



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Mary Peters Trust
Date:	16 January 2014
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>In the last number of years the Parks and Leisure Committee has approved a contribution of £5,000 to the Mary Peters Trust. The Trust assesses sporting need and provides small grants to individual sports people to assist them in achieving excellence in sport.</p> <p>Advice from the Legal Services Manager has indicated that as a general rule district councils do not have any legal power to contribute to the funds of charitable organisations. The only exception to that general rule being where an application for financial assistance is made under criteria which the Council has in place in relation to the incurring of expenditure for special purposes under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 section 37 (previously known as section 115 of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972.)</p> <p>The Act permits the council to make any payment for any purpose which in its opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the council;b) the district or any part of its district; orc) the inhabitants of its district of any part of its district. <p>The amount of money available under Section 37 is subject to an annual cap and in determining whether any payment should be made the Council must ask whether the benefit would be commensurate with the payment to be made.</p>
2	Key Issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Mary Peters Trust has made a request to the Council for a financial contribution to the work of the trust for the 2014/15calendar year. (appendix

	<p>one)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the Committee be minded to make a contribution to the trust, given its charitable status, the contribution would have to be made under Section 37 Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011. An assessment of the request against the criteria agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in 2004 has indicated that the request would bring a direct benefit to the inhabitants of Belfast. It is proposed that a contribution of £5,000 be made to the Mary Peters Trust under Section 37 Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011. If agreed it is considered that the benefit obtained will be commensurate with the payment made.
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3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> The proposed £5,000 can be accommodated within Section 37 budget</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no human resource implications.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> None.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None

5	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to agree to make a contribution of £5,000 in the 2014/15 financial year to the Mary Peters Trust and resolve that the expenditure be approved under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, it being the opinion of the Committee that the expenditure would bring direct benefits to the inhabitants of the district and that the direct benefits would be commensurate with the payment made.

6	Decision Tracking
	The Business Manager will be responsible for carrying out the decision of the Committee at the start of the 2014/15 financial year.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8	Documents Attached
	Appendix one – Correspondence from Mary Peters Trust