

	Executive – 10 th July 2019	Agenda Item No.
		6

Title	Playing Pitch Sports Strategy
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Wards of the District directly affected	District wide impacts
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A
Background Papers	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes – Ref: 995
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
Whilst details have changed there is no change in Policy	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	18/6/2019	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	18/6/2019	Rose Winship
CMT	18/6/2019	Chris Elliott/Bill Hunt/Andy Jones
Section 151 Officer	18/6/2019	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	18/6/2019	Andy Jones
Finance	18/6/2019	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder	18/6/2019	Cllr Mrs Grainger
Consultation & Community Engagement		
<p>As part of the PPS assessment of demand, local sports clubs, NGBs and Sport England were consulted.</p>		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		
N/A		

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 In 2015 a report was taken to Executive detailing the strategic importance of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and Indoor Sport Strategy (ISS) in shaping the future of sporting facilities in the District. In accordance with Sport England's recommendations both strategies have been refreshed and now take into account the population increase as outlined in the Local Plan. The evidence contained within the Strategies ensures that we have a robust mechanism to meet the futures demand of the population in Warwick District Council.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members note the updated comprehensive evidence base and modelling which makes up the PPS report and the consequent recommendations in the strategy document.
- 2.2 Members approve the refreshed Playing Pitch Strategy (2019) as set out at Appendix 1.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendations**

3.1 Recommendations 2.1

- 3.1.1 The PPS 2019 is an update of the previous PPS (2015), which was based on detailed needs and evidence work at the time and was produced in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF was updated in 2018, and sets out the requirement for Local Plans to ensure that there is proper provision of community and cultural facilities to meet local needs. Sport England has developed a mechanism to calculate developer contributions for outdoor sports pitches. The updated PPS provides a robust evidence base alongside the Sport England calculator to inform these requests for contributions from developers

- 3.1.2 The new NPPF's expectations for the development of local planning policy for sport and physical activity/recreation is set out in paragraphs 96 and 97, which requires there to be a sound (i.e. up-to-date and verifiable) evidence base underpinning policy and its application.

- 3.1.3 Paragraph 96 indicates that:

Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the need for open space, sports and recreation facilities (including qualitative or quantitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision are needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.'

- 3.1.4 Paragraph 97 states that:

'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.’

3.1.5 The latest 2019 Strategy is a refresh of the 2015 evidence base, reflecting changes that have taken place over the last 4 years across Warwick District. The updated PPS now includes Athletics, in addition to the sports from the original strategy, ie Football, Rugby, Cricket, Hockey and Tennis. The Strategy includes sport and the associated facilities in the District which are managed and owned by private clubs, schools or by the Council directly.

3.1.6 As was the case in 2015, it is essential that the Council has a robust evidence base to support any requests for developer contributions towards sport in the District in the coming years. The PPS is the recognised methodology for establishing demand for various sport facilities, based on the population and demographics of an area. The recommendations in the Strategy identify potential projects, which may require funding through Section 106 contributions. With support from National Governing Bodies of sport the Council has a robust methodology, which has proved successful and rarely challenged by developers.

3.2 Recommendation 2.2

3.2.1 The refreshed 2019 PPS ensures that the long term sports facility needs for the District to 2029 are identified and it also ensures that the Council is in a position to deliver not only on sporting provision, but also on the Council’s health and well-being and economic priorities. The Strategy has been updated to reflect the latest information relating to formal sport including council owned facilities, private facilities, schools and universities. It also factors in projections for population growth and the associated demographics up to 2029, in order that future plans by all leisure providers can reflect the needs of the District for now and in the future as the population demographic changes and increases.

3.2.1 In parallel to the completion of the PPS in 2019 was the production of the Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) commissioned by the charitable arm of the Football Association, the Football Foundation. The LFFP complements the PPS by demonstrating a need for additional football facilities in the coming years to accommodate the population increase and growing popularity for the game amongst in particular younger people. The FA will be making available potential funding for capital projects identified in the LFFP and evidenced in the PPS. The Council will be working closely with the FA to ensure we take every opportunity to improve our football facilities in the District.

3.2.2 The PPS indicates that the authority plays a significant role in providing sporting opportunities in the District for the local community. The Council owns a third of the grass football pitches in the District; we also have tennis courts situated in our parks within Leamington Spa, Warwick and Kenilworth. The Council also own the only athletics track in the District, currently situated in the heart of Leamington Spa. The track may in the future relocate to a site which will be the

home of a five thousand seater community football stadium to the south of Leamington Spa. The PPS confirms the new location of the track as the preferred site, acknowledging that this move will resolve the challenges of managing a currently aging facility with limited parking.

- 3.2.3 Officers regularly meet with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of the sports featured in the PPS to discuss the progress of their respective sports in the District. This commitment by officers and NGB's to meet, ensures that the PPS remains in focus and relevant. Over the years, sports clubs and organisations have come to value the input from officers who utilise the evidence in the PPS as a guide and are able to offer support on that basis. Some recent examples of the authority working in partnership with clubs includes, Khalsa Hockey Club's potential merger with Leamington Hockey Club and relocation to Berricote Lane. Khalsa Football Club's ambitions to create their own club facilities in Hatton and Racing Club Warwick, who are looking to build an artificial playing pitch within their current premises. The PPS identifies a multitude of clubs who have ambitions to improve their current status and could be looking to Council officers for support and advice in the future.
- 3.2.4 The updated PPS demonstrates that there is a significant amount of change since the original was produced in 2015. Notable are the number of sports clubs who have ambitions to improve their facilities and grow their club provision to meet the increasing demand for certain sports in our community. Two examples are the Wardens Cricket and Football Club and their relocation to Castle Farm in Kenilworth and Kenilworth Rugby Football Club's relocation to land east of Kenilworth. Both clubs expressed a desire to relocate and by working closely with the Council will have improved facilities as a result of the move.
- 3.2.5 In parallel with the refresh of the PPS there has been the development of the Local Football Facilities Plan for the Council. Further information regarding the detail of the LFFP can be found in the LFFP report elsewhere on this agenda. The two documents work in tandem and provide data-based evidence which supports the development of football facilities, both public and private, in the District. Football continues to grow in popularity particularly for younger people, the refreshed PPS demonstrates that there is a greater demand for football facilities than before with a need in particular for 3G Artificial Football Pitches in the District.
- 3.2.6 The refreshed PPS includes Athletics; this is a new addition to the group of sports included in the 2015 version. Athletics in the District is a priority sport for the Council as the athletic facility located in Leamington Spa may be rebuilt at the site of the new community football stadium. The PPS provides useful evidence, which indicates a strong need for an athletics facility to be retained in the District.

4. **Policy Framework**

4.1 **Fit for the Future (FFF)**

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The Council’s Service Area Plans are the programme of work fundamental to the delivery of the strands described in the table below.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
Evidence to support ambitious projects to improve the District’s sporting facilities	Protecting and enhancing grass pitches, ensuring that the District has adequate areas of open space to play sport.	Modernisation of Council owned assets (leisure facilities), extending the life of the assets and reducing the ongoing maintenance liabilities.
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
Impacts of Proposal		
Staff are clear about objectives and priorities for outdoor sports provision	Services are designed and managed in a way that meets the needs of the community.	Improved facilities may attract greater participation and increased income.

5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1 The Council is committed to continuing its investment in its sports and leisure stock. The PPS, along with the Indoor Sports Strategy approved in 2018, provides the robust evidence base to allow us to draw in appropriate Section 106 contributions for such investment projects. Whilst the precise values are yet to be determined for new Section 106 contributions, it is anticipated the sums will help to fund a number of sporting facilities in the District. The PPS and Indoor Sports Strategy also provide evidence in support of any future submissions to be included on the 123 list for CIL contributions.
- 5.2 The adoption of the Playing Pitch Strategy in itself has no budgetary implications for the Council.

6. Risks

- 6.1 There is a risk that without an adopted Playing Pitch Strategy, the Council could be challenged by developers when requests are made for Section 106 contributions to sports projects.
- 6.2 There is also a risk that without an adopted strategy the positive relationship gained with sporting NGB's would deteriorate without the continuing PPS meetings. Also the guidance and support offered to existing sporting clubs based on the evidence from the PPS could be called into question if the Strategy was not adopted.
- 6.3 There is a further risk that without an adopted Strategy that looks across the whole District, and to neighbouring authorities, investment in sports provision could be uncoordinated, with the potential for duplication or gaps in provision. Whilst the Council cannot force partners or neighbouring authorities to recognise the Strategy, the existence of the document provides a framework for joined up and cooperative working.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1 The Council could have chosen not to refresh the 2015 Strategy and continue to use the documents for forward planning purposes. The newly formatted Playing Pitch Strategy creates a methodology for calculating Section 106 contributions for grass pitches, which was not available in the previous version. In addition, to not refresh the PPS is contrary to the advice from Sport England and would leave the Council exposed to risk as outlined above. Therefore, it was not considered a viable option.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Playing Pitch Strategy can be sourced electronically via the Council's agenda pack.