

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive – 2 December 2009

Review and Update of the Playing Pitches Strategy and Policies

Report of Leisure Development Manager

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Richard Lees)

1 Purpose

1.1 To present to Members the draft Playing Pitches Strategy and associated Policies for consideration and adoption.

2 Executive Summary

2.1 An up to date Playing Pitch Strategy with associated Policies is needed to inform the development of the Local Development Framework, respond to the anticipated population growth in the Borough and ensure that facilities are developed and managed in the most appropriate way.

3 Background: the original Playing Pitches Strategy

3.1 In 2003 the Council adopted its first Playing Pitches Strategy. Whilst it included an audit of local provision and assessed local needs, work on the document predated the publication of Planning Policy Guidance note 17 (PPG17) so no standards were developed and no policy statements were included in the strategy.

3.2 As six years have passed since the original Strategy was adopted, it is now time to review the situation to ensure our Policy and Strategy fit with current policy both nationally and locally. This coincides with the development of the Local Development Framework.

4 The draft revised Playing Pitch Strategy

4.1 The draft Playing Pitches Strategy for 2010-2026 is available on the Members' Portal in full. The scope of the Playing Pitches Strategy includes football, cricket, rugby and hockey. The Strategy includes a review of the current situation, our ability to deliver national and local policies, a detailed audit of quantity, quality and accessibility along with an assessment of potential for improvement and future provision levels.

4.2 In the light of the information in the draft Strategy, Members are asked to consider the aims and objectives for the Strategy, whether the categories of open space are right, whether they support the proposed standards for open space in respect of quantity, quality and accessibility and whether the proposed policies for managing our open spaces are the right ones. Each of these areas is set out below

5 Aim of the Strategy

5.1 The key aims of the strategy are:

- to improve the overall quality of playing fields and their ancillary facilities throughout Taunton Deane,
- improve both participation and satisfaction levels
- achieve an accessible distribution of pitches,
- provide an adequate supply of pitches for all current and future projected increases in demand.

6 Objectives of the Strategy

6.1 The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- protect playing pitches against development pressures, and specifically residential proposals on land in, and around, urban areas
- identify pitch (natural grass and artificial) supply and demand issues in relation to predicted population changes
- address 'demand' pressures created as a result of specific sports development pressures e.g. mini soccer, move to use of artificial pitches by hockey.
- Ensure that the future supply and quality of pitches and ancillary facilities is sufficient to encourage an increase in participation rates.
- identify priority sites for development or improvement in relation to external funding opportunities

7 Standards

7.1 The standard developed from the audit of supply of pitches is set out in the table below.

Type of Space	Quality	Access		Existing Quantity ha per 1000 population	Proposed Quantity ha per 1000 population
		Time (mins)	Distance (m) straight line		
Active recreation spaces (pitches)	4 (good)	N/A*	N/A*	1.78	2.00
* not applicable as pitches for team sports attract players from the entire borough and beyond					

7.2 The translation of this overall standard into specific provision will be undertaken by applying the Toolkit used in the Playing Pitch Strategy. This matches existing and future predicted demand to the supply of pitches for each of the sports covered in the Strategy.

8 Policies for playing pitches

8.1 The draft policies for consideration, based on the findings of the strategy, are set out below:

Provision policies

PPS 1	Existing playing fields are protected with consideration only given to disposal where alternative high quality provision is made available or demand has been satisfied.
PPS 2	Contributions towards off-site or on-site provision of playing pitches will be sought under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 from housing developments including provision for subsequent maintenance costs.
PPS 3	If after working through all options for playing pitch development in the borough, including considerations for other uses, allotments, play, etc, a surplus is identified, it is recommended that careful considerations should be given to the disposal of pitches in appropriate locations, giving thought to both the borough as a whole and the locality. The playing pitch methodology calculations by ward will help to inform this judgement. Strong evidence is required to justify the sale of any sports pitch, which will be supported through the Green Space Strategy, recognising, among other things, informal use.

Quality and capacity policies

PPS 4	Improve the quality of pitches and ancillary facilities in accordance with the Sport England quality assessment, prioritising improvements that increase capacity in areas and sports that are currently most deficient.
PPS 5	Increase the use of synthetic pitches for training and where deficiency in pitch quality unduly limits carrying capacity.

Policies for the development of new facilities

PPS 6	Influence the design and specification of school facilities to ensure their suitability for school and community use, securing formal community use agreements at each site – PFI / BSF schools or new developments.
PPS 7	Develop new multi-pitch/multi-sport hub sites which can provide facilities for a range of training, development and performance sport. Hub sites should provide a synthetic turf pitch (STP), floodlit multi-use games courts, grass pitches and adequate changing facilities. This, as a pilot, should be based in Wellington where there is football, rugby and cricket all using both public and private facilities. The existing Sports Federation in Wellington could act as an overarching club. This development would provide a pattern for others to follow as other hub sites are identified
PPS 8	Develop and enhance existing multi-pitch sites.

PPS 9	Provide new junior pitches across the borough, providing a minimum of one multi-pitch junior soccer site in each sub-area.
Marketing & development policies	
PPS 10	Seek to attract commercial investment to deliver high quality training and performance sports facilities.
PPS 11	Support development of facilities that provide for growing mid-week sports demand, such as 5-a-side soccer and floodlit cricket.
PPS 12	Ensure that hub or integrated facility developments are reflective of the needs identified within Governing Body Whole Sport Plans and contribute to the achievement of locally determined sports development targets and priorities.
PPS 13	Enable and support self-management of facilities by voluntary sports clubs and other organisations where applicable.

9 Consultation

9.1 In order for the Strategy to become an Evidence Base for the Local Development Framework, it is necessary to undertake consultation on the document with agencies, organisations and the community in the New Year.

10 Action Plan

10.1 An Action Plan for the next 5 years will be developed following consultation and any resulting amendments.

11 Equalities

11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Strategy. The assessment and resulting Equalities Action Plan are attached as APPENDICES 1 and 2.

12 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

12.1 review and support the proposed Vision, Aims, Objectives, Standards and Policies;

12.2 accept the Strategy as a technical document to be weighed in the decision-making process for the determination of development proposals;

- 12.3 approve for the draft Taunton Deane Playing Pitches Strategy to go out to wider consultation which will enable it to be considered for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document;
- 12.4 delegate the Executive Councillor for Sport, Parks and Leisure to approve any alterations to the Strategy resulting from the consultation and the outcomes for the Action Plan as they are developed.

APPENDIX 1
Equalities Impact Assessment

What are you completing this impact assessment for? E.g. policy, service area	Playing Pitch Strategy
Section One – Aims and objectives of the policy /service	
<p>This Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) aims to provide a sound strategic approach to meet the needs of Taunton Deane for playing pitches into 2026. Specifically, it aims to provide:</p> <p>An appropriate basis upon which to give advice and make decisions on planning applications</p> <p>Additional protection for playing pitches</p> <p>An objective basis for identifying and considering potential land disposals, whilst directing priorities for compensatory provision in the event of disposal being confirmed</p> <p>Strategic substantiation of funding bids required by funding bodies before they will consider significant capital commitments</p> <p>A framework within which providers from each sector can co-ordinate their priorities and harmonise their investment programmes.</p>	
Section two – Groups that the policy or service is targeted at	
<p>Citizens of Taunton Deane</p> <p>Local sports Clubs</p> <p>Sports Leagues</p> <p>Somerset County Council Schools</p> <p>National Governing bodies for sport</p> <p>Sports Charities and funding bodies</p> <p>House builders and developers</p> <p>The Borough Council as a provider and maintenance service</p> <p>Parish Councils</p> <p>South West One and other public sector providers</p> <p>Private Schools</p> <p>Schools governing bodies</p>	
Section three – Groups that the policy or service is delivered by	
<p>The Borough Council as a provider and maintenance service</p> <p>Parish Councils</p> <p>Private Schools</p> <p>Schools governing bodies</p> <p>Local sports Clubs</p> <p>Sports Leagues</p> <p>Somerset County Council Schools</p> <p>National Governing bodies for sport</p> <p>Sports Charities and funding bodies</p>	
Section four – Evidence and Data used for assessment	
<p>Audit of Pitches 2009</p> <p>Club Consultation 2009</p> <p>GIS plotting of all pitches</p>	
Section Five - Conclusions drawn about the impact of service/policy/function on different groups highlighting negative impact or unequal outcomes	

PPS 1 – Potential negative impact on all groups. If playing fields are disposed of it will be necessary to undertake an impact assessment on the criteria used for consideration of disposals.

PPS 2 – No negative impact

PPS 3 – Potential negative impact on Disabled users, age, some racial groups and gender for informal use. If playing fields are disposed of it will be necessary to undertake an impact assessment on the criteria used for consideration of disposals.

PPS 4 – No negative impact

PPS 5 – Potential negative impact on accessibility for Disabled users, age, some racial groups and gender, but potential positive impact on disabled users. Council will need to consult with these groups on a case by case basis.

PPS 6 No negative impact

PPS 7 - Potential negative impact on accessibility for Disabled users, age, some racial groups and gender, but potential positive impact on disabled users. Council will need to consult with these groups on a case by case basis.

PPS 8 & 9 – No negative impact.

PPS 10 – Potential negative impact on all groups particularly low socio economic groups, age, & disability. The Council should seek to use its influence to ensure that any agreement includes provision for full access for all groups to comply with best practice.

PPS 11 & 12 – No negative impacts

PPS 13 - Potential negative impact on all groups particularly low socio economic groups, age, & disability. The Council should ensure that any agreement includes provision for full access for all groups to comply with best practice.

Overall the Strategy promulgates a move from local provision towards higher quality hub provision. This is, in part, balanced by the proposal for greater use of locally based school sport facilities. In order to maintain current levels of accessibility to facilities by non mobile groups, it is essential that the strategy is implemented in full, as partial implementation could lead to an overall reduction in access.

Section six – Examples of best practise

The Council's requirement for contributions towards off-site or on-site provision of playing pitches to be sought under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 from housing developments will make more pitches potentially available to all groups.

The Council's support for synthetic pitches will enable more fields sports to be played by disabled people.

APPENDIX 2
Impact Assessment Issues and Actions table

Service area				Date		
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Groups affected	Actions needed – how will your service or policy be amended	Who is responsible	By when	Is a monitoring system required	Expected outcomes from carrying out actions
Knowing our Communities, engagement and satisfaction						
Continue to engage with minority groups to identify special needs for e.g. women's pitches	Minority sports groups	Regular liaison with NGBs.	K Woollard	Ongoing	Yes	Greater involvement in sport by minority groups
Responsive services and customer care						
Ensure that any agreements with clubs and parish councils meet best practice in terms of equality	Clubs parish councils/ schools	Draft model agreement for clubs / parish councils / schools	K Hughes / Legal	March 2011	Yes	
Place shaping, leadership and partnerships						
Develop Sports club management agreements that require successor bodied to maintain equality		New agreements to be drawn up to replace existing lease agreements	K Hughes / Legal	Draft agreements in place by March 2011	Yes	Creation of agreements that meet the Equality Framework requirements

<p>of provision based on FA model agreement. Put systems in place to monitor compliance with these requirements.</p> <p>Refer to, and adopt best practice from, CABE Space Design Guide - "Inclusion By Design", and Sport England, to reduce potential for inequality where new and refurbished sites are developed.</p>		<p>As required for new developments</p>				
<p>A modern and diverse workforce</p>						
<p>None</p>						

