

**STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
MEETING 9 JULY 2019**

Urgent Update

Item 15: Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies - Approval

Reason for Urgency

The urgent update contains further information following publication of the agenda, and it is apparent that this needs to be brought to the attention of Members as it materially affects decision making.

Mangravet Recreation Field

Following completion of the Playing Pitch Strategy, which was undertaken in accordance with Sport England guidance, attention was drawn to the omission of Mangravet Recreation Field from the strategy. The Kent FA had no record of clubs using the Field and, despite significant stakeholder consultation, nor was the omission of the site from the Playing Pitch Strategy raised by the governing bodies of sport, the users and providers of pitch facilities, parish councils or Members. This is not uncommon given the unpredictability of the formation and disbanding of football clubs - such omissions would normally be addressed through a review of the strategy in accordance with Sport England's guidance. As a consequence, the consultants did not include Mangravet Recreation Field in their survey, analysis and consultation for current/future pitch provision; and the site was not subject to a qualitative, accessibility and availability assessment. A review of the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies will commence in January 2020, to support the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. At that time, the need for new sports facilities and pitches will be updated to reflect the future growth in population and any changes in provision.

To highlight this position, and to avoid further delays in publishing the strategy as a result of additional consultancy work, it is recommended that an addendum is included in the Playing Pitch Strategy to confirm that Mangravet Recreation Field will form part of considerations when the strategy is reviewed.

Insert Recommendation 3 to the report:

- 3. Include an addendum in the Playing Pitch Strategy to state:
"Mangravet Recreation Field has potential to contribute towards the borough's supply of sports pitches, and an appraisal of the site will be given consideration when the Playing Pitch Strategy is reviewed in 2020."**

Heavenly Fitness Gym

Although the Heavenly Fitness Gym is still operational, the facility was excluded from the Sports Facilities Strategy because it is allocated for housing development in the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017. Consequently, it could not be relied upon as future sports provision. The site's potential will be

given consideration through the reviews of the Sports Facilities Strategy and the Local Plan, and this position can be made clear by the inclusion of an addendum in the Sports Facilities Strategy.

Insert Recommendation 4 to the report:

- 4. Include an addendum in the Sports Facilities Strategy to state: "The Heavenly Fitness Gym has been omitted from the strategy due to the site's allocation for housing development in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017. The site's potential for future housing development or sports provision will be examined through the review of the Sports Facilities Strategy and as part of the Local Plan review."**

Pegasus Gymnastics Club

The Pegasus Gymnastics Club provides specialist gym facilities. The Sport England methodology requires assessments for new specialist facilities to be focused on a sub-regional or regional analysis of need, as opposed to meeting a borough need. Paragraph 1.4.2 of the Sports Facilities Strategy explains that one-off specialist sporting facilities, such as climbing facilities and gymnastics facilities, have been specifically excluded from the Sports Facilities Strategy on this basis. Consideration can be given to including these when the strategy is next reviewed.