

WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY SERVICES

4 MARCH 2010

CONSULTATION ON FOOTBALL, PLAY & WELLNESS

1.0 Why has it come to Committee?

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consult with the Area Committee in relation to the:
- i) Football Investment Strategy (FIS) – proposed priorities for investment
 - ii) Play and Urban Games Strategy – identification of priorities for future investment
- 1.2 The report will additionally provide an overview of Wellness programmes and seek feedback from the Committee in relation to future areas of work.

2.0 Description of the Decision (Recommendation)

- 2.1 The Area Committee are requested to note the content of this report and provide feedback on the proposals outlined within the report.

3.0 Football Investment Strategy

- 3.1 As the Area Committee may be aware, the city has developed a Football Investment Strategy (adopted by Cabinet in January 2010) that sets out a clear 'vision' for football facilities and the player pathway in Sunderland, across public, private and school based provision. It establishes a clear approach to the level of provision including the implementation of local standards for playing fields and ancillary facilities.
- 3.2 Whilst some improvements have been made, a key priority for the city remains to contribute to Sport England's target, of a 1% increase in sport and physical activity participation year on year. Football is one of the highest participation activities nationally, with opportunities to engage with residents of all ages, abilities and disabilities in playing, volunteering, coaching and spectating.
- 3.3 As part of the work to complete the FIS, a full assessment of local needs and demand for football has been completed, which has resulted in a tiered model of provision and standards which will help to ensure football sites have defined purpose, and that development principles are embedded into the delivery. Working in partnership with the FA and the Football Foundation (FF) the City Council has secured an in principle commitment of £1m investment to match the City Council's £700,000 contribution. It is intended the Strategy will improve satisfaction rates in community based facilities and increase participation in sport amongst adults and young people.
- 3.4 Within Washington, provision for football has been mapped through the Football Investment Strategy and a list of the pitches can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 The Area Committee may also be aware that previous football investment has been made locally in recent years which includes:
- Millennium Centre – 7-a-side 3G pitch and floodlights
 - 2 senior grass pitches with improved drainage at Washington School
 - Blackfell School – multi use games area
 - Washington School – multi use games area

- 12 mini soccer pitches developed at Northern Area Playing Fields
- NOF Green Spaces funding to improve drainage at Northern Area Playing Fields
- Pavilion improvements at Northern Area and Southern Area Playing Fields
- More efficient pitch maintenance programmes introduced following the purchase of new equipment

3.6 Based on the evidenced gathered during the development of the FIS and the assessment of need, the following improvements are proposed:

Football Investment Priorities Phase 1 (2010-2012)

Site	Project	Number of Teams	Participants and spectators
Northern Area Playing Fields	4 change pavilion and storage area (pre-fabricated)	22	770
Biddick Sports College	Relay synthetic turf pitch with 3G	Sports College and citywide training	Sports College and citywide training

Football Investment Priorities Phase 2 (2013-2018)

Biddick Sports College - drainage improvements to 4 pitches

Football Investment Priorities Phase 3 (2018-2022)

Northern Area - extension of original pavilion development and fencing works
 Southern Area – drainage works to 4 pitches
 Plessey Sports Field - new 4 change pavilion
 Glebe Park - upgrade pavilion

3.7 The proposals are consistent with implementing the tired model of provision detailed in the FIS and the six factors for prioritising investment as detailed below:

- Cost and Value for Money – to ensure that funds have the greatest impact on reaching participants and increasing participation
- Playing Capacity – recognising that sites with a higher playing capacity enable more people to play football
- Football Development – in line with FF requirements, ensuring the development of FA Charter Standard Clubs are at the heart of investment
- Match Funding – must be identified to enable delivery of the priorities
- Facilities Development – prioritising projects which address gaps in provision
- Multi-sport Potential – recognising synergy between sports to provide both value for money and broader opportunities to raise participation.

3.8 Following Phase 1 developments all projects identified within the priorities for investment for Phases 2 & 3 will require an appropriate level of funding and officers will continue to work closely with funding bodies such as the Football Foundation to ensure that Sunderland is well placed to take advantage of external funding streams.

3.9 Durham County FA, the governing body for Football in our sub-region, has been working with the city closely in the city’s efforts to secure host city status for England’s submission for the World Cup in 2018. The process of developing a submission has strengthened links between Durham FA and local partners, which

has supported the parallel process of developing a football investment strategy and the world cup legacy plans.

3.10 The Committee's comments and observations would be welcome in relation to the investment proposals.

4.0 Play and Urban Games

4.1 The Strategic vision for play in the city outlined in the Play and Urban Games Strategy – Moving Forward (2007-2012) is that:

Sunderland will work in partnership to provide, support and sustain a variety of high quality and accessible play environments and opportunities for all children and young people up to 19 years. The city aspires to a core offer of free provision citywide supported by affordable supervised provision as appropriate.

4.2 In January 2008, Sunderland City Council was one of 20 authorities to be awarded Play Pathfinder status, a £2.1million capital investment accompanied by £500,000 revenue support. The award has resulted in an 18 month transformation programme in the delivery of play and urban games city wide.

4.3 The City Council is now supported by an emerging network of partners in play, who have grown to include organisations such as, Play England, Tyne and Wear Play Association, Gentoo, voluntary sector groups, schools and residents associations.

4.4 The achievements of the Play Pathfinder Programme are as follows:

- Match funding the £2.1million DCFS capital grant and £200,000 City Council funding, by a further £1.8million from external funding
- Developing an inspiring partnership with the Aiming High Pathfinder for disabled young people to develop an integrated service model for play
- Maximising partner skills through commissioning a range of voluntary sector organisations, to deliver neighbourhood based consultation
- Undertaking a mid-programme review of consultation, to reflect local feedback and embrace the community leadership role of Elected Members
- Engaging over 3,000 children and young people citywide in the design of play spaces and play services, including a young people's inspection team
- On target for the delivery of 28 new or refurbished high quality play spaces citywide by the end of March 2010
- In Washington, an increase from 30% children and young people, with access to high quality play spaces 1km from their door in 2008, to 57% high quality access in March 2010
- On target for the delivery of a unique City Adventure Play Park
- Launch of the 'Lets Play' campaign, to inspire families to get involved in their local play spaces and to challenge negative perceptions of children playing
- Designed and refurbished the following local play facilities at Albany, Wheeled Sports Park, Sulgrave, Glebe, Holley Park, Barmston – Big Lottery.

4.5 The programme delivery has not been without its challenges. The programme has been supported by Elected Members to build confidence in communities, who in some cases fear that play may create problems rather than solve them. This has included coordinating multi-discipline teams to ensure a 'one council' solution, prior to any new play development. Tackling perceptions against play provision remains a key challenge moving forward. Nonetheless, the developments have led to a sustained improvement in resident satisfaction levels. Since 2004, a net improvement of 19% to the current date, has been seen through the annual MORI survey. This measure was taken prior to the Pathfinder investment and it is hoped that satisfaction levels will increase following the next resident survey.

4.6 Following significant progress against the action plan within the current Play and Urban Games Strategy, an addendum to the document is being prepared. This will consider revised guidance issued by Government and Play England, but mainly seek to review progress and update the action plan. The Area Committee may be aware that as the Play Pathfinder developments are finalised in March 2010, work has started to determine the process for prioritising sites the next phase of developments.

Elected Members have previously been asked at Area Committee for their views on possible next steps for play development. The following suggestions have been forwarded to date; Lumley Close / Dunstanburgh, Penshaw Park, Roseberry Court, Washington North: Goal Posts, Blackfell.

4.7 The Committee is requested to provide feedback on locations they consider would benefit from future investment in play provision.

5.0 Other Consultation

5.1 'Wellness...it's a walk in the park' Programme

Providing the city's residents with opportunities to be physically active is a primary aim of the Wellness Service. In recent years the development of Wellness Centre's, community based activities, exercise classes and a host of prevention and intervention services have reinforced the role of the Wellness Service as the city's primary provider of physical activity opportunities.

5.1.1 Phase 1 of the Walking Programme will see the launch of the 'Wellness ...its a walk in the park' programme. Phase one consists of 'way marked' walking routes within ten city parks. Walks for Washington have been planned from Princess Anne Park and James Steel Park.

5.1.2 Depending on the size of the park, the marked walk routes are approximately 1, 2 or 3 miles in distance and are suitable for walkers, runners, wheelchair users and pushchairs. The launch week is scheduled for 6-10 April 2010.

5.1.3 Phase 2 of the programme aims to expand the walking routes to incorporate other areas of interest within the geographic area. **To assist with the preparation of Phase 2, the Committee is requested to provide feedback on possible locations or routes they consider would benefit from inclusion.**

5.2 Active Sunderland Project

5.2.1 The Active Sunderland Project operates in all areas within the city, with the main purpose of increasing participation in sport and physical activity, but also raising awareness of local and city wide opportunities to be active. The team of Activators have been working with a variety of community organisations and local businesses, to reach out to residents and support them in being active. In addition, the Active Sunderland Bus provides the Activator team with a base from which they can

operate in public spaces and organise local events. The Active Bus contains health and fitness testing equipment, allowing the Activators to offer health checks and raise awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

5.2.2 Considerable work has been undertaken to highlight suitable locations for the Active Sunderland Bus visit and also platforms from which the Activators can operate, there may be many other venues which could be accessed to extend the project.

5.2.3 Within Washington, the Active Sunderland Bus has already accessed:

- The Galleries
- Washington Sixth Form Campus

5.2.4 In the coming weeks, the Bus will return to JFK Primary School and the Washington Galleries.

5.2.5 The Committee is requested to provide feedback on possible locations they consider would benefit from the Active Project and the Bus visiting.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The Area Committee are requested note the content of this report and provide feedback on the proposals outlined within the report.

7.0 Background Papers

7.1 The following background papers were relied upon to compile this report.

- Leisure Facilities Research 2004
- New National Performance Framework for Local Government 2008
- Active Sunderland Bus, from application to Sport England 2008
- Leisure Centre statistics from Centre records
- Play Pathfinder Terms and Conditions 2008
- Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee Report February 2010

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APPENDIX 1

Washington pitches

Site name	Community use	Senior football	Junior football	Mini-soccer	Synthetic
Albany Park	Yes	1			
Albany Village Primary School	Yes		1		
Biddick Primary School	Yes		1		
Biddick School Sports College (and St Robert of Newminster RC & Sixth Form College)	Yes	3	3		1
Columbia Grange School	Yes		1		
Glebe Park	Yes	1	1		
John F Kennedy Primary School	Yes		1		
Millennium Centre	Yes				1
Nissan Sports and Social Club	Yes	3			
Northern Area Playing Fields	Yes	4		14	
Northumbria Centre	Yes	4			
Plessy Sports Field	Yes	2			
Oxclose Community School	Yes	3		5	
Rickleton Primary School	Yes		1		
Southern Area Playing Fields	Yes	6			
St Bede's RC Primary School	Yes	2			
St John Boste Primary School	Yes		1		
Usworth Park	Yes	1			
Washington Secondary School	Yes	1	1		