



<b>Subject:</b>	Proposal to mark out a temporary pitch at Stranmillis Embankment
<b>Date:</b>	7 November 2017
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Walker, Portfolio and Programme Manager

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

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	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 seek approval from committee to provide a temporary playing pitch on Council land at Stranmillis Embankment.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Note the report;</li><li>2. Agree, in principle, to mark out the pitch subject to discussion with the local Residents Association and the Friends of Botanic Gardens;</li><li>3. Agree that this be for the period up to the end of September 2018 subject to</li></ol>

	<p>favourable site conditions as determined by the Community Park Manager;</p> <p>4. Agree that the cost will be met by the Council from existing budgets if available; and</p> <p>5. Agree to a key holding agreement with the 2 GAC's to allow access to the woodland area for ball retrieval as necessary.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	<p>Members may be aware that works at Cherryvale Playing fields as previously agreed by Council as part of the Pitches Strategy have commenced. A copy of the previously agreed layout is attached as Appendix 1 for information. Works are scheduled to complete March / April 2018 subject to weather and potential unforeseen technical issues. The scheme includes a new sand based, floodlight GAA pitch which is being funded through the Ulster Council of the GAA, while the work will be completed March / April 2018 the pitch will not be available for use until late 2018 / early 2019. Members will note from Appendix 1 that the three main sporting codes who use the facility will see a reduction in the availability of pitches. Members will know that disruption and displacement is an inevitable consequence of pitch developments and users need to seek alternative accommodation during the works, Council is not always able to meet the demand particularly at peak times.</p>
3.2	<p>At a recent meeting in September, requested by the GAA, Officers were asked to consider whether the Council would erect Gaelic posts and mark out an area of Botanic Gardens at the rear of Queens Sport adjacent to Ridgeway Street / Stranmillis Embankment. A copy of the site is attached as Appendix 2. The purpose would be to provide a temporary pitch to address the issue of displacement.</p>
3.3	<p>Officers have inspected the site and have concluded that a full size GAA pitch (140m x 90m including run off, could not be accommodated. However, it might be possible to provide an area of approximately 130m x 80m including run off). The pitch is bordered by a pedestrian path, which would be retained and a perimeter fence behind which is small area comprising trees and hedging.</p>
3.4	<p>Members are asked to take into account the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council have not previously provided temporary playing field facilities to offset displacement. Members are asked to be mindful of the precedent being set should this be approved;</li> </ol>

2. The cost of establishing the pitch including the erection of the goal post is estimated to be in the region of £5,000. This would need to be found from within existing budgets; it was suggested that the Clubs be asked to meet the cost of this however, the GAA is already investing in the site and the teams will be charged the normal booking rate;
3. The site has natural drainage and retains rainwater particularly during the autumn and winter months, this appears to be most evident where there is run off at the edges. As a consequence grass cutting may not be possible, although this is less of an issue at this time of the year. Officers would however wish members to note that owing to the underlying conditions, use may be limited at this time of the year;
4. All pitches need resting and if the facility is used in the autumn and winter the facility may not be available for use over the spring / summer;
5. Owing to the site conditions and operational difficulties it is unlikely that other sports could be accommodated on this site although no formal request has been received from other sports.
6. Unauthorised use may be an issue.
7. This is an area of open space which is used casually by dog walkers and other casual users. There has been no consultation with other users of the facility. The Area Working Group has asked that the Stranmillis Residents Association and the Friends of Botanic be consulted. Members are asked to note that the use would be temporary and would be limited to weekends; consultation will delay the marking out of the pitch;
8. There is no Council car parking or changing facilities available on the site. The Clubs are aware of the issue and have indicated that they would use either the Car Parking at Queens or at Shaftesbury Recreation Centre; there is also parking available on the embankment itself;
9. A charge will be levied for use of the facility.

3.5	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The cost of the marking out of the temporary pitch and the erection of the posts is estimated to be in the region of £5,000. This would need to be found from within existing budgets. The council will gain some incomes from the use of the pitch. The adult charge is £20.50 per hour and the concessionary rate is £10.25 per hour.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
3.6	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Plan of proposed works at Cherryvale</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Proposed layout of temporary pitch</p>