



### Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Resurfacing of Multi Sports Games Area (MUGA) at Waterworks</b>
<b>Date:</b>	6 December 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Fintan Grant, City Park Manager

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>The Committee is reminded that the Council constructed a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in the Waterworks Park in 2001. The pitch measures 80 metres by 40 metres, is constructed with a synthetic polymeric surface, ball stop fencing and floodlighting. As part of the funding agreement the council entered into a facilities management agreement with the North Belfast Play Forum (the Forum) to manage the MUGA. The council allocates an annual management fee of £11,650 to the Forum to support the on-site maintenance of the pitch. In addition to managing the facility on our behalf the Forum is responsible for engaging with the local community to encourage the use of the facility.</p> <p>The facility is widely regarded as being highly successful in attracting a high volume of users - in the region of 70,000 per annum. It is opened 7 days a week from 10am to late evening; in addition opening hours are extended at the weekend to accommodate midnight soccer.</p> <p>In April 2009 the top surface of the pitch was re-laid costing £34,000.</p> <p>The Council has been made aware through the North Belfast Play Forum that a funding opportunity has presented itself to upgrade the pitch to a 3G surface. The funding is through Biffaward which is a multi-million pound fund which awards grants to community and environmental projects across the UK. The fund's money comes from landfill tax credits donated by Biffa Waste Services. Biffaward is managed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) on Biffa's behalf. The estimated cost of the upgrade would be in the region of the £60,000, Biffaward would provide a maximum of £50,000 leaving a shortfall of £10,000. The Forum has asked that the Council consider meeting this short fall.</p>

<p>The Forum has highlighted that participation and usage figures for the facility have declined over the past 12 months with local sporting clubs preferring to use the more modern 3G playing surfaces elsewhere. It is the view of the Forum that without the upgrade the facility will run down. The Forum maintains that the additional investment would ensure that it can offer competitive facilities at a competitive price and sustain its long run of success in the area.</p> <p>It is estimated that the construction work would take approximately 2 weeks and there would be no disruption to park users during construction as separate access is available on site.</p> <p>A licence agreement with North Belfast Play Forum to facilitate the closure and completion of the works would be necessary.</p> <p>The surface will need to be marked for the following games to be played:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• soccer</li><li>• hurling</li><li>• gaelic football</li><li>• hockey</li></ul>
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<p><b>2. Key Issues</b></p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Waterworks facility has been a success and has become a model for midnight soccer across the City.</li><li>2. There has been relatively little investment in this facility over the years other than routine maintenance and resurfacing works.</li><li>3. Changes in technology and users expectations have combined to challenge the sustainability of the current provision.</li><li>4. In 2009 consideration was given to the installation of a 3G surface however it was believed that the polymeric surface would be adequate.</li><li>5. There are ongoing maintenance problems with drainage and pooling which restrict the use of the facility during winter and periods of heavy rain.</li><li>6. There is no provision in the estimates for this work to be carried out in 2012/123 budget estimates, however subject to the successful grant award this amount could possibly be secured from the review of other maintenance programmes.</li><li>7. Members will be aware of proposals under the pitches strategy and other projects which will increase 3G pitch provision in that particular area of North Belfast. Within the next 18-24 months 3G pitches at Solitude (soccer), Cliftonville Playing field (GAA), Marrowbone (soccer), Ballysillan (soccer), Boys Model (soccer), St Malachy's College (GAA/soccer) may be constructed however the Waterworks provides a unique facility which attracts a wide range of socially deprived and excluded groups and it is contended that its natural catchment would continue to support the facility should the up grade go ahead. The Forum has become a hub for sports initiatives and</li></ol>
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	sports development in the North of the city and beyond. The lack of a 3G surface at this facility would have a serious impact on the vitality and relevance of this site to young people, families and the wider community.
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<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p><u>Financial Implications</u> The costs of replacing the polymeric surface to the 3G pitch will be £60,000. The Council is being asked to provide £10,000 of the total cost as referred to at point 6 above. Annual maintenance costs for the 3G surface will be £3,000 compared to £2,500 for the polymeric, this can be provided from within the 2012/13 budget provision. The cost of the facility management agreement is currently provided for within the revenue budgets. The project is dependent on the Forum securing funding of £50,000 from Biffaward.</p> <p><u>Human Resource Implications</u> There are no additional human resource implications.</p> <p><u>Other Asset Implications</u> This work is necessary to secure the continued use of this well used facility.</p>

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
	None.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	The Committee is asked to note the above report and consider the recommendation to agree to support the project to the amount of £10,000 subject to the successful award of grant funding from Biffaward.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision tracking</b>
	Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Manager to action.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	<p>The Forum: North Belfast Play Forum  MUGA: Multi Use Games Area  3G 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation</p>

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1: North Belfast Play Forum proposal document

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**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Belfast Play Forum Lease
<b>Date:</b>	9 August 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Walker, Parks and Leisure Department

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Relevant Background Information</b></p> <p>The Committee is reminded that at its meeting in December 2012 it received a report which outlined a proposal from the North Belfast Play Forum to replace the existing polymeric surface with a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation surface (Appendix A). The Committee agreed to make a 3<sup>rd</sup> party contribution of up to £10,000 subject to the successful award of grant funding from BIFFA.</p> <p>The Committee is referred to Appendix B which is a copy of the conditional letter of Offer from BIFFA regarding the grant. The letter contains a number of points of relevance to the Council.</p> <p>Paragraph three seeks a contribution of £5,102.04 from the Council as a 3<sup>rd</sup> party funding body; this is less than the anticipated £10,000 and is within the terms of the previous decision.</p> <p>Paragraph six refers to three quotations being required to satisfy the procurements of BIFFA, the primary funding body. At the time of the previous report no terms and conditions relating to procurement practice, however, Members will be aware that the Council's procurement guidelines would require in the case of a Council led procurement exercise a tender process be undertaken for expenditure in excess of £30,000 and that tenders be sought from four potential suppliers. In this instance, the procurement will be undertaken by the North Belfast Play Forum and it is proposed that as our contribution is under the £30,000 threshold that we concur with the requirements of the main funding body, BIFFA.</p> <p>Finally, the attention of the Committee is drawn to paragraph seven which</p>
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	refers to the requirement for a minimum 15 year lease. The purpose of this is to ensure that the facility is sustained for the purpose of the grant and used as sporting facility.
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<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<p>The Committee is asked to consider the issue of security of tenure as referred to in paragraph seven of Appendix B.</p> <p>Members are reminded that there is an existing management agreement in place between the Council and the North Belfast Play Forum. Within this agreement maintenance and management responsibilities have been divided between the two parties. To support the Play Forum the Council makes an annual payment of £12,000 towards the running costs.</p> <p>The Committee will be aware of the ongoing review of facilities management agreements. At present the agreement with the Play Forum runs from month to month. Officers are seeking to regularise the situation and a separate report on the issue will be presented to Committee.</p> <p>Under revised proposals existing facilities management agreements will be replaced, this will result in the bringing in house of operational maintenance and bookings, no fee will be paid to agreement holders and income generated from the use of the facilities will revert back to the Council. New agreements will be entered into.</p> <p>Discussions with representatives from the Play Forum have indicated that the retention of income is vital to the delivery of programmes at the facilities and that whilst they appreciate the support from the Council in the past and the positive working relationship they believe that the lease option represents the best way forward at this time.</p> <p>The Forum has asked that the Committee be made aware that whilst the income potential from the 3G surface maybe greater than that gained from the current facility, it will require additional effort and staff, they have asked that the Committee to note that the loss of the annual fee will place a further strain on the Forum.</p>

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p><u>Financial</u> The move from a management agreement to a lease will result in a saving to the Council in the region of £12,000. BIFFA are provided approximately £50,000 to the North Belfast Play Forum.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no additional human resource implications; work can be progressed within existing resources.</p>

	<p><b><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></b>                  The lease represents a disposal and will therefore reduce the capacity of the Council in this area, although the associated demand will continue to be met by the Play Forum.</p>
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<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
	There are no equality implications.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the content of the report;</li> <li>2. Authorise the payment of £5,102.04 to the North Belfast Forum in respect of the replacement of the existing polymeric surface with a 3G surface;</li> <li>3. Agree to a lease agreement up to a maximum of 15 years to meet the terms and conditions of the funder, subject to approval by Strategic Policy &amp; Resources in line with Standing Order 60, be entered into with the North Belfast Play Forum and that appropriate terms and conditions be put in place to safeguard the Councils' interests in the land.</li> </ol>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	A further report will be presented to Committee upon completion of the works.

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	None.

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None.

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