

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD**

**22 September 2010**

**Report of the Chief Leisure Officer and the  
Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken  
by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 TONBRIDGE FARM SPORTSGROUND – DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Summary**

**This report advises on the Draft Management Plan for Tonbridge Farm Sportsground and seeks Member comment prior to formal public consultation.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 The Outdoor Leisure Performance Plan identifies the need to bring all of the Council's principal public open spaces in line with the criteria of the Green Flag Award - a national standard for parks and open spaces. Key elements of the Green Flag Award criteria include cleanliness, community involvement, health and safety, a welcoming park, marketing and sustainability, all of which need to be incorporated into a Site Management Plan.

1.1.2 Management Plans have already been developed for Haysden and Leybourne Lakes Country Parks and Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground and the need to develop a plan for Tonbridge Farm Sportsground is identified in the Outdoor Leisure Performance Plan for 2010/11. This will be the first Management Plan for this site.

**1.2 Introduction**

1.2.1 Tonbridge Farm Sportsground covers an area of 24 hectares (59 acres) and is located to the north of Tonbridge Town Centre. It provides a range of sports facilities including a cricket square, football pitches, lawn bowling green, All Weather Training Area, children's play area, skate park, ball court and contains the stadium for the Tonbridge Angels Football Club.

1.2.2 Tonbridge Farm Sportsground, which opened formally to the public in 1984, is well used by the local community for both formal and informal sports, walking, children's play, dog walking and picnics. The site has benefited significantly over

the last couple of years from capital investment in the play facilities, and works are currently progressing to improve the on site changing pavilion.

### 1.3 Policy Context

1.3.1 The Management Plan has been developed to conform to policy guidance contained within the Local Development Framework, addresses themes and actions highlighted within the Leisure & Arts Strategy and follows up on issues raised in the most recent onsite market survey.

1.3.2 The Plan has also been developed to take into account the local policy/guidance, listed in Table 1 of the draft Plan, and incorporates a number of the Borough Council's Key Priorities including:

- Involve, safeguard and meet the needs of children and young people.
- Achieve a smarter and cleaner street scene and open space environment.
- Promote and encourage and provide opportunities for healthy living.
- Work with partners to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.
- Make a positive local contribution to tackling the causes and effects of climate change.

### 1.4 Draft Management Plan

1.4.1 The draft Plan is intended to provide guidance and direction for the management of the Sportsground and be used as a management tool to inform future maintenance and development of the site. The document may also assist in leveraging in external funding.

1.4.2 The draft Plan follows the format of the recently adopted Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground and Haysden Country Park Management Plans and was developed in accordance with guidance from the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. A copy of the draft Management Plan has been circulated with these papers for Members' consideration and a brief summary of the sections is provided below (please note that some of the Appendices have yet to be included).

- **Where are we now?** The first section of the Plan describes the current situation, at the time the Plan was written. It is an introduction and tells us what we have at present and what we are trying to achieve.
- **Vision – where do we want to get to?** This section of the Plan describes our vision for the Sportsground and sets out our management aims and objectives.

- **How will we get there?** This section sets out how we are going to achieve our aims. A Five Year Work Programme sets out long-term targets and annual Action Plans focusing on each year will flow from this.
- **Monitoring and review – how will we know when we have arrived?** The final section of the Plan looks at how we will track progress and how the plan might be updated.

## **1.5 Consultation**

1.5.1 Initial consultation has already been undertaken with Tonbridge Sports Association and local Members.

1.5.2 Subject to Member comment at the meeting, it is proposed that formal public consultation takes place in the autumn of 2010, on the following basis:

- The draft Plan is to be circulated directly to all key stakeholders **[Annex 1]**, identified in the Plan.
- Copies of the draft Plan will be deposited at the Council Offices at Kings Hill and Tonbridge for public viewing.
- A copy will be available to view on the Council's website.
- Posters will be displayed at the Sportsground advising visitors on the consultation process.
- The draft Plan will be sent to the members of the public that have already expressed an interest.

1.5.3 A list of comments received along with any recommended alterations to the Plan will be reported at a future meeting of this Board for final approval.

## **1.6 Legal Implications**

1.6.1 A copy of the draft Plan has been circulated to the Legal Services Partnership Manager, to ensure that all legal requirements have been taken into consideration.

## **1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.7.1 The draft Management Plan reflects existing capital and revenue budgets associated with the site.

## **1.8 Risk Assessment**

1.8.1 The Council's Health and Safety Officer will be consulted on the draft Plan and a number of site specific risk assessments will be developed for the Sportsground.

## **1.9 Policy Considerations**

1.9.1 Biodiversity & Sustainability, Community, Healthy Lifestyles, Young People.

## **1.10 Recommendations**

1.10.1 It is, therefore, **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that:

- 1) subject to Member comment at the meeting, the draft Tonbridge Farm Sportsground Management Plan be circulated for public consultation as outlined in the report; and
- 2) following consultation, the final Plan be brought forward to a future meeting of this Board for consideration and approval.

The Chief Leisure Officer confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Chris Fox

Market Survey of Tonbridge Farm Sportsground 2006

Robert Styles  
Chief Leisure Officer

Martin Coffin  
Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts