

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

21 FEBRUARY 2022

In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman has agreed to take this item as a late item of business in order to ensure that the proposed budget provision of £25,000 be included within the Revenue Budget proposals for 2022/23.

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY AND SPORT & RECREATION FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEWS

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To secure Committee approval to appoint external consultants to deliver an updated Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport & Recreation Facilities Improvement Plan through the Sport England Active Environment Framework in order to ensure that the Council has up to date strategy documents.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The current Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and Sport & Recreation Facilities Improvement Plan (S&RFIP) were last reviewed and refreshed in 2017 and 2019 respectively and due to changes to the current sport and leisure landscape in the local area over the last 5 years the strategies are no longer considered to be current in accordance with Sport England advice and guidance. Therefore, it is timely that both documents be reviewed in accordance with the recently refreshed and published Sport England - Active Environments Framework.

2.2 Sport England believe that providing the right facilities in the right place is central to helping people take part in sport and activity and such strategy documents should be designed to give a clear understanding of what is required in an area.

2.3 The review and refresh of such strategy documents provides a sound basis on which to develop policy and make informed decisions for sports development and investment in facilities. In addition they provide a clear and robust assessment to help develop and apply local planning policy. As a result, this approach will assist the District Council with meeting the requirements of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#). Furthermore, refreshing the PPS and S&RFIP and aligning it with the Council's Open Space Strategy and other relevant strategies and development plans will provide a clear and strategic approach to future sports provision and investment across the District and the evidence base to support bids for external funding.

2.4 The preferred approach will be to procure an approved consultant for the PPS through the Lot B - Assessment of Need Framework which contains 7 consultancy companies that have all met the Sport England's Quality Assurance Assessment Framework and have the skills and experience to deliver the required strategy documents using the latest approved Methodology. The S&RFIP will be refreshed in-house with consultants producing Facilities Planning Model reports (FPM's) for swimming pools and sports halls which form the main focus of the strategy in respect of indoor leisure facilities. These reports can be commissioned through OHR Consultants who are Sport England's current approved provider to undertake such work. The FPM reports are generated from the 'Active Places' database which is Sport England's national register of sports facilities and was utilised to secure Sport England's capital contribution to the Dukeries swimming pool project.

2.5 Both strategy documents highlighted above are included in the approved Health Improvement & Community Relations Business Plan 2022 - 2023 therefore progress is required to deliver on this specific objective and a budget secured to appoint appropriate consultants. In this respect it is anticipated that the full review of the PPS will cost in the region of £22K and the productions of FPM's to support the refresh of the S&RFIP would be in the region of £3K therefore a budget of £25K would be considered appropriate in order to complete the work proposed.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 To appoint external consultants to deliver an updated Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport and Recreation Facilities Improvement Plan through Sport England's - Active Environment Framework in order to ensure that the Council has up to date strategy documents for indoor and outdoor sports provision across the District.

3.2 To agree a budget of £25K to commission consultants to develop the strategies in association with the Council's project team.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 There are no adverse equalities implications in relation to this report. The review and rewrite of the two strategy documents will ensure that the District Council has up to date information to help inform decisions about the provision of indoor and outdoor sport facilities and pitches to ensure a suitable level of provision is available across the District in accordance with national and local standards as relevant.

5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 There are no adverse digital implications with this proposal.

6.0 Financial Implications (FIN21-22/2364)

6.1 The £25,000 budget provision as outlined in this report has not been included within the Revenue Budget report elsewhere on this agenda. Therefore, should the recommendation below be approved, this would need to be added to the revenue budget to be approved by Council on 8 March 2022 as a one off contribution. The impact of this would also then need to be borne within the Medium Term Financial Plan to be approved at Council on the 8 March, also elsewhere on this agenda.

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

7.1 Having access to up to date and accurate information about the provision of accessible sports pitches and recreational facilities in the district will support the Council's Community Plan objective of 'improving the health and wellbeing of local residents' and will enable the Council to consider and plan for future demand for such facilities.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport & Recreation Facilities Improvement Plans be reviewed and refreshed; and**

- (b) a budget provision of £25K to commission consultants to develop the strategies in association with the Council's project team, to be approved and added to the 2022/23 budget report to then be approved by Members at Full Council in March 2022.

Reason for Recommendations

To ensure that the Council has current and accurate strategy documents that it can rely as a robust evidence base of provision of sport and recreation facilities across the District.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Andy Hardy on Ext 5708

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