

# West Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 6th April, 2017

## SPECIAL MEETING OF WEST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

- Members present: Councillor Magennis (Chairperson);  
Councillors Attwood, Austin, Bell,  
Bunting, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Heading,  
McConville, O'Hara and Walsh.
- In attendance: Mr. G. Millar, Director Property and Projects;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director;  
Mr. G. Dickson, Policy and Performance Analyst; and  
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Beattie, Carson and McVeigh.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Update –Andersonstown Leisure Centres

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Kelly, representing Cathal Brugha Swimming and Water Polo Club, to the meeting.

Mr. Kelly advised the Working Group that Cathal Brugha Club had been in existence since 1932. Initially, the aim of the club had been to provide a swimming teaching facility for young people, however, it soon had developed into a competitive outfit in both swimming and water polo. Competitive swimming and water polo had complimented each other until the early 1970s when the club had started to almost exclusively concentrate on water polo.

The representative referred the Members to details in respect of a partial floating floor which he reported was the club's preferred option for the new swimming pool proposed for the Andersonstown Leisure Centre.

He then proceeded to outline what Cathal Brugha Club perceived to be the benefits of a partial floor as follows:

- it would provide a 'multi-functional water space' as oppose to fixed;
- it would provide all-inclusive access as it would accommodate individual swimmers and non-swimmers of all ages and abilities;

- it would provide access to all swimming groups with varying water depth needs;
- it would enable the centres activity programme to be able to better react to future aquatic trends;
- it would provide significant opportunity to teach more people to swim and therefore contribute substantially to the health and wellbeing of the community; and
- there would be a short 'pay back' period for the initial investment.

The representative outlined that Cathal Brugha Club had estimated that the Council would be required to make an initial investment of £200,000 and he drew the Members' attention to details of a simple desktop payback exercise that the club had undertaken.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Kelly for his presentation and he left the meeting.

The Members considered and discussed the various advantages and disadvantages of a Partial Floating Floor during which the Director of Property and Projects reported that it was estimated the inclusion of a partial floating floor into the existing plans would cost in the region of £300,000 and he stressed that no provision had been made for this expenditure.

A Member suggested that a compromised offer in respect of the agreed leisure waters might be a solution in terms of adhering to the allocated budget.

Another Member stated that he did not wish for the existing proposal to be compromised in any way.

### **Proposal**

Detailed discussion ensued following which it was:

Moved by Councillor Garrett,  
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That a paper be submitted to a future meeting which would consider all options available for securing the required additional resources for a partial floating floor to be included within the existing proposal. This should include detail in respect of discussions with the Department for Communities regarding community benefit monies in respect of Casement Park and the mobilisation budget.

### **Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Attwood; and  
Seconded by Councillor Heading,

That officers investigate and cost a compromised option in respect of the agreed leisure waters in order to try and adhere to the agreed budget.

On a vote by show of hands two Members voted for the amendment and eight against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly the Committee agreed to adopt the original proposal.

### **Brook Activity Centre**

A Member raised some concerns regarding the proposal to install a pop up gym within the hall at the Brook Activity Centre to ensure continuity of provision for users during the redevelopment of Andersonstown Leisure Centre. During discussion the following issues were highlighted:

- the displacement of current groups using the hall;
- it was noted that the hall was also used as a temporary evacuation facility for the local area in the event of an emergency; and
- the existing car park was already full, therefore there was concerns that there would be no capacity for the additional usage that might be generated by the pop up gym.

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised that a full communications and engagement plan was being drawn up around the business continuity arrangements and that officers would ensure that all users were kept fully apprised of the proposed changes.

Following discussion, it was agreed that officers would liaise with GLL to examine the potential of the space upstairs (currently used as a changing area) to be converted into a pop-up gym facility (instead of the gym hall) and submit an update report for the Working Group's consideration as soon as possible.

Chairperson