

### Belfast Play Forum Lease

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 6th December, it had considered a report which had outlined a proposal from the North Belfast Play Forum to replace the existing polymeric surface at the Multi-Use Games Area in the Waterworks Park with a third generation pitch. Accordingly, the Committee had agreed to support the project in the sum of £10,000, subject to the successful award of grant-funding from BIFFA.

The Assistant Director reported that correspondence had been received from BIFFA which was now seeking a contribution of £5,102.04 from the Council and that that amount was less than the anticipated £10,000. In addition, the correspondence had indicated that three quotations would be required to satisfy BIFFA's procurement guidelines. She pointed out that, at the time of the previous report, no terms and conditions relating to procurement practice had been available. However, the Council's procurement guidelines required that, in the event of a Council-led procurement exercise, a tender process be undertaken for expenditure in excess of £30,000 and that tenders be sought from four potential suppliers. In this instance, the procurement would be undertaken by the North Belfast Play Forum and it was proposed that, as the Council's contribution was under £30,000, it concurred with the requirements of the main funding body.

She drew the Committee's attention to the fact that, in order to ensure that the facility was sustained for the purpose of the grant and used as a sporting facility, a fifteen year lease would be required. There was an existing management agreement in place between the Council and the Play Forum and, within that agreement, maintenance and management responsibilities had been divided between the two parties and, in order to support the Play Forum, the Council made an annual contribution of £12,000 towards its running costs.

The Assistant Director stated that, due to the fact that there was an on-going review of facilities and management agreements, the current lease with the Play Forum ran from month to month. Officers were seeking to regularise the situation and a report in this regard would be submitted for the Committee's consideration in due course. She pointed out that, under revised proposals, facilities management agreements would be replaced with operational maintenance and bookings in-house. Therefore, no fees would be paid to agreement holders and income generated from the use of such facilities would revert back to the Council. However, discussions with representatives of the Play Forum had indicated that the retention of its income would be vital to the delivery of the programme and that, whilst they appreciated the support which had been received from the Council in the past and the positive working relationship which had been developed, they were of the view that the lease option represented the best way forward. The Forum had requested that the Committee be made aware that, whilst the income potential from the third generation surface might be greater than that gained from the current facility, it would require additional effort and staff and had requested that the Committee note that the loss of the annual fee would place a further strain on the Forum. The Assistant Director stated that a move from a management agreement to a lease would result in a saving to the Council of approximately £12,000 and that BIFFA were providing approximately £50,000 to the Forum. Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee:

- (i) authorise the payment of £5,102.04 to the North Belfast Forum in respect of the replacement of the polymeric surface with a third generation surface; and
- (ii) agree, in order to meet the terms and conditions of BIFFA, to lease the site to the North Belfast Play Forum for a maximum period of 15 years, subject to approval, in accordance with Standing Order 60, of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the completion of an appropriate legal agreement.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.