

**Parks and Leisure Committee,
Thursday, 13th December, 2007**

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- The Council will be required to remove a small area of green to retain the existing car parking; this can be facilitated through the revenue estimates;
- Each side to bear own legal costs.

Human Resources

No additional human resources required.

Asset and Other Implications

- Reduction in Council land holding by 0.35 acres at this location.
- Potential to release future development value from entire holding.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee accede to the request for the land exchange and the associated works at the City of Belfast's Playing Fields, subject to appropriate terms being incorporated into a suitable legal agreement by the Director of Legal Services."

The Committee adopted the recommendation, subject to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee being notified, in accordance with Standing Order 60, of the acquisition and disposal.

Restrictive Covenant – 43 Whitewell Road

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report in relation to a request which had been received from the Arc Housing Association in connection with the lifting of a restrictive covenant at the Council's former land at 43 Whitewell Road.

Playground at Ferguson Park

The Committee was reminded that the former Parks and Amenities Sub-Committee, at its meeting on 11th November, 1997, had agreed to accept the management and maintenance of a playground and kick-about area located at Ferguson Park, subject to the transfer of the land to the Council and to the Benview Community Association raising the necessary finance for capital works.

The Principal Parks Development Manager reported that the Community Association had been successful in obtaining £400,000 in capital funding and the Scheme had been completed during 1999. However, due to the fact that there remained a number of issues surrounding the satisfactory completion of works, the responsibility for the playground did not transfer to the Council. He explained that, at the request of the Lord Mayor (Councillor Rodgers), officers had met with local community workers at the facility during October and November to discuss the position. Following these meetings, it had been agreed that, because of the lengthy period of time which had passed since the Council had agreed to undertake the maintenance, it would be necessary to bring the matter to the attention of the Parks and Leisure Committee for renewed consideration.

He stated that the Community Association had requested that the Council honour its original decision and accept the transfer of the facility and, whilst the facility was well managed and had low levels of vandalism, it was now in need of repair. Both the play area and football area would require replacement and, at this time, replacement of the playground and swings would incur expenditure in the region of £83,000 and could be included within the Playground Improvement Programme. Currently, there was no estimate for the replacement of the football area, but this was envisaged to be in excess of £100,000 and could be brought forward for consideration within the Capital Programme at an appropriate time. In addition, no provision for expenditure had been made for the revenue maintenance within the existing Departmental budget. Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee reaffirm the decision to accept the transfer of the facility and authorise officers to enter into the appropriate legal agreement in connection therewith.

The Committee adopted the recommendation, subject to notification in accordance with Standing Order 60, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Shankill Women's Centre – St. Michael's Park

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

The Council hold land at St Michael's Park on a 900 year lease dated 11 June 1997 from the Department of Social Development. Use of the land is restricted to open space. DSD have agreed to permit the proposed use of a portion of the land for play area and car parking by Shankill Women's Centre.

At its meeting on 12 June 2007 the Parks and Leisure Committee approved the leasing of an area of approximately 0.118 acres of land at St Michael's Park to the Shankill Women's centre for a term of 25 years for the purpose of providing an outdoor play facility and car parking. Committee approval was subject to agreement on financial and other terms being reported to the Committee for approval at the earliest opportunity but with the proviso that the terms could be reported retrospectively if such becomes necessary in order to meet SWC project deadlines.

Terms have now been agreed and can be reported as follows:

- 1. The arrangement with SWC is governed by an Agreement for Lease and draft Lease. This provides SWC with access to the land to allow them to construct a play area and car parking in accordance with an agreed specification. This is to be carried out in conjunction with refurbishment of an adjoining building (not in Council ownership) for the provision of child care and other community based activities. SWC have up to 12 months to complete the construction**

from commencement of the Agreement for Lease (it is expected this will have commenced prior to the Committee meeting).