



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Centenary Fields Programme
Date:	12 June 2014
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Royal British Legion and Fields in Trust have written to Belfast City Council inviting us to join in the Centenary Fields Programme.</p> <p>The stated objective of this new programme is 'to encourage every council in the UK to nominate at least one recreational space to be dedicated as a Centenary Field to commemorate this significant milestone in our shared history and to create a tangible local legacy that will be valued by your local community for generation to come.'</p> <p>The Royal British Legion as the UK's largest armed forces charity and the Custodian of Remembrance will be leading the nation in respecting the sacrifices made during World War 1.</p> <p>Fields in Trust is the operating name of the National Playing Fields Association who have been the leading independent charity campaigning to secure and improve playing fields for more than 85 years. The charity works with councils to safeguard a number of sites including the King George V Playing Field (protected 1956) and is currently in the process of protecting Orangefield Park as part of the Queen Elizabeth II campaign.</p> <p>Both organisations are working together to deliver the Centenary Fields programme which aims to create a living UK-wide legacy and at the same time commemorate the sacrifice made by those who gave their lives in the conflict. The protected sites could be sites that contain war memorials or other valued green spaces.</p> <p>All first tier local authorities across the UK have been invited to participate. The programme will run over the four years of the centenary commemorations to establish the legacy by November 2018 to mark the centenary of the end of World War 1.</p>

	<p>The programme will be launched officially in November 2014 and in 2015 Centenary Have a Field Day will be launched where local communities will be invited to participate in activities that their ancestors would have enjoyed at the beginning of the last century.</p> <p>Fields in Trust will provide support for Councils wishing to hold a local event to mark the site's dedication and will be working to raise funds to provide occasional improvement grants to sites protected as part of the Centenary Fields programme.</p>
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2.	Key Issues
	<p>Many of the Council's properties have already been gifted to the council with restrictive use clauses contained within the title deeds to those properties which effectively create a trust which the council is required to adhere to.</p> <p>There are many other Council properties held under deeds of dedication with the Millennium Commission signed in 2000 for a period of 99 years and these could not be nominated.</p> <p>Other properties gifted to the Council such as Dunville Park and Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park were named after their benefactor(s), in accordance with specific requests by those benefactors.</p> <p>If the Council chooses to nominate any of its properties the title would first need to be examined to ensure that the property is not already subject to a Deed of Dedication, or to alienation provisions within the title (i.e. restrictions on assignment, or parting with possession) or certain use covenants.</p> <p>The Deeds of Dedication issued by the Fields in Trust and which the Council would be required to sign are stringent and constrain what the Council can do in terms of disposal or any building works/changes of use affecting any nominated property. A Burden is required to be registered against the title of the nominated property. Any dealings with the property or works to same in the future would require the consent of Fields in Trust, and once successfully nominated this remains the case in perpetuity.</p> <p>Proposed Approach</p> <p>The Council has previously participated in the Fields in Trust Queen Elizabeth II campaign. The approach identified possible sites and subsequently assessed their feasibility including an examination of title.</p> <p>In this case it is proposed that officers liaise with Party Group Leaders to receive site nominations and that an assessment of feasibility is carried out by Legal Services and Estates Unit with proposals brought to a future committee for approval.</p>
3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> No financial implications</p>

	<p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>Impact on Legal Services and the Estates Unit to carry out assessment of sites and or examining Title.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>The title of nominated properties would need to be examined to ensure that they are not already subject to deeds of dedication or subject to alienation provisions or certain use covenants.</p> <p>The chosen site would be subject to a deed of dedication which would constrain Council's use of the property in the future.</p>
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4.	Equality and good relations implications
	There are no equality implications.

5.	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to agree participation in the Centenary Fields Programme and to the proposed approach to nominating sites.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	None