

## **SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY 2015 - 2020**

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Mrs Julia Adey

**Wards Affected:** All wards

**Officer contact:** Sarah Randall Ext:3888

Email:sarah\_randall@wycombe.gov.uk

### **PROPOSED DECISION**

To adopt the new 2015-2019 Sports Facility Strategy

#### **Reason for Decision**

The last adopted Sports Facility Strategy covered the five years from 2009 to 2014 and a new strategy is required to support the development of sports facilities across the district.

#### **Corporate Implications**

1. There is no statutory duty to adopt a Sports Facility Strategy, but the Council is empowered to do so under the “general power of competence” in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, and it is good practice to do so; many other local authorities also do so.
2. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the “public sector equality duty”) provides that the council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Strategy is designed so as to comply with this duty.
3. Whilst there is no express duty to consult in this case, public authorities must act fairly in exercising their functions. Normally there is a broad discretion to decide how and when a consultation exercise should be approached, although generally any consultation process should allow an adequate period for response, should give reasonable consideration as to those who should be involved, should involve questions germane to the issue being considered and provide enough information to allow intelligent responses, and any decision should properly take into account the responses received. Given the nature of the impact of this decision, which is broadly intended to continue to improve sports facilities in the district and encourage users from across the whole spectrum of the community and general public it is considered that the consultation which has taken place is adequate and proportionate.
4. There are no financial implications to the Council in adopting this Strategy.

## **Executive Summary**

5. In 2009 the Council adopted a new Sports Facility Strategy 2009 – 2014. The Council needs to adopt a new strategy for the next five years for the district to ensure the continued development of sports facilities for the local community.

## **Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications**

6. The strategy links closely to the Health and Well-being theme in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **Background and Issues**

7. In 2009 the Council adopted a new Sports Facility Strategy 2009 – 2014. The Strategy recommended the support of a new stadium and sports hubs across the district, along with the development of a new sports centre for High Wycombe and a large number of community sports club facility developments. This Strategy has been particularly successful as a wide variety of projects have been achieved by a variety of organisations across the district, including the following:
  - Replacement Wycombe Leisure Centre under construction (due to open January 2016)
  - New synthetic turf pitch (STP) at John Hampden School
  - New athletics facility at Little Marlow
  - New BNU Sports & Fitness Centre in High Wycombe
  - New sports centre & STP at Great Marlow School
  - New sports hall at Princes Risborough School
  - New hockey competition standard STP at Marlow Sports Club
  - Four new football pitches at the Rye
  - Additional rugby pitch at Kingsmead
  - New gymnastics facility at Cressex industrial park
  - Two new croquet lawns at Hazlemere Recreation Ground
  - New changing rooms at Desborough Recreation Ground
  - Pavilion extension at Bassetsbury Manor Bowls Club
  - Improvements to sports facilities at Bledlow Cricket Club, High Wycombe Cricket Club, Risborough Rangers and Longridge Outdoor Activity Centre
  - Replacement clubhouse at Marlow Rowing Club and at Hazlemere Parish Council's Recreation Ground
  - Clubhouse improvements at Marlow Rugby Club, Bucks Squash Club and Downley Sports Club
  - Improved facilities at Amersham & Wycombe College
  - New Cressex School buildings with sports facilities
  - Wycombe Rye Lido re-opened with new gym and dance studio
8. The new proposed Strategy provides an analysis of indoor and outdoor sports provision, and the needs and aspirations of local sporting providers. A copy of the 2015-2019 Strategy is available upon request.

9. The key recommendations of the strategy are:
  - 9.1 To continue to improve the Council's public facilities. This work started in the previous strategy and the new Wycombe Leisure Centre at Handy Cross is being open early in 2016. The review of Court Garden Leisure Complex and Higginson Park starts in 2015, and capital funding has been agreed for the improvement of Risborough Springs Swim and Fitness Centre.
  - 9.2 To support sports clubs and schools developing schemes identified in Appendix 1; actively supporting those that rank highest, such as delivering cycling facilities within the district.
  - 9.3 To continue the development of multi sports hubs providing local sports provision, for example the expansion of Marlow Sports Club.
  - 9.4 To ensure provision of 3G pitches in the District to meet current and future needs.
  - 9.5 To work with WDC Planning department, developers and other infrastructure providers on the provision and development of sports facilities on strategic sites and as a consequence of Reserve Sites and at Princes Risborough, as well as providing input to and evidence for the Local Plan.
10. The Strategy will be owned by Wycombe District Council with regular reporting to the Wycombe Sports and Physical Activity Network (Wycombe SPAN) which, amongst others, has been consulted in developing the Strategy. Wycombe SPAN is a sub group of the Wycombe Partnership and is a forum for local sports providers to work together for the benefit of sport and physical activity locally. Projects will have delivery teams comprising organisations relevant to the initiative to be delivered. The recommendations in the Strategy will be reviewed after three years from adoption of the strategy and again at the end of the strategy to capture progress made

## **Consultation**

11. The development of the Strategy has been done in consultation with Wycombe SPAN, local sports clubs and sports providers, and WDC Planning Department.

## **Options**

12. There are two options:

Option1 – Adopt the Sports Facility Strategy

Benefits – The strategy will support the continued development of local sports facilities and provide evidence and support for any external funding bids to support the development.

Disadvantages – There are no known disadvantages in adopting the strategy.

Option 2 – Not support the adoption of a new Sports Facility Strategy.

Benefits – There are no clear benefits of not supporting the adoption of a strategy.

Disadvantages – The lack of a clear strategy may hinder local providers when seeking external funding to support the development of facilities. Deficiencies in sports facilities will continue to exist within the district.

### **Conclusions**

13. The conclusion is that the Council should adopt the new Sports Facility Strategy and support the review process.

### **Next Steps**

14. If approved the Strategy will be published on the website and work will commence on the key recommendations.

### **Background Papers**

Sports Facility Strategy 2009-2014