

| Report of | Meeting | Date |
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| Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy | Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 9 January 2014 |

FINAL REPORT - HEALTH AND WELLBEING BENEFITS OF THE PLAY, OPEN SPACES AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

PURPOSE

- To review the Health Impact Section of the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment to ascertain if its current arrangements are adequate when considering the health and wellbeing of its residents.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- To consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group contained within the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The Council's Integrated Impact Assessment is the tool which is used to ascertain whether the Council's policies and procedures are robust and fit for purpose. The Health Impact Section of this document is used to assess whether or not, health and wellbeing opportunities are being maximised.
- The Committee focused on the emerging Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy as a way of testing the current health impact arrangements contained within the Integrated Impact Assessment tool.

| Confidential report Please bold as appropriate | Yes | No |
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

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| Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all | √ | A strong local economy | |
| Clean, safe and healthy communities | √ | An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area | √ |

INTRODUCTION

- At a recent meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had received a presentation on how the Council impacts on the health of its citizens. The Council delivers a number of health related services, such as Environmental Health and Housing, Planning and Development Control, Sports and Leisure, Economic Development and Welfare Benefits.

7. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA) is the document which analyses the health needs of populations to inform and guide commissioning of health and wellbeing services within local authority areas. These assessments would identify long term health trends that would be difficult to measure at present. The new arrangements would need time to become established with many health benefits only becoming measurable over a longer period of time.
8. As a result of the new public health responsibilities, all districts are now represented on the countywide Health and Wellbeing Board and Healthwatch has recently been launched to scrutinise accountability and public involvement.
9. The committee felt that in scrutinising health impact it was important to put this in the context of local need against what was currently being delivered.
10. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to undertake a piece of work to look at the emerging Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy that would detail developments planned what was going to do over the next five years in light of a recent study that had been undertaken for the Local Development Framework process. By using our Impact Assessment methodologies the Committee wanted to try and assess whether the health and wellbeing opportunities were being maximised.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

11. We received a presentation on the Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy. Chorley has never previously had an overall Strategy that pulls together all the existing management and location plans of sites across the borough. The Council has very high and ambitious standards that are above those of our neighbouring authorities. The Council felt that a new strategy was required to pull together the three key areas of play areas, playing pitches and open spaces. It would also provide detailed actions and assist with section 106 agreements in the future.
12. The draft Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy would set out how Chorley Council plans to protect, manage, enhance and secure its open spaces over the next five years and beyond. It would focus on sites that need to be improved and sustained to mitigate against negative trends and recommends how any identified deficiencies in provision of open space should be addressed through a five year action plan.
13. To support the Strategy and associated action plan, three supplementary documents have been produced, each covering the three elements of play, open spaces and playing pitches, that provide the full details and analyse that have been undertaken to identify the key priorities and associated actions.
14. The Committee were provided with the detailed lists of the play areas, open spaces and playing pitch provision across the borough that had been compiled into the eight Neighbourhood Areas. This list had been circulated to all Members of the Council and Parish Councils and any additional suggestions or existing amendments would be included into the Strategies consultation process, which is currently on going.
15. The draft Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy 2013 - 2018 is currently out for consultation with partners, local residents, sports clubs/organisations, community groups and neighbourhood partnerships until January 2014.
16. The tool that is used to assess the impact of new policies, strategies and areas of service is the Councils approved Integrated Impact Assessment that includes an element that focuses on health impact.

17. Using the draft Strategy as an example, the Committee sought to test the Health Impact Section of Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) on a number of sites from the lists that covered the three areas of play areas, open spaces and playing pitches, to ascertain whether the IIA was robust enough to maximise its health and wellbeing outcomes.

INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT – HEALTH IMPACT SECTION

18. The Health Impact section of the Integrated Impact Assessment assesses the impact of new policies and strategies and contains a section on the impact of health. The current arrangements asks – What potential impact does the activity make upon:
19. Encouraging healthy lifestyles across Chorley Population, with possible issues to consider being:
- Diet and nutrition
 - Exercise and physical activity
 - Substance use; tobacco, alcohol and drugs
 - Risk taking behaviour
 - Education and learning, or skills
20. Promoting a positive social environment for all of Chorley's residents, with issues to consider being:
1. Social status
 2. Employment (paid or unpaid)
 3. Social/family support
 4. Stress/mental health
 5. Income
21. Promoting a positive physical environment across Chorley with possible issue to consider being:
1. Living conditions
 2. Working conditions
 3. Accidental injuries or public safety
 4. Transmission of infectious disease

PUBLIC HEALTH INDICATORS – CHORLEY

22. Members looked at the Health Profile for Chorley that had recently been published. The profile gave a picture of the area and was designed to help local government and health services understand our community needs, so that we can work to improve people's health and reduce inequalities.
23. The health of people in Chorley is varied compared with the England average. There are some extreme negative indicators that are not acceptable and needed to be addressed. Members learnt that priorities in Chorley include reducing those health inequalities by reducing fuel poverty, improving housing and integrating health into planning through the Local Development Framework (LDF), improving mental health and wellbeing and access to services and reducing alcohol harm.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

24. The Committee identified the following four case studies from the provision listed in the draft Strategy:
1. Southland High School: Playing Pitches – Chorley Town West
 2. Canal Walk: Play Area – Chorley Town East
 3. Greenside: Playing Pitches – Euxton, Astley and Buckshaw
 4. Coronation Recreational Ground: Multi-use facility – Chorley Town West

SOUTHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

25. Southland High School is classified as a Sports Academy and works in partnership with the Councils Sports Development Team. A Business Manager is in post and the facilities are advertised to the wider community for use at a cost. The Academy is structured and activities are planned and well organised.
26. Councillor Julia Berry and Mark Perks visited Southlands High School and met with the Manager – Claire Hamilton, to discuss the facilities and their plans for the future. The school had fantastic resources that were clearly being underused, with the main reasons being given as lack of communication and collaboration with other organisations including the Council. It was considered that improved working relations needed to be established and that by embracing an holistic partnership approach, long term planning could develop greater investment for health and wellbeing intervention programmes that would benefit the community.
27. It was clear, that when assessing the potential need for health and wellbeing on this site, partnership working was an area that needed to be explored to ensure that any existing facilities could be maximised to their full extent. It became apparent that the current health impact section needed to provide a more detailed list of actions to be followed and evidenced by officers, that would include the following examples:
- Consultation with surrounding landowners
 - Consultation with existing owners of nearby facilities and/or users
 - Improved methods of communications
 - Consultation with any schools in the area

CANAL WALK

28. This land has two different land owners and as a result the land is not maintained as it should be. Poor consultation in the past has resulted in the space not being used to its maximum potential and reports of antisocial behaviour had become more frequent. Places for People had submitted a planning application for housing development that had since been retracted. Access is not particularly good and with the Canal located nearby, there is a danger to children. The land is also in a low deprivation area in terms of health.
29. Recently a Residents Association has been constituted and they have been very proactive. Consultation has taken place with nearby residents as to what they would like to see the land used for and they have drawn up a plan of action. This group has been maintaining the site, ensuring that the grass gets cut and have held a number of social events to encourage greater interaction with the local residents. They are also undertaking partnership working with the organisation, Groundwork on a neighbourhood project.

30. Health Profiles give a snapshot overview of health for each local authority in England and are designed to help local government and health services make decisions and plans to improve local people's health and reduce health inequalities, the profiles present a set of important health indicators that show how the area compares to the national and regional average.
31. Super Output Areas give an improved basis for comparison across the country because the units are more similar in size of population than, for example, electoral wards. They are also intended to be stable, enabling the improved comparison and monitoring of policy over time
32. This site was located within a Super Output area and Members thought that it was important for this information to be linked to any health impact assessment. This would be something that would need to be identified through the Integrated Impact Assessment.
33. This site had been neglected for various different reasons over the years and as a result regular grass cutting and maintenance schedules had not been adhered to. The upkeep of this land was extremely important in terms of people being able to use the land effectively and this was seen as something that needed to be included in any assessment.

GREENSIDE PLAYING PITCHES

34. The playing pitches are owned by Chorley Council and are located within the Greenside estate in Euxton. The site is primarily used by Euxton Girls Football Club, who are based there and have facilities that include, a clubhouse, pitches and a car park. The football pitches are fully utilised but Members considered if there could be room to develop an all-weather pitch. In addition, it was felt by Members that the area was not used by the wider community and was a lost opportunity that needed to be maximised.
35. Broader engagement with the community is needed and additional signage is required to highlight public access to the site. There are some links to the surrounding woodland that could be improved upon by maintaining pathways between the land to schools and houses.
36. This site is situated in the heart of a residential area, although the site was being used by the football club, Members felt that its facilities were not being utilised fully by the surrounding community and wondered if this was due to inadequate signage. The Health Impact Assessment needed to prompt officers to address these kinds of issues. Members felt that improved signage and promotional information would maximise this sites potential more fully.

CORONATION RECREATIONAL GROUND

37. This recreation ground is owned by Chorley Council and is located within the centre of the town. This site is traditionally laid out and incorporates a wide range of facilities that included children's play areas fitted with equipment, playing pitches, tennis courts and a bowling green. A footpath has been installed around the perimeter and centre of the park and lighting has been erected that is used in the evenings. King George V and Queen Mary visited the park in 1913 and Members felt that it was important to retain this historic legacy by restoring the existing buildings, renovating paths and maintaining tree roots.
38. The Councils Sport and Leisure teams hold an annual free play day for children of the borough, local guiding and scout groups regularly use the park in the summer and the facilities are well used by residents who live nearby. A mobile fitness club also uses the park three times a week and it was thought that this type of activity could be expanded upon to provide rehabilitation for patients linking with the doctors surgeries in the area.

39. It was considered that recognition needed to be given to the existing use of a site, especially if it had historical value. This detail should be addressed with the assessment tool. This would help to build relations with the surrounding community and promote a feeling of community involvement and pride for the residents.

CONCLUSION

40. The Committee felt that overall there needed to be more emphasis placed on the importance of using the Integrated Impact Assessments on any new policies and procedures that are implemented by the Council, particularly in relation to the impact of health and wellbeing. It was also considered that a better understanding about the importance of using this tool would greatly influence decisions made in the future in relation to health and wellbeing and therefore training in this area was a key issue that needed addressing for both officers and Elected Members of the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

41. The Committee agreed for the following recommendations to be considered by the Executive Cabinet:
1. That the Health Impact Section of the Councils Integrated Impact Assessment that is used across all services be reviewed to provide a set of objectives that are more detailed and fit for purpose to ensure that any future health and wellbeing opportunities can be maximised to their full potential.
 2. That any Integrated Impact Assessment fully considers and links into the super output areas of the borough.
 3. That partnership working be fully explored at every stage to ensure greater collaboration and engagement and build on existing experience.
 4. That the profile of the Integrated Impact Assessments, particularly in relation to the section on Health Impact be raised with both officers and Elected Members of the Council
 5. That training be provided to all Elected Members and officers of the Council that will provide:
 - Greater understanding of the context of the Integrated Impact Assessments.
 - An understanding of its principles and methods
 - Awareness of the different tools and ways of using Health Impact Assessments
 - The importance of involving stakeholders and service users in the process at every stage development.
 6. Following the end of the consultation the Health Impact Section of the Councils Integrated Impact Assessment be applied to the draft Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy 2013 – 2018 and that potential impacts are clearly identified within the final report to Executive Cabinet.
 7. That improved processes/projects that the Integrated Impact Assessment is used for be regularly monitored and reviewed.

COUNCILLOR JULIA BERRY

CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP – PLAY, OPEN SPACES AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

COUNCILLOR MARK PERKS

VICE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP – PLAY, OPEN SPACES AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

| Report Author | Ext | Date | Doc ID |
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| Dianne Scambler | 5034 | 16 December 2013 | *** |