

Monitoring of Playing Pitches Strategy EQIA

S75 internal meeting

March 2014

Background

The final EQIA report for the Playing Pitches Strategy was considered by the Parks and Leisure Committee on 9th February 2012, the Committee accepted the findings of the EQIA and this decision was ratified by Council on 1st March 2012.

The Strategy has three high level objectives which are supported by a number of sub-objectives. These are –

Objective 1 – Capital investment

To deliver and, working in partnership, enable a programme of capital development, enhancement and maintenance investments which address identified deficiencies and protect existing playing pitch provision.

Objective 2 – Management

To implement and monitor a range of management options with community and statutory partners, so as to maximise people's participation in team sports activity.

Objective 3 – Sports development

Working in partnership, to develop and deliver a sports development programme to maximise people's participation in team sports activity. This will include under-represented groups, such as females and those with disabilities.

Monitoring update

Work has been ongoing on the delivery of these three objectives and the following is an update on progress to this point and the delivery of the mitigating actions identified in the EQIA.

Due to the nature of the ongoing work it has not been possible at this point to provide quantifiable update information. A delivery board has been established, which meets monthly to oversee the implementation of the strategy and key progress in year 2 is outlined below.

Objective 1 – Capital investment

- Work has been ongoing to deliver the Phase 1 capital build element and the focus to date has been around design and location within the identified sites. Sites have been identified and consultation has been ongoing with users and other interested parties, including sports clubs, governing bodies, local residents and Members, throughout the design process. This process has been slower than anticipated but we would hope to be in a position to commence construction at some sites in the coming year.
- Through the design process we have ensured that all buildings and access to the pitches are DDA compliant.

- The £750k fund for capital enhancements to school playing pitches to allow increased community access has been designed and launched with a closing date of 29 March 2013. One of the scoring criteria was around increasing participation and a higher score was given where the applicant demonstrates that they will encourage wider community use and have plans in place to target wider use among at least 3 of the following groups:
 - People with a disability
 - People from an minority ethnic background
 - Females
 - Older people
 - Youth organisations

Following an application process six successful applications were agreed by the Parks and Leisure Committee at its meeting in May 13 subject to them completing a due diligence process. It is anticipated that funding agreements will be issued in the coming months and the projects completed by the 31st March 2015.

- Sports development plans will be drawn up in advance of the opening of the pitches and these will include actions which will specifically address the under-representation of certain Section 75 groups in team sports activity, including older people, women and girls, people with disabilities and people with dependants.
- Discussions have been ongoing with the sport's governing bodies and clubs in relation to potential partnerships arrangements; these have included the securing of additional funding for the development of the pitches. Any partnership arrangements will include conditions around secured community access.

Objective 2 – Management

- A review of the current Facility Management Arrangements has been undertaken and a new partnership model drafted – Partner Agreements and work is progressing on implementing these. The new Partner Agreements will include a sports development plan which focuses on wider community involvement in activities onsite including targeting underrepresented groups such as females and people with a disability.
- It was agreed that a review of the baseline assessment which formed the basis of the strategy be undertaken and this piece of work has been undertaken and the final draft report is currently being finalised. One of the key findings is that the greatest growth in all sports is at the underage level and this is where there is an undersupply of pitch provision. The findings will be brought to Council in due course and where necessary actions put in place to address issues.

Objective 3 – Sports development

- Ongoing work has being undertaken to promote pitch sports and programmes of activities have been undertaken with the following partners:
 - IFA
 - Ulster Rugby
 - GAA
 - Camogie
 - Ulster Hockey

→ Cricket Ireland

- Our Leisure Development Unit continues to work with Sport NI and community-based partners, including the Active Communities programme, to develop and deliver a sports development programme that will maximise participation in team sports activity particularly amongst those from under-represented groups
- Work has been ongoing with the IFA around the support of small sided games through our support for two grassroots soccer development officers and we will examine how we can develop this

Complaints

No complaints have been received to date.