



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject</b>	Development of a Boxing Strategy for Belfast
<b>Date:</b>	12 January 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Boxing has traditionally been a very successful sport for Northern Ireland with many successes at local and international levels. Boxing was Northern Ireland's most successful sport at the most recent Commonwealth Games in Delhi and Northern Ireland was the most successful Commonwealth boxing team at the Games.
1.2	The Ulster Provincial Boxing Council (UPBC) with the support of Sport NI want to develop a four year plan to identify how UPBC proposes to implement the Irish Amateur Boxing Association's (IABA) Strategic Plan in Ulster for the period 2011-16. IABA's strategic plan is currently in draft, however it is envisaged that the IABA's strategic plan will cover the following 4 key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• pathways – participation and performance focussed;</li><li>• coach education and development;</li><li>• club support and development; and</li><li>• governance.</li></ul>
1.3	The sport of boxing is recognised as having made a significant contribution to local communities in Belfast. Although many of the clubs are in locations which are generally deemed to have a high social need and in areas associated with a single tradition, they also often have a cross community focus and membership.
1.4	There are 26 boxing clubs in Belfast. The attached map at Appendix 1 shows the geographical spread of the clubs in the city.
1.5	At a recent meeting with representatives from boxing clubs in the Ulster Hall it was considered important that the council works in partnership with UPBC and Sport NI to develop a complementary boxing strategy for the city.

<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p>There are significant issues with club capacity and facilities available to clubs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many clubs do not have the officials/senior members with the skills or experience to enable them to administer their club or to gain access to public funding.</li> <li>• Whilst there are examples of good facilities there are many clubs where facilities are poor or inadequate to support the needs of the club. Many clubs reside in ageing buildings with limited ancillary facilities.</li> <li>• The condition of clubs is not considered attractive to young people and inhibits growth in membership.</li> <li>• Many clubs do not have the accommodation to support their current membership or growth in membership.</li> <li>• Many clubs do not have changing facilities for females.</li> <li>• Many clubs operate in other organisation's buildings and have to erect/dismantle equipment for each session.</li> <li>• Many clubs that do not own their premises have fairly loose tenancy arrangements which means capital funding opportunities cannot be accessed.</li> </ul>
2.2	<p>It has been agreed as part of the Active Belfast and Open Spaces Strategy (ABOS) that the Active Belfast approach should provide opportunities for increased participation in health enhancing activities to all. The framework recognises the importance of both the built environment and the social environment in creating an active city.</p>
2.3	<p>It is therefore proposed that the council commits to working in partnership with UPBC and Sport NI to develop a strategy to support the sport of Boxing in the city.</p>

<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p>Any proposed future resources required as a result of the strategy development will be presented to committee in due course.</p>

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
	<p>The boxing strategy will be subject to equality impact screening.</p>

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>Committee is asked to support the development of a boxing strategy for the city. A further report will be brought to committee providing the proposed approach and time scale for the development of the strategy.</p>

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure to implement the decision of the committee.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	UPBC    Ulster Provincial Boxing Council IABA    Irish Amateur Boxing Association's ABOS    Active Belfast and Open Spaces

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1: location of boxing clubs in Belfast