



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Stadia Update
Date:	9 May 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Members will be aware that in March 2013, SP&R agreed to continue the 'in principle' decision to move both the Olympia and Andersonstown Leisure Centres to Stage 2 of the Capital Programme as the first phase of the Citywide Leisure Estate Review.</p> <p>SP&R Committee also agreed to further develop the regeneration plans in respect of both sites concurrently as far as possible working toward an investment decision in May with a completion date in 2016.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>Intensive discussions have been ongoing with the IFA/DCAL re: the lease agreement if the Council was to relocate its facility into Windsor. These discussions have ranged from the IFA proposing an initial rental cost of £200,000 per annum, and a further revised proposal of £142,500 per annum reviewable annually in line with RPI and based on a 25-50 year lease term. IFA were basing their rental proposals on a 'return on capital' investment principle.</p> <p>While there are clearly benefits to both the Council and the IFA in terms of co-location, the Committee considered a number of critical issues:</p> <p>a. Correspondence from the IFA to date has been vague in its detail. It has not definitely confirmed that the relocation will be at a nil rental nor give any confirmation re the lease period to be offered to the Council – this currently does not represent a value for money proposition for the Council</p>

- b. IFA have highlighted that agreement on relocation *“is subject to a **funding methodology** which would enable the Association to **develop significant social capital in the local area by way of community developments**”*. Preliminary discussions have taken place with the IFA in this regard but the **nature and quantum of this remains to be agreed**.
- c. Option 3 (Relocation) anticipates a contribution of £2.6m being made by DCAL/IFA in respect of the shell for the leisure facility which in effect represents the ‘community benefit’ contribution of the stadium development.
- d. **Phase 2** of this proposal (the ‘sports village’) concept **needs further development. Substantial additional enabling works** are also required in order to facilitate the relocation of the leisure facility within the West Stand. This includes the cost of the boulevard access road, the relocation of the two pitches (existing Council and Linfield), potentially a new stand and a new play park. Discussions are also ongoing re the potential of relocating the existing community centre closer to the Village area
- e. **The timescales for this project are extremely tight**. In order to meet the programme for delivery of the stadium there will be a significant amount of work which will need to be undertaken within the coming weeks including final specification for the centre, detailed costs and designs.
- f. The **layout of the new centre is constrained** by the site boundary and the shape of the proposed shell. Officers will proactively work to ensure a design which maximises the use of the space while ensuring its flexibility.

In light of these issues, the Committee agreed:

- **‘in principle’ with relocation only on the basis** of a nil rental and a lease of at least 25years is agreed with the IFA (subject to the detailed terms of the lease being agreed by Council’s Town Solicitor and Estates Manager) and a mutually beneficial agreement is reached by the IFA and the Council in relation to the social capital/community benefit arrangement.
- a definitive position should be sought from the IFA to allow an update report to be taken to the SP&R Committee meeting in May
- the **Council continues to work ‘at risk’** on this project in the

	<p>coming weeks on developing costs and detailed designs in order to meet the timescales for the delivery of the stadium programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - officers also continue to explore alternative options in the event that a mutually beneficial agreement cannot be reached with the IFA - a further report on Andersonstown/Casement, including an update on community benefit, should be brought to Committee in due course. <p>Further updates and information on decisions required will be brought to SP&R Committee in May and June.</p>
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3.	<p>Resource Implications</p>
	<p>Financial: Not quantified at this stage but likely to involve significant financial investment in regard to the two leisure centres and associated assets required to fulfil regeneration opportunities. There may also be potential revenue consequences in relation to the community benefits.</p> <p>Human Resources: There will be significant staff resource requirements from relevant departments in order to develop each project in line with DCAL's tight timeframe. Potential staffing issues will be examined as part of the overall review of the leisure transformation programme. Any resultant HR issues will be managed in accordance with the Council's processes, policies and procedures for dealing with HR matters and TU consultation.</p> <p>Asset and Other Implications: Unknown at this stage, however comprehensive regeneration of the stadium developments should lead to improved services and benefits for the community and aesthetic improvements at Council sites.</p>

4.	<p>Equality Implications</p>
	<p>The phases of the overall leisure transformation will be subject to equality screening. This will include the periodic screening of the stadia developments as part of phase 1 to identify differential impacts and any mitigating actions required, in accordance with standard Council procedures.</p>

5.	<p>Recommendations</p>
	<p>Committee is asked to note the above report.</p>

6.	<p>Decision Tracking</p>
	<p>The Leisure Transformation Board will be responsible for the development of this project, and reporting back to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee.</p>

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	IFA – Irish Football Association DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
8.	Documents Attached
	None