

Planning for Sport in Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon

Draft Notes from Working Group meeting at Council Offices, Harrogate, 5.30pm, Wednesday 4th November

Present;

Cllr Pat Marsh (HBC)
Cllr Richard Cooper (Cabinet Member for Cultural Services, HBC)
Cllr David Parnaby (Mayor of Ripon, HBC)
Mark Taylor (Pannal Sports FC and JFC)
Richard Irving (on behalf of Ripon City Football Club)
John McGivern (Sports Development, HBC)
Lynne Garne (Harrogate District Sports Council)
Paul Ashfield (Harrogate Racquets Club)
Alec Porter (Rugby Football Union)
Brian Forshaw (Harrogate Rugby Union Football Club)
Alan Williams (Harrogate Town Football Club)
Patrick Kilburn (Parks and Open Space, HBC)
Gordon Renton (Knaresborough Lions/Renaissance Knaresborough)
Andrew Wadsworth (West Riding Football Association)
Jo de Tute (West Riding Football Association)
David Sykes (Planning Policy, HBC)
Rachael Hutton (Planning Policy, HBC)

Apologies : Mr Andrew Miles (Local resident)

Actions are given in emboldened and italicised text in the notes below.

Dave Sykes welcomed members to the first working group and introductions were made.

Agenda Item 2 Terms of reference and working arrangements

It was explained that the group should be limited to looking at sports provision for the District's three main settlements so as to focus discussion on the main areas of sports need in the District. The group were informed that Parish Council's would be consulted separately on sport and open space as part of the LDF plan process.

The need to bring in someone from the schools side of sports provision was discussed and Council officers agreed to invite Damian Smith, Partnership Development Manager for the Harrogate School Sports Partnership to be involved in relevant discussions.

It was accepted that whilst the group would be focussed on sports provision for those sports having the largest potential land use requirements, the needs of smaller more minority sports should not be forgotten.

The terms of reference and working arrangements were agreed by the group.

Agenda Item 3 The Harrogate District Local Development Framework and the Core Strategy Examination

A brief discussion took place on this paper and the importance of the deliverability of any proposals coming out of this work was emphasised.

The group understood the need to address sports clubs needs and aspirations as a follow up to the Core Strategy Examination Inspector's Report, but there was a general feeling that this should avoid raising expectations of sports clubs. The difficulty of providing land for sport on the edge of settlements was seen as emanating from landowners hope that they may eventually receive planning permission for housing.

It was agreed to put the issues of deliverability on the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion. (RH)

Agenda Item 4 Existing Information on Sport

The group were asked to comment on the papers provided on the Playing Pitch Assessment (2004 and 2008) and the Indoor Sports Assessment (2006).

There was recognition that the information in these papers about the demand and supply of sports was out of date. However, it was generally agreed that the main areas of deficiency are at least the same, and most probably worse than when the studies were carried out. More recent information provided by Ripon City Football Club to the Council suggests that there is some deficiency in terms of senior football pitches in Ripon, as well as junior and mini football.

There would be a need to review and update these assessments before the Sites and Policies DPD was submitted to the Secretary of State. (RH)

There was discussion about whether consultants working on the PPS had contacted sports clubs and found out what their aspirations were. Sports clubs were contacted in the form of a questionnaire however much of the deficiency statistics were worked out using the Sport England approved methodology.

It was pointed out that the FA held data about all football teams playing in the District including info such as no. of players, ages, teams etc. ***The FA would supply the group with that information (AWad).***

The FA pointed out the need to consider the general development of football as well as individual aspirations of clubs. For example the FA has identified that there is a need for a 3G artificial pitch. ***The Council agreed to seek similar information from the other National Governing Bodies. (RH)*** The majority of clubs whatever the sport would affiliate with their National Governing Body at the start of the season so they should be the best people to inform us of the number of teams playing each sport in the District.

The Harrogate District Sports Council has been working with Sport and Leisure at HBC to develop a database providing information on all clubs in the District.

There was discussion on the need to look at qualitative issues such as quality of pitch, how often it could be played on, drainage etc. These are important issues as improving the quality could increase the playing capacity of pitches. Patrick Kilburn (HBC Parks) noted that there should be some opportunities to improve pitch quality and quantity within Council owned public open space. He raised the issue of whether there could be more flexibility in the timing of games e.g 70% junior games presently played on a Sunday.

Some concern was expressed about the impact of parking on surrounding residential properties if existing green open spaces were to be used

A request was made by Cllr Parnaby that he was supplied with all information relating to the sports clubs in Ripon so he could do further work (RH/JM).

Agenda Item 5 Options for improving Sports Provision

The 7 possible options for improving sports facilities were outlined and explained by the Council.

The sharing of facilities by different sports was discussed and although there was doubt expressed by some that this could work, a number of examples of successful sharing were given. It was agreed that the sharing of facilities did not necessarily mean the sharing of pitches but of facilities such as changing rooms, social facilities parking etc

An example was given at Wetherby where there is a multi-sport facility to be developed.

It was made clear that the group would be looking at all possible options (location and size/scale) and that this would form part of the evidence for justifying any DPD proposals that may come forward. These may or may not include the Claro Road/Kingsley Drive area as appropriate as an area for multi-sports use. The benefit of the approach now being taken in the consolidated Sites and Policies DPD is that we will be assessing the need and suitability of land for new housing and sports provision as part of the same plan.

This was also a benefit in relation to the ability to link the development of larger housing developments with the provision of open space. Furthermore, the use of developer contributions for sports provision may be able to be looked at in a more coordinated manner in the Sites and Policies DPD. In terms of the small scale/single sport versus larger scale/multi sports debate, the group wanted to make sure that all options were looked at, because one option is not necessarily beneficial to all the sports clubs and their needs. Larger scale facilities require a critical mass for example.

John McGivern of HBC Sport and Leisure emphasised that as part of this process, we must look realistically at funding options and where the National Funding Bodies will put their money e.g multi/single sports. This would be a very important in terms of delivery.

The 7 options contained in the circulated paper were agreed as appropriate to assess and it was agreed that each member of the group submits their views on the suitability of each of the options for consideration at the next meeting.

In doing so it was agreed that members of the group should give as wider view as possible on how each option may or may not have benefits for sport in the community as a whole. A letter is to be sent to members of the working group clarifying what information is needed before the next meeting.

Agenda item 6: Planning policy to protect existing sports facilities

The group were informed that, as part of this work, they would be asked for their views on the appropriate wording for any policy to protect existing sports facilities.

Agenda item 7: Further work

This had already been discussed under earlier agenda items.

Date for next meeting

It was agreed that this should be mid Jan 2010.