

Title of Report:	Draft Play Strategy and Draft Pitch Strategy
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 th September 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, healthy & engaged communities
Outcome	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health.
Lead Officer	Head of Sport & Wellbeing

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Capital
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date: Aug 2018
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date: Dec 2018
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date: Aug 2020
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to seek Members approval for the draft Play Strategy and draft Pitch Strategy.

2.0 Background

In February and March 2019, Members received reports on the draft Play and draft Pitch Strategies respectively. These reports provided details of feedback received following Section 75 consultation and requested final approval from Members.

Both papers were deferred for approval subject to a Members Workshop. This approach provided the opportunity for consultation with each DEA councillor grouping, allowing for members' input and agreement of the proposals relevant to specific geographical areas of responsibility.

A Members Workshop was subsequently held in October 2019 to receive feedback with a key action being the completion of 'Rural Proofing' on both strategy documents.

Rural Needs Impact Assessments were completed and concluded that whilst the Play Strategy does pay due regard to rural needs, the Pitch Strategy (which was developed before the Play Strategy) in hindsight did not sufficiently identify rural needs and the influence they may have had in implementing the investment plans, particularly in relation to population based criteria.

To address this it is proposed that the Pitch Strategy adopts the agreed approach in the Play Strategy as follows:

"In recognition of local and rural needs, prior to initiating the development of a pitch project will undertake a further two stage process consisting of:

- 1. A review of actual need (as opposed to statistical need) in order to determine the level of demand for pitch development through community engagement and consultation processes; and*
- 2. The identification of potential land options that lend themselves to meeting pitch development should demand be confirmed. This will include consideration of Council owned land, other land in ownership of public bodies that could be transferred / accessed on a partnership basis (e.g. schools) etc.*

Each project will also be subject to business case, local consultation and individual investment decisions in accordance with the Council's four stage capital management process. The business cases for pitch projects will also explicitly address rural needs in the strategic context, non-monetary assessment criteria and affordability analysis".

Both strategies have since been updated following the Section 75 consultation, Rural Needs Impact Assessment and Members feedback and are retained in the Members Library. An overview of both strategies is provided below for ease of reference.

3.0 Draft Play Strategy

In 2017 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council commissioned PlayBoard NI to develop an overarching Play Investment Strategy for the Borough.

The key recommendations of the Strategy are summarised within the costed Action Plan within the Executive Summary section of the report.

It is important to note that while the Action Plan acts as a tool to prioritise projects for future investment in fixed play, it does not constitute budget approval. All proposed investments in play will be the subject of proportionate business cases and investment decision making in compliance with Council's capital project procedures and delegated approvals.

The Action Plan recommends investment across 7 areas over a 5-year period as follows:

Action Plan	Action	Indicative Cost
1.3	Review of Megaw park play area and ancillary facilities to ensure full accessibility	£150,000
2.1	Develop new high value fixed play areas at 6 locations: 1. Limavady Town (Accessible Destination Play Area – NEAP) 2. Waterfoot (LEAP Play Area) 3. Portrush (Destination Play Area) 4. Portrush (Play installations to stimulate play along key walkways including East and West Strands, Ramore Head etc.) 5. Waterside, Coleraine (NEAP Play Area) 6. Ballykelly (NEAP Play Area)	£1,225,000
2.2	Extend and enhance existing fixed play areas at 3 locations: 1. Bio Park, Cloughmills (LEAP) 2. Quay Road, Ballycastle (Accessible Destination play area) 3. Rugby Avenue, Coleraine (Destination play area)	£850,000
2.3	Estimated costs associated with new play development at 4 locations (pending community consultation): 1. Ballymoney South 2. Castleroe 3. Bushmills 4. The Cuts 1 (Coleraine)	£500,000
3.1	Capital renewal of 12 play areas: 1. Landsdowne Road 2. Lisnagrot 3. Alexander Road/Blackburn Path 4. Middle Park 5. Cottage Wood 1 and 2 6. Garvagh Road 7. Swanns Bridge 8. Dhu Varren 9. Daneshill 10. The Warren 11. Anderson Park 12. Larchfield	£1,175,000
4.1	Transformation of play areas at 5 locations (dependent on community consultation): 1. Shanes Park 2. Islandmoore (Ballylagan Road) 3. Ballyknock 4. Glenullin 5. Ballanagarvey	£70,000
7.1	Development of non-fixed play services	£159,000
	TOTAL ASSOCIATED INVESTMENT	£4,129,000

In addition to this, PlayBoard NI undertook a condition audit of all 99 fixed play areas. As a key commitment of the Play Strategy this has resulted in individual reports which in many cases recommend maintenance and repair in addition to the projects listed above in the Action Plan. These repair and renewal recommendations have now been costed by Council's Estates Team with an anticipated budget of £0.5m to protect and reinstate the initial play value of these sites.

4.0 Draft Pitch Strategy

In 2017 Council commissioned Otium Leisure Consultancy to undertake a Facility Audit and Pitch Strategy to include 8 different outdoor facility types: Association football, Rugby, Gaelic games, Cricket, Tennis, Hockey, Outdoor bowls, Multi-use games areas/small sided games/kick about areas.

The key outputs for the Pitch Audit and Strategy were summarised as follows:

Part 1 – Audit of Existing Provision:

Audit the design, distribution, demand/supply information and condition of each of around 100 sites hosting Council and community/club owned outdoor ‘pitches’ and associated changing facilities in the Borough. This audit is to include all natural turf and synthetic ‘pitches’ for association football, Gaelic games, rugby, hockey, tennis, cricket, athletics, outdoor bowls, multi-use games areas and small sided games/kick about areas. Make recommendations and provide indicative costs in relation to any identified remedial works or further technical investigations necessary.

Part 2 – A Pitch Strategy:

Review the current hot and cold spots for pitch provision identified in the Facilities Strategy 2015, and combine this with additional condition and use pattern research to make recommendations for a prioritised ‘pitch’ (and associated changing provision) investment strategy for the Borough and provide indicative cost estimates.

The Pitches Strategy should set out a 5-year plan and make area specific recommendations and provide cost estimates in relation to a range of options. The Strategy recommendations should also take account of levels of deprivation and barriers to access such as disability or rurality etc.

The total indicative capital cost for 22 priority recommendations is £9.925m summarised as follows:

▪ Priority 1 Recs (11)	(Years 1-3)	£3.64m
▪ Priority 2 Recs (7)	(Years 2-4)	£5.385m
▪ Priority 3 Recs (4)	(Years 3-5)	<u>£0.9m</u>
		<u>£9.925m</u>

The following tables deal with facility developments at Council-owned sites that will be Council-led. Each recommendation is given a priority rating based on the extent of its impact on adequacy of provision and related issues such as the cost of maintenance and the potential to benefit health & well-being of community.

Priority 1 – Years 1 to 3		
Item No	Description	Indicative Capital Costs
2.	Consider existing pitches across the Borough that have playability issues for remedial work to the playing surface and/or changing accommodation.	£500k
3.	Extend the existing changing accommodation at Riada Playing Fields.	£800k
5.	Implement an appropriate Pitch Usage Policy and maintenance programme.	n/a
7.	Develop additional floodlit 3G provision where need is evidenced.	£1.55m
8.	Identify Council sites surplus to requirements and consider their future use.	n/a
9.	Depending on the long term future of the club there is a need to replace the changing accommodation at Armoy and complete drainage work on the pitches. Council to explore construction options for changing accommodation, including modular options.	£540k
10.	Consider the development of a changing pavilion in Riada Playing Fields adjacent to the AstroTurf pitch, especially suited to the requirements of female hockey players.	Ref Item 3
11.	Replace the ageing surface on the AstroTurf pitch at Quay Road, Ballycastle.	£150k
13.	Consider the value of a continuing tennis presence in Portrush in view of the proposed re-development of Portrush Recreation Grounds.	n/a
14.	Carry out upgrade to the tennis pavilion in Ballycastle, including toilet provision and maintenance issues.	£100k
22.	Support clubs in their aspirations for improved club-based facilities. This could be delivered through the Council's capital and minor grants programmes.	Capital grants
Sub Total		£3,640,000

Priority 2 – Years 2 to 4		
Item No	Description	Indicative Capital Costs
1.	Ensure existing Council facilities for association football in the Limavady area are used to their full potential; consider the potential to increase the quality, capacity and flexibility of the facilities at Scroggy Road and Roe Mill Playing Fields.	£1.5m
6.	Develop additional grass pitch facilities in the Dungiven area.	£800k
12.	Consider the development of improved tennis provision in the Coleraine area in respect of scale of provision and playing surfaces.	£975k
16.	Consider the design of future indoor facility developments regards their suitability for indoor cricket practice.	CLC budget
18.	Consider a new approach to supporting lawn bowls including the provision of synthetic greens.	£410k
19.	Consider the development of MUGA's at Cushendall, Limavady, Dungiven, Castlerock, Dervock, Cloughmills and Portrush. The development of smaller MUGA's has some crossover with the work of the Council's Play Strategy.	£1.2m
21.	Consider re-development of the Council's shale pitches where this is possible.	£500k
Sub Total		£5,385,000

Priority 3 – Years 3 to 5		
Item No & Description		
Item No	Description	Indicative Capital Costs
4.	Consider the potential to improve grass pitches in line with evolving grass pitch technologies, such as <i>sand fibre natural grass</i> .	£400k
15.	Consider supporting cricket clubs with specialist equipment to assist the delivery of training sessions and in maintenance of grass surfaces. This could be achieved through the capital grants programme.	Capital grants
17.	Develop perimeter walking/jogging paths (with lights) at a range of club and Council facilities. Also consider Quay Road Playing Fields and a section of the proposed Ballymoney-Ballycastle Greenway, Riada Playing Fields and Roe Mill Playing Fields.	£500k
20.	Develop a multi-sport synthetic training area at Rugby Avenue Playing Fields with a high specification synthetic surface suited to a range of sports; approximate size 140m x 90m. Ancillary accommodation (parking, pavilion) to be enhanced.	Refer Item 7
Sub Total		£900,000
Strategy Total		£9,925,000

5.0 Ongoing Work – Outline Business Cases

Prior to the development of both the Play and Pitch Strategies, Members prioritised 10 capital projects for progression to Stage 1 – Outline Business Case development. Included within this prioritised list was two ‘Play’ Projects (Limavady Accessible Play Park and Aghadowey Play Park) and three ‘Pitch’ Projects (Cloughmills, Burnfoot and Riada).

To progress these projects, Council’s Sport & Wellbeing team has carried extensive community engagement and consultation. In parallel, Council’s Capital Delivery Team has completed site feasibility, outline design and capital estimates to allow the Outline Business Cases to be brought forward for formal consideration.

It is important to note that while the Play Strategy and Pitch Strategy make the ‘strategic case’ for investment, all Outline Business Cases will utilise current population data and information available at the time of appraisal and future-proof for community needs and demands where possible. This requirement will be included as an addendum to both strategies when published.

6.0 Next Steps – Funding Strategy

It is important to note that the Play and Pitch Strategies do not commit Council to investment, instead the research and analysis will support the development of new Strategic Outline Cases for capital projects that may attract external funding opportunities.

The Sport & Wellbeing Service and Funding Unit will continue to target external funding opportunities which align with central government emerging priorities and funding requirements including:

- DAERA Rural Development Programme which is now closed for applications, but will have a similar programme next year;
- DAERA TRYPSY fund – year end funding for ‘shovel ready’ projects;
- Landfill Communities Funds which have previously given up to £30k for projects within a 10 mile radius of the landfill site, likely that this will reduce to £15k this year;
- DfC/Sport NI – Access & Inclusion Programme and potentially Sub-Regional Stadia Development funding.

7.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

- Approve the draft Play Strategy and draft Pitch Strategy; and
- Note the progress made to date with Outline Business Cases and Funding Strategy moving forward.