



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Active Communities Programme
Date:	24 February 2015
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Caroline Wilson, Neighbourhood and Development Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>Active Communities (AC) is a Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) programme, delivered from April 2010 to March 2015, through 11 council groups/ consortia including BCC.</p> <p>It is recognised that the AC programme has proved to be a valuable coaching and community resource, which has led to high levels of participation in the city including under-represented groups, whilst providing opportunities for partnership working.</p>
1.2	<p>At its last meeting, Committee agreed that it would accept Sport NI's letter of offer for the delivery of the Active Communities programme in 2015/16. It also agreed to support Disability Sport NI's management fee of £7,000. It noted that there were 2 options for the continuation of the programme:</p> <p>Option 1: Continue 'as is' with a reduced management contribution to BCSDN; or</p> <p>Option 2: Manage all coaches in-house, with the exception of those employed through Disability Sport NI.</p> <p>Committee requested that officers concluded these discussions with Belfast Community Sports Development Network (BCSDN), to determine whether it was feasible for them to continue to deliver a sub-contract with the reduced management fee, covering the employment of 18 coaches.</p>

2.	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The Director met with the Board of Directors of BCSDN, to outline the new funding scenario (i.e. £50,000 management fee) and the options available to the Council. The Chairperson of BCSDN, Mr Tom Scott noted the Director's comments and agreed to respond in writing to the Council.</p>
2.2	<p>At the meeting, the Chairperson requested that the Council sought clarification from Sport NI on the potential to allocate any surplus from salaries into management costs; and secondly, to ascertain whether Sport NI would permit income generation through charging for some of the activities.</p> <p>The Director has spoken to Sport NI and they have confirmed that it is not possible for salaries to be allocated to management costs. It is however possible for BCSDN to</p>

	apply charges provided these are not excessive and take account of need.
2.3	<p>Option 1</p> <p>Correspondence has now been received from BCSDN and is attached as an appendix. It proposes that BCSDN continues to deliver the sub-contract, by reducing and re-configuring some of its management costs. In the letter, they commit to reducing the overall management fee required from Belfast City Council/Sport NI from £111,104 to £65,000. They have however also indicated that this would be dependent on DSD continuing to fund BCSDN but this has not yet been confirmed by DSD.</p> <p>BCSDN consider they can partly achieve this by controlling expenditure, utilising a portion of their financial reserves and introducing limited charges for sessions (excluding Neighbourhood Renewal areas and/or vulnerable groups).</p> <p>There remains a shortfall of £15,000 and BCSDN has requested that Council considers increasing its offer from £50,000 to £65,000.</p>
2.4	<p>The key risks with this approach is the limited resources of voluntary/community organisations to absorb the cost of managing and housing coaches, and BCSDN's ability to control expenditure. The Council would need to provide an additional £15,000 to the allocation already made.</p> <p>However, this model will provide better value for money than currently and sustains a devolved local approach to sports development, with minimum disruption to programme delivery.</p>
2.5	<p>Should the Committee recommend the sub-contracting arrangement with BCSDN, it is recommended that the additional requirements are put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly reporting on agreed SMART targets reflecting the KPIs in the letter of offer from Sport NI, to be discussed at performance review meetings • A demonstrated balance of interventions across the city and reports on an area basis to demonstrate local impact. <p>This option will be subject to confirmation by DSD of their portion of funding towards management costs.</p>
2.6	<p>Option 2</p> <p>Alternatively, the Council could opt to bring the delivery of the programme in-house. The revenue budget would need to be directed to additional resource to manage the network of sports coaches – either as part of the Leisure Development Unit or alternatively as a variation to the leisure contract with GLL.</p> <p>Administrative support would be available within current resources at no additional cost.</p>
2.7	<p>There are a number of drawbacks to centralising the Active Communities programme. The Council would need to give 3 months notice to BCSDN, which would require the Council to continue to pay a proportion of the current management fee of approximately £27k+ up until end June 2015. In addition, the existing coaches would transfer to the Council under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006. If the Council decided at any point in the future to terminate the contracts of the coaches (e.g. if Sport NI ceased the funding), the Council would be liable for the redundancy costs of the coaches.</p> <p>However, this option would standardise the sports development activities programme</p>

	across all areas of the city, in line with community planning expectations. It would improve value for money, with centralised administration and management costs, as well as increase the use of Council facilities in 'down-time'.
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p>Financial: £50,000 revenue funding has currently been provided in the departmental estimates. An additional £15,000 would be diverted from other activities.</p> <p>Human Resources: TUPE implications as outlined in Option 2.</p> <p>Asset and Other Implications: None</p>

4.	Equality Implications
	There are no equality and good relations implications at this stage.

5.	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to consider and agree its preferred option.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Responsible Officer: Neighbourhood and Development Manager

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>AC – Active Communities</p> <p>SNI – Sport Northern Ireland</p> <p>BCSDN – Belfast Community Sports Development Network</p> <p>DSD – Department of Social Development</p>

8.	Documents attached
	Appendix 1 - Correspondence from Mr Tom Scott, Belfast Sports Community Development Network