

 <b>Executive – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015</b>		<b>Agenda Item No.</b>  <b>8</b>
<b>Title</b>	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy	
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<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	District wide impacts	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	Indoor Sports & Leisure Strategy – Executive 9 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2013	
<b>Background Papers</b>		

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	Yes 655
<b>Equality &amp; Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken</b>	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	16/2/2015	Chris Elliott/Bill Hunt/Andrew Jones
Head of Service	16/2/2015	Rose Winship
CMT	16/2/2015	Chris Elliott, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	16/2/2015	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	16/2/2015	Andrew Jones
Finance	16/2/2015	Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holder(s)	16/2/2015	Cllr Sue Gallagher
Consultation & Community Engagement		
N/A – to follow approval		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

## **1. SUMMARY**

This report builds on the work which has been ongoing since 2013 to inform the future plans for playing pitch and outdoor sports provision in Warwick District. It references several studies and assessments which can be drawn upon to provide evidence to support a strategic approach to the provision of these facilities. It also outlines the value of the evidence base and modelling which form a key component of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan / Local Plan.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the comprehensive evidence base and modelling for playing pitches and outdoor sport which has been undertaken and published as part of the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan and ongoing preparation of the emerging Local Plan.
- 2.2 Members note the Athletics Needs Assessment (Appendix 2) and agrees that this data is used to inform decisions on future athletics provision in the district.
- 2.3 That members approve the updated Indoor Sports and Leisure Strategy March 2014, which updates the strategy approved by Executive in October 2013 to address Indoor Bowling Facilities (Appendix 3).
- 2.4 That members approve the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy 2014 (Appendix 1).

## **3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **3.1 Evidence Base**

- 3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities must ensure "...planning policies are based upon robust and up-to-date assessments of needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision."
- 3.1.2 The evidence base prepared for Warwick District has been gathered in accordance with Sport England approved methodology and provides a robust analysis of provision in the district. This has been modelled against planned growth and can be used to determine the impact of developments as they are approved within the district and the level of contribution which is appropriate.
- 3.1.3 The evidence base, published on the WDC website, is a key component of the data supporting the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sits alongside the emerging Local Plan. These key documents will have a significant impact on the district over the long term and therefore the inclusion of comprehensive and current data and analysis of demands and needs is essential.

### **3.2 Athletics provision**

- 3.2.1 Athletics provision initially fell outside of the scope of the Built Facility Audit and was not picked up by the playing pitches and outdoor sports methodology. Therefore a separate audit and needs assessment was commissioned from Neil Allen Associates (NAA) who had carried out the facilities and pitch audit. The data and recommendations from this work should now be considered alongside the facilities and pitch evidence.

- 3.2.2 In summary, the audit has found that based on demand and supply, there is a good argument for ensuring the retention of an athletics track in the district. The audit confirmed that the current track at Edmondscote has a number of limiting factors which will impact on the long term "fitness for purpose". The site is poorly located with restricted access through a residential area and poor parking provision. The track and infrastructure will shortly require significant investment if it is to remain a certified track able to host local and regional events and be the home track for a number of local clubs.
- 3.2.3 Opportunities are being considered that would see a track being included on a new site alongside other sports facilities, and the existing site being returned to open space. The needs assessment considered 2 possible new sites i.e. Myton school/community stadium, and any possible site of a new Kenilworth School. Whilst these opportunities are very much in the early stages, the NAA report will provide an evidence base for future decision making.

### **3.3 Adoption of Strategies**

- 3.3.1 The Indoor Sport and Leisure Strategy and the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy together provide a coordinated and long term approach to sports facility provision and planning across the district. They take account of the full range of providers including local authorities, schools, sports clubs, private sector provision, and other community organisations. Jointly they provide the knowledge to enable the Council to drive forward the delivery of the public health agenda; they inform physical activity development projects and initiatives; and they inform local planning policy and potential developer contributions.
- 3.3.2 The Indoor Sports & Leisure Strategy was shared with members in October 2013 and has been informing the sports & leisure options appraisal work in the last 12 months. The updated March 2014 version of the strategy incorporates further work undertaken to examine the needs of Indoor Bowls within the District. The findings of the study point towards the need for an indoor bowling centre within the district.  
[http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/file/2008/indoor\\_sports\\_and\\_leisure\\_strategy](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/file/2008/indoor_sports_and_leisure_strategy)
- 3.3.3 The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy sets out the key priorities for the future delivery of outdoor sports across the district from 2013 to 2031. It outlines the future facility requirements for football, cricket, rugby, hockey, tennis and bowls. The Strategy has been developed in line with Sport England guidance and has included at all stages consultation with key users of facilities, relevant National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs), WDC officers from appropriate service areas and Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sport (CSW Sport).
- 3.3.4 The assessment identified the growth implications of the local population which is generally healthy and active. Whilst participation nationally is declining, data locally shows participation levels are steady with small increases in recent years and that much of the population of the district has a profile that suggests that many people are likely to engage with pitch and outdoor based sports. This is a repeat of the patterns identified for the Indoor Sports & Leisure audit.
- 3.3.5 Based on the evidence gathered, the strategy identifies key issues for each sport and for each geographic area of the district. It has been agreed that the action plan will be reviewed on a six monthly basis by a working group, led by

WDC officers and including key partners in order that it remains current during the duration of the strategy.

#### 4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

##### 4.1 **Policy Framework**

4.1.1 **Policy Change;** the recommendations of the report do not conflict with any of the current statutory policies within the council`s policy framework.

4.1.2 **Policy Development;** the recommendations proposed strengthen the evidence base for Infrastructure Development which is a key component of the emerging Local Plan.

##### 4.2 **Fit for the Future (FFF)**

4.2.1 **Aligning Strategies;** the development of a clear Vision and Principles for the district for Sports & Leisure which is aligned with the FFF Vision for the district ensures the council`s role and investment in this area is appropriate and supports future progress.

4.2.2 **Sustainable Community Strategy;** the proposed Vision and Strategy will directly support the delivery of the emerging refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy priorities and actions;

###### **Growth Theme;**

- Ensuring the right infrastructure is available.....
- Making better use of public sector assets .....
- ....use of cultural activities and events..
- ..attract visitors to spend within the district...

###### **Health & Wellbeing Theme;**

- Increasing opportunities for everyone to engage in sports...
- Reducing obesity ....
- .. introduce a new leisure centre programme...
- .. implement our new arts strategy, indoor sports strategy and playing pitch strategy

4.2.3 **Compliance with FFF;** the proposals within the report are fully in support of the strategic direction set out within the 3 strands of the FFF programme. By refining service provision and making sure that the local sporting infrastructure is appropriate it is consistent with the **Service** strand of the FFF programme. By virtue of inclusion within the IDP, there is the opportunity to ensure appropriate levels of funding to deliver the infrastructure so it is in line with the **Money** strand of the FFF Programme. The strategy is not directly relevant to the **People** strand but is certainly not in conflict with it.

#### 5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

5.1 The comprehensive evidence base prepared in relation to playing pitch and athletics provision provides robust justifications for contributions from developers to be calculated and secured as the district grows. A clear strategic direction on how contributions are spent will help shape the medium and long term financial plan.

5.2 The Playing Pitch Strategy provides the basis for how the Council can target funds towards playing pitch improvements. In addition it can aid local clubs in securing funding from Sport England and the National Governing Bodies for

sport, e.g. the Football Association (FA), Rugby Football Union (RFU) or England Athletics (EA)

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 The development of a robust evidence base, gathered, modelled and calculated in accordance with NPPF and Sport England guidance is essential to ensure the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) stands up to scrutiny and challenge. Alternative options to this were not therefore considered.

## **7. RISKS**

- 7.1 Due to the nature of the strategy and the period that it applies to, there are a significant number of factors over which the Council have little if any control. Consequently there are risks associated with the deliverability of the strategy in its current form. These risks have been mitigated by the introduction of a quarterly review mechanism that includes Council officers and representatives from the relevant National Governing Bodies of sport which will review and update the priorities and action plan as appropriate.
- 7.2 Given the ambitious nature of some of the actions detailed in the strategy, there is a financial risk to the deliverability of the strategy. Many of the actions require partnership funding which adds to the complexity of risk mitigation. Funding risks and opportunities will be reviewed at the quarterly review meetings as appropriate.
- 7.3 Within the strategy Action Plans there are a number of items for which the Council are not the lead partner. Therefore the risks associated with these items remain with the lead organisation and not with WDC.

## **8. BACKGROUND**

### **8.1 Context**

- 8.1.1 The benefits of an active lifestyle for individuals, local communities and the services which serve them are well documented. In striving to ensure Warwick District is a great place to live, work and visit, along with a strong commitment to growth in the local economy and housing market, it is not surprising that a strong commitment to Sports & Leisure runs through the Council's corporate and strategic aspirations.
- 8.1.2 In its Community Leadership Role the council has an important part to play in working with strategic partners from all sectors to build a broad consensus and ensure all communities are able to access opportunities appropriate to their needs. A proposed consultation on the Vision and Principles will provide a framework around which this wider policy conversation can begin to take place.
- 8.1.3 The Council is currently working with partners to develop strategic projects that will contribute to the district's sporting provision in the future i.e. Myton school site, Leamington FC/community stadium, Castle Farm/Wardens and Kenilworth School. The projects that will be informed by both strategies referred to in this report.

### **8.2 Vision and Principles**

- 8.2.1 Providing a service which is committed to delivering:

- Local Facilities, (built and playing pitches), for all sectors of the community.
- Modern Facilities, fit for purpose, with flexible spaces.
- Value for Money, fair pricing, and long term financial stability.
- Sustainable model for provision:
  - Promoting the service to current and new users
  - Engaging current and new users in healthy lifestyle choices
  - Supporting continued attendance and commitment
  - Developing opportunities to advance and compete.

#### 8.2.2 Local Facilities

The facility audit and assessment work and facility planning modelling has confirmed we have facilities which are geographically accessible to our population, now and in the future. The Vision and Principles proposes local facilities ie retains centres in each of three towns; seeks ways to improve transport links and parking; understand demands and needs for playing pitches and associated buildings; seeks ways to secure provision for new housing areas as they develop.

#### 8.2.3 Modern Facilities

The facility audit and assessment work and stock condition surveys have confirmed the fabric of the buildings is sound, but they are aging and becoming less attractive to users and less practical to maintain. The draft Vision and Principles propose we seek to invest in our facilities to develop contemporary appearance, welcoming reception and circulation spaces, well lit, energy efficient, versatile and flexible spaces, low running costs, easy to clean, maintain, repair and upgrade. Specifications which cater for NGB requirements, but are also social and flexible for community use should be used, appropriate vending & catering opportunities developed. Further ahead an ongoing funded programme of maintenance, refurbishment and replacement will be required.

#### 8.2.4 Value for Money

The programme review work and an evaluation of fees and charges has brought into focus some areas where value for money can be improved and pricing structures revised. The draft Vision and Principles propose the service offers opportunities at a fair price, offers support and concessions where appropriate to encourage participation, but also uses profitable cost centres to offset subsidised elements of the service. The service must be underpinned by a sound business case committed to its long term future and clear about levels of subsidy required.

#### 8.2.5 Sustainable model for provision

Demands and needs analysis plus programme review and proposals from the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) have helped identify the need to ensure the sports and leisure provision is sustainable over the long term. The draft Vision and Principles propose a model which includes Promotion, Engagement, Support, and Development to ensure all sectors of the community have access to opportunities.

Promote – the service is identifiable and visible in the market; local residents are aware of the service offer, locations and opportunities to get involved are understood; promotions and campaigns are received by the right people and success stories are shared; more people are more aware

Engage – The service understands its current and potential customers; offers them tailored support; engages them in active lifestyle choices as part of their routine; participation rates increase

Support – Customers are supported to continue and develop their physical activities, coaching, training, supervision and motivation is provided; health and fitness improves

Develop – Skills and potential are encouraged, talent and opportunities are understood; competition and signposting is offered in association with local clubs and NGBs

### **8.3 Evidence Base (Demands and Needs)**

- 8.3.1 The playing pitch evidence base is published via the WDC website at [http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20416/evidence\\_base/728/sports\\_pitches\\_and\\_indoor\\_facilities\\_study](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20416/evidence_base/728/sports_pitches_and_indoor_facilities_study) The athletics evidence base can be found at Appendix 2 Added to the evidence base for built facilities, these pieces of work provide a robust and complete picture of current provision and the impact of planned changes over the lifespan of the emerging Local Plan.
- 8.3.2 The benefit of this work has already been seen via the successful negotiation of developer contributions for sports facilities as part of a number of section 106 agreements for significant planning applications that have been granted in the last 18 months. It is also being used as part of further ongoing negotiations with developers on other current large scale planning applications.
- 8.3.3 The completion of this work supports the Council in demonstrating the soundness of the plan at the forthcoming Examination in Public; provides a justifiable basis for planning contributions; and can inform the approach to be taken to any planning applications concerning existing or new sports facilities.

## **Appendices**

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| Appendix 1 | Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2014) |
| Appendix 2 | Athletics Needs Assessment (2014)                |
| Appendix 3 | Indoor Sports and Leisure Strategy (March 2014)  |