



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	The Irish Football Association (FA) Strategic Plan (2013/2018) - We're not Brazil, We're Northern Ireland.
Date:	16 January 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Karen Anderson-Gillespie, Policy and Business Development Officer

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>On 26 November 2013 the Irish FA published their strategic plan – ‘We’re not Brazil, We’re Northern Ireland’ as a blueprint for success over the next five years (2013/2018) and a roadmap for the continuing fulfilment of their vision to ‘<i>promote, foster and develop football for all in Northern Ireland</i>’.</p> <p>It identifies six long term objectives across three areas international, domestic and grassroots, six principles and a detailed action plan for delivery with partners as expressed through an extensive consultation and engagement process with stakeholders.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>The Irish FA strategy aims to achieve its vision by attempting to be ‘world class on the pitch’ and ‘world class off the pitch’. The following is a summary of the contents of their strategic plan.</p> <p><i>‘We are world class of the pitch’</i></p> <p>The Irish FA has outlined 6 long term objectives, which are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualify for a major tournament <p>It hopes that within the lifespan of the strategy it will qualify for a major tournament for the first time since 1986.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver a new national stadium <p>The Irish FA has an opportunity to transform its stadia over the next 5 years. This will involve the £29.2m redevelopment of Windsor Park which will be the new home of the Irish FA, provide a new conference facility for Belfast and provide social and recreational facilities to local communities. A further £36.2m investment is planned to develop sub-regional facilities to benefit the international and domestic game. In total the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has committed £61.4m for football</p>

	<p>stadia with the Irish FA committing a further £4m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster a balanced, flourishing senior domestic game Football remains Northern Ireland's most popular sport. However, the enthusiasm for the game is not being translated into attendance at Saturday or mid-week domestic games. There is opportunity to develop and grow this further to provide an exciting and viable structure for the game in the future. • Create a healthy domestic game at all levels Anyone can start a football club. Over 900 amateur teams exist with over 30,000 adults and children taking part, most of which operate outside of the senior game. The female game is also rapidly growing with approximately 1,100 female players taking part at 50 clubs. The Irish FA aims to professionalise, modernise and standardise its systems across the domestic game to ensure the support and strength of their teams and club network. • Reach Beyond the Game The Irish FA recognises it plays a role not only at the grassroots of football but of our society. Community Relations work is world leading and is praised as a model of best practice. The Irish FA hopes to make the game more vibrant, dynamic and inclusive to all. • Build a culture of lifelong involvement in football The Irish FA is committed to creating an environment that encourages a lifelong involvement in the game for all. This includes mobilising the 'armchair army' who may have lost contact with the game, reaching further into disability football, encouraging new forms of the game and developing a volunteer network to support communities and clubs. <p><i>'We are world class off the pitch'</i></p> <p>The Irish FA recognise that it must maintain its principles of quality, deliver, foster, reach and build in order to stride off the pitch too. This requires them to become an organisation that is consistent in its approach, dedicated to the same vision and more efficient and businesslike in its operations.</p> <p>The introduction of this new strategy is to be welcomed and we are committed to working in partnership with the Irish FA to help deliver its vision, objectives and strategic action plan going forward. Members will be aware that the Council is working with the IFA on the redevelopment of the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park as part of the Leisure Transformation Programme.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p>Financial None</p> <p>Human Resources The partnership approach and delivery of some actions are part of council officers' and staffs' normal duties.</p>

	Asset and Other Implications None
4.	Equality and good relations implications
	There are no equality or good relation implications in relation to this report.
5.	Recommendations
	Members are asked to note the contents of this report.
6.	Decision Tracking
	No further action is required.
7.	Key to Abbreviations
	DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
8.	Appendices
	Appendix 1: The Irish FA strategy summary

Values/ Principles	Professional, Inclusive, Team, Caring & Confident, Honesty (PITCH)			
Stakeholders	Belfast City Council			
Vision	To Promote, Foster, & Develop football for all in NI. (6 Long Term Objectives to achieve vision)			
	Long Term Objective		Related Activities/ Policies	
'We are World Class on the Pitch'	Promote	1	<i>Qualify for a Major Tournament</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage a world class Elite Performance Director to work alongside the International Manager Reconstruct elite coaching Identify talent earlier and support worldwide scouting system Consolidate elite player support and counselling
		2	<i>Deliver a New National Stadium</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the new National Stadium Create a Stadium Management Company Adopt sub-regional facility strategy & develop a National Training Centre
	Foster	3	<i>Foster a Balanced, Flourishing Senior Domestic Game</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an independent body to manage senior football Reduce debt burden among senior clubs Maximise value of senior clubs
		4	<i>Create a Healthy Domestic Game at all Levels</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a club mark to support & develop amateur football clubs Streamline & modernise models of football administration Consider establishing amateur board to further develop the game Create clear strategies for women's boys' & schools football
	Develop	5	<i>Reach Beyond the Game</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to minimise all discrimination & launch a RESPECT programme Use the power of football to foster community & personal development Strengthen partnerships targeting social need
		6	<i>Build a Culture of Lifelong Involvement in Football</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolves & celebrate football in NI Develop & promote a positive plan for disability football Excite our young people & give them a voice in the future of football Capture the passion of volunteers in football & the community Collaborate through sport to make a difference
'We are world Class off the Pitch'		1	<i>Delivering off the Pitch</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reform the organisational structure Review the governance structure & be open Develop a culture of excellence & delivery Produce a Strategic Financial Outlook on a 4yr cycle Produce annual departmental operating plans & budgets Develop the infrastructure of the organisation Further mainstreaming of Good Relations at the

				IFA & across football
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Appendix 1: Irish FA strategy summary