it is proposed that the installation of the proposed temporary buildings be incorporated within the terms and conditions of the proposed facilities management agreement as agreed in April 2011.</li> </ol> <p>The Committee is also asked to note that the club has requested permission to 'store' the structures on site until such time as they can be installed. This is not something that the council would normally do; although the council currently permits through licence containers to be kept on site for storage purposes;</p> <p>Should the Committee agree to the request from the club to store the structures on site pending installation it will be necessary to enter into a temporary licence agreement with the club. This would be subject to a time limit and a fee would be charged. Although the intention is to store the structures behind a security fence it would be appropriate for the club to obtain the necessary public liability insurance to indemnify the council in the event of damage, theft, injury resulting from the storage of the structures should the Committee agree to this request.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There are no financial implications for the council. The cost of acquisition and installation will be met by the club; the building maintenance and utility costs will also be met by the club.</p>

	<p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no additional human resource implications other than officer time.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> The provision of the temporary building will, together with other associated works, bring the football ground up to the required standard for intermediate and amateur league football.</p>
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<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
	In relation to the building the main issue would relate to DDA compliance, it will be requirement that the building meets the necessary standard.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the report.</li> <li>2. Agree in principle to enter into an appropriate management agreement with the club to permit the installation of the temporary changing facilities subject to planning approval and agreement with NIE regarding the right of way.</li> <li>3. Agree that Legal Services be instructed to incorporate within the facilities management agreement agreed in April 2011 to incorporate these temporary buildings.</li> <li>4. Consider whether it wishes to permit the club to store, under licence and subject to conditions, the temporary structures at the Suffolk Playing Field site.</li> <li>5. Agree that recommendations 2 – 4 above are conditional on receiving a positive report on the condition of the buildings.</li> </ol>

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	A further report will be presented by the Departmental Portfolio Programme Manager following a decision by the Planning Service.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	NIE: Northern Ireland Electricity.

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None.