



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Bridges Urban Sports Park – End Project Review
Date:	16 January 2014
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Caroline Wilson, Neighbourhood and Development Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Members will be aware that funding was granted to the Council by SEUPB in August 2008 for the purposes of building an outdoor urban sport facility located between Little Patrick Street and Corporation Street under the M3 flyover bridge. The total project cost of £500,000 was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £390,000 funded by SEUPB under measure 2.1 of the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2007-2013• £80,000 funded by Belfast City Council through the Capital Build Programme• £50,000 funded through the Brighter Belfast Landfill Tax Credits Scheme. <p>The development period of the Urban Sports park ended on 31 December 2013.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>Since May 2011 regular sports events, activities and programmes have been running at the park including 25 cross community events, 6 cross border events, 24 formal competitions, and 12 events involving community and voluntary groups throughout Belfast with an emphasis on involving a wide range of organisations from neighbourhood renewal areas throughout all parts of the City.</p> <p>A further 120 events were staged focussing on outreach work and coaching, and a wide range of volunteers have been trained and have sought employment in the increasing popular urban sports industry. By targeting local neighbourhood and community and voluntary organisations we ensure that all events and activities are representative of all community backgrounds.</p> <p>A project evaluation has been completed and sent to Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). All programme expenditure including capital, marketing,</p>

programme and staff costs has been drawn down to date.

A further claim is to be made in relation to expenditure occurred between October 2013 and December 2013. This claim will be submitted in January 2014.

The key strengths to the project are as follows:

- Good partnership approach from the beginning of the project until project closure;
- Achievement of all KPI's within budget;
- A healthy focus on providing volunteering opportunities for young people and providing / enabling pathways to further training, education and / or employment;
- Detailed communications plan drawn up and the use of social media to promote and highlight the regular events, activities and programmes that occurred through the Peace III Bridges Urban Sports Park project.

Importantly, according to user surveys, the park was attractive and reached a key group of young, male adults who are often not accessing mainstream leisure provision. Also of note, is the accredited pathway for volunteers which has targeted young people not in training, employment or education and enabled them to access paid opportunities in the emerging urban sports industry.

The evaluation report also noted a number of areas for future development including the potential to improve monitoring of participants, who use the facility as well as the potential to seek funding for increased facilities e.g. toilets, seating areas, power generators.

The report recommends that the partnership arrangements with the urban sports organisations BUS and No Limat continue, in order to support a comprehensive management plan for the park. No Limat is a community interest company who are responsible for managing events in conjunction with Belfast City Council and are key holders who lock the facility on a daily basis. Over the duration of the Peace III funding, a successful partnership has developed in which No Limat support the management and animation of the site.

The current 'Service Level Agreement' (SLA) with "No Limat" runs to 31 January 2014 and on a month to month basis thereafter, unless determined by either party by the giving of one month's written notice to the other.

Based on the successes to date, Legal Services has suggested that we extend the SLA with our partners No Limat for a further two years to ensure the up keep of the facility and to develop regular events and activities working with groups and communities city wide with a focus on young people.

This will ensure the sustainability of the park in terms of maintaining the facility to a high standard as well as running events throughout the year with a focus on cross community events and working with community and voluntary groups. This is in line with the commitments in the letter of offer from SEUPB in relation to sustaining their investment.

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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Asset:</u> Subject to Committee agreement, Legal Services will undertake to negotiate the terms for the renewal of the SLA/partnership agreement with No Limit for the management of the Bridges Urban Sports Park. Parks Service (Area North) is responsible for the maintenance of the park.</p> <p><u>Financial:</u> There is no direct cost for the SLA/partnership agreement. Any costs relating to events organised as part of the SLA/partnership agreement will be covered either by revenue budgets or external funding.</p> <p><u>Human Resources:</u> Parks Service – outreach will have overall responsibility for the Bridges Urban Sports Park, and work with No Limits to manage the park to achieve the desired outcomes and sustain successes to date.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	None

5.	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to grant authority to Legal Services, in liaison with the Director of Parks and Leisure to agree the terms for a further extension to the SLA/partnership agreement with No Limits for the management of the Bridges Urban Sports Park.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Officer responsible: Actions to be completed by: Cormac McCann, Leisure Development Manager

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	BCC - Belfast City Council SEUPB – Special EU Programmes Body SLA – Service Level Agreement

8.	Documents Attached
	None