

Title: **Formal adoption of Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document**

Portfolio holder: **Cllr Michael Mounde – Economic Development and Planning**

Reporting officer: **Jim Sherry – Planning Policy and Conservation Manager**

Purpose

Formally to endorse the Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document as Council policy and recommend its adoption by the Implementation Executive.

Copies of the document are available in the Members' room and on request from Member Support (01225 776655 ext. 242).

Background

The Council has prepared a Development Plan Document (DPD) under the new planning procedure in order to remedy the deficiency in leisure and recreation planning policies in the current Local Plan. The process was set in motion in 2003 by the Planning Inspector who conducted the public inquiry into the West Wiltshire District Plan (First Alteration). He recommended that the Council should carry out a needs assessment and audit of open space, sports and recreation facilities in the district as the basis for future strategy.

The Leisure and Recreation Needs Assessment was carried out by Kit Campbell Associates, and was published in 2007. The Consultant was also extremely helpful to the Council during the Public Examination of the DPD in July 2008.

Although the DPD was initiated to remedy shortcomings in the existing Local Plan, it has been prepared in accordance with the new regulations which came into effect following the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Along with the current Local Plan, it will eventually be superseded by the Local Development Framework currently in preparation on behalf of the new Wiltshire Council.

Following the Public Examination of the DPD in July, the Inspector has issued his report. This finds that, subject to a number of changes, the DPD is "sound" in planning terms. The changes proposed by the Inspector are binding on the Council.

Key issues

The main elements of the DPD are

- A set of new development plan policies which are based on a recent assessment of need;
- Standards of leisure and recreation provision which will need to be met by future development, and which will inform new planning obligations;
- Specific proposals for leisure development to serve Trowbridge, Melksham and Westbury; and

- A strategy for the review of existing open space and recreation provision.

Effect on strategies and codes

The DPD will replace most of the existing leisure and recreation policies in the 2004 District Plan. A detailed list of the policies to be superseded is given at Appendix 5 in the DPD.

Finance and performance implications

The DPD contains proposals for the development of new recreational facilities in the District. These proposals will be subsumed into the forward capital programme of the new Wiltshire Council.

Legal implications

The District Council's constitution requires that a policy document must be approved by a meeting of the full Council before it can come into effect. However, under the 2008 Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) Regulations which govern the period leading up to the formation of the new unitary Wiltshire Council in April 2009, new policy can only be adopted by the Implementation Executive. It is therefore recommended that the District Council should, in turn, recommend that the Implementation Executive should adopt the DPD as planning policy for the West Wiltshire District.

Next Steps

If the Council agrees the text of the DPD, it will be passed to the Implementation Executive for adoption.

Recommendation

That the Council endorse the DPD and recommend its adoption by the Implementation Executive as planning policy for West Wiltshire