



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Falls Park Pitch Development – Proposed Consultation
Date:	12 June 2014
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Committee is reminded that it is intended to provide a 3rd generation artificial turf pitch and changing pavilion at Falls Park as part of the £14.1m investment in Pitches in the city. Planning approval for this project is expected shortly.</p> <p>During the engagement with local residents a number of concerns were raised, some of which were of a planning nature whilst others expressed concern over what could be termed management or operational issues.</p> <p>These latter issues such as opening and closing times and street car parking have been raised with the Director and Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure at a recent meeting with an Elected Representative from the area. It has been requested that the Council undertake a consultation process with residents to establish in more detail their concerns and to seek where possible, to put in place measures which would mitigate the concerns raised.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>The Committee is asked to consider the request to undertake this piece of work and in doing so to take into account the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Council Officers have previously met with residents from the immediate vicinity of the Park on a number of occasions to provide information on the reason for the proposed location, in particular concerns were raised about the impact parking might have on parking in the adjoining streets;2. The proposal has been through the planning process and has been recommended for approval;3. At this point it is intended to proceed to tender and to commence

	<p>work as soon as possible;</p> <p>4. In the interim there is a window of opportunity to further engage with those residents who have concerns regarding the management and operation of the pitch post completion</p> <p>5. Some of the concerns voiced are outside of the Council's powers, such as on street parking;</p> <p>6. Members are asked to be mindful that this may set a precedent for other projects being undertaken by the Council and that a wider consultation and engagement framework is being developed and will be brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.</p> <p>In addition the Chairman of the Committee has received a written request from a group of residents from the Norfolk Drive area to brief Members of the Committee in relation to their concerns. The Committee is asked to consider the request from residents to brief the Committee.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>There will be an additional cost in the commissioning of an independent piece of work to establish the issues, it is anticipated that this will cost in the region of £10,000, no provision has been made for this work within the current estimates. Upon completion of the consultation there may be further resource implications.</p> <p><u>Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The work will be carried out by an independent consultant, but will require input from Council Officers, including out of hours work.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	There are no equality implications

5.	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to authorise expenditure in the region of £10,000 to undertake a consultation exercise to establish the concerns of residents in the streets adjoining Falls Park and to bring Council proposals to address these issues.

6.	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be brought to Committee outlining mitigation plans by December 2014.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	None