

LOUGHBOROUGH AREA COMMITTEE – 19TH MARCH 2019

Report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces

Part A

ITEM 5 OPEN SPACES, PLAYING PITCH AND INDOOR BUILT FACILITIES STRATEGIES

Purpose of the Report

To provide information to the committee on the recently approved Open Spaces, Playing Pitch and Indoor Built Facilities Strategies.

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the contents of this report.

Reason

To enable members to be informed about the Open Spaces, Playing Pitch and Indoor Built Facilities Strategies.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020 aims to encourage healthy lifestyles for all our residents through physical activity programmes and the provision of sports facilities and green spaces. These strategies will protect existing facilities and ensure that accessibility to green spaces/sports infrastructure is maintained as the borough develops.

The Borough Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will consider the land use implications of the three strategies and set out policy to guide future development such as new standards of open space provision. The period covered by the strategies is 2018 to 2036. When the new Local Plan is adopted the three strategies will run concurrently with it in order to inform decision making on planning matters. The strategies may be refreshed periodically as a result of new evidence or changing priorities.

The Council's previous Open Spaces Strategy was adopted in 2013 and ran for the period 2013 to 2028. The new strategy will replace the existing one which has been developed as a result of a new Open Spaces Study being completed during 2017.

Assessments for the provision of playing pitches and indoor sports have previously been commissioned to determine the levels of current and future need. These have now been developed into individual strategies in their own right. The previous Open Spaces Strategy did contain some elements of outdoor sports provision.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The Strategies discussed within this report were approved by Cabinet on 17th January 2019.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

It is anticipated that the funding for the projects identified in the Action Plans will be provided from a combination of external organisations including Parish /Town Councils, sports governing bodies and developers.

However, a sum of £500k has been made available through the existing Capital Programme to support some of the actions identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy. A further report will outline how this capital expenditure will be invested by the Council.

Any capital or revenue funding in excess of the £500k committed through the existing Capital Plan would require approval through the Council's budget setting processes. In adopting the Strategies themselves the Council is not committing to funding any projects that have not been previously approved.

The financial implications of the revised Strategies include the need to secure maintenance funding for any new responsibilities for open space management that is given to the Authority through new developments in the future

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
Failure to deliver the Action Plans within the Strategies	Unlikely (2)	Serious (3)	Moderate (6 - 9)	The Strategies will be the subject of ongoing monitoring.
Failure to support the Council's Local Plan	Unlikely (2)	Serious (3)	Moderate (6 - 9)	The Council's Officers responsible for the Strategies have worked closely on the development process to ensure they support each other's aim's, objectives and priorities. All strategies have been developed using

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
				nationally recognised processes for the assess
Failure to identify resources to deliver the Strategies over their 18 year lifespan., or sufficient income being derived from the Strategies objectives	Unlikely (2)	Serious (3)	Moderate (6 - 9)	resources to deliver the Strategies over their 18 year lifespan., or sufficient income being derived from the Strategies objectives Possible Major The delivery of the Strategies requires funding sources to be identified. In addition, the delivery will rely on funding through the planning system such as developer contributions, alongside other external and partner funding. The adoption of the strategies is required in order to secure funding from both developers and other sources.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix A - Open Spaces
Appendix B – Playing Pitch
Appendix C – Indoor Built Facilities

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Part B

Background

1. The assessments and strategies will form part of the supporting evidence for the forthcoming Local Plan that will consider strategic spatial planning with the borough until 2036. The strategies account for the growth in population throughout the period.
2. The three strategies appended to this report have been written following a baseline assessment of existing facilities within the borough. Baseline assessments looked at the quantity, quality and accessibility of green spaces, sports pitches / outdoor sports facilities and indoor sports facilities throughout the borough.
3. The baseline assessments, and resulting strategies assess local provision by subdividing the borough into sub areas. This allows local accessibility to be determined and ensures that reasonable travel times are taken into account.
4. The assessments and strategies take into account the spectrum of facility providers throughout the borough and recognise that the Council is not the sole provider of community infrastructure for green spaces, sport pitches / outdoor sport provision and indoor sports facilities.
5. As part of the assessment and strategy development, community consultation took place with a wide range of stakeholders including parish / town councils, education establishments, sports clubs, Sport England and the National Governing Bodies representing individual sports. Individual residents were also invited to submit their views through surveys.
6. The assessment for each of the individual surveys adopted a recognised methodology that is understood nationally. The surveys were conducted by independent consultants following the agreed methodology.
7. The strategies in their entirety have not been appended to this report due to their size, however, they can be viewed in full here:

<https://charnwood.moderngov.co.uk/documents/b628/Item%2007%20Open%20Spaces%20Playing%20Pitch%20and%20Indoor%20Built%20Facilities%20Strategies%2017th-Jan-2019%2018.00%20Cabi.pdf?T=9>
8. The Loughborough specific actions within the action plans are appended to this report at Appendix A (Open Spaces), Appendix B (Playing Pitch), and Appendix C (Indoor Built Facilities).

Open Spaces Assessment and Strategy

9. The vision for the Strategy is;
“The Council will work with our partners in improving the quantity, quality and accessibility of outdoor sport and recreational opportunities by providing sustainable open spaces. It will protect and enhance biodiversity and heritage, whilst meeting the community’s needs, maximising the use of facilities, and engendering pride in the local community.”
10. The Baseline Assessment of sites took place during 2017 and looked at the following open space typologies;
 - Parks and Gardens
 - Natural and semi-natural green space

- Amenity Green Space
- Green Corridors
- Children's Recreational Spaces
- Young Person's Recreational Spaces
- Allotments
- Churchyards and Cemeteries (not Burial Capacity)
- Civic Spaces

11. The assessments determined the accessibility, quantity and quality of existing provision on a parish by parish basis. It also proposes a set of planning standards to be used on new developments. This has been adopted through the new Open Spaces Strategy. The new standards are based upon the Fields in Trust (FIT) standards that are widely used in these assessments.

Playing Pitch Strategy

12. The Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy followed the Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance. The following sports were considered as part of the assessment and strategy;

- Football
- Cricket
- Rugby
- Hockey
- Rugby League
- Tennis
- Golf
- Bowls
- BMX
- Athletics
- Netball

13. The assessment looked at the quantity, quality and accessibility for outdoor sports provision throughout the borough. Assessments took place over a prolonged period in order to account for the condition of pitches of both summer and winter sports.

14. The vision of the Strategy is;

'To ensure that there is an adequate supply of good quality facilities to accommodate a range of sports and physical activities in order to meet current and future levels of demand and to provide enhanced opportunities so as to increase the number of people participating in sport and physical activity.'

15. For the purposes of the assessment the borough was subdivided into sub-areas to ensure that provision was assessed on a local level. Provision for both adult and junior participation was assessed and the resulting strategy makes recommendations with regard to participation of all age groups.

16. Extensive consultation took place with Sport England and the National Governing Bodies of Sport throughout the development of the strategy to ensure that existing provision had been properly addressed and that future need had been assessed correctly. The draft Strategy has been signed off by Sport England and the National Governing Bodies.

17. In addition to sport specific recommendations there are 7 generic recommendations which are:

- Charnwood Borough Council works with all relevant governing bodies (national and regional) to ensure that all playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities in Charnwood are of adequate quality to meet the needs of their users, with special attention paid to ensuring all facilities provide a safe venue to be enjoyed by their participants.
 - As identified in the 2018 Charnwood Indoor Built Sports Facility Strategy, all opportunities to open up existing and new education sites for community use of sports facilities should be explored.
 - Charnwood Borough Council seeks to ensure that any new educational sites involving new or enhanced sports facility has a Community Use Agreement (CUA) as part of the planning consent so as to secure pay and play opportunities for clubs and groups.
 - The opportunity to further develop multi-sport hub sites across the Borough is explored; this should focus on the enhancement of sites where there is currently provision for a minimum of two pitches/outdoor sports to optimise the capacity of existing facilities, allow for sharing of e.g. changing, parking etc. Multi-sport hubs provide the opportunity for co-location of a number of different but complementary sports, and can offer increased participation opportunities, particularly for young people who are able to ‘try out’ a number of sports on one site. The recreation sites proposed for the SUEs (all three) have significant potential for development as multisport hubs comprising a range of pitch sports, tennis (West of Loughborough and North East of Leicester SUEs), indoor facilities and BMX (West of Loughborough SUE). The principle should, however, be one of partnership (with education, parish councils, NGBs, local clubs) to promote existing sites where multiple sports are played and invest as identified in the sport-by-sport priorities. Ancillary provision should also be provided to a good standard at each multi-sport hub, and should, wherever possible, be shared. Management of multi-sport hubs needs to consider how best to address issues of overlapping seasons e.g. cricket and football, competitive fixtures, and demand for training. Charnwood Borough Council should focus on the development of the sites that they own and those owned by parish councils as priorities for the designation and/or development of multisport hubs. Development of multi-sport hub sites, including the three SUEs, will also help to address the identified future need for playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities in the Borough, and specifically respond to the increased demand generated as a result of new housing development in the Borough.
18. Investment in specific ancillary facilities identified on a sport-by-sport or site-by-site basis (see sport-specific recommendations and sport-by-sport summaries) should be reviewed on proposed multi-sport hub sites, and adjusted where it is possible to make economies of scale over shared provision, e.g. changing accommodation, parking provision etc. This will make the most effective use of available resources and facilitate increased use of sites across a range of sports.
19. The allocated areas for sport in the three SUEs (NE Leicester, West of Loughborough and Broadnook) should be developed to provide additional sports facilities to meet identified future need in the Borough. The priority sport needs to be met are:
- Grass Pitches – Football, Rugby Union
 - Non-turf cricket wickets
 - Artificial grass pitches (AGP’s)
 - Outdoor floodlight tennis and netball courts
20. Officers are currently working with the Football Association (FA) to develop the recommendations and inform a Local Football Facilities Plan which will be produced by the FA in 2019.

Indoor Sport Facilities Strategy

21. The Indoor Built Facilities Strategy followed the Sport England's Assessing Need and Opportunity Guidance (ANOG). This is the standard recognised and applied nationally and is accepted as the process required to secure developer contributions.

22. The Vision of the Strategy is:

'to ensure that there is an adequate supply of good quality facilities to accommodate a range of sports / physical activities in order to meet current and future levels of demand and to provide enhanced opportunities so as to increase the number of people participating in sport and physical activity'

23. The scope of the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy (ISFS) covers analysis of provision for the following facility types across the Borough of Charnwood:

- Sports Halls (including schools and community buildings) and covering indoor sports halls such as netball, badminton, basketball and volleyball.
- Health and Fitness Centres (including dance/aerobic studios)
- Squash Courts
- Swimming Pools
- Indoor Tennis

24. The assessment of existing facilities too that following factors into account the quantity, quantity, availability and accessibility of facilities.

25. The recommendations within the report are as follows:

- The existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision in the Borough are retained as a minimum, but these need not necessarily be the same facilities as at present.
- Charnwood Borough Council promotes investment into additional swimming pool provision. The priority is a new learner pool at Soar Valley Leisure Centre.
- Existing levels of community accessible and affordable fitness suite provision in the Borough should be retained as a minimum, and where appropriate, opportunities for investment in additional health and fitness provision where there is an identified need/business case justification should be considered by all providers.
- Opportunities to increase access to sports halls for indoor netball – training and competitive play should be considered by all relevant stakeholders – Charnwood Borough Council, facility operators local netball clubs, England Netball and the East Midlands Netball League
- Charnwood Borough Council seek to ensure that any new educational facility has a Community Use Agreement as part of the planning consent so as to secure pay and play opportunities for clubs and groups.
- Charnwood Borough Council and its public and voluntary sector partners facilitate, where possible, increased access to pay and play community centres/halls to maintain and grow participation in physical activity.
- Dialogue is established with English Indoor Bowls Association (EIBA) and local bowling clubs to further explore the potential of facilitating club – led development of additional indoor bowling facilities by 2036.
- Future need for purpose-built gymnastics/ trampolining facilities in the Borough, to meet latent demand, is explored further by British Gymnastics and Trampoline, local clubs/partners, and Charnwood Borough Council.

- Where appropriate, Charnwood Borough Council and its partners seek to secure S106 contributions that could contribute towards the development of additional and safe walking, running and cycling routes, and where possible to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active.
- Charnwood Borough Council and all its partners identify the level of capital funding required to address the identified investment needs for sports facilities, and investigate all available sources for capital funding, on a partnership basis.
- Charnwood Borough Council and its partners prioritise investment in the development of high quality community sports facilities/spaces, with other local partners. Increasing available capacity and therefore opportunities to take part in regular physical activity, in the local community, will contribute to reduced health inequalities, increased participation better community cohesion.
- There should be on-going monitoring of this Strategy through its implementation, but as a minimum, progress should be reviewed and refreshed every five years. On-going monitoring should include partnership working with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.