



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Proposed Lease Arrangements at Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park and Belfast Castle
<b>Date:</b>	23 November 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, Ext. 6217
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager, Ext. 3493

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	<p>As part of its Improvement Programme the Parks and Leisure Department has been investigating ways of generating additional income through the leasing of facilities within the Parks and Leisure Estate. At its meeting on 15 November 2012 the Parks and Leisure Committee received a report on proposed lease arrangements at the Stables Block, Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park and potential future letting arrangements at Belfast Castle. The Director of Property and Projects will provide an update on the outcome of the Parks and Leisure Committee meeting.</p>
1.2	<p>A copy of the report presented to the Parks and Leisure Committee, including the appended map is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The report relates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) The proposed re-location of Belfast City Marathon Offices from their existing 1<sup>st</sup> floor accommodation at the Stables (above the Restaurant) to somewhat smaller ground floor accommodation in an adjoining underutilised portion of the building.</li><li>ii) To facilitate the move referred to at i) will require the grant of a new lease to Belfast City Marathon Limited (the Marathon Office) on the new accommodation and termination of their existing lease on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor accommodation.</li><li>iii) The proposed termination of the Marathon Office lease will free up the 1<sup>st</sup> floor accommodation for potential re-letting through a commercial estate agency.</li><li>iv) The proposed re-location of visitor facilities from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Belfast Castle could free up this area for alternative uses. The Parks and Leisure Committee was recommended to consider authorising officers to further consider the feasibility of these proposals with a further report to be brought to Committee in due course.</li></ul>

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p>Ground Floor, The Stables</p> <p>Proposed new lease to the Marathon Office for 1 year and year to year thereafter, subject to a combined rent and service charge of £12,000 per annum, reviewable after five years. The Marathon Office will be responsible for rates, for any damage they cause to the property, public liability and contents insurance and any telephone charges. The Council will be responsible for internal and external maintenance. The anticipated cost of heating and lighting the property is encapsulated in the Service Charge element of the above annual payment figure.</p>
2.2	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Floor, The Stables</p> <p>Proposed surrender of existing lease which is for a period of 1 year and year to year thereafter at an annual rent of £11,000 per annum, plus Service Charge. The surrender will be subject to appropriate legal arrangements between the parties. Following vacation by the Marathon Office, the premises will be advertised 'to let' through a commercial estate agency. The terms of any new lease will be brought to Committee for approval in due course.</p>
2.3	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Belfast Castle</p> <p>Following re-location of the visitor accommodation from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, to the refurbished 'Cellar' area within the Castle, works could be undertaken to convert the relevant area to office accommodation. The proposed conversion remains subject to obtaining relevant Planning, Listed Building, and Building Control approvals. Following the proposed conversion the property could be advertised 'to let' through a commercial estate agency. The feasibility and costs associated with these proposals is to be further explored</p>

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources and Asset and other implications are set out in the appended report (Appendix 1).</p>

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	<p>There are no known equality or good relations issues associated with this proposal.</p>

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Committee is recommended to approve the grant of a lease to Belfast City Marathon Limited of the area shaded blue on the map at Appendix 1, for one year and year to year thereafter, at a combined Rent and Service Charge of £12,000 per annum, upon the terms set out in the body of this report and subject to a suitable legal agreement to be drawn up by the Town Solicitor.</li> <li>2. Committee is recommended to accept termination of the lease dated 16 December 2010 between the Council and Belfast City Marathon Limited,</li> </ol>

	<p>from a mutually agreed date, in accordance with any relevant contractual and statutory obligations as may be legally necessary to achieve this and subject to a suitable legal agreement (as may be required) to be drawn up by the Town Solicitor.</p> <p>3. Committee is recommended to note the proposed marketing of the vacated first floor offices area above the Stables Restaurant with the proposed terms of any letting to be reported to Committee in due course.</p> <p>4. Committee is recommended to authorise further work by officers to establish the feasibility of converting 2nd floor accommodation at Belfast Castle for potential commercial letting purposes.</p>
--	--

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
<p>The Director of Property and Projects to arrange for the initiation of necessary legal arrangements and marketing in respect of Belfast Marathon Office and liaise with the Director of Parks and Leisure regarding the feasibility of the proposed conversion works etc. at Belfast Castle.</p>	

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
<p>Belfast Marathon Office – Belfast City Marathon Limited.</p>	

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
<p>Appendix 1 – Report to the Parks and Leisure Committee of 15 November 2012, including map appended thereto.</p>	