

<b>Portrush Leisure Development</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>
<b>To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Decision</b>	

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	Resilient, healthy & engaged communities
<b>Outcome</b>	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Head of Sport & Wellbeing
<b>Cost:</b> (If applicable)	To be confirmed via a procurement process

**The purpose of this report is to update members on the scoping of community leisure options for Portrush, recent stakeholder engagements and make a recommendation to proceed with the preparation of 3 business cases.**

### **Background**

In January 2016, June 2016, September 2017 and November 2017 the Leisure & Development (L&D) Committee discussed the need for improvements to The Recreation Grounds at Ramore Avenue, Portrush and in February 2016 Members approved a capital prioritisation list that included the Recreation Grounds at joint 9<sup>th</sup> position.

Current facilities include a 3,500 sq. ft. pavilion that is no longer fit for purpose, 2 grass bowling greens, 12 tarmac tennis courts, a redundant crazy golf area and a sparsely equipped playground. The facility is in poor condition and many of the features are of such an outdated design that they fail to meet current user expectations.

Officers suggested that before planning a project for the Recreation Grounds it is important to understand the outdoor recreational facility needs of the town and consider the best fit between need and the available sites. Officers have been working to scope the range of available options and have undertaken an extensive community engagement exercise to gain views from the general public and special interest groups in relation to:

- Leisure facility need in the Portrush area.
- Site options for various facility types.
- Advantages and disadvantages of various options.
- Priorities for action.

The challenging geography of the town and limited site availability means that all of the possible solutions will require some compromise in respect of the available sites, need, aspiration, affordability and planning considerations.

### **Objectives**

The following are proposed as objectives for any related community leisure project/s in the town:

- Improved quality of life and enhanced physical and emotional well-being of the citizens of Portrush.
- Increasing access to inclusive, multi-use and accessible leisure facilities that meet local need.
- Improve the appearance and recreational use of The Recreation Grounds.
- Make the most economically advantageous use of the available space.
- Enhance the attractiveness of the town for residents and visitors alike.

### **Facility Need**

The on-going work has not been limited to formal sports facilities but has also included the needs of the town for improved outdoor recreation space, play facilities, event space and casual outdoor physical activity. With reliance on the outcome of the public engagement exercise, the emerging findings from the Pitch and Play Audits and the Council's existing Leisure Facilities Strategy 2015, need has been identified within the following categories and facility types:

#### **Structured Sport & Leisure**

- Improved pitch quality and training area/s.
- Tennis for casual play.
- Improved quality of outdoor bowling facilities.

#### **Casual Physical Activity (free to use)**

- Urban sports: skate, scooter, BMX, Parkour.
- Playparks.
- MUGA.

#### **Commercial Leisure**

- Pay to use family leisure activities (normally best delivered by private sector).
- Current disposal and redevelopment of the site and building at Dunluce Avenue.

#### **Outdoor Recreation (Also used for event space)**

- Connected walks and cycleways.
- Open space for picnics, sitting and general outdoor enjoyment.
- Access to and protection of the unique natural environment.
- Casual water sports opportunities.

#### **Event Space**

- Improved spaces for hosting a variety of outdoor events e.g. West Bay, Metropole and Recreation Grounds.

#### **Options Identified**

At the L&D Committee in September 2017, Members considered a discussion paper that identified site options, their relative merits/disadvantages and the priorities for each of the above activities. While the business cases could be developed concurrently, it was proposed unlikely that Council would have the financial or other capacities to progress all potential projects simultaneously. Officers also noted that the work on the Pitches and Play strategies is ongoing and that the emerging findings are consistent with the need for fixed play and training pitch space in the town of Portrush.

Officers sought the approval of Members to progress the development of three business cases to refine and more fully assess the issues of need, options identification, costs and most advantageous solutions. It was emphasised that through the business case process, options would be developed and assessed in consultation with key stakeholder groups.

### **Member / Stakeholder Workshop**

Members expressed the wish to further engage with the stakeholder groups on these matters in advance of work progressing on business case development. A workshop was arranged for Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October where the following groups gave presentations to the Members in attendance:

- Portrush FC.
- Portrush Bowling Club.
- CCC Show Jumpers.
- Portrush Matters.
- Sure Start.
- CAUS.
- Portrush Hockey Club.

The Members reported this to be a useful engagement and suggested a further workshop with officers to discuss the content of the stakeholder presentations and the available options. This workshop took place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December when officers presented a summary of the stakeholder presentations, an objective review of the available information and the issues considered pertinent to a review of the options. The slides from this workshop are attached at Annex A for Member's information.

### **Priority Projects for Business Case Review**

In light of the stakeholder presentations, objective information analysis and Member's comments, officers recommended the following options as the most likely to represent viable solutions for detailed business case analysis:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Site Options</b>	<b>Features/ Considerations</b>
1. Formal and informal outdoor recreation	Ramore Head Recreation Grounds	1 or 2 Bowling Greens 2 to 4 tennis courts Small play facility New pavilion Event space Associated parking Small urban sport area
2. Integrated Play Facility	The Bowl or Dunluce/Metropole	The main site for: Urban Sport MUGA Play
3. Training pitch/small sided games	Parker Avenue, Glenmanus, The Warren and/or Rugby Avenue	Increased/improved pitch space combined with synthetic training areas for formal bookings.

The business case process is the key tool to fully assess need, evaluate site opportunities/constraints, develop design options, estimate costs and anticipate the benefits. While a business case to consider pitch/training facility options is relatively straight forward and deliverable within a few months, The Recreation Grounds and Ramore Head are significantly more complex with the potential to require specialist investigations in relation to

environmental, archaeological and other planning related matters. As a result, a completed business case for a project at The Recreation Grounds/Ramore Head is likely to be at least 6 months in development. In compliance with Council's S75 policy, any funding decisions will need to be exposed to a 12 week public consultation in advance of implementation.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Members approve:

1. The proposed objectives for the leisure and recreation projects for Portrush; and
2. That officers proceed to outline business case appraisals for the above 3 projects.

Presentation from 6 December Workshop

	 <p>Feedback from Portrush Stakeholder Event: 30 Oct 2017</p>										
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Portrush Community Leisure Consultations</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Stakeholder Feedback, Options and Issues</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">Nick Harkness SIB</p>	<p><b>Agenda:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portrush FC</li> <li>• Portrush Bowling Club</li> <li>• CCC Show Jumpers</li> <li>• Portrush Matters</li> <li>• Sure Start</li> <li>• CAUS</li> <li>• Portrush Hockey Club</li> </ul> <p><b>For Each:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of key points from the consultation</li> <li>• Objective Information Analysis</li> <li>• Issues to be resolved</li> </ul> 										
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<p><b>Club Perspective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 260 children registered, 20,000 participation events / annum</li> <li>• One grass pitch (considered poor), 2 x grass training &amp; some use of 3G at Rugby Av</li> <li>• Changing pavilion meets current needs</li> </ul> <p><b>Needs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgraded pitch to grass/synthetic technology (to allow training)</li> <li>• Synthetic, floodlit &amp; fenced training area/s</li> <li>• Car park extended and new egress road</li> </ul> <p>❖ <u>Club can bring capital to the project</u> (quantity not defined)</p> <p>❖ Club accept 3G planning constraints</p>  <p><b>Objective information analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High volume leisure provider for the town</li> <li>• Request seems proportionate to scale of club</li> <li>• Training on grass pitch against Council policy (new technology = potential to review)</li> <li>• Light, traffic, noise and fencing = planning constraints, less so if no increase in volume</li> </ul>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Issue</th> <th>Options</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Lack of training space</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Parker Avenue:</b> traffic, light, noise and visual impact issues with 3G</li> <li>• <b>Glenmanus:</b> distance from club</li> <li>• <b>East Strand:</b> currently used for some training. Not in Council ownership. Potential approval constraints</li> <li>• <b>Use the grass pitch:</b> against Council policy, needs upgrade</li> <li>• <b>Out of town:</b> Warren or Rugby Avenue = loss of town connection</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quality of pitch during heavy use</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3G:</b> unlikely re planning constraints</li> <li>• <b>Sand mattress:</b> still limited hours of use circa 4 hours</li> <li>• <b>New hybrid technology:</b> 20+ hours / week</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>20,000 participation events to service</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great community service but levels of use impacts on pitch condition</li> <li>• Options very limited in the town</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Planning constraints</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grass/hybrid most likely to get approval if servicing current use</li> <li>• Visual impact, 3m fencing: possible planning issue for training area</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Issue	Options	Lack of training space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Parker Avenue:</b> traffic, light, noise and visual impact issues with 3G</li> <li>• <b>Glenmanus:</b> distance from club</li> <li>• <b>East Strand:</b> currently used for some training. Not in Council ownership. Potential approval constraints</li> <li>• <b>Use the grass pitch:</b> against Council policy, needs upgrade</li> <li>• <b>Out of town:</b> Warren or Rugby Avenue = loss of town connection</li> </ul>	Quality of pitch during heavy use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3G:</b> unlikely re planning constraints</li> <li>• <b>Sand mattress:</b> still limited hours of use circa 4 hours</li> <li>• <b>New hybrid technology:</b> 20+ hours / week</li> </ul>	20,000 participation events to service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great community service but levels of use impacts on pitch condition</li> <li>• Options very limited in the town</li> </ul>	Planning constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grass/hybrid most likely to get approval if servicing current use</li> <li>• Visual impact, 3m fencing: possible planning issue for training area</li> </ul>
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## Portrush Bowling Club



### The Club Perspective:

- High performance, needs grass (recent poor condition)
- 45 members, current state of facility limits membership
- Membership history: Max circa 90
- Open to considering shared maintenance
- Larger events need 2 greens: annual Portrush Bowls Festival, Home Country (5/10 yrs)
- Aspire to indoor short mat facility

### Objective information analysis:

- **Annual cost/member:** £10k x 2 (cutting) + caretaking, maintenance, insurance, consumables, equipment £10k (est) = £30k/45 members = **£650/member**
- If each member plays once/wk x 24 wks = **£30 subsidy/play**
- Back to full membership of 90 = **£15 subsidy/play**
- Capital costs: 2 x green repairs £20k, dedicated committee room, kitchen, changing etc £300k. Circa £20k/annum loan costs + £30k rev = **Total cost/member @ 45 = £1,000+**
- **Pitch audit:** healthy bowling club = **60 members/green**
- **Indoor facility @ NI DC costs £14 subsidy/play (exc. capital), Ballymoney has one.**

## Bowling: Issues to be Resolved

Issue	Options
Number of Greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 or 2 Greens</li> <li>• At current membership, 2 greens + pavilion – £1,000+/member/annum</li> </ul>
Surface of greens	<p><b>Synthetic:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High capital cost £120k Close to £0 maintenance cost</li> </ul> <p><b>Grass (restored):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low capital cost to repair c£20k</li> <li>• Revenue cost £10k/green (cutting only)</li> <li>• Needed for high performance bowling</li> </ul>
Pavilion options:	<p><b>Dedicated Bowling Club space within a bigger building:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High capital and running cost for very few beneficiaries</li> <li>• Bowling and other uses most likely limited to 6 months max</li> <li>• Option: seek commercial operator to run café @ 10m x 20m – 200m sq. x £2k – £400k (£22k/annum borrowing cost within likely rental income)</li> </ul> <p><b>Shared Space:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced privacy for members</li> <li>• Increased community value &amp;</li> <li>• Reduced capital cost</li> </ul> <p><b>Building scaled to service bowlers only (see Knock BC):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly reduce capital costs by 50%</li> <li>• No wider community use (no need for additional community space)</li> </ul>



## Causeway Coast Community Show Jumpers



### The Show Jumper's Perspective:

- Up to 70 competitors x 5 days @£75 (2017 including Pony Club)
- Mostly day visitors from within NI
- Needs:
  - Warm up area: 50m x 40m
  - Competition area: 50m x 80m, fenced
  - Car and trailer parking
  - Grass, well drained surface
- The Bowl is ideal apart from lack of toilets

### Objective information analysis:

- Show jumping: relatively low impact on local economy, bed nights, visitor spend etc.
- Circa £14k pa grass cutting (excluding any specialist recovery work)
- Alternative sites could be explored/supported if Bowl to proceed for play etc.
- The Bowl is a credible site option for play, Urban Sport and MUGA
- Other options present challenges re:
  - Combining the 3 facility types on one site
  - Visual impact on open space
- Currently an underutilised area with 'green space' restrictions on future use

## Show Jumping: Issues to be Resolved

Issue	Options
Value of equestrian sport @ The Bowl:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>High:</b> must stay @ Bowl</li> <li>• <b>Medium:</b> support to find new location if Bowl developed</li> <li>• <b>Low:</b> leave to own devices if Bowl developed</li> </ul>



**The Group's Perspective:**

- 650 members
- Council communication with the group is appreciated
- Recreation Grounds need fixed
- Specific interest in issues including:
  - Water sports such as kayaking and surfing
  - Mini golf
  - Men's sheds

**Objective information analysis:**

- No specific proposals/comments for consideration other than general support



**Sure Start Perspective:**

- Delighted that play is on the agenda for the town
- Portrush play facilities are in a terrible condition
- Need play at various locations
- Play areas to reflect the local landscape: sand, boulders etc.
- Risk is important, we can make things too safe
- Families have kids of various ages, reflect this in play facilities
- Include places to ride bikes, skate, scooter etc

**Objective information analysis:**

- Play Audit supports the play need in the town and the current poor quality
- Sure Start views are consistent with proposal for multiple play sites



Issue	Options/Progress
Innovative designs to better reflect environment	✓ Design brief is currently part of the upcoming play strategy
Location for a main play facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recreation Grounds:</b> weather &amp; remoteness from residential areas</li> <li>• <b>The Bowl:</b> displacement of equestrian events</li> <li>• <b>Dunluce/Metropole:</b> planning concerns with co-location of MUGA</li> </ul>
Minor play sites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation Grounds</li> <li>• The Bowl</li> <li>• Dunluce/Metropole</li> <li>• Kerr Street Green</li> <li>• West Bay</li> <li>• East Strand</li> <li>• Lansdowne</li> <li>• Arcadia old pool</li> <li>• Antrim Gardens</li> </ul>



**CAUS Perspective:**

- Current street activity creates some conflict
- 2013 consultation:
  - 856 responses
  - Responses favoured skateboard facility in Portrush
  - Outside Dunluce Centre nominated at potential site
  - Integration with other facilities and all ages
  - 'street course' preferred
  - Consider visibility and child safety
  - Support main site and dispersed features

**Objective information analysis:**

- The Dunluce Centre was preferred in 2013 survey
- The Bowl was not considered in 2013
- CAUS support mixed play provision and multiple sites
- The Bowl was positively considered an option
- Youth Centre plans offer synergies



## Urban Sport: Issues to be Resolved

Issue	Options
<b>Main site: are there fixed views?</b>	Attitude to site flexibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Bowl?</li> <li>Metropole/Dunluce?</li> </ul>
<b>Minor sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreation Grounds</li> <li>East strand</li> <li>West Bay</li> <li>Kerr Street Green</li> <li>Lansdowne</li> </ul>
<b>Value of intergenerational play/mixed use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>High:</b> must collocate urban sport with play, MUGA etc.</li> <li><b>Medium:</b> where possible collocate urban sport with play, MUGA etc.</li> <li><b>Low:</b> no need to collocate urban sport with play, MUGA etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Facility mix</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skate/scooter</li> <li>Play</li> <li>MUGA</li> <li>Parkour</li> <li>BMX</li> </ul>



## Portrush Hockey Club

### Hockey Club Perspective:

- 2 senior & 4 under age teams
- Travel for pitches: Ballycastle, Ballymoney and Coleraine = loss of identity with town
- Coaching in 19 primary schools
- Coleraine hockey pitch over subscribed
- Proposal: Astro hockey pitch etc @ East Strand for multi-sport use
- Didn't apply to Sport NI capital programme as couldn't raise 15%

### Objective information analysis:

- As Ballymoney & Coleraine 3G bookings grow, demand for Astro pitches will reduce
- East Strand: not a Council owned site so capital grant application is only route (max 50%)
- Astro (hockey) is the least preferred surface for big ball sports
- Pitch Audit conclusions for hockey:
  - No need for additional hockey pitches
  - As 3G use grows and schools develop hockey pitches, demand for Council Hockey facilities will fall

## Hockey: Issues to be Resolved

Issue	Options
<b>Need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pitch audit: No need demonstrated for hockey</li> </ul>
<b>Ownership @ East Strand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council has no ownership @ East Strand, only route is capital grant</li> <li>Capital grant limited to 50%</li> <li>Club turned down opportunity for 85% over lack of partnership funding</li> </ul>
<b>Approvals @ East Strand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approvals and consents could be problematic</li> </ul>



## Proposed Options for Business Case Review:

Facility Type	Options for Detailed Review:		
<b>1. Play (combined)</b>	The Bowl	Dunluce/Metropole	Plus various minor sites
<b>1. MUGA (combined)</b>	The Bowl	Dunluce/Metropole	
<b>1. Urban Sport (combined)</b>	The Bowl	Dunluce/Metropole	Plus various minor sites
<b>2. Pitch/ Training area</b>	Grass pitch upgrade options @ Parker Av Synthetic training @ town sites	The Warren full 3G Synthetic training @ town sites	Rugby Avenue full 3G Synthetic training @ town sites
<b>3. Bowling @ Rec Gds</b>	2 grass (improved) + pavilion	1 grass(improved) + pavilion	1 grass (improved), 1 synthetic + pavilion
<b>4. Tennis @ Rec Gds</b>	4 courts	3 courts	2 courts
<b>5. Events &amp; Improved Open Space</b>	Recreation Gds	Dunluce/Metropole	Westbay



## Suggested Priority Projects for Business Case Development:

Proposed business cases to fully test options for:

- I. An **integrated play facility** (and minor installations) including:
  - Urban Sport
  - MUGA
  - Play
- II. Formal and informal outdoor recreation at **The Recreation Grounds and Ramore Head**
- III. **Training/small sided games/pitch upgrade**

### Other options :

- Improved open/event space at Metropole & West Bay (see new opportunities)
- Safe swim zone and raft @ Harbour



## Current Opportunities – West Bay and Metropole:

- Current layout limits use for casual recreation and events
- Upcoming capital projects (Harbour and Public Realm)- possibility of low/no cost surface-fill material
- Unique and time limited opportunity to infill these areas and return to grass at a reduced cost
- Grass is a 'blank canvas' for future opportunities



# Thank You













