



Subject:	Request from Crumlin Star re Strangford Avenue
Date:	10 th January 2017
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department 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 the Committee on the request from Crumlin Star FC to upgrade facilities at Strangford Avenue Playing Fields to meet Intermediate League Ground Requirements and to seek preferential use of the facility for the Club. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix 1. The Committee agreed that Officers would investigate the possibility and the implications of the works.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While it appears that technically the facility can be brought up to an existing Intermediate Ground Standard, there remain a number of issues around funding, planning (including potential local opposition), and displacement of existing users. • Given the current review of Intermediate League Ground Criteria which is likely to result in revised standards it is recommended that a decision on this be deferred until such time as the review is completed.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Crumlin Star FC is a successful team playing in the Premier Division of the Intermediate League. Owing to lack of its own facilities and the lack of other suitable alternatives, the

	Club is currently playing its home matches at Larne. The Club has previously sought support from the Council to secure 'a home' but to date a solution has not been found owing to the requirements of the IFA Intermediate Committee.
3.2	Crumlin Star is seeking preferential use of Pitch 3 and the adjacent changing pavilion which would be in line with a sports development plan. They wish the Council to upgrade the facilities to meet the Intermediate Committee Ground Criteria. A copy of the criteria is attached as Appendix 2.
3.3	The Club has indicated that if successful it would explore other investment options to enhance the facility, at present the Club does not have the finances to meet the costs. The Club propose that the Council will remain responsible for the maintenance of the pitch and that they would pay for use of the facility.
3.4	The previous report highlighted a number of potential issues which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would be necessary to liaise with the IFA (Amateur League Committee) regarding the suitability of the facility and to establish what work if any are required; this is normally carried out by the Club; 2. Planning consent is likely to be required for the erection of the high level fencing; 3. The pitch is already used and should the Council agree to the proposal it would be necessary to displace existing users and find alternative facilities;
3.5	Officers met with a representative from the IFA with responsibility for Ground Criteria for a preliminary assessment. The main points arising from that meeting are summarised below.
3.6	To meet the standard the facility will require a perimeter high level fence around the pitch as well as the spectator rail, the league does not stipulate the height of the fence, a height of at least 1.8m is normal. The spectator rail is normally 1.2m high. The high fence will require planning approval. This will need to extend around the pitch, to enclose the playing surface, the run off area and the circulation spectator.
3.7	The existing changing pavilion is currently fenced in with a 1m fence. The IFA appeared satisfied with this. The fence is camouflaged by hedging.
3.8	The pavilion appears to be compliant with current criteria in terms of size and the

	<p>accommodation for match officials. However, as the pavilion has separate changing area and shower facilities it will not meet the ground criteria. To make it Intermediate League compliant it will be necessary to restrict the use of the pavilion to 2 teams; one team would use block 1-3 and the other block 4-6, during Intermediate League games. Strangford Avenue is currently booked on Saturdays by South Belfast League and Belfast and District League. Both of these leagues would be displaced from this facility on those occasions when Crumlin Star would be playing. There has been no discussion with either of these Leagues to date.</p>
3.9	The Intermediate Ground Criteria require dug outs.
3.10	An estimated cost for the works would be in the region of £50,000.
3.11	It has been suggested that fencing could be used from other projects in order to reduce costs. Specifically, reference has been made to the ongoing works at Olympia. We have checked and been advised that it would be possible to salvage fencing from Olympia, but have not considered how this can be used.
3.12	Members are asked to note that Officers also met with representatives from the IFA Intermediate Committee. The Chairman of the Committee informed us that there was an ongoing review of Ground Criteria at Intermediate level. He stated that the Report is expected to be completed towards the end of the 2017 and is expected to make changes to the existing grounds criteria. The Chairman stated that until this report was completed it was unlikely that the Committee would approve works to bring a new pitch up to the existing standards.
	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u>
3.13	There are no financial implications at this stage based on the recommendation.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>
3.14	There has been no Equality Assessment carried out.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Previous Report to People and Communities Appendix 2 – IFA Grounds Criteria

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