

Consultation on Draft Amateur Boxing Strategy 2012-2022

Findings

March 2013

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1.0 Background

- 1.1 Following approval of the draft strategy by the Parks and Leisure Committee at its meeting in October 2012, a period of public consultation opened on Monday 5 November 2012. A copy of the draft strategy and a response questionnaire were available to download from the Council's website and the closing date for responses was Friday 8 February 2013.
- 1.2 A letter was sent to 31 boxing clubs¹ informing them of the consultation and inviting them to a meeting at which they could give their views. This meeting was held on Thursday 17th January 2013 at 7pm in Ormeau Bowling Pavilion. A detailed note of this meeting is attached as appendix 1.
- 1.3 Officers also offered to meet with the Boards of each of the partner organisations to discuss the strategy and provide clarification as required. This offer was taken up by the Board of Co Antrim Boxing and a meeting was held with them on 8 January 2013.
- 1.4 An email was sent to all the organisations on the Council's Section 75 Consultative Forum list informing them of the consultation and inviting them to respond. As there is a high level of interest in boxing from the Irish Traveller Community contact was made with two umbrella organisations informing them of the consultation and inviting their views.
- 1.5 Officers also presented an overview of the draft strategy to the youth forum at a specially organised meeting. The meeting was attended by 17 members and a high level of discussion followed the presentation. A detailed note of this meeting is attached as appendix 2.

2.0 Response rate

- 2.1 A total of 16 written responses were received to the public consultation, 14 of which were in the format of the consultation questionnaire. Of the responses received 14 were made on behalf of clubs, one was from an individual and one was from Sport NI. The clubs that submitted a response are:
 - Belfast (Kronk) ABC
 - St Pauls ABC
 - Holy Trinity ABC
 - Sandy Row ABC
 - Monkstown Boxing Club
 - St Agnes ABC (the respondent also indicated that he is a member of the IABA but the response was from the club)
 - Gleann ABC
 - Oliver Plunkett ABC
 - 'Patsy Quinn Gym' Newington
 - Dockers Boxing Club
 - Corpus Christi
 - Emerald ABC
 - Red Triangle ABC
 - Cairn Lodge ABC
- 2.2 Several clubs did not submit formal written responses but representatives attended the meeting in Ormeau Bowling Pavilion and made their views known. These clubs were:

¹ 27 clubs within the Belfast City Council boundary and four on the periphery (two in Newtownabbey and two in Lisburn council areas).

- St John Bosco ABC
- Albert Foundry
- Holy Family ABC
- Hillview ABC

3.0 Summary of key findings

3.1 The following is a summary of the key findings from the consultation exercise:

- Increasing female participation
 - There is agreement that this is an issue that needs to be addressed but there is a lack of facilities in the majority of clubs for females
 - Suggestion was made that additional money needed to be put into target/develop female participation
 - Suggestion was made that there is a need to have more female coaches as females may feel intimidated going to classes with male coaches
 - Promote female boxers – e.g. use their photos on poster
- Increasing participation among people with a disability
 - The majority of clubs do not have the facilities necessary to take members with a disability
 - Suggestion was made that we should look at working with special schools – train coaches to work with kids with special needs
- Sport development officers/coaches
 - There was mixed feelings from the governing bodies and boxing clubs for the appointment of 2 Sport Development Officers; unclear what their role would be and some feeling that they won't come from boxing and won't know about the sport
 - There was support for putting in additional boxing coaches or following the Dublin model
 - It was raised is there the possibility of the coaching training being run in Belfast rather than Dublin
 - Suggestion made that if each club had a qualified coach they could train others in the club
- Volunteers
 - Issue of getting and keeping volunteers was raised
 - Need for funding to help with volunteers expenses
 - Question was asked could Belfast City Council set up a volunteer list/bank that clubs could use
- Financing of clubs
 - None of the proposed funding is to help clubs with running their clubs – issue of keeping clubs running and their doors open
 - Can we examine the use of council facilities for example free/reduced hire rates for boxing clubs
- Events
 - Need for funding to host events in Belfast but also need to have a balance between the money being available for the large scale and small events
 - Issue of getting funding for boxers going to events elsewhere
 - Need to work with all the partners to bring large scale international competitions to Belfast
- Schools programme
 - Support from Youth Forum for the schools programme but questioned if enough money being put into it
 - Not clear understanding from clubs how it would work

4.0 Breakdown of responses to questionnaire

4.1 The consultation questionnaire asked a series of questions to which respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Space was also provided for respondents to provide comments. A copy of the consultation questionnaire is attached as appendix 3. This section provides a breakdown of the responses to each question. Within each table the number of responses given to each point of the scale is given.²

4.2 Respondents were asked ‘Do you agree or disagree with the overall approach of the draft amateur boxing strategy?’

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
8	4		1	1

4.3 The approach taken was to work in partnership with a number of bodies to develop the draft strategy and to undertake a baseline assessment to identify need. The feedback from both the questionnaire and the wider meeting was strong agreement for the approach taken. Specific comments made included:

- I believe this strategy is a brilliant move for Ulster boxing; both BCC and SNI should be applauded for what they have set in motion; I strongly believe that if this strategy is allowed to run its course the success of Ulster boxing will increase tenfold
- I think what is being done at present is acceptable
- Very good project
- Your strategy does not take in the financial needs of the clubs in every day running
- There is a clear need for investment in the sport of boxing given its work in local communities. The approach proposed however, suggests that the sports administration and governance framework is of a good standard. Regrettably, the support from its NGB and Provincial Board is less than ideal. There is a clear difference in how the sports leadership operates and that of one such as the GAA and IRFU. There is little harmony between all stakeholders in the sport and clubs have been left to ‘go it alone’ in many ways. Any investment must be in adherence with the highest standards of accountability and as such, should focus on the establishment of a clear management structure initially before investment is released
- Sport NI agrees with the approach that Belfast City Council has undertaken with regards to the development and proposed delivery of the Strategy. Sport NI does note that many of the outputs of the strategy are dependent on the Country Antrim Board, UBC and IABA. In order for a boxing strategy to be delivered effectively, Belfast City Council would need to ensure that these organisations are satisfied with the content of the strategy and the proposed delivery mechanism.

4.4 Respondents were asked ‘Do you agree that we identified the correct key issues and need within amateur boxing in Belfast?’

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7	6		1	

4.5 Again the responses from both the questionnaire and the feedback from the wider meeting suggest that there is agreement that we have identified the correct key issues. It was

² The total may not add to 14 as not all respondents answered every question.

raised that there are particular issues around facilities for females and people with a disability. Specific comments made included:

- I believe that the key issues have been identified correctly
- You can only deal with need and the issues which the clubs tell you about
- Clubs need financial help for heating, electric, insurances etc
- Clubs should be helped in some way with insurance and other overheads such as travelling costs to national championships
- The clubs have given BCC an assessment of their needs and BCC have gone to great lengths to inform Belfast clubs of how to move forward – good start
- Two major sectors are not covered – the justice system and the health service
- I agree but do feel you are going in the wrong order...everything begins with the local boxing club... but very little of the funding available for boxing seems to be going directly to clubs. The first priority must be clubs fit for purpose
- The baseline assessment had an 87.1% response rate which provides an accurate assessment of the key issues affecting clubs. However it is essential that any investment into the sport of boxing is aligned with the strategic needs as identified by the IABA and UBC strategies with the requirements of the clubs being met through these organisations.

4.6 Respondents were asked ‘Do you agree or disagree with us using the four strategic challenges outlined in the draft strategy?’

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7	5	2		

4.7 The four strategic challenges used were those identified by the IABA in their strategic plan and used by both UBC and Co Antrim Boxing. These strategic challenges are:

- Pathways (boxers, coaches and officials)
- Coach education and development
- Club support and development
- Governance

Again there was strong support for using these four strategic challenges and no specific issues were raised at the wider meeting. Specific comments made in the questionnaires included:

- I especially agree with governance, which should help spread the work load in running a club and will greatly help when the clubs are applying for such things as grants. One strategy that might have been overlooked is that of giving each club an immediate small grant to cover running costs
- The four points above can only but move our sport forward
- Four challenges seem unnecessary
- Sport NI agrees that with the use of the four strategic challenges as they are in-line with both the strategic needs identified by the IABA and UPBC. However a consequence of this approach could be a duplication of resources, with support being targeted for the same themes by different organisations. Therefore it is essential that Belfast City Council works in partnership with both the boxing authorities and Sport NI to ensure the efficient investment of funds into boxing.

4.8 Respondents were asked to provide comments on each of the four action plans and to provide any additional actions they thought could be added to the action plan. The following summarises the comments and suggestions made under each heading:

Action Plan for Pathways (boxers, coaches and officials)

- Need for clubs to receive funding to bring in teams for events – do not put it all to large scale events
- Can funding be obtained to send teams to competitions elsewhere
- Why is free Boost only available for elite athletes – would be more beneficial to give it to up and coming boxers
- The pathways plan if followed will be a major help in promoting Belfast boxing and the city as a venue for major events
- It might be a good idea to target female schools as a way of bringing more females into the sport and target large community events such as festival to promote boxing
- Hopefully if the action plan set out is delivered it would help promote the art of amateur boxing in Belfast and the clubs will continue to help young boxers show their true potential
- I boxed for a number of clubs and boxing is an important and essential element of my 'keep fit' lifestyle since then. I would love to qualify as an IABA coach but have never been able to connect up with the system to achieve this – it's essential that former boxers' expertise and enthusiasm is harnessed to resource amateur boxing clubs across Ulster/N Ireland
- To promote the sport of boxing we must have safe premises. You have at no time noted that all our competitors must complete a very stringent medical nor do you mention all clubs must be affiliated to the IABA.
- 'Try It' events and 'Belfast Boxing'? - From the survey, clubs have indicated that they do not have the facilities to cater for either of the underrepresented groups mentioned – females and people with a disability. If the two initiatives ('Try It' events and 'Belfast Boxing') create a demand for participation in boxing there is a risk that the present facilities as used by the clubs will be unable to facilitate any new members
- Support for Sport – Support for Individuals Grant - this initiative is similar to Sport NI's Athlete Investment Programme and therefore there may be a need for collaboration between Belfast City Council and Sport NI
- International Competitions – the bidding and staging of major events such as the Commonwealth Boxing Championships will require the UBC to bid for them not the County Antrim Board. There is a need to ensure, that throughout the strategy, the appropriate section within the IABA is involved in the delivery of the action plan. There has to be consideration given to the governance / business relationship between Co. Antrim Board, UBC and IABA and how Belfast City Council will manage and interact with the relevant roles and responsibilities of all parties
- The Pathways Action Plan does not provide any support or actions for a pathway beyond club boxing e.g. a talent pathway. Work on this area could examine the opportunities for boxers to avail of a well-resourced high performance centre potentially based in Belfast or elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

Action Plan for Coach education and development

- If each club had a qualified coach then they could train others in their club
- Possibility of having some of the coaching courses in Belfast rather than in Dublin
- I suggest that the coaching course are held more regularly and in various places across Belfast; the coaches who do level 1 should be encouraged to level 2 as quickly as possible
- There should be development plans for younger coaches which should be funded because young coaches have to pay £100 each which clubs cannot afford
- Coach education comes from ground level – hands on approach
- Ex amateur boxers should be contacted and invited to partake in the coaching programme

- All affiliated clubs must have an active communication link with the coach education/development project

Action Plan for Club support and development

- Issue that the level required for the Sports Development Officer will be 'graduate' and this will rule out most people 'in boxing'
- Would prefer the role were boxing roles or coaching rather than sports development role
- Think the SDOs will be a massive help
- Put in 4 coaches instead of SDOs
- If these new SDOs help clubs get grants it will offset the costs of their wages
- Difficulties with attracting and retaining volunteers
- Could BCC set up a volunteer bank
- Can BCC examine the use of council facilities – reduced rates for hire
- Issue of running costs – clubs find it hard to get the money to keep the doors open
- The appointment of 2 development officers could possibly be the most important part of the strategy – I personally believe they have to be impartial and independent of all clubs
- The volunteers within all clubs is something that I hope the strategy works for...it would be good if the volunteers could achieve something in return for all their efforts, maybe some kind of award which could then be put on CVs
- Pay coaches expenses, i.e. fuel costs and subsistence
- That the finances of clubs should be looked at and that the really poor clubs should receive immediate assistance of some kind
- Look at some level of funding for qualified volunteers
- Look at some sort of central venue in Belfast (BCC owned) that clubs can avail off for events
- I think there should be 2 development officers from the city council
- The employment of 2 sports development officers makes a big hole in the pot – maybe 2 job sharing
- New clubs should be put on provisional licence for 2-3 years
- The sine qua non for Belfast boxing clubs seems to have been their Spartan nature – but to me it seems remarkable that out of adversity this place has facilitated boxers of the highest capability and achievement for near on 100 years. A bit more 'support and development' will only reinforce our natural ability in these parts to breed amateur boxing champions
- Clarity needs to be provided on the IABA/SNI supported club development manager appointed recently and the proposed staff to be recruited by BCC. Duplication of resource is likely if there are no clear lines of delineation between roles, responsibilities and relationships.
- Not necessary to spend so much money on 2 Development Officers – have you considered paying affiliation fees for all the clubs instead
- Sport NI recognises that effective coaches play a vital role in increasing and sustaining participation in sport, as well as in the development of talent and attainment of success. Therefore, the availability of an appropriately skilled and qualified coaching workforce will be a key factor in the realisation of this strategy
- All three actions detailed within the Coach Education and Development Action Plan will require the approval of and delivery by the governing body (IABA, Ulster Council and Co Antrim Board). In addition, any support for coach education in Belfast would have to be aligned to IABA coaching framework. Within this there are mentoring programmes already in place that could be drawn upon to deliver coaching master plans and on-line resources
- Sport NI is of the opinion that there needs to be clarification sought regarding the role of the Sports Development Officers. During the development of the strategy it was

suggested that these roles were to be based on the Dublin model where the officers are more community/youth oriented rather than sports orientated. The officers work with children on a range of issues and use training in a boxing club as a mechanism to attract the children. It would appear now that the officers' main priority would be the delivery of the boxing strategy and also one to one assistance to clubs. This is a different role and would need to be very clearly aligned to the Club Development Manager which is employed by the IABA. The proposed situation of sports development officer for boxing working with clubs but having no responsibility to the governing body does not seem the most effective or efficient arrangement

- It would be useful to have an analysis of the map of the clubs in Belfast to show where the hotspots and gaps are. This would also demonstrate if and where new clubs need to be established (as proposed in the action plan). In addition with an average club membership of approx 70, there may also be a need to encourage the coming together of clubs (potentially in new facilities) for economies of scale.

Action Plan for Governance

- Clubmark is a lot of work but it is worth it in the end as all the information is in the one folder
- Totally agree with this part of the plan, it is essential for all clubs to have governance. I believe the action plan should make it essential that all clubs do their Clubmark – we are already through the bronze stage and have found it very helpful in running the club more effectively
- On line information 'very well' but would need help to retrieve the information from computer
- It's vital that amateur boxing in Greater Belfast is synonymous with the highest standards of personal and social probity
- The importance of good governance within the voluntary and community sector is fundamental where tax payer's monies are invested. The current arrangement is less than ideal and cognisance of a Sport NI audit into the Ulster Boxing Council should be read prior to funding being released into the sport
- Any person wishing to box must be affiliated to the IABA. Affiliation is also linked with every club and member being insured...the IABA is affiliated to the AIBA (world body) and if you wish to compete you must comply with the World Body
- Club Mark support is already in place for Belfast City Council supported by Sport NI. This support is available to the clubs to, gain the Club Mark and in turn develop better management structures and to put in place relevant policies and procedures. Club Mark already provides online templates and policies which the clubs can gain access too
- Sport NI is of the opinion that the work that will be needed to improve governance is underestimated and under-resourced. There should be further consideration of the timescales for the actions e.g. governance, administration, coach and official education needs to be completed before the promotional aspects of the sport to ensure there is capacity to cope with increased numbers.

4.9 Respondents were asked to identify any other actions that they thought should be included in the draft amateur boxing strategy. The suggestions made were:

- The only item I think has been overlooked is that of an immediate cash injection into the clubs, without this some of the clubs may not be around in a few years to reap the benefits of the strategy
- All clubs have their own strategy
- Help with the overall running of a boxing club
- It saddens me to have to comment on my disappointment that our boxing clubs and membership may not be as open and welcoming to all our citizens, regardless of our cultural markers. Everything must be done to focus on amateur boxing training, skills development and practice, completion and related social interaction so as to major on

the absolute importance of respect for, and valuation of, the manifest difference and diversity within our society

- A fit for purpose audit and possible appointment of an operations type manager to manage staff
- The Strategy would benefit from having a finance section which provides a costing for each action plan to cover 2013 – 2016 and targets set against those costings. Also, for clarity, it would be beneficial for Belfast City Council to consider and state in the strategy the amount it is intending to allocate to areas e.g. staff time etc.

4.10 Respondents were asked ‘Do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation (ie the performance indicators as set out on page 27 of the draft amateur boxing strategy and a comprehensive strategic review)?’

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7	4	2	1	

4.11 The responses show that the majority of respondents agree with the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation. Specific comments made included:

- I think this is the only way in which you can realistically tell if the strategy is succeeding... if the strategy is failing these indicators will or should show exactly where and why it has failed
- Doesn't give any reason what support it gives to clubs; refs and judges numbers change from year to year, same with memberships. Female boxing in Co Antrim needs to have their own association
- Reports from all the clubs giving an update on the boxing strategy and how it has impacted on their club
- In general the strategy would benefit from the inclusion of a table with:
 - the Actions (potentially grouped);
 - the KPIs that relates to the actions;
 - baseline information from the consultation work);
 - targets (based on some consideration on club needs in relation to their size and membership profile); and
 - the cost to achieve the target and the proposed avenues for funding the cost.

4.12 In relation the equality screening respondents were asked ‘Do you agree or disagree with our provisional finding and proposed mitigating actions?’

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	5	1	2	

4.13 The responses show that the majority of respondents agree with our provisional finding and proposed mitigating actions. Among the comments made in relation to this were:

- Perhaps one way to increase female participation would be to have more females coaches as females can be intimidated by male coaches
- It would be useful to have coaches that were trained to work with people with special needs as perhaps boxing could be used to manage certain conditions such as ADHD
- All sports clubs no matter what sport they are involved in should be run equally for all members... in the sport of boxing must clubs don't have the facilities to accommodate all the above. This is something that must be addressed quickly
- The club already promotes an open door to all, regardless of religion or gender – we support the promotion of the sport
- Equal opportunities for everyone if the facilities are in place

- Careful thought needs to be put into how to engage disabled persons in try it events. Specialised training also should be provided to coaches
- I strongly disagree with all forms of sectarianism
- Sport NI would wish to have sight of the outcomes of the pre-consultation before agreeing or disagreeing with the findings and proposed actions. Sport NI is aware that both the IABA and UBC regard the increase in female participation as a strategic priority and through the Sport NI Investment Programme are seeking to improve club facilities to meet the needs of female boxers e.g. toilets, changing and shower facilities.

4.14 Respondents were asked to provide any other comments they wished to make on the draft amateur boxing strategy. Among the comments made were:

- Once again I would just like to say that everyone involved in this strategy to date, deserves a large pat on the back... I hope all the good work continues right up to 2022. The strategy if implemented will bring nothing but success to Ulster boxing and all involved in it
- There is much needed investment required to the grassroots of boxing, actions plans are required, help is needed in the running costs of clubs to survive...I hope consideration will be given to helping clubs and not lining people's pockets
- My club is now into its 41st year – this strategy is a must for amateur boxing in Belfast and beyond – it can only but work
- I was very disappointed when recently the media reported that difference and diversity in our boxing club memberships had resulted in bad-mannered, discourteous treatment of some boxers and officials from one Belfast boxing club. I would like to have seen this addressed with more energy and imagination to minimise the harm done to amateur boxing's reputation and standing. Let's focus on boxing, its beauty, its honourable history and legacy and its potential for enriching all our lives and connecting us with boxing fans, enthusiasts and aficionados across the world.
- The club welcomes that fact that the report highlights issues such as facilities which are unfit for purpose; unpaid services provided by volunteers; the lack of male and female changing and the lack of toilets and showers. We are deeply disappointed that there is no suggestion in the Draft Strategy that there are serious issues surrounding the governance of amateur boxing and sectarianism.
- In terms of the contents of the report we would note that the Olympic success was obtained by boxers who represented the Republic of Ireland on the international stage. We believe there should be equality for those who see themselves as British. They should have the right to compete under the Union Flag at the Olympics. This is a serious equality issue.
- While there is much talk in the report about increasing female participation in the sport (which we welcome) there is nothing proposed to address the serious underrepresentation of Protestants in the sport. In our view BCC needs to encourage clubs in Unionist areas of the Province and actively encourage people from the Protestant community to train as coaches in order to encourage people from that community to take up the sport
- As a club outside of the BCC boundary, I would welcome the strategy to be rolled out to clubs close to the BCC limits. With many young people travelling to our area from the Belfast area due to its programmes and facilities we feel funding should be made available for programmes delivered
- Sport NI welcomes the proposed investment in boxing within Belfast. Sport NI will work closely with Belfast City Council and the IABA (including UBC and Co Antrim Board) to ensure that the investment from this strategy and from Sport NI's Boxing Investment Plan complements one another and that the resources are delivered to the boxing clubs using effective and efficient process.

5.0 Summary of findings of meeting with boxing clubs

5.1 A detailed note of the meeting with the boxing clubs is attached as appendix 1 but in summary the discussion focused on number of key issues as outlined below:

- Facilities
 - look at putting funding into the existing facilities of other sports that could also be used by boxing
 - need for facilities for females and additional money to be put into this area to develop this aspect of boxing
- Event funding
 - need to balance the support given to large international events and small scale local events
- Coach education
 - potential to have the training in Belfast
 - train a coach in each club who can train other coaches in their club
- Club support and development
 - issues with the proposal to appoint two Sports Development Officers
 - issue of recruiting, retaining and rewarding volunteers
 - clubs need assistance with running costs
 - is there a possibility of free/reduced rates for hire of BCC facilities.

6.0 Summary of meeting with youth forum

6.1 A detailed note of the meeting with the youth forum is attached as appendix 2 but in summary discussion was around the following key themes:

- Increasing female participation and potential methods to do this
- The proposed schools programme
- Increasing participation among people with a disability and in particular suggestions for working with people with special needs.

6.2 The members of the youth forum also had queries around the process for allocating the funding associated with the delivery of the action plans and felt that it should be used to promote boxing across the entire city and not just in areas of social deprivation.

Belfast City Council

Parks and Leisure Services

Draft Amateur Boxing Strategy

Notes of meeting with boxing clubs as part of the consultation process
Held on the Thursday 17th January 2013 @7pm at
Ormeau Bowling Pavilion

In attendance:

Rose Crozier - Belfast City Council
Emer Boyle - Belfast City Council
Claire Sullivan - Belfast City Council
Claire Moraghan - Belfast City Council
Shaun Ogle - Sport NI
Willie Devlin - Sport NI
Jim Sanderson - Independent facilitator

There were 22 representatives of boxing clubs from across the city including representatives from Co. Antrim Boxing Board.

Introduction to the consultation process

Rose Crozier (RC) opened the discussion and welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting and presented the agenda for the evening. She outlined the process and approvals received to date, an overview of the draft strategy, the consultation process and how attendees should respond to it.

Willie Devlin (WD) gave an explanation of the SNI (Lottery) fund including its 3 tranches:

- equipment
- premises repairs
- major capital works.

A number of specific questions were raised by attendees in relation to the SNI fund and WD responded -

Q. Is the equipment already picked? If more has been requested than is available, will the kit then be prioritised? (Particular reference to treadmills etc)

A. *Headgear, boxing gloves and bags are seen as priority items.*

Q. When would the actual visits to the clubs to assess their condition be happening?

A. *SNI is currently appointing Design Team - likely to happen in March/April 13.*

Q. When will repairs etc likely to be taking place?

A. *Minor works next year and the major capital build happening the year after.*

One club representative raised an issue where clubs may be unable (due in some instances to condition of facility) to receive kit until the more significant work is undertaken

(John DeBosco example) and asked what action could be taken to secure this provision until a more appropriate time

SNI will consider this and advise accordingly

One of the club representatives referred to the assistance which had been promised by the Minister for immediate work to be undertaken (in particular - special case commitment for John DeBosco) and queried over the lengthy period of time that it is taking to action

SNI confirmed that all clubs are being treated equally.

Discussion on draft Amateur Boxing Strategy for Belfast

The discussion was facilitated by Jim Sanderson. He commenced the session by testing awareness of how many of the audience had read the draft strategy. The majority indicated they were not fully aware of the Draft document.

He outlined his proposed methodology which was to follow the format of the Draft document and to seek responses to each of the consultation questions following sufficient time for discussion and clarification on particular queries. He suggested that some points might require further consideration by BCC staff and this process provided the opportunity for clubs to raise issues, to seek clarification or, if necessary, recommend a change in direction but most importantly, it would provide BCC with meaningful opinion, in agreement or otherwise with the Draft Strategy. For the purpose of efficiency, on this evening, it was agreed that a nil response from the audience would indicate general agreement with the question being considered.

Question 1: Do you agree or disagree with the overall approach of the draft amateur boxing strategy?

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Comments and Issues arising

BCC should be congratulated for taking the initiative, although long overdue, for giving attention to the sport and helping to improve the situation for the sport.

Question 2: Do you agree that we identified the correct key issues and need within amateur boxing in Belfast?

Assessment of need

We used several sources to provide us with information on the key issues and need within boxing in Belfast. This included information on membership, coaches and volunteers, governance structures, funding, facilities and equipment. These sources included information we gathered from the surveys we sent to all the boxing clubs in Belfast as part of the baseline assessment and information we obtained from the IABA and UBC.

- a. Agree
- b. Comments and Issues arising

Facilities

Issue with accessibility of facilities and use of equipment for disabled users (e.g. lowering of bags etc)

SNI appointment of a Design Team will ensure appropriate consideration of accessibility issues

Has any consideration been given to the use of existing sports facilities in a particular area (not boxing clubs)? Maybe it would be cheaper to add on an extension to an existing building which could be used for boxing rather than starting from scratch (e.g. using existing gyms and changing rooms etc).

SNI - happy to work with clubs if suitable economies of scale are identified in project proposals; part of role of new Boxing Development Manager is to build relationships between boxing and other sporting codes.

If clubs don't own premises, where do they stand?

SNI will look for some level of security of tenure, but will seek to minimise obstacles for clubs with their proposals.

Female provision

There is an issue around provision for females and getting that addressed - need more money to develop this element of boxing

BCC referred to the appointment of Development Officers (with remit for boxing). Part of their remit will be to support clubs in their identification, preparation and application for and securing of other funding which will assist in developing programme etc. SNI highlighted the need for design of facilities to accommodate this demand.

Both BCC and SNI to consider further.

Coach development

Agreed - no specific issues.

Volunteering

Agreed - no specific issues.

Governance and management

Agreed - no specific issues.

Club development plans

Agreed - no specific issues.

Assistance with funding

Agreed - no specific issues.

Q.3 Do you agree or disagree with us using the 4 strategic challenges?

Action plans

We have developed action plans under four strategic challenges identified by the IABA in their strategic plan and used by both UBC and Co Antrim Boxing. These strategic challenges are:

- Pathways (boxers, coaches and officials)
- Coach education and development
- Club support and development
- Governance

Agreed - no specific issues.

Q.4 Comments on action plan for Pathways (boxers, coaches and officials)

Issue of availability of funding for events in March 2013.

There is a need for funding for bringing international competition to Belfast. Give funding to clubs to bring teams in not just to Co Antrim.

SNI informed the meeting that they will be opening an events funding programme in the next few weeks.

Can funding be obtained for boxers going to competitions elsewhere?

BCC to review policy.

Why just free Boost for elite boxers - they are already looked after and have access to gyms, saunas etc and train 6 days a week so they don't need to go to a LC on their 1 day off? Would be more beneficial to give it to up and coming boxers.

BCC to consider policy.

If SNI and BCC spend money on big events then it reduces the likelihood for clubs to be able to get funding for small events.

BCC advised that the level of funding available, generally, is limited and once allocated the budget is not replenished until the following year.

Query around if an event that has received funding makes a profit, does the surplus have to be repaid to the funder.

BCC to advise on grant aid policy and auditing of funding allocations.

Q.5 Comments on action plan for Coach education and development

Agreed with each of the 3 identified actions.

If each club had a qualified coach then they could train others in their club. Possibility of the coaching training being run in Belfast and not always in Dublin. Will be difficult to roll out the level 2 training as there are a limited number of tutors - all tutors are linked to the IABA and they are currently training up more people.

All points noted by BCC for consideration with Steering Group

Q.6 Comments on action plan for Club support and development

Development

The following comments were made around the introduction of Sports Development Officers for Belfast:

- Issue of 2 officers being employed and what will they know about boxing - making it at the level of graduate and that will rule out most of the people who are "in boxing".
- If it's run the way it has been in Dublin - all people who have been appointed there have come up the ranks in boxing.
- Would prefer the roles were boxing roles or coaches rather than sports development roles.
- Think it will be a massive help.
- Put in 4 coaches instead of SDOs.
- Issue raised of getting boxing qualification on the JD/spec.
- If these new SDOs help club get grants that will offset the cost of their wages.

BCC to consider comments.

Volunteers

Toolkit for volunteers - lots of feedback re getting and keeping volunteers
Money needs to be fed into the system to help with volunteering.

Very difficult to develop other elements of boxing e.g. females, with the same number of volunteers.

Example was given of the small fund that BELB had a number of years ago to support volunteers.

Could BCC not lead on the whole volunteering element of the strategy and get a list/model in place to help with this process - set up a volunteer bank which clubs can use?

BCC to consider options for volunteer bank generally.

Facility use and funding

Can we examine the use of council facilities - reduced rent for community centres?

Is it possible to get reduced rates to hire the Ulster Hall?

Is it possible to get funding to pay coaches for the hours they work or to pay expenses (transport etc)?

There's no sustainability in this for running of clubs - it costs quite a few thousand pounds a year to run clubs and these are not all sustainable. Actual clubs need money to keep running and to actually open their doors and keep the sport running.

Issue of paying for:

- insurance
- affiliation fees
- travel
- lack of sponsorship in the recession.

Need some way to help clubs with the standard running costs as well as the development all aspects of the strategy.
Issue around start up funding - do not just give new clubs money as they might disappear; they need to prove themselves over a year or two.

Issue of what sports are included under the title of boxing club - some may include martial arts.

There may be too many boxing clubs already - increasing participation shouldn't be about new clubs as this may dilute where all money goes.

Major issue for BCC is about sustainability and governance of clubs in the future. This is linked to the need for sound and objective business planning as part of a club development plan. This is similarly linked to the need for support mechanisms for clubs to develop such plans.

Not just funding for events, but proposal for a venue for hosting events, training camps and ongoing centre of excellence (a base in Belfast) e.g. a "home for boxing" - for all boxing clubs in Co Antrim and a base for the Antrim Board.

Issue was raised that there are concerns with BCC money being used for a County Antrim dedicated venue.

BCC to consider

Q.7 Comments on action plan for Governance

Agreed with all 3 actions.

Clubmark is a lot of work but it is worth it at the end as all the info is in one folder.

Comment ditto

Q.8 Please identify any other actions that you think that we should include in the draft amateur boxing strategy.

None given in addition to those below - attendees were advised to put any additional comments in their response.

Q.9 Do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation (i.e. the performance indicators as set out on page 27 of the draft amateur boxing strategy and a comprehensive strategic review)?

Monitoring and Evaluation

The draft amateur boxing strategy proposes a set of performance indicators against which effectiveness of the strategy will be monitored and reported on annually.

These are set out in detail on page 27 of the draft strategy document. In addition, we propose to undertake a comprehensive strategic review in 2016 to consider how successful the approach taken has been and to agree the next phase of actions.

No comments made.

Q.10 Equality screening

Equality Impact

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (see http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/section_75) requires that public authorities, in carrying out functions relating to Northern Ireland, have due regard to promote equality of opportunity -

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

Equality impact screening of the draft amateur boxing strategy is being conducted, to which this consultation will contribute. Based on the outcomes of the pre-consultation phase already conducted, our provisional finding is that there may potentially be an adverse impact on some of the categories listed under Section 75. These include women and persons with a disability.

Within our action plans we have included mitigating actions to help manage any potential impacts on these groups. These include 'try it' events for females and persons with a disability.

Issue raised over relevance of equality screening questions; whether it should be asked when boxers are from all sections of the community and does it affect the funding you are given?

BCC advised that Council was bound by legal requirements to equality screen all now policies and strategies.

The meeting was closed by Rose Crozier who thanked attendees for their contributions and interaction. She asked clubs to complete the forms and return them to BCC. Five completed forms were handed in. Session ended at approx. 9.20 pm.

Meeting with Youth Forum re Draft Amateur Boxing Strategy

Monday 4th February 2013 @ 5pm

In attendance: Claire Sullivan (CS), Parks and Leisure
Pete Murray, Parks and Leisure
Lorraine Wallace, Young Person's Coordinator
17 Members of the Youth Forum

A brief presentation was given by CS to the group outlining the process to date and the key points of the strategy.

The following points were raised during the discussion. They are grouped into broad themes:

Female participation

- Issue of female participation – one problem is not enough female trainer/coaches; example was given of attending a boxercise class and feeling intimidated by the male trainer
- It was suggested that a self defence element to any programme would appeal to women
- Suggestion was made to concentrate on volunteers – encourage women to become coaches
- Get local female boxers to promote boxing – usually its men on posters, why not use female boxers

Working with schools

- £10k seems like a small amount to give to a schools programme when you consider the number of schools across the city
- Equipment is expensive so rather than giving schools money to buy equipment work with the boxing governing body to go into schools; example was given of the IRFU coming into one of the school and the number of pupils who participated for a small sum of money
- Boxing open days – move to schools, target younger generation

Increasing participation among people with a disability

- Target special needs schools – there is a lack of PE in special needs school; Disability Sport and SNI have come into the school in the past
- Clubs don't have the facilities for females and people with disabilities
- Need to train coaches so they have ability to work with people with special needs

Increasing participation

- Look at boxing across the city – promote it all areas not just those that are socially deprived
- Look at using existing groups to target programmes at it such as scouts groups

Process queries

- Query was raised if we were funding events how would they benefit Belfast
- Query was raised over how the money was going to be distributed

Amateur Boxing Strategy 2012 - 2022

Consultation Questionnaire

November 2012



Purpose of this document

The purpose of this consultation questionnaire is to seek your views on the draft Amateur Boxing Strategy. Your views will help inform the final strategy and how we implement it. You should complete the questionnaire after reading the draft strategy.

Consultation Process

A pre-consultation phase has already been completed, involving members of boxing clubs across the Belfast City Council area and on the periphery. The outputs of the pre-consultation phase have been used to prepare this draft strategy. The results from this phase of public consultation will be used in the finalising of the strategy.

How to respond

This questionnaire has been developed to help you in submitting your views. If you do not agree with the content of the draft strategy, please say so and state exactly what it is you do not agree with. And, if possible, what you think should be considered instead.

Alternative formats of the document are available on request and by contacting us.

If you need an explanation of any terms we've used or you want any clarification please contact us.

Telephone	028 9091 8779
Emailing	sullivanc@belfastcity.gov.uk
Writing to	Policy and Business Development Unit Parks and Leisure Department Belfast City Council 2nd Floor, Adelaide Exchange 24-26 Adelaide Street Belfast BT2 8DG

The documents can also be viewed and downloaded from our website at www.belfastcity.gov.uk/boxing

Responses must be received no later than 4pm on Friday 8th February 2013 and should be posted to the above address or emailed to sullivanc@belfastcity.gov.uk

Please note that all responses will be treated as public, and may be published on our website. If you don't want your response to be used in this way, or if you would prefer it to be anonymous, please tell us when responding (see Statement of Confidentiality and Access to Information Legislation at the end of the document).

Once we have considered all responses we will publish a report on our website.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and for giving us your views.

Your information

I am responding as:

An individual

on behalf of an organisation or club

Name:	
Title (If applicable) e.g. President, secretary	
Organisation or club (If applicable)	
Address	
Telephone	
E-mail	

Mailing list

Please tick the box below if you would like to be included on our mailing list to receive further information on the development and implementation of the amateur boxing strategy.

Please include me on your mailing list

Approach

Our draft strategy was developed in partnership with Country Antrim Boxing, the Ulster Boxing Council (UBC), Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) and the Irish Amateur Boxing Association (IABA). We undertook a baseline assessment of all boxing clubs in Belfast and on the periphery. We used this information along with information provided by the IABA and UBC to identify need across the city.

We have developed actions to meet these needs and we plan to deliver these in partnership with others over a 10 year period.

Question 1: Do you agree or disagree with the overall approach of the draft amateur boxing strategy?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Please provide details of why you agree or disagree with the overall approach and any changes you think should be made to the overall approach.

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Assessment of need

We used several sources to provide us with information on the key issues and need within boxing in Belfast. This included information on membership, coaches and volunteers, governance structures, funding, facilities and equipment. These sources included information we gathered from the surveys we sent to all the boxing clubs in Belfast as part of the baseline assessment and information we obtained from the IABA and UBC.

Question 2: Do you agree that we identified the correct key issues and need within amateur boxing in Belfast?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Please provide details of why you agree or disagree with the key issues and need we have identified and any other things we should consider.

Action plans

We have developed action plans under four strategic challenges identified by the IABA in their strategic plan and used by both UBC and Co Antrim Boxing. These strategic challenges are:

- Pathways (boxers, coaches and officials)
- Coach education and development
- Club support and development
- Governance

Question 3: Do you agree or disagree with us using the four strategic challenges outlined in the draft strategy?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Please provide details of why you agree or disagree with the use of the four strategic challenges and if there are any additional strategic challenges you feel should be included.

Question 4:

(a) Do you have any comments on the Action Plan for Pathways (boxers, coaches and officials)?

(b) Please provide details of any other action areas which you think should be included in the plan for Pathways (boxers, coaches and officials) and your reasons for suggesting them.

Question 5:

(a) Do you have any comments on the Action Plan for Coach education and development?

(b) Please provide details of any other action areas which you think should be included in the plan for Coach education and development and your reasons for suggesting them.

Question 6:

(a) Do you have any comments on the Action Plan for Club support and development?

(b) Please provide details of any other action areas which you think should be included in the plan for Club support and development and your reasons for suggesting them.

Question 7:

(a) Do you have any comments on the Action Plan for Governance?

(b) Please provide details of any other action areas which you think should be included in the plan for Governance and your reasons for suggesting them.

Question 8: Please identify any other actions that you think that we should include in the draft amateur boxing strategy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The draft amateur boxing strategy proposes a set of performance indicators against which effectiveness of the strategy will be monitored and reported on annually. These are set out in detail on page 27 of the draft strategy document. In addition, we propose to undertake a comprehensive strategic review in 2016 to consider how successful the approach taken has been and to agree the next phase of actions.

Question 9: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation (ie the performance indicators as set out on page 27 of the draft amateur boxing strategy and a comprehensive strategic review)?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Please provide details of why you agree or disagree with the approach.

Equality Impact

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (see http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/section_75) requires that public authorities, in carrying out functions relating to Northern Ireland, have due regard to promote equality of opportunity -

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

Equality impact screening of the draft amateur boxing strategy is being conducted, to which this consultation will contribute. Based on the outcomes of the pre-consultation phase already conducted, our provisional finding is that there may potentially be an adverse impact on some of the categories listed under Section 75. These include women and persons with a disability.

Within our action plans we have included mitigating actions to help manage any potential impacts on these groups. These include 'try it' events for females and persons with a disability.

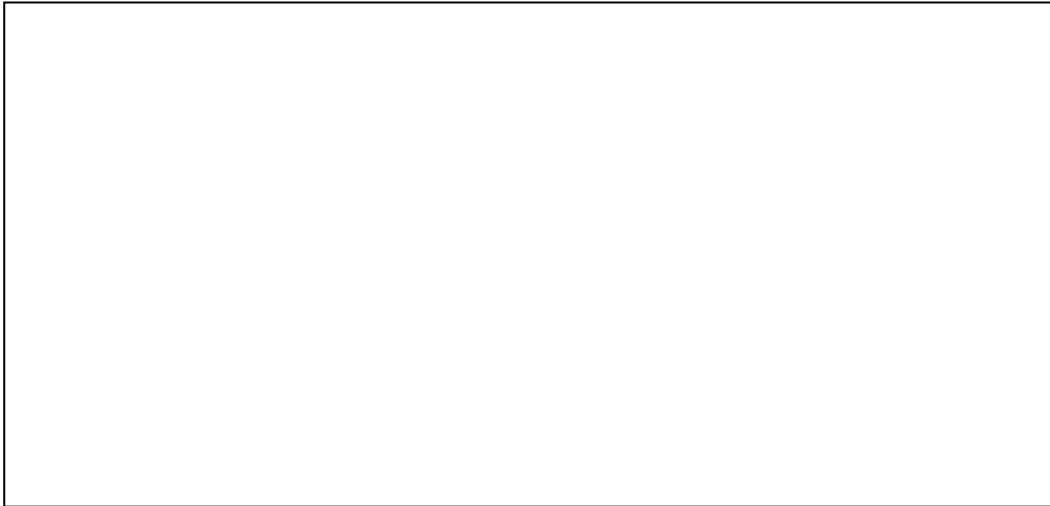
Question 10: Do you agree or disagree with our provisional finding and proposed mitigating actions?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Please provide details of why you agree or disagree with our provisional finding.

Additional comments

Question 11: Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the draft amateur boxing strategy.



Confidentiality and Access to Information Legislation

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with access to information legislation: these are chiefly the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want us to treat the information that you provide as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice (section 45) which we must comply with. It deals, with, amongst other things, obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that we can maintain confidentiality in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on Belfast City Council.

For further information about confidentiality of responses see www.ico.gov.uk or contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 028 9026 9380 or email ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk