



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Outdoor Fitness Equipment Proposal
Date:	10 November 2011
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Andrew Steenson, Health and Fitness Officer

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Blythefield Park is located in the Sandy Row area of South Belfast and is the only green space in the area. The park comprises a children's playground, 18 small allotments and a BMX track, all owned and managed by the council. There is also a nursery school within the park and a primary school, youth club and multi use games area (MUGA) within the surrounding area.</p> <p>Blythefield Park is included within the neighbourhood renewal action plan for South West Belfast, which makes reference to the improvement of public realm and provision of green and communal spaces in the area.</p> <p>Areas of South Belfast, including the Sandy Row area, have significantly worse health than other more affluent areas of the city, with higher prevalence of diabetes, circulatory and respiratory disease recorded.</p> <p>Following local consultation the Sandy Row Community Forum (SRCF) approached the council and Public Health Agency (PHA) regarding potential for the development of Blythefield Park to include outdoor fitness equipment for adults.</p> <p>The land identified for the installation of outdoor gym equipment is owned by the council.</p> <p>Discussions have also been ongoing with the PHA about the rolling out of a programme to install outdoor gym equipment in other council parks and open spaces.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>Blythefield is a community led initiative, which has been identified through local consultation undertaken by the SRCF and links to the neighbourhood action plan for South West Belfast.</p> <p>The proposal links directly to the work of the Local Commissioning Group in South Belfast in promoting physical activity and opportunities for physical activity and the council's vision of improving quality of life and is supported by the PHA and Belfast Health Development Unit (BH DU) as part of the developing work around 'Active Belfast'.</p> <p>This proposal would increase physical activity opportunities for adults living in the Sandy Row and surrounding area.</p> <p>Blythefield Park has low levels of recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The SRCF has asked council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. agree to the proposed installation of outdoor adult fitness equipment at the Blythefield site; 2. provide assistance in designing the layout for proposed scheme; 3. prepare the land prior to the installation of equipment; 4. undertake the maintenance of the equipment; and 5. accept the public liability responsibility in respect of the equipment. <p>Officers have been working with the PHA who have expressed a willingness to provide funding to develop a proposal for the purchase and installation of outdoor fitness equipment for another seven sites across the city.</p> <p>Work is currently being undertaken to develop a selection criteria to identify other potential sites. Once this has been completed the list of potential sites will be brought back to committee for approval.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The BH DU has confirmed funding of £25,000 with a further £3,950 confirmed by the PHA, to cover the cost of purchasing and installing the equipment. A small financial outlay may be required to prepare the land for installation. The equipment would be inspected as part of the ROSPA inspection programme in place for children's playgrounds. The cost of installing equipment on an additional seven sites is approximately £160,000. PHA have indicated their willingness to provide £80k to this project. In September 2011 the SP&R Committee agreed to allocate £800k to Parks and Leisure Programmes. It is proposed that this scheme be allocated £80k from that budget.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>Resources will be required for the additional seven sites.</p>

	<p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> The installation of this equipment will make a significant contribution to the quality of life of the community and will support neighbourhood renewal through delivery of the action plan.</p>
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4.	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>It is recommended that Committee agree to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the land at Blythefield Park being used to locate adult outdoor fitness equipment; 2. provide assistance in designing the layout for the proposed scheme; 3. prepare the land prior to the installation of equipment; and 4. undertake the public liability responsibility in respect of the equipment and ongoing maintenance as required. 5. the installation of outdoor gym equipment on another seven sites subject to agreement by committee on locations.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Decision of the committee to be implemented by the Health and Fitness officer and a report on seven additional sites to be presented to a future committee.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>MUGA: multi use games area LCG: Local Commissioning Group SRCF: Sandy Row Community Forum PHA: Public Health Agency BH DU: Belfast Health Development Unit</p>

8.	Documents Attached
	None.