



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Outdoor Gym in Alexandra Park
Date:	13 September 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Paula Irvine, Community Park Manager (Outreach)

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Committee will recall at its meeting on 11 August 2011 approval was given for a funding agreement between Groundwork NI and the Council for the continued involvement of Groundwork NI in Alexandra Park up to December 2012.</p> <p>The provision of that funding has ensured that Groundwork NI have continued to work with the Alexandra Park Steering group ensuring the delivery of a programme of activities which meets the Council and departmental aims with regards to good relations, anti-social behaviour and shared space.</p> <p>As part of the ongoing work with the steering group the group has been successful in securing £20k of funding for further environmental improvements within Alexandra Park.</p> <p>On discussion the steering group have agreed that the installation of an outdoor gym would be top of the wish list. This option was also greatly favoured by the funder and the request does reflect the Council's ambition to improve and make better use of its assets and get people more active.</p> <p>Groundwork NI and the steering group have secured the £20k funding from a regular contributor to Groundwork UK called BUNZL.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>From a recent tender exercise carried out by Belfast City Council £20k of funding should provide six pieces of outdoor gym equipment including safety surface and installation however this will be more apparent following a specific tender exercise for this project.</p> <p>A consultation exercise with the wider community needs to take place regarding the positioning of the pieces of equipment within the park. Sensitivity needs to be applied when selecting areas for equipment and early discussions have favoured a trim trail effect encouraging participants to move around all areas of the park passing through the peace wall.</p> <p>The landscape plans and tender process will be carried out by Groundwork NI under the guidance of officers from the parks operational team and the landscape unit. The specification for equipment must meet the required standards as outlined by the council.</p> <p>It is anticipated that 10% of the overall cost of the outdoor gym needs to be incorporated in to the budget estimates to cover ongoing maintenance and essential repairs.</p> <p>The daily inspection of the gym equipment needs to be built in to the programme of work for the ROSPA team in that area. Safe inspection and recording of the outdoor gym equipment is likely to require additional training.</p> <p>The life span of the equipment is estimated at approximately 10 years at which the Council may be obligated to find funds for a full refurbishment. This may need to form part of the playground refurbishment programme.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> There may be a cost to the council if the staff require additional ROSPA training specific to the outdoor gym equipment. This will be absorbed by the training and development budget for the area.</p> <p>10% of the overall capital works needs to be factored in to parks annual budget to cover essential inspections and maintenance.</p> <p><u>Human</u> It is anticipated that the existing ROSPA squad for the park will carry out the daily inspection of the outdoor gym equipment this will be accommodated through our normal management process.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None.</p>

4.	Equality and good relations implications
	The Alexandra Park project and work carried out by Groundwork NI has been developed with full involvement of the good relations team, local communities and all relevant stakeholders and is completely in line with the Council's responsibility in this area.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>It is recommended that the committee grant authority for the installation of the outdoor gym in Alexandra Park subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwork NI carrying out a consultation exercise with the wider community • All landscape designs and equipment specifications being approved by Belfast City Council • The development and implementation of a programme of activity for the outdoor gym with the community and users of the park.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Community Park Outreach Manager.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	ROSPA – Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents.

8.	Documents Attached
	None.