

Policy Development and Review Committee		Agenda Item: 5
Meeting Date	28 October 2015	
Report Title	Draft Playing Pitch Strategy	
Cabinet Member	Councillor Mike Whiting	
SMT Lead	Dave Thomas, Head of Customer Contact & Commissioning	
Head of Service	Dave Thomas, Head of Customer Contact & Commissioning	
Lead Officer	Len Mayatt, Leisure & Technical Services Manager	
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the contents of the draft Strategy and Assessment Report. 2. To make any comments on the proposed management actions prior to undertaking further consultation on the Strategy. 	

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council has developed a draft Playing Pitch Strategy for 2015 - 25 (**Appendix i**) which analyses the Boroughs Playing Pitches in terms of both quantity and quality. It considers pitches that are available for public use that are provided by the Council and other organisations. The Strategy sets out the Councils intended approach and priorities for ensuring there is sufficient provision to meet current and future demand.

2 Background

- 2.1 In order to ensure there are sufficient pitches and ancillary facilities, the Council has worked with external consultants and Sport England to analyse the current provision and develop a series of actions to maintain momentum and ensure demand can be met cost effectively.
- 2.2 The final document will be used by the Borough's Local Plans team to ensure that appropriate contributions are made by developers to make sure appropriate levels of provision are maintained.
- 2.3 In addition, the document will be a "live document" used by the Leisure & Technical Services team to set parameters for maintaining facilities the Council owns, as well as working with partners and other providers.

2.4 This Strategy links to other strategic frameworks and documents such as the developing draft Facilities Strategy and Sport & Physical Activity Framework which focuses on maintaining and increasing participation in sport and physical activity in Swale.

3 Proposals

3.1 This report invites the Committee to consider whether the draft Playing Pitch Strategy achieves our aims of capturing sufficient information on current provision (detailed information on this aspect is contained in the Playing Pitch Assessment **Appendix ii**) and formulating clear objectives to ensure that anticipated future demand will be met both in terms of quantity and quality of playing pitches and ancillary facilities.

3.2 Feedback on the Aims of the Strategy as outlined in the Management Objectives Action Plan (pages 47 -64) is sought from the Committee, to ensure they are appropriate and fit for purpose and whether there are any other general comments on the Strategy.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 No alternative options have been considered at this stage as the Strategy is required for three main reasons.

- Sport England and other funding bodies will always ensure the Council and its partners refer to an up to date Playing Pitch Strategy when funding bids are being developed for improving facilities or creating new ones.
- The Council's Local Plans Team need a robust strategy that has been approved by Sport England when considering planning applications which involve current or future pitch provision.
- Having a strategy provides a benchmark for the level of standards to be maintained and an Action Plan for the Leisure & technical Services Team and their partners to work to.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 Initial consultation was undertaken with facility providers, clubs, schools, appropriate National Governing Bodies, Sport England, Town & Parish Councils, Kent Sports Development Unit, countywide partners, health organisations and local leagues.

5.2 Besides consideration by the Committee, we propose to consult with the same organisations again before finalising the Strategy.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The provision of a Playing Pitch Strategy supports the Council's aims to be both a Borough and a Community to be Proud of as described in the Council's Corporate Plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>This Strategy will ensure that the Council and its partners are providing cost effective services and are making best use of the appropriate resources and property.</p> <p>At this stage no additional costs to the Council have been identified. However, there may be requests for contributory funding for individual projects as they are developed. By adopting a robust Playing Pitch Strategy though such requests will stand a better chance of being successful.</p>
Legal and Statutory	There are no specific legal implications. However, by providing a robust strategy that is endorsed by Sport England the Council will be better placed to defend any challenges which may be presented by developers.
Crime and Disorder	The provision and good management of a broad range of playing pitches can make a positive contribution to managing issues of crime and disorder by providing diversionary activities and encouraging community cohesion.
Sustainability	Where possible, maintenance regimes which are "environmentally friendly" will be considered and adopted.
Health and Wellbeing	By providing and supporting a broad range quality facilities across Swale, there will be greater opportunities for people to participate in healthy activities. Where possible, partnerships will be sought with appropriate health partners to encourage participation and maximise funding opportunities.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<p>Without a strategy that is endorsed by Sport England the Borough will be at risk of missing funding opportunities; losing challenges to planning applications by developers and not providing top quality facilities for its residents.</p> <p>By maintaining its own pitches to agreed standards the Borough Council will ensure their facilities are safe and fit for purpose.</p>
Equality and Diversity	Issues of equal opportunity will be addressed through applications for any new developments and ensuring that such facilities are compliant and fit for purpose.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix i: draft Playing Pitch Strategy 2015/xx.
- Appendix ii: Playing Pitch Assessment

8 Background Papers

8.1 None.