REPORT TO EXECUTIVE  
Date of Meeting: 12th February 2019

Report of: Director  
Title: Draft Built Facilities, Playing Fields, Pitches, Play Areas, Parks and Open Spaces Report

Is this a Key Decision?  
No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function?  
Executive

1. What is the report about?  
1.1 The draft document appended to this report sets out proposals for how Council built facilities, playing fields, play areas and parks could be developed in future so that they can contribute to the strategic vision of Exeter becoming the most physically active city in England and encouraging those most at risk of inactivity to become active in everyday life.

2. Recommendations:  
2.1 It is recommended that the Executive approves the draft strategy for public consultation with a final report to be presented to Council in July 2019.

3. Reasons for the recommendations:  
3.1 This document brings together for the first time an integrated set of proposals for key Council owned assets. Traditionally these resources have all been considered separately and this document is a first attempt to draw them together as part of the Whole System Change Approach advocated by Sport England and proposed within the draft Exeter Live Better and Move More Physical Activity Strategy. There is a need for the Council to set out an integrated strategy for the future of built sports facilities, playing fields, pitches, play areas, parks and open spaces.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources.  
4.1 Officer time and funding will be required to undertake a public consultation and this will be met within existing resources

5. Section 151 Officer comments:  
5.1 This report raises no immediate financial issues for the Section 151 officer, on the basis that the cost of undertaking a public consultation and associated officer time can be met from existing approved budgets.

5.2 However, the potential outcomes of an integrated strategy for the future of built sports facilities, playing fields, pitches, play areas, parks and open spaces could
have significant financial implications, which will require a thorough financial appraisal as and when detailed plans are available.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 Please refer to paragraph 8.6 below.

7. Monitoring Officer’s comments:

7.1 This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report details:

8.1 Delivery of sport and leisure facilities is a discretionary area for the Council however it is important that the draft Physical Activity Strategy and the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot are underpinned by a sustainable approach that provides good quality, accessible, community based built sports and leisure facilities and preserves and improves the city’s pitches, playing fields, play areas, parks and open spaces.

8.2 With on-going funding cuts to Council there is a need to balance resident’s expectations with the funding and resources available to the Council and to consult as openly as possible with the compromises and choices we have.

8.3 With the exception of the planned new build St Sidwell’s Point Leisure Complex, there is aging and poor quality built estate which needs a strategic approach to determine areas for future investment that will best meet the needs of residents in the context of the overall resources available to the Council.

8.4 The Council needs to plan for and invest in local facilities in the context of developments within the Greater Exeter Strategic Partnership (GESP).

8.5 The growth in Play Areas across the city has largely been development-led as opposed to needs led resulting in an uneven distribution and increased and unsustainable repair and maintenance costs to the Council.

8.6 The Council has statutory duties as a local planning authority in line with National Planning Policy Framework (paras73 & 74); for the provision and protection of sport, green spaces and recreation facilities. We are also required to publish an assessment of current and future needs for playing fields and pitches to inform, provide evidence for and make recommendations in relation to planning policies and delivery models.

8.7 The report provides a detailed rationale for proposals for consolidation and investment and requires formal consultation with communities, stakeholders, Sport National Governing Bodies and Sport England.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council’s Corporate Plan?

9.1 The strategy will contribute to the 2018/21 Corporate Plan objectives of

1. Tackling congestion and accessibility
2. Promoting active & healthy lifestyles
3. Building great neighbourhoods
4. Providing value for money services
10. **What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

10.1 None.

11. **What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?**

11.1 The draft strategy for consultation proposes a consolidation and future investment plan that would see a step change in the range and quality of provision across the city. The proposals aim to intensify resources into localities of greatest need with the aim of achieving population level change that directly tackles entrenched inequalities. Successful implementation of the strategy would contribute to reducing inequality and promoting inclusion.

12. **Are there any other options?**

12.1 None considered at this time.

**Director**

Jo Yelland

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**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

**Background papers used in compiling this report:-**

1. Draft Built Facilities, Playing Fields, Pitches, Play Areas, Parks and Open Spaces
4. Exeter City Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2017 to 2026 Final Draft February 2018 Continuum Sport and Leisure Ltd
5. Exeter Draft Play Report 2017

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