



Subject:	Girdwood Community Hub
Date:	4 April 2017
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
Contact Officer:	Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To provide an outline of progress to committee on the Girdwood Community Hub.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note progress to date• Consider the request for political representative on the Girdwood Community Forum.

3.0	Main report
	<p data-bbox="256 208 432 241"><u>Background</u></p> <p data-bbox="151 257 1455 443">3.1 The Girdwood site in north Belfast has been transformed into a state of the art shared space community hub which offers first-class leisure, community and education facilities. The project, which has a total value of £20 million with significant income via the EU's PEACE III Programme, has been developed in partnership with the Girdwood Hub Forum.</p> <p data-bbox="151 510 1455 689">3.2 The Community Hub and Pitch is the first step in the wider regeneration of Girdwood Park, a 14 acre site located between Crumlin Road and Cliftonpark Avenue. The hub is part of Council's Investment Programme and also ties in with plans to transform our leisure services over the next decade.</p> <p data-bbox="256 763 619 797">Community Participation:</p> <p data-bbox="151 813 1455 1149">3.3 The Girdwood Community Forum was set up by Belfast City Council in 2011 to work in partnership with Council in delivering the Girdwood Community Hub project as a centre for peace and reconciliation and a shared site. The Forum is a cross community body chaired by council and made up of over 20 groups from the surrounding area, representatives from the Department for Communities, Belfast MET, Newington Housing Association, PSNI and other key stakeholders. There has been consistent and committed representation from those community groups who work around the Girdwood site.</p> <p data-bbox="151 1216 1455 1597">3.4 Last year, Forum members agreed that given the change in stage of some of the key elements of the project, that is to post construction, it would be timely to review the terms of reference and the membership to ensure clarity of roles and responsibility and effective engagement. The review was supported with external facilitation, initially from Stratagem and then by Stellar Leadership. At each stage of the process the recommendations were amended to reflect stakeholder comment. A final draft proposal, which summarised the conversation to date and outlined proposals to refresh the community engagement arrangements, was formally considered by the Forum at their meeting in Feb 2017.</p> <p data-bbox="151 1664 1455 1899">3.5 The paper proposes two focused structures – one with a Girdwood Park planning remit and the other with a Girdwood Hub & Pitches delivery remit. This proposal reflects the need to retain the identified best practice of the Forum while also addressing the need for an operational group to address the 'day to day' aspects of the Facility which is managed by GLL.</p>

3.6	<p>While some community members raised concerns around the potential to <i>dilute</i> the role of the Forum, the formal community feedback supported a need for an operational group to co-ordinate the work of the various operational partners within the Girdwood Community Hub. They indicated that any such group would report back to the Girdwood Community Forum to record progress and note issues. The Forum noted the concerns and agreed to adopt the recommendations on an interim basis subject to ongoing review.</p>
3.7	<p>The discussion noted the overriding desire to retain the open membership and therefore accessibility of the Girdwood Community Forum (GCF) which has been cited by all as an example of best practice for community engagement. There is agreement, however, that membership of the new Girdwood Operational Group (GOG) would be limited to those with a service delivery remit and will be chaired by GLL. The Forum agreed that others can and will be invited to join and attend either the Forum or the Operational Group as issues that matter to them arise.</p>
3.8	<p>The review also highlighted the need for Forum members to be supported to keep their organisations and wider networks informed. Priority will be given to developing a communications plan and to identify support channels to ensure provision is made to engage, involve, consult and inform the wider community of issues and proposals as they emerge. A 'lessons learnt' and outcome based planning workshop is being planned for April 2017.</p>
3.9	<p>Community representatives also suggest the model should be built upon and would be strengthened by the involvement of Belfast City Councillors on the Forum. Officers agreed to put this to committee for consideration in the context of Council protocols and precedent in this regard. Since April 2016, community representatives from the Forum have been invited to meet with the North Area Working Group on a bi-monthly basis to monitor progress. The Girdwood Community Forum representatives nominated to attend the meetings are (please note that whilst the representatives are there on behalf of the Girdwood Community Forum, all have their own individual organisations):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Manus Maguire (Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum)▪ Janice Beggs (Lower Oldpark Community Association)▪ Ian McLaughlin (Lower Shankill Community Outreach Project)▪ Paul O'Neill (Ashton Community Trust)▪ Rosemary McGreevy (Thorndale Duncairn Kinnard Residents Association)

Community Programming:

3.10 The Girdwood Community Hub has now been open for just over one year. In that time it has shown itself to be a fantastic facility and asset that is used in increasing numbers by local residents and young people from the surrounding communities – Lower Shankill, Lower Oldpark, New Lodge, Cliftonville, Girdwood, and Thorndale, Duncairn, Kinnard and across North Belfast and beyond. For example, in October 2016 a Halloween event drew more than 1,200 local people with representative attendance across community background and age profiles.

3.11 The priority objective is to ensure the Hub is accepted as a safe and welcoming venue for everyone and that it is used by nearby community groups, as well as other organisations in north Belfast, including statutory bodies and charities.

3.12 The Hub is managed by GLL. The on-site facilities include:

- state of the art gym equipment
- spa
- sports hall and changing facilities for a wide range of group exercises, including a range of cardio, strength, conditioning and relaxation classes
- multi-purpose rooms for a variety of events and activities
- community space for after-schools, crafts and other activities
- birthday party room hire
- classrooms for courses with Belfast Metropolitan College
- a dedicated youth space
- an outdoor piazza with seating, as well as a range of other facilities

Leisure and Sports Development

3.13 GLL have an extensive programme with a broad activity offer, for example, Chronic Condition Management Programme, Women’s programme in partnership with WISPA, Cardiac rehab, Stroke association speech and language therapy, pulmonary rehab programme and Jog Belfast. They are also working with Volunteer Now to specifically look at extending seniors involvement including a Men’s Shed project, coffee mornings, etc. They are working in partnership with MacMillan Cancer and a project support officer has now started with GLL and is based in Girdwood.

Belfast Metropolitan College

3.14 Belfast Met are running a range of education programmes from their dedicated facility on

	<p>site. These include Essential skills - literacy, numeracy and ICT, Family learning, Childcare, Beginners and Improvers computer courses and Tour Guides. In partnership with the Prince's Trust, they are delivering a 12 week Team programme for young people between the ages of 16 and 24. The college are working with the Forum to encourage participation in their current programme and to inform and extend their future programme offer.</p>
3.15	<p>Officers from the LEMIS+ Project recently presented to the Forum in order to agree how to promote better linkages between the opportunities / availability of training and mentor offers via LEMIS and the users at Girdwood.</p>
	<p><u>Dedicated Youth Space</u></p>
3.16	<p>The Forum have endorsed the need for a community provider of the Youth Space and welcomed this as a capacity building pathway towards the aspiration for future community management of the Hub. The work was initially developed by North Talks Too (NTT) with input from the Youth Space Working Group (YSWG) of the wider GCF. BCC have since provided technical assistance from the <i>Interaction Institute for Social Change</i> to support NTT to develop a detailed business proposal. Any proposal needs to demonstrate ongoing engagement with and incorporation of the views of the broader community before being tabled with the GCF for formal endorsement. Whilst the original outline proposal came from NTT, community representatives propose that the governance structures of Girdwood Community Trust (GCT) would be better placed to take the proposal forward. Founding members of GCT (and NTT) are Lower Oldpark Community Association, Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum and Lower Shankill Community Association.</p>
3.17	<p>Once a final proposal is submitted, it will be assessed by Council officers and presented to Council for any resource decision. A joint funding application will be made to the Executive Office.</p>
3.18	<p>Prior to a community management contract being in place, officers from Community Services are supporting the YSWG in the development and delivery of the activity programme within the Youth Space and wider Hub. The latest programme runs to the end of March 2017 and the working group are already planning to extend this to the end of June. The programme is collaborative in nature involving local community youth providers, funded by BCC and the Executive Office, and provides a range of activity for young people such as: arts, IT and sports for all encouraging access to the Hub. The addition of the</p>

	<p>media suite within the Youth Space provides an opportunity to reach older people and young parents as well as children and young people. The programme includes outreach and detached work which aims to support local young people at risk, reduce ASB on site and encourage involvement in the Youth Space and Hub.</p>
3.19	<p><u>Shared Space:</u> The Girdwood Community Hub Forum established a Shared Space and Programming working group in August 2015 to develop and agree a shared space approach that will inform the programming of all areas of the Girdwood Community Hub. The key objectives of the Shared Space and Programming working group are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agree the establishment of a small group of stakeholders, with Belfast City Council, to oversee the development of the shared space approach and GCH programme ▪ Consult with wider stakeholders through an engagement process which is agreed ▪ Report back to the Girdwood Forum on progress ▪ Develop a communication protocol to ensure that the development process and the plan is appropriately communicated to all stakeholders ▪ Build in a monitoring process to measure and adjust the delivery of the shared space plan
3.20	<p>Belfast City Council Good Relations Unit is facilitating the Shared Space and Programming working group. The group is composed of three nominated community representatives and representatives from BMC, GLL and BCC.</p>
3.21	<p>The Shared Space and Programming Group delivered a very successful summer programme in association with the local community organisations: this included the Girdwood Community Cup, which, due to the success of the event, the group has endorsed as an annual event for the Hub. A further highlight was the very well-attended performance of a hard-hitting theatre piece, 'Those that we pass on the street', delivered by Kabosh Theatre Company and with a community-led facilitated conversation following the performance: this play was complemented with an exhibition on 'Everyday Objects' associated with the Troubles and delivered in association with Healing through Remembering.</p>
3.22	<p>The main focus of the Shared Space group over the last number of weeks has been the organisation of the community event "Spring into Girdwood" on Saturday 25 March 2017. The event was an opportunity to celebrate and mark the first 12months of operation and the programme included a range of activities to cater for all ages ranges such as: Circus</p>

skills, inflatables, petting farm, animal interaction station, junior football tournament, birds of prey display, mountain biking skills, arts and crafts, performance acts, free BBQ, climbing wall, kiddies amusement rides, photobooth, music entertainment, playbus, a dedicated youth zone and go karts.

3.23

Community Safety: A recent Committee report noted Girdwood as one of a number of sites across the city affected with a level of criminal damage including inappropriate use of scramblers, abuse of staff/residents, rowdy and nuisance behaviour. Analysis of incident reports for the site shows the frequency of incidents at Girdwood as unpredictable, however, the level of ongoing nuisance and anti-social behaviour within the building and site remains of concern. In order to proactively maintain the safety and shared nature of the site/building, BCC chair the Girdwood 'Site Management and Operations' sub-group. The group, which meets monthly, includes BCC community safety and development officers and community and statutory representatives on the Forum including PSNI, DfC and Newington Housing Association. They recently completed a review of the Community Impact Assessment and the Site Management Protocol. The BCC Community Engagement Officer produces an incident report for each meeting using PSNI, GLL and BCC info. This information informs any recommendations for ameliorative action or development activity in order to promote the venue as a safe, welcoming space, inclusive for all.

3.24

There has been a decline in incidents reported since December 2016. While this is in part seasonal, it has also been positively supported by securing DfC investment to raise the height of the pitch fencing and, importantly, via the ongoing proactive youth engagement and outreach programme.

Community Benefit Project of the year

3.25

The development was awarded the coveted prize of Community Benefit Project of the year at the Property Excellence Ireland Awards. It shared this prize jointly with Cosgrave Developments for their work at Honeypark in Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. The judges assessed Girdwood Community Hub's benefit to the community based on a range of criteria however the close links between the development team and the Girdwood Community Forum and the positive development of contested space were key to its success. This category is the only category that was voted on by members of the public and 70% of the vote was dictated by the public vote, 30% by the judging panel. This category is central to the Corporate Social Responsibility aspect of the programme and

	<p>was the most highly contested category of the entire awards ceremony.</p> <p>Developing the Hub</p> <p>3.26 The development is the first step in the wider regeneration of Girdwood Park by the Department for Communities against the Girdwood Masterplan agreed by the Executive in May 2012. A development brief relating to the mixed use area appeared in the 3 main newspapers on 2 consecutive weeks in February 2017. The advert was to notify the public on how to request a copy of the development brief for consumption. DfC had previously worked with the Forum to agree content. DfC has commissioned the Strategic Investment Board to look at the development of the indoor sports site. They will consult with the Forum and the wider community to inform any draft proposals.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>3.27 There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>3.28 The Girdwood Community Forum has been cited as an example of good practice to support community engagement for this Shared Space development.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None