



Belfast City Council

Report to: Parks and Leisure Committee

Subject: Ulster GAA Partnership Development Update

Date: 6 December 2012

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1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to;- (i) Provide an update on the ongoing partnership development with the Ulster GAA and; (ii) Seek approval to formalise the governance arrangements through a joint management board in the interim until 'agreements for use' are finalised and in place.
1.2	Members will recall at November Committee a new Playing Pitches agreements policy was agreed which will manage requests received from sporting organisations or clubs (amateur to international level of competition play) to enter into 'agreements for use' of parks and leisure sites.
1.3	This forms part of the department's overall approach to the development of a framework which will consistently manage the requests from external organisations to provide services and / or develop the use of assets in partnership with the Council.
1.4	The engagement on the draft policy is being planned and over the next year the operational changes required to service delivery will be made for 'Agreements for use' to go live in the next business year.
1.5	In the meantime officers in the council continue to develop and maintain relations with a range of partners at all levels and in this interim period it is likely these arrangements will need to be formalised.

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	Ongoing liaison with the Ulster GAA has reached a point where the legal and management arrangements need to be progressed in order for their financial contribution to be drawn-down.
2.2	The Joint Management Board type of arrangement can still be delivered via an 'Agreement for use' rather than a FMA or a lease. Legal Services are currently drafting a prototype 'agreement for use' document to enable the partnership discussions to proceed.
2.3	A joint management board (JMB) is the preferred governance model which will manage the detail of the Agreement for Use and it is proposed that the Council will sit on the JMB alongside Ulster GAA, Antrim GAA and Down GAA Board.
2.4	Appendix 1 outlines the general terms proposed for a joint management board - aligned to the 'agreement for use' arrangement agreed last month. The "sample" terms of reference set out the purpose and scope of the JMB governance arrangement along with the general roles and responsibilities of the partners and the benefits to be realised from the partnership. N.B. Officers continue to work with Legal Services and Estates to finalise the details of these arrangements. GAA will also have to agree to the terms of the Joint Management Board.
2.5	A draft timeline is provided in Appendix 2 to outline how the partnership will be developed and bearing in mind the wider picture of the engagement on the playing pitches agreements policy.
2.6	Wider Council position Council agreed a draft playing pitches agreement policy which forms part of the department's partnership management framework in November 2012. This partnership is being developed in parallel to the engagement period for the draft policy and finalising the operation of 'agreements for use and may need to adapt or adopt depending on the outcome of this work.
2.7	Joint management board A joint management board is a management structure that can be applied to any other partnership with any other governing body or equivalent level body.
2.8	The prototype 'agreement for use' between Ulster GAA and the Council The arrangement between Ulster GAA and the Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - remove the need for individual agreements for use with the individual clubs and is the preferred route by the Council to strategically develop playing pitch provision across the city. - Ensure any specific requirements do not contravene any obligations the council may have under covenant or in setting precedent that cannot be provided equally to any other party. - Provide an agreed schedule of specific sites and requirements to be delivered through the partnership which is appended to the legal document; - Ensure any revisions or changes to the purpose which impact earlier agreements by Council need to be presented back to the relevant committee. - Protect the investment of the GAA in the programme to ensure that clubs get

	adequate pitch time at the sites invested in.
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3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u> To date GAA have agreed on investment of £1Million to contribute to the development at Cherryvale, Woodlands, Musgrave and Cliftonville. A formal letter of offer has not yet been received but is imminent. Discussions are still ongoing about the level of investment on specific sites.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Human Resources</u> Ongoing officer time from a range of officers across the department will be dedicated to implementation and ongoing management in the medium to long term. Legal services support and advice and assistance from Estates and Property / Projects will also be a requirement during the next stage.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> There may be a requirement to consult on the development of the partnership at the related sites which may require resources.</p>

4.0	Equality Implications
4.1	The final draft of the legal document and terms of reference of the partnership will be screened in line with the council's existing equality screening process.

5.0	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) note the update provided and the ongoing work continuing at officer level on the draft sample terms of reference for joint management boards ; (ii) authorise officers to continue discussions with Ulster GAA to finalise the terms for an appropriate Joint Management Board to cover the pitches which are to be partly funded by the GAA.

6.0	Decision Tracking
6.1	Members will a further partnership development update by April 2013.

7.0	Key to Abbreviations
7.1	Facility Management Agreement – FMA

8.0	Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1: SAMPLE terms of reference for the Ulster GAA and Council Joint management board (for further review and agreement with Legal / Estates) Appendix 2: Ulster GAA and BCC joint management board Implementation timeframe</p>