



Subject:	Hillview Amateur Boxing Club
Date:	8 August 2017
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
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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	The purpose of this report is to update the Committee regarding consideration of Finlay Park as a potential location for a Boxing Facility for use by Hillview ABC.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note that: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the report concludes that there is evidence that a boxing facility would be used;2. technically Finlay Park could accommodate a boxing facility of approximately 20m x 11m which would provide a home for Hillview ABC;3. while there is support for the concept of a boxing facility there are also concerns

2.2	<p>within the community regarding the use of Finlay Park and the loss of the open space;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. there may be opportunities to explore an alternative site at the former Ballygoland Primary School; 5. there is currently no capital funding available, although some BIF monies remain unallocated in North Belfast subject to discussion at the North AWG. <p>It is therefore recommended that the Club be advised of the findings of the study, be advised to liaise further with the wider community in relation to its desire for premises; to explore the Ballygoland option; and to engage with potential funders. It is further recommended that no further action by Council in relation to Finlay Park be undertaken at this time.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>The Committee is reminded that at its meeting in October 2016 it received a report regarding a request from Hillview Amateur Boxing Club seeking Council support to find a suitable location for a boxing facility. The Committee noted that the club had previously secured funding from Sport NI and the former Department of Culture Arts and Leisure to support the development of suitable premises but it had to be expended within the financial year 2016/17. It is the understanding of Officers that this funding is no longer available at this time as the Club had been unable to secure suitable premises.</p>
3.2	<p>It was reported that despite the setbacks the Club remained committed to securing premises and had requested that the Council consider the feasibility of constructing a building within the Finlay Park facility. Committee granted authority for officers to work with Hillview Amateur Boxing Club to establish the feasibility of constructing a boxing facility at Finlay Park. At the time of the report there was no funding available to commission a feasibility study however Sport NI subsequently agreed to fund the study which was commissioned by the Council. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the main points of the study.</p>
3.3	<p>There were 3 aspects to the Study, a copy of which can be provided to Members upon request:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical feasibility 2. Need and demand for a boxing facility; and 3. The capability of Hillview ABC

3.4	<p>Finlay Park is Council owned land on the Whitewell Road, North Belfast. The facility is one of a few areas of accessible public space and consists of a fixed equipment playground, a multi user games area (MUGA), a community garden, an area of green space and some car parking. In undertaking the study it was assumed that the existing playground, MUGA and community garden would remain unaffected. Within the limited space available it was determined that a small 20m x 11m building to contain a training sized boxing ring, training space, changing area and some office accommodation could be constructed. An indicative cost of £235-300,000 has been estimated, subject to detailed design and costing and depending on the type of construction. This cost excludes car parking and a trim trail which were suggested during the study, these would be at an additional cost.</p>
3.5	<p>As part of the study consultants sought to establish the demand / need for such a facility. An online survey was conducted, 99% of those who responded believed there was a need for such a facility. Caution should be taken in relation to these surveys, however precautions were taken to minimise the potential for multiple responses from the same individuals through checking of responding email addresses. The survey does however indicate that there is demand for such a facility and that it would be well used. A survey of residents immediately adjacent to Finlay Park was conducted, this was inconclusive with some in support and some opposed. The study concluded that while there was support for the Club from the wider community there was concern at the potential loss of open space in an area with limited space. It was suggested that there were ongoing discussions regarding a nearby site, the Ballygoland Primary School Site and it was suggested that this should be considered. This is however beyond the scope of this particular report which considers only the Council owned Finlay Park.</p>
3.6	<p>The study concludes that there is a clear demand for a boxing facility, there is also support for a boxing facility however there are mixed views on the use of Finlay Park.</p>
3.7	<p>Preliminary discussions with the Planning Service did not highlight any apparent technical encumbrances to a planning application, which would of course be subject to formal scrutiny and consultation.</p>
3.8	<p>The feasibility study also considered the capacity of the Club. It found that the Club has been operating for a number of years and despite the disappointments of being unable to secure new premises remains committed to its goals. The study concluded that an</p>

	<p>operational audit found a good deal of capability in some areas of the operation of the Club and some areas which had need of improvement. The study includes a development plan which might assist the Club. The study in conjunction with the Club included a draft sports development plan to address issues around participation of adults and young people as well as encouraging wider community involvement, community inclusion, coaching and volunteering.</p>
3.9	<p>The study concludes that the Club, while currently only functioning in a limited way, is capable, with support, of functioning and sustaining itself as a boxing club.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.10	<p>There are no financial implications at this time.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.11	<p>There are no equality or good relation implications at this time.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None