



Subject:	Women's U19 European Championships 2017 – Update Report
Date:	11 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of City and Neighbourhoods Stephen Walker, Portfolio and Programme Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 Members on the forthcoming Women's Under 19 European Championships and to inform Members of the impact on council facilities and to re-affirm council support.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the update and confirm support for the IFA in hosting the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Women's Under 19 European Championships in 2017;• Agree to the addition of a pitch at Alderman Tommy Patton and Cherryvale as training venues at no cost;• Agree to provide the Irish Football Association (IFA) with free use of Blanchflower Stadium to facilitate evening training for those team training in Northern Ireland in preparation of the Women's U19 Tournament, the teams are from Northern Ireland, England, France and the USA. Training will potentially be from 14-24 October; and• Authorise the Town Solicitor to ensure that these requirements are integrated in the Council's legal agreements with the Irish Football Association.

3.0	Main report
3.1	The Committee is reminded that the former Parks and Leisure Committee received and approved a report regarding Council support for the then proposed application to hold the Women's U19 European Championships. A copy of the report is attached for information as Appendix 1.
3.2	The bid to host the Championships was successful and they have now approached the Council to work towards having the facilities prepared in time for the tournament.
3.3	The City Growth and Regeneration Committee agreed to support the tournament in May 2016, as part of a series of high profile international events, as part of the Council's ongoing Place Positioning work.
3.4	Members are reminded that Council had previously agreed to supply facilities at no cost and the IFA had indicated that the potential training venues would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blanchflower Stadium ▪ Ulidia Playing Fields ▪ Strangford Avenue Playing Fields ▪ Victoria Park ▪ Dixon Park Playing Fields.
3.5	However, having reviewed the grounds criteria, IFA only took forward Blanchflower Stadium and Ulidia Playing Fields and these are subject to UEFA approval. The IFA has also requested that Council agree to additional facilities at Cherryvale Playing Fields and Alderman Tommy Patton Park be included for the purposes of being used as potential training venues. This would be limited to one pitch per site.
3.6	Members are asked to note again the potential implications of using the facilities as training venues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Potential closure of the pitches before the end of the local football season; b. Pitches may require attention prior to the regular season and may not be available until after the start of the season; c. Potential restricted access to each of the sites for members of the public; d. Alignment of the pitches to meet the pitch size requirements;

3.7	A UEFA delegation is scheduled to meet with the IFA and Council Officers during October 2016 to finalise selection of the facilities for training and for matches. Officers will meet with them to discuss the preparation of the pitches on each site selected. Once this is clarified, discussions will be held with any clubs who might be impacted upon by the use of the facilities. As far as possible alternative facilities will be offered. However, as this is an IFA sponsored event, it is hoped that the IFA will work with the leagues to accommodate fixtures.
3.8	Members will be aware that this is a significant event for local football and will attract media coverage. The IFA is confident that a successful tournament will support Northern Ireland and Belfast is securing other tournaments in the future.
3.9	The Committee is asked to consider a late request from IFA to use free of charge the Blanchflower Stadium between the 14-24 October 2017 as a training facility for the Women's U19 Preparation Tournament. The teams potentially using the floodlit facility are NI, England, France and the USA.
	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u>
3.10	The estimated cost of meeting the requirements will be met within revenue budgets, and there will potentially be minimal loss of income. However, depending on ground conditions and use the pitches may require ongoing attention during the period of the tournament.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>
3.11	There are no equality implications.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 - Previous Report to Parks and Leisure Committee September 2014