



<b>Subject:</b>	Blacks Road Sensory Garden
<b>Date:</b>	7 June 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director Gary McNeill, Landscape Planner

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update members on an emerging project to develop a small sensory garden on council lands at Blacks Road Park.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Note this emerging project and to agree to officers from Landscape Planning &amp; Development Unit supporting the development and delivery of a new sensory garden at Blacks Road Park.</li><li>Agree that the Council undertake the ongoing maintenance and management of any new facility.</li></ul>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Blacks Road site transferred from Lisburn City Council to Belfast City Council under Local Government Reform (LGR) in April 2015 (See Appendix 1). It comprises two areas of linear open space on either side of a roadway connecting Colin Park Leisure Golf Course to Blacks Road. The western area of the site includes a wildlife walk, pedestrian

	bridge, gym stations and viewing platform. The scheme was delivered by Lisburn CC in partnership with Groundwork NI and local stakeholders prior to transfer.
3.2	In recent months high levels of antisocial behaviour have been prevalent at the site, causing significant nuisance for adjacent residents at Arlington Drive.
3.3	Funding set aside under LGR has allowed plans for a new playground to progress; with a full planning submission being made by the department in April 2016. The new facility is designed to include additional 2.4m high boundary fencing to make the wider site more secure and easier to manage. As a result a reduction in levels of anti-social behaviour and vandalism at Blacks Road is anticipated.
3.4	In parallel to the playground scheme, officers from Landscape Planning & Development Unit (LPDU) produced a concept masterplan in September 2015 for Blacks Road Park (see Appendix 2). The plan identified a number of physical improvements that would enhance the site's environmental quality and increase levels of community usage and ownership. One potential project listed was the development of a small sensory garden/ outdoor learning area adjacent to the entrance of the site.
3.5	Subsequently the Department of Social Development (DSD), Belfast Regeneration Office offered to contribute £130k funding to support the development and delivery of the new sensory garden.
3.6	Although much smaller in scale, the Blacks Road sensory garden will be designed to echo the existing Therapy Garden at Musgrave Park. It will provide a secure, inclusive, outdoor learning facility that can be enjoyed by children with a range of abilities. Design elements could include an outdoor classroom / story circle, raised planters with sensory horticulture and sensory play equipment.
	<u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u>
3.7	The cost of the new sensory garden is estimated to be in the region of £130k; DSD Belfast Regeneration Office have agreed to 100% funding of the project, subject to agreement of a detailed design and costing. Full planning approval will also be required as a condition of the funding offer.
3.8	Officers from LPDU propose to design the new sensory garden and to submit a planning

	<p>application. It is envisaged that construction of the facility will be delivered through the council's existing Measured Term Contract for Minor Civils Works, with LPDU officers supervising construction and handover of the scheme.</p>
3.9	DSD Belfast Regeneration Office has also confirmed that 70% of the works must be complete by the end of March 2017 in order to comply with their proposed funding offer.
3.10	Management and maintenance of the new facility will be absorbed within the existing operational budgets for the area.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>
3.11	There are currently no equality or good relation implications associated with this report.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
4.1	Appendix 1 – Location Plan Appendix 2 – Concept Masterplan