

Central Bedfordshire Council

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 23 November 2017

Leisure Strategy - Parish Schedule Consultation

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Purpose of this report

1. The report provides feedback from town and parish councils in response to the Leisure Strategy Parish Schedule Engagement in March 2017. To comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regulations on securing developer contributions, the Council requested details of each parish's priority recreational open space and outdoor sport projects. This information will be held within the relevant Parish Schedule and Outdoor Sport Priority Project List; to evidence local needs and ensure appropriate Section 106 developer contributions are secured from relevant developments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider the feedback from the engagement.
2. On receipt of new planning applications, endorse the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Priority Project List as the point of reference for Leisure Services in identifying recreational open space and outdoor sports projects to which Section 106 developer contributions are sought.
3. On receipt of new planning applications, endorse the process whereby, if no local priority project has been identified, Leisure Services may seek Section 106 developer contributions towards the identified strategic priority project within the catchment of that parish.

Leisure Strategy – Background

2. The Leisure Strategy chapters set the policy requirements for the provision of indoor sports and leisure centre facilities, recreational open spaces and outdoor sports facilities within the chapters below.
 - a. Chapter 1: indoor sports and leisure centres
 - b. Chapter 2: nine types of recreational open space
 - c. Chapter 3: nine types of outdoor sports facilities

The Leisure Strategy documents can be viewed at the following link:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/leisure/strategy/overview.aspx>

3. This report focuses on the Recreational Open Space and Outdoor Sport facilities detailed in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

Parish Schedules

4. To support the delivery of the Leisure Strategy at the local level, a Parish Schedule has been created for each parish to detail their recreational open space and outdoor sport facilities.
5. The Parish Schedules can be viewed at the following link:
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/leisure/strategy/engagement/parish-schedules.aspx>
6. Each schedule contains the following information:

Chapter 2: Recreational Open Space

- a. List of recreational open space sites
- b. The strategy standards applied to parish provision to indicate a quantitative shortfall or surplus
- c. Qualitative data for each site/facility
- d. Local facility/project requirements – where identified by the town /parish council

Chapter 3: Outdoor Sports

- a. List of outdoor sports sites
- b. Quantitative and qualitative data on facility-specific requirements drawn from the strategy assessment, National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGB), clubs and local councils.
- c. Local sports facility projects are listed in the each schedule; and
- d. as many sports facilities serve a catchment wider than a single parish, all sports projects are shown on the Outdoor Sport Priority Projects List.

7. The Outdoor Sport Priority Projects List can be viewed at the following link:
<S:\CS\Leisure Libraries Learning\Shared\Leisure Strategy\Outdoor Sport Priority Project List.xlsx>
8. To provide spatial information on the sites and link with the parish schedule site list, a Geographic Information System (GIS) layer has been created which identifies each site and its facility type.
9. The GIS layer can be viewed at the following link:
<http://my.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/mycentralbeds.aspx>.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

10. Under the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Section 106 developer contributions must be sought towards identified, costed projects and not toward generic improvements.
11. To seek S106 developer contributions from new development for recreational open spaces and outdoor sports facilities, Leisure Services must evidence their request by providing details of the project on which the money will be spent. Without this information, no S106 contributions can be sought.
12. As the majority of recreational open spaces and outdoor sports facilities are owned by town/parish councils or sports clubs, details of their CIL compliant projects must therefore be provided by the facility owners/operators.

Parish Schedule Engagement

13. In March 2017 Leisure Services contacted town and parish councils, National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGB), sports clubs and local countryside organisations via an online engagement which ran for eight weeks.
14. The consultees received their respective Parish Schedule, access to GIS maps and the Outdoor Sports Priority Projects List.
15. Feedback was requested on the following information:
 - a. To verify the sites information in the Parish Schedules and GIS maps.
 - b. To identify town/parish, NGB and sports club priority projects and provide project costings for new or improved recreational open

spaces and outdoor sport facilities. This information to be used to evidence requests for S106 developer contributions from new development.

Purpose of the Engagement

16. To ensure that all appropriate S106 contributions are secured from new development, it is intended that the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Priority List will detail all local and strategic priority projects to evidence S106 contribution requests.
17. The engagement informed local councils and sports organisations of the restrictions placed on securing S106 contributions under the CIL legislation, and encouraged them to plan for their future open space and outdoor sport facility requirements by identifying their priority projects.
18. The policies and facility information in the Leisure Strategy are available to parishes and clubs to help them identify and develop their projects, utilising where appropriate expertise from the National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGB) and other bodies.
19. The engagement asked parishes and sports clubs for details of their priority projects to populate the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Priority Projects List. It explained that this information will be used by officers to comment on planning applications and where appropriate, seek S106 developer contributions. It confirmed that without project information being provided, officers would not be able to seek S106 contributions.

Emerging Local Plan

20. Policies for each of the Leisure Strategy chapters have been included in the draft Local Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the approach taken by the Leisure Strategy in undertaking detailed local assessments to evidence where new facilities should be provided and where developer contributions should be sought.
21. The Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Project List will provide the detailed information on local requirements to evidence requests for both facilities and S106 contributions.

Engagement Feedback – Town and Parish Councils

22. Following a subsequent reminder in July, a total of 36 parish councils responded to the engagement, only 20 of those parishes identified priority projects. The parishes who responded and the number of projects they identified are listed in Appendix A.

Engagement Feedback – Sports Clubs

23. A total of 15 sports clubs (excluding football) responded to the consultation, identifying 27 priority projects.
24. The football consultation was managed by the Bedfordshire Football Association (BFA) who consulted in excess of 40 clubs comprising their highest ranked clubs which play at Step 7-3 of the National League System. In addition, community clubs who had expressed interest in facility development were also contacted.
25. The other NGBs were consulted in the engagement to guide clubs to identify projects which are in line with NGB policies, support club development and are more likely to achieve NGB funding if needed.
26. The Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Priority Projects List have been updated with the information received from local councils and sports organisations. To ensure they remain current and accurate, an annual engagement will be held, however, updated project information can be submitted at any time.

Engagement Feedback - Countryside Organisations

27. No responses were received from the countryside organisations.

External Funding Partners

28. Throughout the Leisure Strategy development Leisure Services has worked closely with Sport England and other funding partners to understand their requirements for projects which will attract external funding.
29. The Leisure Strategy provides the strategic background which identifies and assesses local needs against adopted standards; however, this does not provide the local detail required to support individual funding applications.
30. The Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sports Priority Project List provide the local picture and project-specific information required to seek both S106 developer contributions and external funding.
31. In addition, the Outdoor Sports Priority Project List provides details of strategic sporting facilities which serve a wider catchment, encompassing a number of parishes.
32. All funders require applications to provide match funding and this can be provided via a S106 contribution. The link between the Leisure Strategy

assessments and the requirements of funding partners provide the evidence base to maximise funding sources for a given project.

33. Sport England endorses the approach taken in the Outdoor Sports Priority Project List, and will be using this as an example of best practice for other authorities.

Leisure Responses to Development Management Consultations

34. At present, when a Development Management consultation is received, Leisure officers have to contact the relevant parish council and/or sports club to obtain details of any projects to which developer contributions could be sought.
35. This process can be slow and often does not meet parish council or Development Management timescales. Some parish councils do not forward plan in this way and therefore do not have any projects identified locally. Where projects are devised instantly to secure contributions they may, with further consideration, be either inappropriate or not needed.
36. The purpose of the engagement was to encourage parishes and clubs to plan more effectively for future requirements and ensure their evidence is made available to Leisure Services to build an accurate, current and comprehensive picture of local needs and projects.

Procedure for consideration

37. The purpose of the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sports Priority Project List is to provide a single reference point for information regarding recreation open space and outdoor sport projects to which S106 contributions could be sought, and to optimise officer time in responding to Development Management consultations.
38. Support is sought for the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Priority Projects List to be the single point of reference for Leisure Services in identifying projects to seek developer contributions. Where councils and/or sports clubs have not identified a local project, Leisure Services will not request contributions from that development.
39. For developments where the local council has not identified any projects, if the development site lies within the catchment of an identified strategic project, contributions will be sought towards that project only.
40. Where both a local and a strategic project are identified, the local council must identify which project the contributions should be sought for.

Reasons for Procedure

41. Prior to inclusion on the Schedules and Sports List, the project information will be assessed and developed with the parishes and relevant organisations to ensure it provides defensible evidence of local needs and the projects designed to address them.
42. This approach ensures that Leisure Services has a single point of reference for project information when seeking contributions from development.
43. Having a single source of information will utilise officer time more effectively when responding to Development Management consultations.
44. Where no local projects are identified, the approach ensures that opportunities to secure developer contributions are not lost, and developer funding can be targeted at strategic facilities which will serve a wider catchment.

Council Priorities

45. The purpose of the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sports Priority Project List is to identify all local and strategic facility requirements across Central Bedfordshire. By assessing and developing these projects with the help of local councils, clubs and other bodies, Leisure Services can ensure both S106 developer contributions, and external funding can be maximised to help deliver new or enhanced sports and open space facilities.

Corporate Implications

46. Formalising a process for the identification of local and strategic leisure projects supports the delivery and ongoing development of sustainable local facilities which enable residents to live active and healthier lives.

Legal Implications

47. The information contained in the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Priority List will be used to evidence the requests made by Leisure Services for Section 106 developer contributions under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Financial and Risk Implications

48. The information contained in the Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sports Priority Project List will be used to evidence the requests made by Leisure Services for Section 106 developer contributions.

49. The majority of recreational open space and outdoor sports facilities are owned by parish councils or sports clubs. The engagement process was designed to identify, genuine, costed projects to which S106 contributions complying with the CIL regulations, could be sought.
50. Developer contributions sought will be secured by Development Management via a Section 106 legal agreement with the respective housing developer. Contributions will be secured in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regulations.
51. Following receipt by the council of contributions from the developer, the project promoter will be made aware of the funds and will submit a release application for approval by Development Management. Funds will be released in accordance with the release procedure and will be paid to the applicant on the production of paid invoices.
52. Where S106 contributions are secured for CBC owned facilities, the projects will be managed in accordance with the councils' financial regulations.

Equalities Implications

53. The engagement has consulted each town or parish council in their role as owner and managers of the majority of open spaces and outdoors sports facilities, and as the focal point for local needs and opinions. The engagement timescale allowed for councils to engage with their residents and ratify their responses through their own democratic procedures.
54. In addition all sports clubs and their relevant Sports Governing Bodies were consulted to secure both the strategic requirements of each sport and the specific local needs. Encouraging clubs to work together and to engage the help of their governing bodies will enable them to assess the needs of all their current and potential members, and develop their facilities in accordance with local needs and national guidance.
55. The development of the overarching Leisure Strategy included both targeted and randomised public consultation to secure a comprehensive breadth of opinion and needs. This subsequent stage of the strategy is focussing on the how and where of potential new or improved facility requirements with the aim of increasing access to leisure opportunities across the area.

Conclusion and next Steps

56. In order to maximise opportunities to secure developer contributions for the provision of new, or improvement of existing open space and outdoor sports facilities, requests for contributions must comply with the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
57. To comply with CIL and support the requirements of external funding partners, an effective procedure is required to manage information on the strategic and local projects required across Central Bedfordshire.
58. The parish schedules and outdoor sports list are intended to provide a single, comprehensive point of reference for Leisure officers in responding to Development Management consultations; and supporting parishes or clubs with external funding applications.
59. Sport England has endorsed this approach with regard to sporting facilities and on completion, will be using this as an example of best practice for other local authorities.
60. The Football Foundation (FF) which is the funding arm of the Football Association (FA) is currently developing a similar approach which will produce local football plans for each local authority area. The FF has welcomed CBC's approach and the Outdoor Sport Priority Project List will provide the basis on their plan for CB.

Next Steps

61. The updated Parish Schedules and Outdoor Sport Priority Project List will be relaunched on the council's web site. The local councils and sports clubs will be contacted to reiterate that to ensure contributions are sought from appropriate development, towards their projects, they must provide the information for inclusion on the parish schedules and outdoor sports list. If no information is received, no contributions will be sought. Where the development is within the catchment of a strategic project, a contribution will be sought towards that only.
62. Officers will refresh the engagement annually and update the information accordingly, however, updated project information can be provided at any time.

Appendices

Appendix A: Town and Parish Councils responding to the Parish Schedule Engagement

Background Papers

The following background papers, not previously available to the public, were taken into account and are available on the Council's website:

- (i) Table of town and parish council responses to the engagement.

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Appendix A: Town and Parish Councils responding to the Parish Schedule Engagement

Parishes with number of identified projects:

1. Ampthill x6
2. Arlesey x10
3. Brogborough x1
4. Cranfield x4
5. Dunstable x17
6. Eggington x1
7. Harlington x1
8. Haynes x1
9. Henlow x2
10. Houghton Regis x6
11. Husborne Crawley x1
12. Kensworth x1
13. Meppershall x4
14. Northill x3
15. Pottton x8
16. Ridgmont x1
17. Shefford x1
18. Slip End x4
19. Stondon x10
20. Toddington x1