



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Proposed Northern Ireland Centre of Food Education
Date:	11 September 2014
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1. Relevant Background Information

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of an emerging proposal from Groundwork NI to develop a National Centre of Food Education.

Appendix A to this report sets out the proposal. The main points are:

1. The proposal is based on work to develop a healthy living centre at Colin Glen;
2. The aim is to develop a social enterprise centre to provide a city wide resource to promote a health and well being agenda and to create opportunities to enhance multiculturalism and provide employment opportunities;
3. There have been preliminary conversations with Queens University Belfast and with a number of community and voluntary organisations in the South of the City;
4. The proposal includes a small sustainable building which would be an administrative base; an education and information centre; a facility to sell produce and potentially a café;

In the context of the development of a healthy living centre at Colin Glen and their engagement with Queen's University, Groundwork has approached the Council with a view to investigating potential sites in South Belfast and is seeking the Council's consent to identify sites and undertake some preliminary site surveys to determine the suitability of the soil for growing and indeed for the building. It is estimated that approximately an acre of land would be required.

2. Key Issues

The Committee is asked to note the following:

1. This project would fit with the Council's own Growing Communities strategy;
2. Identifying suitable sites in South Belfast is likely to be difficult, Botanic and Ormeau have been suggested during preliminary conversations;

	<p>3. Whilst no discussion has taken place as to the nature of the legal arrangement should a suitable location be identified; it is anticipated that a lease agreement will be the preferred arrangement;</p> <p>4. As the site has not been identified no statutory approvals have been sought at this time;</p> <p>5. No funding has been secured for the project, there are no cost projections but Groundwork are optimistic that given the range of potential funding options they would be able to draw down the necessary grants;</p> <p>The key issues for the Committee are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it supportive of the principle of the proposal? • Is it supportive of the proposal to potentially locate the centre on Council land in South Belfast?
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>At this time there are no financial implications</p> <p><u>Human Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no additional human resource implications</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	There are no equality implications.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is asked to consider the report and to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the proposal in principle; 2. Agree that officers meet with Groundwork to discuss potential sites; 3. Agree that appropriate tests be carried out to determine the suitability of the land subject to the necessary legal agreements being in place if necessary; and 4. Agree to receive a further report at a later date to update the Committee on the proposal and seek necessary further approvals as required.

6.	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be brought to the Committee at a later date.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix A National Food Centre Report September 2014.