

	TYPED	ORIG.	HEAD OF SERVICE	A.D.	DIR	DIR LEAD OFF.	FINANCE	LEGAL
INITIALS	SMS	DWL	AW	DWL	JM sent 15.1.04	TR sent 15.1.04	PD sent 15.1.04	KE sent 15.1.04
DATE	15.1.04	15.1.04	15.1.04					

	CHAIRMAN	PLAN/OHP	BACKGROUND/PRESS
	VICE-CHAIRMAN	APPENDICES/PRIVATE SESSION	RELEASE/LEADER

**WARDS:** All

**AGENDA ITEM NO.**

**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**SELECT COMMITTEE - CULTURE AND RECREATION - 26 JANUARY 2004**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

**USE OF LEISURE CENTRES AND PUBLIC HALLS FOR COMBAT SPORTS**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

1.1 To consider the development of a policy for the use of public halls and leisure centres for competitive combat sports.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 At its meeting on 24 March 2003 the Select Committee for Culture and Recreation considered a report concerned with the use of leisure centres and public halls for combat sports. For the purposes of the report combat sports will include boxing (amateur and professional), judo and the wide range of martial arts.

2.2 Amateur and professional boxing have clear safety regulations that are applied to all bouts that take place. Amateur boxing, through the Amateur Boxing Association, sets a standard for competitions that focuses on safety and ensures that appropriate medical supervision is available throughout the whole competition. The British Board of Boxing Control Limited publishes a set of procedures that were included as on Appendix

1 to the report and as a set of guiding principles it was agreed that these standards should be applied to all combat sports.

2.3 It was recognised that Ooher martial arts and combat sports are not all under the jurisdiction of a single governing body of sport. In itself this makes it difficult to identify a clear set of regulations governing the activity of the promoters and competitors in competition settings. To address this issue and to ensure that hirers are meeting their obligations it is proposed that for activities of this nature the following principles be applied:

- Proof of insurance cover to a minimum of £2 million is produced
- Proof of affiliation to a national governing body of sport recognised by Sport England
- Proof that the hirer represents a bona-fide organisation

2.4 The requirements in 2.3 were in addition to the standard hire agreement for leisure centres and the Halls for Hire conditions and regulations.

2.5 In public halls this has been applied and used in connection with a number of events. There have been no enquiries for such activities in the five major leisure centres. However, Leasowes Sports Centre received an enquiry and applied the policy it is understood that no booking was taken.

### **3.0 PROPOSALS**

3.1 That Members note the report

### **4.0 FINANCE**

4.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report

### **5.0 LAW**

5.1 Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972, enables the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its statutory functions.

5.2 Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976, empowers the Council to provide recreational facilities in its area.

### **6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

6.1 This report contains proposals which accord with the equal opportunities policies of the Council.

**7.0**      **RECOMMENDATION**

7.1      That the proposal in 3.1 be approved.

**Director of the Urban Environment:** .....

Contact Officer: Andrew Webb - Head of Sport and Recreation Ext:5579

**DRAFT**

## **THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH BOXING BOARD OF CONTROL IN PROFESSIONAL BOXING IN THIS COUNTRY**

The British Boxing Board of Control (BBBofC) has been overseeing British professional boxing since 1929. During this time the role of the Board has changed immeasurably from primarily being concerned with the procedural side of the sport such as the recognition of Championships to the medical protection of the British professional boxers, which has become the Board's main raison d'être.

The Board has approximately 2000 licence holders of which about 650 are active boxers. Of these, the vast majority are semi-professional. There are only a few dozen British professional boxers who earn a full-time living in the sport. Few British professional boxers these days have more than twelve contests a year and most compete only a handful of times. This trend has become most pronounced in the last 30 years.

Concurrent with these changing career patterns there has been the increased activity of the Board in the area of medical controls and safeguards. The BBBofC has never sought to deny that professional boxing is a physically hazardous sport and advises every licence holder of the potential dangers.

In addition, through its Medical Committee, set up in 1950, it has provided British professional boxing with an unrivalled set of medical safety checks and balances. Like any effective system of checks and balances, this works through a mixture of the formal and informal.

The following sections delineate the roles of the key people in the network of safeguards in British professional boxing.

### **AREA COUNCILS**

There are eight Area Councils of the BBBofC. Each has a Secretary, Area Medical Officer and Deputies and Inspectors. Two Representatives from the Council attend the main Board meetings in London once a month and four Area Medical Officers sit on the Board permanently.

The Area Councils co-ordinate the arrangements for each boxer's Annual Medical with the Head Office where all the records are kept. The Medical Form entails a thorough and complete case history and special attention being paid to the Central Nervous System and Skeletal System. A new licence or a renewal is only considered after the medical examination form has been signed by a doctor. The Area Medical Officer then recommends to the BBBofC whether the licence be granted or renewed or not. The Board has the final say over Licences.

If a boxer loses four contests in a row, then his record is automatically submitted to his Area Council. Both he and his manager may be interviewed by the Council and his medical and career history will be analysed in detail. A decision will then be taken on whether the licence holder be allowed to box again. The Council may well request

that the boxer undergo an additional medical tests before making a final decision, or he may be suspended for a rest period or be advised to seek opponents of lower grade.

## **MEDICAL OFFICERS**

The BBBofC goes to great lengths to ensure that when a doctor is appointed to the Board's panel of Medical Officers, he or she has a thorough knowledge of the most common injuries that can occur during the course of a boxing match.

On the day of a tournament one of the two Medical Officers appointed to officiate will attend the 'Weigh-in'. Each boxer undergoes a medical examination and is questioned on his medical history. If the Medical Officer is unsatisfied about the condition of either boxer, then he will not sign the certificate which allows the contest to take place. The Board is particularly vigilant in examining overseas boxers who sometimes arrive with unreliable medical information about themselves. Despite the international boxing licence (a passport style document which carries a boxer's relevant medical and career details), Medical Officers or the Board have refused to let boxers from abroad compete in a contest as a result of the medical examination carried out at the 'Weigh-in'.

No tournament is allowed to commence without one doctor sitting ringside. Due to his proximity to the action, the referee is in sole charge of the contest. However, throughout the contests the boxers performances are noted and any untoward medical problems arising are reported to the Area Council or Board Medical Officers who are in constant touch with trainers, managers and coaches to discuss types of training and the general fitness of boxers.

## **INSPECTORS**

The Board's Inspectors are the 'eyes and ears' for the BBBofC. It is their duty to ensure that all the relevant medicals and safeguards and controls are implemented at a boxing tournament. They act as liaison officers between the promoter and the Board or the Area Council. In the event of a boxer being pronounced unfit to box, it is an Inspector's duty to inform the promoter. It is his duty to weigh the boxers and to ensure that the ring is in accordance with Regulations. In particular size, tightness of ropes, centre ties, ring underlay, padding and lighting.

Furthermore, the Inspectors must ensure that the BBBofC Regulation which demands that once a boxer has been stopped within the scheduled distance of this contest, for whatever reason, (except on a disqualification) he is automatically suspended for a minimum of 28 days, is implemented. The boxer must undergo a rigorous medical examination and only then is a decision taken as to if and when he returns to boxing.

## **PROMOTERS**

The promoters - those who finance the professional boxing contents, are a key link in the Board's overseeing of British professional boxing. Six days before a tournament the promoter must lodge details of the contests with the Board. The BBBoFC has the power to prohibit any contest that in their opinion is not in the interests of boxing.

It is not the role of the Board to match professional boxing but they are constantly aware of the problems of 'mismatches'. This is more likely to occur on occasions when boxers from overseas are selected to meet British opponents on the strength of misleading or incomplete career details. Unfortunately, not every boxing authority in the world is as rigorous in its record keeping as the BBBoFC. However, the Board has a network of worldwide contacts who can provide further information on potential opponents.

Although there are the occasional mismatches, there is a behind-the-scenes dialogue between the Board, promoters and managers which minimises those occasions. It is not in the interest of anyone involved in British professional boxing to match opponents who should not be competing against each other. Potential 'mismatches' are therefore often eliminated at an early stage, as a result of discussions between the Board and promoters.

DRAFT