



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	'Grow it Yourself' Request
Date:	14 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officers:	Emer Boyle, Policy and Business Development Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>GIY (Grow it Yourself) Ireland is a not for profit organisation which aims to encourage people to grow their own food through various activities including community meetings, campaigns promoting school growing, family growing and community gardening, GIY events, and information exchange. GIY Ireland involves around 12,000 people, with 100 GIY community groups holding regular meetings which are open to all and free of charge.</p> <p>Since September 2011, GIY Ireland's local representative has been a member of the Council-led Steering Group working to develop the draft 'Growing Communities' strategy, as presented to Members in May this year. GIY Ireland's aims reflect those of the draft strategy, and the organisation's activities are likely to directly contribute to implementation of the strategy across the city.</p> <p>At the May 2012 Committee meeting, officers were granted authority to pilot free out of hours use of the sports pavilions at Victoria and Orangefield Parks by a range of established stakeholders. This will be subject to satisfactory agreement of terms and arrangements around health and safety and the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and completion of appropriate legal agreements.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	On 4 May 2012, GIY Ireland's local representative wrote to the Council

	<p>requesting free use of a Council venue in South Belfast for monthly meetings of the local GIY Community Group (email letter provided at Appendix 1).</p> <p>The following summarises the nature/requirements of the meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Each meeting will involve around 10 to 30 members of the community from across North, South and East Belfast (there is currently a separate GIY Community Group in the west of the City); – Meetings will be held monthly on a Monday evening from 7.00pm to 8.30pm, September to May inclusive; – Meetings aim to "inspire and empower people to grow their own by bringing them together in community groups to share tips, advice and expertise", and may involve guest speakers, presentations, mentor panels and brainstorming sessions; – Meetings will require no particular facilities apart from heating, lighting, power (for laptops, projectors etc) and access to facilities for making tea/coffee (to be provided by GIY Ireland); and – All meetings will be attended by GIY Ireland's local representative (or in his absence a nominated member of the local GIY Ireland steering group). <p>Subject to availability and any other operational constraints such as winter closure of facilities, a bowling in or close to the south of the City may provide a suitable venue.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> Should Members grant authority to provide a venue for GIY Ireland, there may be a relatively small cost to the Council for additional electricity and water. It is expected that this could be met within existing revenue budgets.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Any requirement for Council staff involvement (for example opening and closing the venue) would be accommodated within normal staffing arrangements.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> GIY Ireland would be expected to demonstrate that any requirements regarding health and safety, the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults, public liability, and any other relevant issues are fully met to the Council's satisfaction.</p>

4.	Equality and good relations implications
	There are no known implications at this stage.

5.	Recommendations
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	Members are asked to consider GIY Ireland's request and give approval for free use of a Parks and Leisure facility subject to availability.
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6.	Decision Tracking
	None.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	GIY – Grow It Yourself

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Email letter to officers from GIY Ireland.