



<b>Subject:</b>	Proposed Disability Bowls Hub in Belfast
<b>Date:</b>	10 May 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Paddy McGrattan, Leisure Development Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	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>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	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	This report is to provide members information on a request made from Irish Bowls Federation (IBF) to develop a Disability Bowls Hub in Belfast.
1.2	To outline for members the proposed pilot project for a Disability Bowls Hub in Belfast and highlight the short and long-term aims of IBF in Para and Visually Impaired (VI) development.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Note the key findings from recently commissioned research to determine the level of existing support mechanisms within the sport of bowls.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree the support of a pilot project up to a maximum of £6,000 with the view of developing a “Disability Bowls Hub” to provide more sporting opportunities for people with disabilities</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<p>In 2022 the IBF undertook a <i>Club Engagement Survey</i> achieving a response rate of 73%. The key findings and emerging priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The under representation of women and girls,</li> <li>• A disability gap with a surprising lack of active playing members with a disability and provision,</li> <li>• An ageing demographic,</li> <li>• Survival of clubs; and</li> <li>• A lack of any recognised club support structure to help with sustainability and growth.</li> </ul>
3.2	<p>The IBF have agreed to focus upon one emerging priority area, namely, the provision of more sporting opportunities for people with disabilities.</p>
3.3	<p>The IBF have identified Musgrave and Grove Bowling Pavilions as potential sites to develop the Disability Hub given the availability of indoor halls for all year-round use.</p>
3.4	<p>Short term programme (June to September 2022 – costs breakdown below).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate, develop and help implement a ‘Disability Bowls Hub’ pilot programme;</li> <li>• Provision of all equipment;</li> <li>• Engage with local community groups;</li> <li>• Provision of bowls coaching with experienced bowls coaches;</li> <li>• Encourage and Promote wellness and well-being</li> <li>• Build a positive and inclusive sports culture</li> </ul>
3.5	<p>Longer term aims and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue working partnership with Belfast City Council to help promote and foster the development of talented athletes.</li> <li>• Provision of suitable facilities, i.e. a bowling green and pavilion that is fully accessible to all disabilities and suitable equipment (e.g. adapted wheelchairs) for use on the bowling green.</li> <li>• To develop athletes to represent Northern Ireland at prestigious International para and Visually impaired events and have in place the necessary infrastructure to facilitate their preparation, training and development.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Ireland is the only home country, which currently does not have para or VI bowls representatives at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.</li> <li>Bowls Scotland, Bowls England and Bowls Wales all have the necessary programmes and infrastructure in place.</li> <li>Para and VI bowls will be included in the World Bowls Outdoor Championships (now held every 2 years) and scheduled for July 2023 on the Gold Coast, Australia.</li> </ul>
	<p>Sports Development Impact</p>
3.6	<p>In line with Council objectives, the diversification of use and improved sports development impact are priorities at our outdoor sites. Bowls remains a sport with intergenerational appeal where all age groups can compete on a level green.</p>
	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p>
3.7	<p>A total of £6,000 from Council is required to support this project and can be accommodated within current revenue budgets. IBF will contribute coaching, development and equipment resources in kind and work in partnership with Council Officers to develop and deliver the project.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.8	<p>None.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	None