



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	2012 Preparatory Action: European Partnership on Sports
Date:	9 August 2012
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
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1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The European Commission recently launched a funding opportunity, seeking European partnership proposals in respect of projects which demonstrated <i>“effective mechanisms to promote sport at a municipal level.”</i></p> <p>The grant allocation under the theme was €0.75million to support up to 4 projects across Europe. The eligibility criteria required that projects must comprise partnerships representing at least 5 Member States and illustrate 20% match funding from a third party private partner. Appendix 1 refers.</p> <p>In June 2012 correspondence was received from the city of Florence, inviting expressions of interest from EU Member States, to partner in a Walking People Project. Appendix 2 refers.</p> <p>The aim of the project was to contribute effectively to the European Year for Active Ageing 2012 by supporting the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• promote the active and healthy aging of EU citizens;• improve people’s health and quality of life, particularly for older people;• assist in the long term sustainability and efficiency of Europe’s health and social care systems;• help to prevent functional decline and frailty;• activate partnership working across Europe for better age friendly living cities and environments;• replace passive care to active ageing; and• ensure sustainability of the project via robust promotion and links with local tourism. <p>If successful, the expected grant for the project, across the 5 Member States, would be €167,000, supported by 40% match funding, 20% contribution from private sector and 20% from Parks and Leisure Department. The project duration</p>

	<p>will be 18 months, commencing between 1 January and 31 March 2013 and completing no later than 30 June 2014.</p> <p>Belfast City Council's Corporate Plan identifies the importance of physical activity in creating improved health and well being for citizens, whilst attracting visitors, investors, tourists and students to the city. Additionally on 12 May 2012 Belfast City Council committed to become an "Age Friendly" city in line with the World Health Organisation guidelines and, in doing so will encourage active ageing, whilst enhancing the quality of life for older people, by optimising opportunities for health and participation.</p> <p>The Parks and Leisure Department plays a crucial role in delivering the Council's health and wellbeing objectives by ensuring that, through its planning processes and development of strategic partnership working, it supports people and communities to achieve improved quality of life and health and well being.</p> <p>Belfast City Council, as one of the lead partners in Active Belfast, works with a range of partners to encourage people to stay fit and healthy. The strategy includes goals to improve facilities to ensure that Belfast has the right facilities in the right places whilst boosting participation in activity. These goals will be achieved by raising the profile of sport and physical activity, promoting health and physical activity and developing coaches and volunteers.</p> <p>Research carried out to support the creation of "Public Space for a Shared Belfast" identified the need to determine how well pedestrian routes across the city are connected to each other and surrounding residential areas. Belfast City Council is currently working in partnership with Queens University and Public Health Agency to develop a "walk-ability model" across Belfast which will encourage physical activity through more accessible pathways.</p> <p>By participating in the Walking People Project, the Parks and Leisure Department plans to harness European grant funding to support the corporate health and well being objectives, motivate people, particularly older people to become more active through the use of easily accessible adapted path ways, together with supporting an "Age Friendly" city.</p> <p>Through the European Unit, Belfast City Council submitted an expression of interest to the city Florence, to partner in the project.</p> <p>On 16 July the city of Florence confirmed that it had selected Belfast as one of the partners in the project.</p>
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2.	Key Issues
	<p>In the local context of Belfast, The Walking People Project aims to promote physical activity through the delivery of adapted walking paths across the city. Should the application be successful, Parks and Leisure Department will receive €20,000 European grant funding to support the project as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mapping existing pathways • identification of 3 existing pathways which will be adapted to assist in overcoming barriers to activity, specifically encouraging local community participation in physical activity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of Smartphone application in 5 European languages providing technical, historical, artistic, environmental and health information; • training and tutoring of at least 50 sports professionals to improve participant performance and enhance safety; • involvement of a minimum of 5 sports organisations; • implementation of a robust communication plan, promoting the project and motivating people to engage in suitable types of activity. • strengthening intergenerational practice through improved exchanges between generations. <p>The funding application criteria required attracting 20% match funding from a private investor. At present, it is planned that €5000 contribution would be from the private sector partner and €5000 from departmental revenue budgets.</p> <p>Given that one of the aims of the project is to develop a Smartphone application, it was considered that this could be linked to the Super Connected Broadband project. Following discussions with ISB it has been confirmed that the 20% private sector funding can be evidenced via the Super Connected Belfast Ultra-fast Broadband project.</p> <p>Should the application be successful, a detailed project plan specific to Belfast including a budget profile will be developed, ensuring value for money and enhancing existing services.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> A €5,000 partnership contribution from a 3rd party private source and €5,000 from the department is required. Provision has been made for this contribution via the Super Connected Belfast Ultra-fast Broadband project and within the PBDU budget.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Officer time will be required for planning project applications and delivery.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None at this stage.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	There are no implications at this stage. However, should the application progress, Equality and Good Relations factors will be taken into account in the development of the project.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the contents of this report and the fact that a proposal was submitted on 23 July 2012 to meet the application deadline; and • agree that financial support, totalling €5,000 can be allocated to the project in compliance with European Commission financing criteria.

6.	Decision Tracking
	November 2012 Committee – outcome of the application.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: European Commission Call for Proposals – EAC/S06/12 Preparatory Action: European Partnership on Sports Appendix 2: WAP – Walking People Project Proposal