



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Belfast Play Forum Lease
Date:	9 August 2012
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Parks and Leisure Department

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Committee is reminded that at its meeting in December 2012 it received a report which outlined a proposal from the North Belfast Play Forum to replace the existing polymeric surface with a 3rd generation surface (Appendix A). The Committee agreed to make a 3rd party contribution of up to £10,000 subject to the successful award of grant funding from BIFFA.</p> <p>The Committee is referred to Appendix B which is a copy of the conditional letter of Offer from BIFFA regarding the grant. The letter contains a number of points of relevance to the Council.</p> <p>Paragraph three seeks a contribution of £5,102.04 from the Council as a 3rd party funding body; this is less than the anticipated £10,000 and is within the terms of the previous decision.</p> <p>Paragraph six refers to three quotations being required to satisfy the procurements of BIFFA, the primary funding body. At the time of the previous report no terms and conditions relating to procurement practice, however, Members will be aware that the Council's procurement guidelines would require in the case of a Council led procurement exercise a tender process be undertaken for expenditure in excess of £30,000 and that tenders be sought from four potential suppliers. In this instance, the procurement will be undertaken by the North Belfast Play Forum and it is proposed that as our contribution is under the £30,000 threshold that we concur with the requirements of the main funding body, BIFFA.</p> <p>Finally, the attention of the Committee is drawn to paragraph seven which</p>

	refers to the requirement for a minimum 15 year lease. The purpose of this is to ensure that the facility is sustained for the purpose of the grant and used as sporting facility.
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2	Key Issues
	<p>The Committee is asked to consider the issue of security of tenure as referred to in paragraph seven of Appendix B.</p> <p>Members are reminded that there is an existing management agreement in place between the Council and the North Belfast Play Forum. Within this agreement maintenance and management responsibilities have been divided between the two parties. To support the Play Forum the Council makes an annual payment of £12,000 towards the running costs.</p> <p>The Committee will be aware of the ongoing review of facilities management agreements. At present the agreement with the Play Forum runs from month to month. Officers are seeking to regularise the situation and a separate report on the issue will be presented to Committee.</p> <p>Under revised proposals existing facilities management agreements will be replaced, this will result in the bringing in house of operational maintenance and bookings, no fee will be paid to agreement holders and income generated from the use of the facilities will revert back to the Council. New agreements will be entered into.</p> <p>Discussions with representatives from the Play Forum have indicated that the retention of income is vital to the delivery of programmes at the facilities and that whilst they appreciate the support from the Council in the past and the positive working relationship they believe that the lease option represents the best way forward at this time.</p> <p>The Forum has asked that the Committee be made aware that whilst the income potential from the 3G surface maybe greater than that gained from the current facility, it will require additional effort and staff, they have asked that the Committee to note that the loss of the annual fee will place a further strain on the Forum.</p>

3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> The move from a management agreement to a lease will result in a saving to the Council in the region of £12,000. BIFFA are provided approximately £50,000 to the North Belfast Play Forum.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no additional human resource implications; work can be progressed within existing resources.</p>

	<p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> The lease represents a disposal and will therefore reduce the capacity of the Council in this area, although the associated demand will continue to be met by the Play Forum.</p>
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4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	There are no equality implications.

5	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the content of the report; 2. Authorise the payment of £5,102.04 to the North Belfast Forum in respect of the replacement of the existing polymeric surface with a 3G surface; 3. Agree to a lease agreement up to a maximum of 15 years to meet the terms and conditions of the funder, subject to approval by Strategic Policy & Resources in line with Standing Order 60, be entered into with the North Belfast Play Forum and that appropriate terms and conditions be put in place to safeguard the Councils' interests in the land.

6	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be presented to Committee upon completion of the works.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	None.

8	Documents Attached
	None.