



**DRAFT (December 2016)**  
**DÚN LAOGHAIRE RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY**

**Prepared by**



## **Vision**

The aim of this strategy is to provide facilities for sport and physical activity that are well maintained, sufficient in number and accessible to as many local people as possible.

The primary focus ought to be to provide publicly owned facilities that will enable participation by as wide a cross section of the population across a diverse range of sports.

We will do this through the relationships we have with local sporting clubs, regional and national sporting organisations, schools, community groups and dlr Leisure.

## **Timeframe and delivery**

This strategy contains a blend of short, medium and long term elements.

**2017:** Within the first year after its adoption there should be a clearly established method of optimising the current use of facilities which the Council provides to clubs and through partnerships with dlr Leisure and schools.

**2018:** Within two years there should be acceptance of the criteria against which improvements to existing facilities and the building of new facilities will be communicated, judged and determined.

**2019:** Within three years there should be the first realisation of improved facilities arising from a new collaborative approach to their provision to sporting clubs and groups.

**2021:** Within five years there should be a fully functioning system for the management and maintenance of the best local authority provision of facilities to enable sport across the whole of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown.

It is recommended that a short annual report of facilities work undertaken and plans in place be compiled and published each year by the Council for the period of this strategy.

## **Context**

This strategy has been compiled with reference to the existing County Sports Participation Strategy; dlr Open Space Strategy, the National Physical Activity Plan, Sport Ireland research through the Irish Sports Monitor on the changing trends within sport; and an understanding from overseas on the optimum way to approach the provision of facilities to populations similar in size to that of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown.

## **Executive Summary**

Sport and physical activity are important to the people of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown.

We have among the highest rates of participation of any local authority in Ireland.

We are constrained though in terms of the freedom to develop new facilities by being the most densely populated area outside Dublin City Centre and with land values that are a barrier to private or club based facility development.

This strategy sets out a logical, deliverable pathway for the optimum use of existing and development of new sporting and physical activity facilities within the County.

We recognise that the pressure on individual clubs to cater for an ever growing population is challenging.

Census Figures from 2016 show that Dun Laoghaire Rathdown saw 5.3% population growth since 2011, the fifth fastest in the country.

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council has traditionally taken on the role of being the major provider of sporting facilities to clubs and organisations through lands under its ownership.

As part of this strategy we wish to restate our commitment in this area.

Our aim is to provide facilities that are well maintained, sufficient in number and accessible to as many local people as possible.

We will do this through the relationships we have with local sporting clubs, regional and national sporting organisations, schools and community groups.

The provision of sporting facilities must also be seen though in the context of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown's wider responsibility to public spaces, visual amenity and safety.

Developing this strategy has been guided by the reality that there is very limited land available for the development of new sporting facilities.

The demand from Clubs for such new development in 2015 outstripped three fold what the maximum development of public land could possibly be short of land reclamation on one side or the levelling of mountains on the other.

In the course of this overall strategy we have:

- audited the current facilities for sport and physical activity within the council area;
- researched and outlined the needs of each of the 48 sports operating within the council area
- Suggested how partnership can be fostered with sports clubs, sporting governing bodies, schools and with dlr Leisure
- Outlined the need for an online booking facility to determine the full extent of usage and assist in maintenance and optimisation of use
- Outlined the need for a credits based system which, without impacting on the cost of facilities to clubs, will generate greater awareness of value and upgrade of facilities where there is the greatest demand.
- Suggested open and transparent criteria for future development of sporting facilities.
- Outlined the need for a three tiered offering on maintenance of pitches, depending on the level of engagement with clubs and what their own needs/ambitions are.
- Outlined four key areas for the future development of sporting facilities within the county.

## **Current Facilities (at December 2016)**

There are currently a total of 118 separate sporting facilities across the County.

In addition there are some measure of sporting facilities at the 79 Primary schools and 38 secondary schools in the area.

The DLR owned facilities will be included as an appendix to the final report, broken down by number of:

- Full grass GAA size pitches
- Full Size Rugby or Soccer Pitches
- Full Size All Weather GAA Pitches
- Full Size All weather Rugby or Soccer pitches
- Tennis facilities comprising a total of XX tennis courts
- Swimming Pools
- Large Halls suitable for indoor Sports
- Clubhouses

The findings of the facilities audit undertaken for the DLR Open Space Strategy will also be integrated in the future planning process. Excerpt set out below:

“Of the 196 pitches, 88 (45%) are in public ownership, and 30 (15%) in private ownership. 78 (40%) are owned by educational bodies, reflecting the significant role schools and colleges play in the overall provision of all sports categories. In terms of hectarage, 54.9 ha of grass pitches (44.5% of total grass pitches hectarage) are in public ownership”

“Pitch ownership varies across the county. This may have an influence on the demand for pitches dependent upon the level and extent to which they are available for community use. Further work is required to analyse the quality, accessibility, usability and local demand for pitches.”

“The results of the quantitative assessment reflect the relative popularity of each sport. The highest level of provision is soccer pitches, which occupy 50.81 hectares - 41.6% of the land provided for all pitches. This is followed by Gaelic and camogie pitches (37.77 ha.) at 30.9%. 29 rugby pitches have been identified and these occupy 30.55 hectares - 25% of the total land area. There are 4 Cricket pitches occupying 3.05 hectares - 2.5% of the total land area.”

Therefore there is a mix of outright and right of use ownership across a wide variety of these pitch based facilities.

In some cases individual clubs have developed their own facility on public and private land and the ability to factor these into an overall system of strategic use will take time.

It will be an integral part of the long term strategy for the provision of sports facilities that standardised criteria for individual facility and club development must be implemented and adhered to.

It is obvious that when land is at a premium that optimum use must be made of what is available.

A key element of the relationship between Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council as the owner and custodian of public lands, and sports clubs and others as private users, is the principle that public use of private lands and facilities must always be favoured over private development on public land.

There will always be an option for private clubs to obtain land and develop their own facilities but that is outside the remit of how Dun Laoghaire Rathdown fits into the equation of creating and maintaining an appropriate level of space for play in a sporting context.

## **Partnership with Sporting Clubs**

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown is home to a total of 276 clubs across 48 different sports.

We have defined a sports club as being an organisation developed by and run within a local community for the purposes of providing sport to that community and not specifically for the purpose of making a profit.

We recognise that sporting clubs come and go and that there may be some not yet registered with Dun Laoghaire Rathdown but we can only plan based on those that we know of at a given point in time, informed by insight on how trends are developing at local and national level.

### ***Registered Sports Clubs in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown - June 2016***

<i>Soccer</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>Camogie</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Tennis</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Cricket</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Sailing</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>Tae Kwon Do</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Golf</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Lawn Bowls</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Hillwalking and Hiking</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Motorsport</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Hockey</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>Orienteering</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Swimming and Water Polo</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>ParkRun</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Cycling</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>Archery</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>GAA</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>Croquet</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Gymnastics</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>Fencing</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Community Games</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Judo</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Table Tennis</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Snooker</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Athletics</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Squash</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Basketball</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Volleyball</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Rugby</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Handball</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Special Olympics</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Life Saving</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Badminton</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Olympic Handball</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Bowling / Boules</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Pitch and Putt</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Boxing</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Riding</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Canoeing / Kayaking</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Rock Climbing</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Scuba Diving</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Skiing</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Kickboxing and Self Defence</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Trampoline</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Martial Arts</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Triathlon</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Rowing</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Ultimate Frisbee</i>	<i>1</i>

## ***Major Field Sports***

A significant number of the larger field sports clubs rely entirely or in large part on facilities on lands owned by the Council.

If the Council was not in a position to provide these facilities the cost of renting them from a private third party provider, were that to be possible, would run to over €1 million per annum.

This would make the provision of the sporting opportunities they provide either wholly unsustainable or only at a markedly higher cost to members.

To put that scenario in the context of where we are today, the contribution that the clubs made in total in 2015 to the rental and maintenance of grass facilities was less than €50,000.

This disparity will, if unchecked lead to unsustainable pressure on the resources of the County or a decline in maintenance and likely loss to safety concerns of a number of the facilities.

We also recognise, having consulted across the wider sports club community, that gaps exist within the provision of facilities to encourage more diverse participation in sport through clubs and sports that are growing fast but operating outside the traditional strong area of team based field sport.

As a part of this Strategy we have engaged with clubs to determine a better way to work in future. Over 40 clubs took part in an open meeting as part of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Sports Forum in March 2016.

53 clubs subsequently participated in an online survey to ascertain their present situation and give an indication of current future needs.

We subsequently held follow up meetings through April 2016 with clubs grouped by being Indoor Clubs, Outdoor Team Sports and Other individual based sports on land or water.

A forum with sports clubs to gather their own views on the key elements of the strategy will take place on Tuesday December 6th following on from presentation to and feedback from the Local Area Committees and before presentation to the full council for adoption.

There has been a broad willingness among clubs throughout to work as partners rather than merely to see the Council as below cost service providers.

We address the ways in which this partnership may take shape when we look at the criteria for developing and maintaining facilities and at a more collaborative approaches to facilities that we recommend towards the potential creation of a number of local sports campuses.

We have compiled a sport by sport breakdown looking at the broad requirements for each of the sports we are home to, based on an understanding gleaned from consultation and research.

### **Existing Use**

We accept that existing use of facilities has become well established among many clubs and we do not see this strategy as a dismantling of existing relationships.

The implementation of enhanced management structures relating to the booking and maintenance of facilities owned by the Council will include full recognition of existing use.

The purpose of the improvements are to develop a system that is fair to all, adaptable for changing circumstances with regard to use and popularity of sports and clubs and to optimise the use of facilities and the quality of their maintenance.

## **Sport by Sport Analysis of Needs**

### **Archery**

The sport can be played indoors or outdoors depending on the variety. Ireland has had success in hosting the World Field Archery Championships which are taking place at Kilruddery.

Equipment is largely transportable though an indoor facility including storage would be useful in terms of providing a base.

### **Athletics**

The County is home to some of the country's most successful athletics clubs. In terms of cross country, the development of a national Cross Country Course as part of the National Sports campus, and the existing course as part of the Santry Demesne means that there will likely be sufficient advanced level facilities nearby to cater for demand.

In terms of track facilities, the closure of the track at UCD has left a void with only the track at Kilbogget Park as an existing facility.

It is desirable that at least one athletics facility be developed in the County though if public land or money is required it would need to be on a collaborative basis between clubs and the Council. We will seek to identify areas where this approach to a partnership might be most effective.

### **Badminton**

The main emphasis for development at national level is at Marino to the North of the City and at the new National Indoor Arena as part of the National Sports campus to the West.

Equipment is largely transportable and clubs operate in a variety of spaces. An indoor facility including storage would be useful in terms of providing a base.

### **Basketball**

There is a strong tradition of school and university based participation in the sport and club facilities tend to be based at education venues. The National Basketball Arena is located in South County Dublin and there are existing good quality facilities at UCD and in a number of local schools. Cost and peak time availability can be a major issue.

## **Bowling and Boules**

Existing facilities on lands shared with other sports are considered to be sufficient to cater for even an increasing demand.

## **Boxing**

Significant national funding was available to boxing following a wave of success at amateur level and especially at the Olympic Games. This was spent largely on bringing facilities to a minimum viable level including investment in separate changing facilities and toilets for female participants.

There is a strong sense of local 'roots' in the sport but the development of multiple facilities dedicated to individual clubs would not be practical.

The creation of a single venue in the County which could serve as a base for a number of Boxing and other Martial Arts Clubs does have merit and is one of the considerations recommended in the medium term as part of this new strategy.

## **Camogie**

Camogie tends to use the same pitches and facilities as other Gaelic Games and significant progress has been evident in terms of a 'One Club' approach. This collaboration is a model for how we see sporting facilities being improved and developed.

## **Canoeing / Kayaking**

There is a need at national level for a Canoeing / Kayaking centre of excellence and we are open to investigating potential facilities, alongside our regional neighbours.

## **Community Games**

The principle of Community Games is based on representing local community areas based on parish boundaries. Use of existing public facilities is negotiated at local level and we see no need to alter this tried and tested approach.

## **Cricket**

Cricket is likely to see growth in popularity in coming years with the likely granting of full test status to the Irish National team.

Facilities at Malahide and Clontarf to the north of the County and a planned national training facility at the National Sports campus to the

west cater for national level but we will remain open to investigation of opportunities to provide facilities within Dun Laoghaire Rathdown.

The footprint of a cricket pitch and the care that needs to be taken of the wicket facility presents unique challenges in terms of shared facilities.

It may be that the development of a pitch facility in collaboration with clubs and a local school would answer the need for a local facility but also one that could be maintained with greater care than might be possible within a public park facility.

## **Croquet**

Existing facilities on lands shared with other sports are considered to be sufficient to cater for even an increasing demand.

## **Cycling**

Cycling Clubs in the County are focused on road and mountain bike racing and make good use of existing general infrastructure. The likely development of an indoor track as part of the National Sports Campus means that such a similar development in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown would not be viable. There is a very well used mountain biking trail located in Ticknock under the remit of the Dublin Mountains Partnership.

## **Fencing**

Equipment is transportable and clubs operate in a variety of spaces. An indoor facility including storage would be useful in terms of providing a base.

## **GAA**

GAA, together with Rugby and Soccer provide the largest games provision service, especially at younger age groups and represent the highest demand on land and club facilities owned by the Council.

GAA clubs will be a key part of the proposed online booking and monitoring system and of the new system of credits on which ongoing or improved service level agreements for maintenance will be based.

GAA requires a larger footprint for a full size pitch, 40% beyond that needed for rugby and soccer.

We recognise the pressure on facilities at key pinch points and have also proposed a greater collaborative approach over the four local authority regions in the Dublin area to liaise with fixture scheduling.

The reality is that it is not sustainable to add more fixtures in narrow windows on existing pitches.

The development of All Weather facilities, in partnership with schools in order to benefit from greater dual use and security is a key element of the strategy for developing facilities.

We hope these issues can be overcome for the good of all.

## **Golf**

We do not see a role for the Council in providing facilities beyond those already in private use and at Stepside and Marlay Park.

## **Gymnastics**

Growing demand and popularity will require greater indoor facility provision with suitable storage.

As commercial property values and rents fluctuate it is desirable to provide suitable indoor space which can cater for a wide variety of sports and clubs operating in a collaborative manner.

Gymnastics is likely to be a key stakeholder in the Large Hall recommendation included as part of this strategy.

## **Handball**

The GAA is to develop a new National Handball Centre adjacent to Croke Park. An existing alley in UCD and a Ball Alley as part of the Harold School in Glasthule are the only known current facilities in the County.

## **Hillwalking and Hiking**

Hillwalking makes good use of natural infrastructure. There are a number of well used trails in the Dublin mountains area and along the Dublin Mountains Way.

## **Hockey**

Hockey is the fourth major field sport providing sport to a significant number of participants. Maintenance of private and school facilities is expensive creating a demand for public facilities to ease the financial burden.

Facilitating Hockey where possible within the online booking system on All Weather facilities also used by other sports should be factored in, alongside the proposed system of credits for ongoing maintenance and use.

## **Lawn Bowls**

Existing facilities on lands shared with other sports are considered to be sufficient to cater for even an increasing demand.

## **Judo**

The creation of a single venue in the County which could serve as a base for a number of Judo and other Martial Arts Clubs has merit and is one of the considerations recommended in the medium term as part of this new strategy.

## **Kickboxing and self defence**

The creation of a single venue in the County which could serve as a base for a number of Kickboxing and other Martial Arts Clubs does have merit and is one of the considerations recommended in the medium term as part of this new strategy.

## **Life Saving**

The use of existing pools as part of dlr Leisure facilities are considered sufficient to cater for current and likely future demand.

## **Martial Arts**

The creation of a single venue in the County which could serve as a base for a number of Boxing and Martial Arts Clubs does have merit and is one of the considerations recommended in the medium term as part of this new strategy.

## **Motorsport**

The growth of trail biking is likely to be significant but there are no obvious areas for development apart from that on Coillte owned land.

## **Olympic Handball**

The regular use of a central large hall space, with storage for goals and equipment would be desirable. Handball is a popular sport within different community groups less well catered for by the larger team sports and Olympic Handball is one sport that would benefit from the Large Hall space we have recommended.

## **Orienteering**

Orienteering makes good use of natural infrastructure. Access issues and on-going maintenance of trails and signage is the extent to which it impacts on the sports facility strategy. This would be in partnership with the Dublin Mountains Partnership.

## **Park Run**

A growing movement which can be catered for using existing facilities in park areas. Management of timetabling, parking, storage facilities for marshalling equipment presents some challenges but there is no present or foreseeable requirement for new facilities.

## **Pitch and Putt**

Existing facilities would appear to be sufficient to meet demand.

## **Horse Riding**

Existing facilities would appear to be sufficient to meet demand.

## **Rock Climbing**

Rock Climbing makes good use of natural infrastructure. Ongoing maintenance of access and a specific approach to use of Dalkey Quarry is the primary impact on the provision of facilities. There are also private indoor facilities based in Sandyford and UCD.

## **Rowing**

The main facilities are within private ownership and any further development of water based sport is tied to overall development of the Harbour area and as such beyond the remit of this strategy.

## **Rugby**

Rugby, together with GAA and Soccer provide the largest games provision service, especially at younger age groups and represent the highest demand on land and club facilities owned by the Council.

They will be a key part of the proposed online booking and monitoring system and of the new system of credits on which ongoing or improved service level agreements for maintenance will be based.

We recognise the pressure on facilities at key pinch points and have also proposed a greater collaborative approach over the four local authority regions in the Dublin area to liaise with fixture scheduling.

The reality is that it is not sustainable to add more fixtures in narrow windows on existing pitches.

The development of All Weather facilities, in partnership with schools in order to benefit from greater dual use and security is a key element of the strategy for developing facilities and may be particularly well suited to the school base in the county.

### **Sailing**

Sailing is a high profile and very visible sport within Dun Laoghaire. The main facilities are within private ownership and any further development of water based sport is tied to overall development of the Harbour area.

### **Scuba Diving**

Recent upgrades to the storage facilities at Scotsmans Bay mean that facilities should be sufficient to cater for demand.

### **Skiing**

The private outdoor facility at Kilternan and indoor facility in Sandyford should be sufficient to satisfy current and future demand.

### **Snooker**

We do not see a role for the Council in providing facilities beyond those already in private use.

### **Soccer**

Soccer, together with GAA and Rugby provide the largest games provision service, especially at younger age groups and represent the highest demand on land and club facilities owned by the Council.

They will be a key part of the proposed online booking and monitoring system and of the new system of credits on which ongoing or improved service level agreements for maintenance will be based.

The large number of individual clubs presents a challenge that will need to be addressed through a greater collaborative approach to the developing of better facilities on existing lands given over to sport.

We recognise the pressure on facilities at key pinch points and have also proposed a greater collaborative approach over the four local authority regions in the Dublin area to liaise with fixture scheduling.

The development of All Weather facilities, in partnership with schools in order to benefit from greater dual use and security is a key element of the strategy for developing facilities.

### **Special Olympics**

The variety of sports and facilities needed means that they should be covered under individual sports.

### **Squash**

There are squash courts located in UCD and in private gyms such as Westwood, which should be sufficient to meet current and future demand.

### **Swimming and Water Polo**

Existing dlr Leisure facilities are well used, while the facilities at UCD and Newpark provide additional club facilities. The Council is considering the possible future development of swimming pool facilities

### **Table Tennis**

A growing indoor sport with significant potential across different age groups. Providing space and time within existing and new indoor facilities, with storage for equipment would be a desired outcome in the future.

### **Tae Kwon Do**

The creation of a single venue in the County which could serve as a base for a number of Taekwondo and other Martial Arts Clubs has merit and is one of the considerations recommended in the medium term as part of this new strategy.

### **Tennis**

Local tennis clubs have benefitted in recent years from capital funds through the Sports Capital Grants Scheme. Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Council has been a funding and underwriting partner on the development of new indoor facilities at Shankill Tennis Club. New facilities are unlikely to be required in the short to medium term though some work in terms of maintenance and provision of toilet facilities may be needed at certain

venues. This will be accommodated under the criteria for development alongside other sports and venues.

### **Trampoline**

There is a need for use of an indoor facility with suitable storage. As commercial property values and rents fluctuate it is desirable to provide suitable indoor space which can cater for a wide variety of sports and clubs operating in a collaborative manner. Trampolining, Gymnastics, Badminton and others could potentially be catered for together in the Large Hall recommendation included as part of this strategy.

### **Ultimate Frisbee**

A relatively new, youth based sport which tends to use existing open space facilities. Very transportable and a classic 'pop-up' sport. There is no need to factor any facility demands specific to Ultimate Frisbee.

### **Volleyball**

In similar fashion to Gymnastics, Badminton and other indoor sports there is a demand for suitable large hall provision with sufficient storage. This is addressed in in the Large Hall recommendation included as part of this strategy.

## **Partnership with Governing Bodies**

For the larger field sports in particular the inefficient use of pitches in very short windows of 'game periods' presents a major challenge.

The administrators of leagues and tournaments in the Greater Dublin Area need to be aware of the pressures on existing facilities.

We propose that a group comprising each of the four County Councils meet with these administrative units on a six month basis to review timetabling of games and to work over time towards a position where greater use is made of scarce facilities and greater time set aside for proper maintenance.

Clubs will also need to accept that there needs to be greater flexibility in the scheduling of matches if the current provision of facilities is to be maintained.

With regard to the wider base of sporting bodies, we propose that working relationships are established and maintained to provide guidance on the development needs of clubs outside of the major field sports.

It will be important to create a strategy that is viable in the long term and a national perspective on the development of individual sports will be an important element of this.

## **Partnership with Schools**

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown has a strong level of school sports facility provision. With sport and physical activity taking a more prominent position as an examinable subject in a developing curriculum there is corresponding pressure on schools to develop fit for purpose facilities.

The time at which these facilities would be used presents, for the most part an ideal overlap with the needs of sporting organisations.

As part of the long term development of sporting facilities for the people of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown it is imperative that future opportunities be explored to develop joint owned, joint managed facilities between schools, clubs and the Council.

The Council will look to work with schools and clubs to develop a template for the management of such joint owned and run facilities.

## **Partnership with dlr Leisure**

dlr Leisure provides an experienced and enthusiastic team willing to play a greater part in the provision of facilities for use by clubs in the County.

The provision of swimming pool facilities is the best used but there is potential to increase club use of gym facilities and all weather pitches in a manner that could provide short term relief.

Understanding of the facilities that are available and a collaborative approach aimed at increasing use of programmes and facilities will yield a return for all parties.

## **Financial Planning**

There is a clear disparity between what is paid for the use of Council owned property and what it costs to maintain.

This historic anomaly cannot be fixed overnight and there is no intention that the Council would seek to fully recoup costs but some change needs to be implemented.

We propose that this should include:

- Introduction of an online booking facility and system of credits
- A new tiered approach to facility maintenance
- An open and transparent set of criteria for regular and larger scale capital investment
- The identification of funding streams

## **Online Booking System and Credits Based Payment**

It is recommended that an online booking system for pitches and facilities be introduced in the first 12 months of this strategy.

A detailed specification of what is needed in order to make this as effective as possible but at the same time not burdening clubs with an excessive administration uplift will be published within three months of the adoption of the strategy.

This online booking system will be backed up by a system of credits taking into account club's traditional usage and size and giving access to facilities based at or near current levels on a cost neutral basis to clubs.

Having a system of knowledge about actual use and the stresses of pinch points will be a vital part of developing a system that is fair to all and robust enough to adapt over time to match shifting population and activity patterns.

Most clubs are already managing the use of their own, council owned and commercial third party facilities to provide for their members needs.

A greater understanding of these uses and needs across the entire sports club population will provide for greater clarity in terms of planning upgrades to existing facilities and provision of new, most likely in partnership with clubs and schools.

Additional use of facilities, and enhanced programmes of maintenance must be budgeted for from a clubs existing credits or topped up so that enhanced services might be made available on a shared cost basis between clubs and the Council.

An annual review of the cost of facilities, benchmarked against those in private ownership will set the rate for pitch and facility use, to be paid for using the credits.

This should include a substantial discount to account for traditional perceived 'rights' of use by clubs and so as not to force any clubs into a position where they can no longer provide a sporting outlet.

## **Facility Maintenance**

By the summer of 2017 The Council will propose and implement three levels of facility maintenance and upkeep.

The lowest grade will be to maintain health and safety standards and present clubs with a basic use.

The next two grades will provide for better quality facilities which clubs will have the option to apply for, at an additional cost.

A simple service level agreement will be made available so that there is clarity around what services can be provided to maintain facilities, what notice will be required to implement maintenance activities from grass cutting to sanding, drainage and the levels that will be needed to produce better quality playing surfaces for those clubs willing to co-invest in them.

### **Capital Investment**

By 2018 an annual budget process should be published and communicated to clubs with regard to capital investment in infrastructure.

Bids for investment should be submitted and approved by the Council.

The bid and decision making process should be transparent and tie in wherever possible with national investment schemes such as any renewals of the Sports Capital Investment Programme.

### **Identification of Future Funding Streams**

A collaborative approach is central to the ongoing strategy with regard to the development of sports facilities.

It is recommended that preference be given to projects where Council funding will be part of an overall mix which in relation to clubhouse facilities may include direct contribution from clubs through fundraising or borrowings, partnership with National Governing Bodies and other streams of potential funding at national or regional level such as the Sports Capital Development Programme.

A key element of this will be to use public money as leverage for other fundraising and financial planning, as opposed to as a replacement for them.

Financial planning and cost benefit consideration will be treated seriously within the consideration of facility development.

## Criteria for Development

In the absence of guidelines for the development of sporting facilities, their use and maintenance, there has been an ad hoc approach based on historic perceived 'rights', and hyper local rather than county wide need.

It is important for the future that all parties are aware of the criteria which will be applied to consideration of application for development and use of facilities.

The criteria should include but not be limited to the following:

Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All clubs using or applying to use facilities owned and operated by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council must be affiliated to their National Governing Body as recognised by Sport Ireland and be in good standing.</li> </ul>	Required
Annual returns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of the agreement to use facilities clubs must present annual returns on their number of registered members, the number of teams they field and the number of events or fixtures staged.</li> </ul>	Required
Past and Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This should be done on the basis of planned numbers for the year ahead and the existence of an up to date development plan</li> </ul>	Required and verified

	<p>based on past and proposed future growth. The numbers should be accurate and will be verified.</p>	
Online Booking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the development of an online booking system for facilities clubs will be responsible for ensuring that bookings made are done in a timely fashion and in good faith.</li> </ul>	Adopted
Training Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs will also register use of pitches and Council owned facilities for training purposes, a practice which has not previously been required. This will give a greater awareness of the pressure on facilities and the programme of maintenance needed.</li> </ul>	Required and Verified
Greatest Number of Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference in terms of capital investment will go to projects which serve the greatest number of individuals.</li> </ul>	Important
Collaboration Preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference in terms of capital investment will go to projects that</li> </ul>	Important

	<p>are put forward jointly by clubs or schools that will facilitate multi-use of the spaces proposed.</p>	
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## **Recommended Area for Development of facilities**

### **Large Hall Strategy**

The shortage of large hall space is a gap in the provision of facilities owned and operated by the Council to be made available for clubs.

Facility provision is generally geared more towards the larger field sports but greater encouragement of indoor sports appealing to a diverse but nonetheless large population should be a long term goal.

Existing expenditure by clubs on the hire or rental of hall space without sufficient or suitable storage is in excess of €100,000 and there is an existing reasonable case to be made for development of a new Large Hall facility on one or more existing Council properties.

It is recommended that a working group comprising representatives of clubs and the Council be established to explore such a development.

### **Martial Space Strategy**

There is demand from across a number of sports who share common space needs and are likely to experience growth in the coming years.

Creating a single dedicated area for sports including Boxing, Martial Arts, Judo, Tae Kwon Do and others has merit and is recommended to be explored using the potential of existing premises that could be repurposed that will be close to public travel routes.

### **School Partnerships**

It is recommended that future provision of required floodlit all weather surfaces be explored as a three way partnership between schools, clubs and the Council.

The security, land and time overlap would create optimum conditions for efficient use and the best value return for all parties.

This may need to be facilitated through the creation of a 'joint venture' style arrangement between the parties covering agreed shared use, payment for upkeep and maintenance and collaboration for the greater good of all.

### **Development of Campus Facilities**

Collaboration and shared use must be a central part of future development of larger scale sporting facilities. This is normal across Europe and has also been used to good effect locally throughout Ireland.

It is recommended that a full feasibility study be undertaken with an initial group of the four clubs operating in Kilbogget Park to develop an improved shared facility that will improve the quality of service provided by Cabinteely FC, Foxrock Cabinteely GAA Club, Seapoint Rugby Club and Cabinteely Athletics Club.

In parallel it is recommended that expressions of interest be sought for collaborative development in other large spaces including though not necessarily limited to Shankill and Marlay Park.

### **Timetable for development, consultation and adoption of strategy**

Presentation to Local Area Committees (Oct. 2016)

Feedback from Councillors

Sports Club Forum with Q & A on key points of strategy (December 2017)

Pre Final presentation to SPC (Jan. 2017)

Final submission to Councillors for Adoption (February 2017)