



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Land adjacent to Springmartin Play Area
Date:	14 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager, Property and Projects Department

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to make the Committee aware of a lease request from the Blackmountain Action Group in respect of the potential development of land adjacent to Springmartin Play area.
1.2	The SP&R Committee at its meeting on the 23 November 2012 endorsed the Shankill Area Working Group recommendation to add a further £50,000 to the £100,000 of Local Investment Funding previously approved in principle (in October 2012) to allow Blackmountain Action Group to develop a mini soccer pitch at the site adjacent to Springmartin Play Area, with all funding subject to confirmation of costs, clarification of legal issues, sustainability etc.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	The Council hold the 1.02 acre site shown outlined red on the plan attached at Appendix '1' at Blackmountain Park off the Springfield Road from the NIHE by way of a 9000 year lease subject to the following main terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To use the site as a play area.• Not to assign or sub-let the site without consent.
2.2	That part of the site shaded yellow has been developed as playground and the remainder of the site is effectively an area of waste land.
2.3	The Springfield Star Blackmountain Community Mini Soccer Pitch committee comprising of 14 members from local schools, youth projects,

	<p>residents, football club and local councillors was set up to discuss the lack of sporting facilities available within the Blackmountain Community. Due to the lack of sufficient facilities in the immediate area the Blackmountain Springfield Star Football Club has been training and competing on offsite locations and as such they advise that they are finding it increasingly difficult to actively engage and recruit local children. The Springfield Star Blackmountain Action Group agreed to seek LIF funding through the AWG to redevelop the existing grassed area, shown shaded blue on the plan attached at Appendix '1', at Blackmountain Park with a third generation playing surface, erection of 4m high pitch side fencing and 4 floodlight masts.</p> <p>2.4 The Springfield Star Blackmountain Mini Soccer Pitch committee have now become the Blackmountain Action Group.</p> <p>2.5 It is proposed that the Council's Property & Projects Department will deliver this project.</p> <p>2.6 The Committee is asked to note that the Blackmountain Action Group have requested a three year lease for the portion of Springmartin Play area shown shaded blue on the plan attached at Appendix '1'. This proposal is in line with the SP&R Committee's clarification of LIF guidance to Members at its meeting on the 22 June 2012, that a LIF proposal in respect of a Council asset could be eligible if it was subject to a lease of reasonable duration from the Council. The Blackmountain Action Group specifically requested a short term lease as they are aware of the risks and responsibilities associated with managing sporting facilities. The granting of the lease will be subject to receipt of the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a satisfactory business plan which clearly demonstrates the sustainability of the proposed project, (ii) a sports development plan, (iii) consent from NIHE to change of user and subletting, (iv) securing the appropriate approvals including planning and building control.
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3.	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>Financial</p> <p>The redevelopment of this land to provide a third generation playing surface, erection of 4m high pitch side fencing and 4 floodlight masts is to be funded by way of £150,000 of LIF support as agreed in principle by SP&R on the 23 November 2012. The Council will deliver the scheme via Property & Projects. The amount of rent to be charged by the Council and the details of the lease will be the subject of a further report to SP&R in due course.</p>
3.2	<p>Human Resources</p> <p>Resources in Parks and Leisure, Estates Management Unit and Legal</p>

	Services involved in agreeing detailed terms and drawing up the proposed lease..
3.3	Asset and Other Implications The provision of a third generation synthetic surface would increase use of the facility and help address short fall in provision. It would support the development of programmes to support initiatives around health and well being; community safety and the creation of shared spaces.

4.	Equality Implications
4.1	An EQIA was carried out at the outset of the Investment Programme. As part of the due diligence process, officers will equality screen all the LIF projects, both individually and as a whole programme. Where any adverse equality impact is identified, either at individual project level, or at a programme or area level, mitigating actions will be devised for inclusion in the letter of offer, and/or for the consideration of the AWGs.

5.	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree, in principle to enter into a lease arrangement with Blackmountain Action Group for a period of 3 years subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) receipt of amended business plan, (ii) sports development plan, (iii) consent from NIHE to change of user and subletting, (iv) securing the appropriate approvals , including planning and building control and council agreement to making the land available. (v) approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in line with Standing Orders.

6.	Decision Tracking
6.1	Actions to be completed by Estates Management Unit and Legal Services by 30 April 2013

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	NIHE – Northern Ireland Housing Executive LIF – Local Investment Fund SP&R – Strategic Policy and Resources AWG – Area Working Group

8.	Documents Attached
	Plan attached at Appendix '1'.