
REPORT TO:	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 6
DATE OF MEETING:	8th FEBRUARY 2018	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	CULTURAL SERVICES MANAGER	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	MALCOLM ROSEBURGH (EXT.5774) Malcolm.roseburgh@south-derbys.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN RURAL VILLAGES	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: OS

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 To note the report on recreational facilities in Rural Villages.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

2.1 To review the recreation provision in rural villages which may not benefit from S106 funding to enable development of such facilities, due to the lower volumes of housing being constructed comparable to larger villages. To look at other sources of funding to assist in the development of recreation facilities in these localities.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Recreational provision in rural villages needs to be reviewed in light of several different strategies, plans and audits and then be linked to potential resources. In terms of strategies, plans and audits these are primarily the Councils Open Space, Sport and Community Facility Strategy, the Play Audit, the Strategy for Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation in South Derbyshire and the Local Plan.

3.2 With regard to the Open Space, Sport and Community Facility Strategy adequate opportunities for recreation are at the heart of the vision and strategic objectives with a desire for basic provision and choice across the district including in rural villages. The particular actions flowing from the strategic objectives that bear relation to rural recreation are the provision of a community facility audit and action plan, an updated playing pitch strategy and upgrading play facilities to a "good" standard.

- 3.3 The Community Facilities audit is intended to map, record and appraise all available community facilities with a view to identifying gaps in provision and providing an evidence base for Section 106 compliance or neighbourhood action towards improvements or additions. The responsibility for this work lies with the Cultural Services and Communities units and is being considered now amongst other priorities by the interim Open Space and Community Facilities Development Manager following the departure of the former post holder. Once completed as stated above it will provide a sound evidence base for attempting to improve facilities including those in rural areas.
- 3.4 Work to update the District's playing pitch strategy has been commissioned and KKP consultants are undertaking this assignment with completion currently expected in April. Their appointment followed a joint procurement exercise with Derby City Council to ensure both parties cater for the likely growth around the South of Derby City as well as meeting new Sport England guidance. Again this strategy should identify requirements in rural areas.
- 3.5 The aspiration to upgrade play facilities to a "good" standard is slightly more difficult to achieve. Existing SDDC revenue budgets for repairs, improvements and additions are limited and should a capital programme be introduced improvements to sites would need to compete against other corporate priorities. The District Council, Parish Council and groups from the Voluntary and Community sector continue to attract external funding to support recreational sites but the general trend seems to be a reduction in opportunities, for example recent changes to the Lottery programme.
- 3.6 Another particular strand to the Open Space, Sport and Community Facility Strategy is the Play Audit. This was last undertaken in 2014 and a refresh is now planned. This audit identified all fixed play sites in the area where SDDC has some responsibility along with a quality assessment of the sites and an associated score. Again this is a useful tool to help attract resources and make decisions about the allocation of existing resources. (Score sheet attached as Appendix 1)
- 3.7 The Strategy of Active Derbyshire for Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation in South Derbyshire 2017-22 aims to deliver against three key areas i.e. physical and mental well-being, individual development and social, community and economic development. Priority target groups are young people and family activity, older people and under-represented groups. A main goal of the strategy is to reduce health inequality including for those in social isolation in rural communities and those with long travel times to GP's. It is self-evident that the strategy supports the notion of recreational facilities in rural locations and importantly acknowledges that to succeed the strategy will require investment and commitment from a wide range of partners existing and new.
- 3.8 The Local Plan identifies areas where development leading to significant Section 106 funding is likely to occur and it is fair to say that some rural communities will have little development over the period of the plan and little or no Section 106 funding to secure recreational facilities.

3.9 In relation to play in rural areas the plan for Play Areas has been identified as:

- Local Service Villages - a LEAP (Local equipped area for Play), plus a further LEAP in housing estates of 50+ dwellings;
- Rural Villages - a LEAP in each village.

3.10 The Open Space and Facility strategy Area profiles identifies the following needs in the Rural Villages:

North West – Scropton - One LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play),

North East - None

North - None

South - Coton in the Elms requires: more space for Outdoor Sports Facilities

- Walton on Trent requires: more space for Outdoor Sports Facilities

3.11 The strategies, plans and audits described above point to the importance of recreational facilities for all communities yet indicate that some rural communities will not have access to Section 106 funding, will need to look elsewhere for investment if they wish to improve or increase their facilities and that they are not necessarily top priorities for investment.

3.12 In order to attract investment it is important that any projects demonstrate wherever possible links to the strategies plans and audits above. This has proved useful in the past when Lottery funding was secured to install bits of fixed play equipment and expand the Council's mobile holiday play scheme.

3.13 It is also important that the documents and their associated action plans are current and up to date and as outlined above work is planned to make sure this is the case. In addition the Council has invested in new software to organise and track Section 106 funding so once historical data has been inputted where there is some general Section 106 funding available this can be allocated efficiently.

3.14 With evidence of need in place and community consultation undertaken then Parish Councils or interested community groups need to identify potential sources of funding. Some villages have made recent improvements via a range of funding which has been assembled by Parishes including Community Partnership Scheme capital grants, Landfill Tax Awards, Tesco Carrier Bag Fund. Other obvious sources of funding include Awards for All, Derbyshire Community Foundation and the community allocations to County Councillors. There are a plethora of other funding opportunities big and small from charities, trusts, government agencies, businesses etc. that need research dovetailed to the specifics of the project requirements such as size, location, need, timing etc.

3.15 Where smaller communities may not have the expertise or confidence to undertake this work support is available at the Council via the post of Community Partnership Officer based in the Communities team. The officer has access to up to date funding information and the skills to assist communities with both project development and funding applications. The

post-holder has previously supported a range of Parishes with funding advice for recreation and play equipment provision including at Egginton, Barrow, Church Broughton, Aston on Trent, Hatton and Coton Park. In addition support is given for Community Plans (Parish Plans as was) that would support the case for facilities. The most recent plan was done for Church Broughton. The Community Partnership Officer also manages the Council's Community Partnership Scheme that is about to be relaunched and will make available significant capital funding for community projects.

3.16 Support for project development and making funding applications is also available from the Council for Voluntary Services and Rural Action Derbyshire.

3.17 As well as making grant applications communities looking to improve their recreational facilities could also consider seeking sponsorship or trying crowd funding.

3.18 Lastly Parish Councils could consider increasing their precept to help fund recreational projects.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None at this stage. Should relevant applications come forward to either the Community Partnership Scheme or any future Council capital programme then they would be judged alongside other applications on their merits including risk and value for money. Further work on compiling the strategies or supporting data is planned to be completed from within existing resources including the use of some monies from commuted sum reserves where appropriate.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The extent and quality of recreational facilities within the District is an important consideration within the Places, People and Progress Themes of the Corporate Plan.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 The availability of suitable recreational facilities in rural locations is of high importance to those communities.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Strategies, audits and plans support the importance of providing recreational facilities across the district including in rural locations. Any increase or improvement in facilities will need to be supported by reference to these documents and appropriate community consultation. There are a variety of funding sources outside of Section 106 available to communities although securing investment is not easy due to a reduction in some suitable funds and extensive competition. Support is available via the Council's Community Partnership Officer and others to assist communities in seeking investment.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 Open Space and Facility Strategy

8.2 Play Audit 2014

8.3 Strategy for Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation in South Derbyshire