



REPORT TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET TO BE HELD ON 18th DECEMBER 2007

TITLE LEISURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT and CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CONTACT

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DATE

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CATEGORY 1

DECISION MAKER (S) Cabinet

TYPE OF DECISION
(Tick applicable box)

Policy Matter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget Setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	In-year decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delegated Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information only	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Date in Forward Plan	<input type="text"/>		

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Cabinet members of the outcome of the Leisure Needs Strategy

2.0 ANALYSIS

2.1 AIMS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

2.1.1 To inform Cabinet members of the outcome of the Leisure Needs Strategy, and the findings and options contained therein.

2.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.2.1 Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council have carried out a number of studies over previous years related to the supply and provision of leisure

and open space facilities e.g. the Greenspace Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy and Physical Activity Strategy. To facilitate the effective planning and management of that provision in the future, and to reflect the needs and aspirations of the local community this further study has been commissioned.

2.2.2 The primary function of this assessment is the provision of a framework to enable informed decisions to be made about the supply, location and nature of open space and leisure and recreational facilities. Setting minimum standards for the different forms of open space, leisure and recreation provision on an area-by-area basis is an integral part of the process.

2.2.3 The study, as identified in the detailed attached document, is intended to provide the council with an open space, sports and recreation needs assessment and audit, completed in line with the requirements of "Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG 17) Planning For Open Space, Sports and Recreation". It follows the methodology set out in "Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A companion guide to PPG 17".

2.2.4 This assessment will also be a key piece of evidence for the Council's Communities Development Plan Document.

2.2.5 Specific aims of the study have been to:

- Ensure that the council can plan effectively for sufficient open space, sport and recreation facilities, and indoor facilities in line with current Government recommendations, Sport England planning resources and the guidance contained in PPG 17 and its companion guide.
- Consult with the community to identify their leisure needs and aspirations.
- Provide a basis for decision making, in relation to managing the Council's assets.

More specifically the objectives of the study have been to use existing studies, and where required, new research to:

- Identify the current accessibility, quality and quantity of provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities within the Borough against the relevant standards.
- To assess community attitudes, expectations and vision for future needs.
- To identify areas of deficiency or surplus, of open space, sport and recreation facilities.
- To provide a set of standards and definitions of open space and other provisions.
- To identify and evaluate strategic options and policy implications for the protection, enhancement, relocation of existing sites or provision of new open space, sport and recreation facilities.

Brief overview of findings

- The existing policy framework for Sport, Recreation and Leisure is weak.
- The landscape of facility provision has changed significantly with the provision of new/improved schools but this has not been matched by a more co-ordinated approach to availability and use.
- Decisions about the development of some facilities seem to have been taken without any reference to actual need.
- According to Sport England's facility planning statistics, Redcar and Cleveland currently has just enough swimming pool water to cover demand in the Borough. However, if a new pool at Redcar is built as planned then there will be an over capacity of swimming pools in the Borough.
- The backlog maintenance expenditure requirements for existing facilities are significant and have increased over the last few years.
- There has been a failure in the past to capitalise on the potential for section 106 to help fund improved sports and leisure facilities.
- Rationalisation of schools and the availability of new facilities provides an ideal opportunity to address local needs for sport and recreation provision.
- Attendances at Leisure centres are declining.
- The number of publicly owned sports halls available (including those on school sites) means that Borough has an over provision of such facilities.
- Governing bodies for sport are concerned about the quality of facilities and the inadequate use of school facilities.
- Leisure activities are considered to be an important component of people's lives with walking and outdoor activities being the most popular.
- Whilst the quantity of open space provision meets minimum standards its quality is an issue.
- Similarly whilst the provision of playing pitches broadly matches needs there are inconsistencies across the Borough with shortages in some areas. The quality of pitches and their related facilities is barely adequate.
- The Borough benefits from significant and well distributed natural and semi natural areas which are important for prime informal recreational activities and need to be maintained and enhanced.
- The huge investment in play has secured the provision of excellent facilities but there are still parts of the borough without sufficient play areas.
- The provision for young people is generally considered to be inadequate and the space available for youth activities is just below the suggested minimum standard.
- The structure of the areas population will change over the next 20 years with increasing numbers of older people and decreasing numbers of young people and the changing demands for leisure will need to be continually reviewed.
- The Borough has a generally aging stock of community buildings with some backlog maintenance issues to be resolved.
- The community buildings are evenly spread demographically throughout the Borough although there is a shortage of community facilities in Guisborough.
- Leisure centre customers are generally satisfied with the service provided by Tees Valley Leisure who manage the centres.

- The majority of users travel to mainstream leisure facilities by car with very few customers using public transport.

2.3 CONSULTATION

2.3.1 A number of community consultation exercises have been carried out as part of the study and information available from previous surveys has also been included where relevant. The breadth of the consultation reflects the diversity of the study and the need to incorporate views from as wide a cross section of the community as possible.

2.3.2 Questionnaire surveys were carried out with:

- Town and parish councils
- Sports clubs
- Community groups/organisations
- 2000 Redcar and Cleveland residents as part of the council's viewfinder panel consultation process.

2.3.3 A number of surveys of young people have been carried out recently and we were advised that further surveys would not be appropriate at present. With this in mind, the needs of young people have been drawn from recent, appropriate, consultation exercises.

2.3.4 A comprehensive survey of the issues relating to the borough's community centres and village halls was undertaken in early 2006 and the findings from this have been used to prepare this report.

2.3.5 Relevant local, sub regional and regional organisations have also been consulted including Sport England (North East), Tees Valley Sport and Tees Valley Leisure.

2.3.6 Representatives of disability groups were consulted through questionnaires as part of the community group/organisations survey.

2.3.7 Council Officers from various sections and departments have also been consulted.

2.3.8 The recently formed Community Sports Network (CSN) which includes various partners e.g. members, schools, sports clubs, volunteer networks, health and wider community groups such as disabled, has also been consulted.

2.3.9 Consultation is a key component of the Leisure Needs Assessment as it provides a local context for the establishment of standards for the different types of leisure activity and helps inform the development of priorities for action.

2.4 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

2.4.1 To be further considered within the report.

2.5 REASON FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

2.5.1 To assist the council to plan effectively for sufficient open space, sport and recreation facilities, and indoor facilities in line with current Government recommendations, Sport England planning resources and the guidance contained in PPG 17 and it's companion guide.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet should:

- Approve the Leisure Needs Strategy
- Further consider the findings of the strategy.
- Further consider the options within the strategy.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

4.1.1 Adherence to the guidance and findings of the report will assist in reaching national, regional and local targets in reference to increasing participation and customer satisfaction.

4.2 TIMESCALE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

4.2.1 This will be dependant on how the outcomes can be achieved, although it will require a reasonable timescale to implement.

4.3 RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.3.1 Cabinet have recently approved £2.5million to start addressing the current backlog maintenance issues within leisure facilities. It is anticipated future levels of funding will be required for further development of the assets.

4.4 COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION & REGULATIONS

	Please tick
Human Rights Act 1998 considered	√
Crime and Disorder Act 1998 considered	√
Children Act 2004 considered	√
Diversity and Equalities Impact Assessment completed	√

4.5 RISK

4.5.1 There is a risk that the supply/demand equation could change at any time.

4.6 REVIEW PROCEDURE

Responsible Council (or other) Officer	Ged Demoily
[Appropriate] Member's monitoring committee	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Deadline for Review	5 Years

5.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Draft Leisure Needs Assessment for Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council Part 3 – Policy and Action Plan Framework

6.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

- Playing Pitch Strategy (A&CS)
- Green Space Strategy (AM)
- Physical Activity Strategy (A&CS)
- Local Development Framework (AM)
- Various Sport England Documents (SE)

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