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SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Introduction

- 14.1 Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They embody the principles of sustainable development at the local level. This means they improve the quality of life for all whilst safeguarding the environment for future generations. Sustainable communities are also about giving the local people the opportunity to be involved in the way that their community is designed, managed and developed. This helps to deliver a caring environment where local people feel part of their community.
- 14.2 Delivering sustainable communities is at the heart of the planning system. This means ensuring that alongside homes, jobs and transport infrastructure, all local people have ready access to those services and facilities they need for their everyday lives and that contribute positively to the health and well-being of the community. Many factors influence the community's health, including lifestyles, the living environment, the opportunities to exercise and the access to health facilities, education, community facilities, childcare, provision for youths, sporting facilities, natural green spaces and open space. A wider sense of well-being is influenced by a variety of factors such as opportunities for work and recreation, personal relations, feelings of safety and community.
- 14.3 The task of the Local Development Framework (LDF) is to set a spatial planning framework that will facilitate positive improvements to North Lincolnshire's health, safety and well being and support the achievement of North Lincolnshire's vision. This chapter will set out a delivery strategy for:
- Community Facilities and Services;
 - Sport, Recreation and Open Space, and
 - Health care provision

Context

National/Regional

- 14.4 National planning policy, as set out in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development requires that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

- 14.5 National planning policy on open space, sport and recreation is set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport & Recreation and its companion guide. The aim is to ensure that there are sufficient high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities, which are attractive to users and well managed and maintained. Policy guidance on leisure uses is included in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4: Planning Sustainable Economic Growth.
- 14.6 Creating sustainable communities is a Government priority. Their aims are set out in Sustainable Communities People, Places and Prosperity Plan (2005). Health, well-being and safety are major issues on the national agenda, and are closely interrelated. Health is not solely about access to medical treatment and services but about lifestyle, safe environments and feeling part of a community. Major development proposals such as large mixed-use areas or urban extensions should have regard to the potential health impacts of proposals.
- 14.7 The Government has set a national target that by 2010 there should be a children's centre in every community providing services to families. The services delivered by the centre should reflect the needs of that individual community.
- 14.8 Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction For Community Services – White Paper published by the Department of Health (DOH), is the key policy document on the nature and provision of Primary Care Services over the next 10 years. It has implications for the location of preventative services, the role of joint commissioning with Local Authority's Social Services and the influence of shared facilities and shared services.
- 14.9 The publication of Game Plan redefined the sporting landscape and initiated the drive to achieve increased participation in sport and physical activity. This also emphasised the importance of sport and active recreation as a contributor towards improving health.
- 14.10 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) requires plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes to assist in improving the health of residents by focussing economic development in and around Regional and Sub-regional Cities and Towns. RSS policy ENV11 seeks to safeguard and enhance sports and recreation facilities and maximise opportunities for cycling and walking to improve health, in line with the Regional Strategic Framework for Health. It also encourages the development of opportunities for walking and cycling routes and other green infrastructure particularly in the main towns and cities in the region. The voluntary and community sector can play an important role in supporting such health and well being initiatives, utilising community facilities and services within the region.
- 14.11 In terms of healthcare, the key is the provision of accessible health care facilities by working with health and social care providers to ensure services are targeted as close to peoples' homes as possible, promoting independence and prevention, and, where not possible, to be easily accessible by public transport. The retention and development of major health care facilities within regional cities, sub-regional cities and towns, and principal towns are also recognised, as well as supporting the provision of outreach facilities in rural areas. The Regional Strategic Framework for Health (RSFH) entitled Our Region Our Health (2004) recommends spatially relevant actions such as: improve cycling, walking and physical activity; more school travel plans; lower road speeds in residential areas; better public and green space. The Yorkshire Plan for Sport also provides related objectives including, safeguarding playing fields and aims to increase participation in sport and active recreation by 1% each year.
- 14.12 Demographic trends over the next 15-20 years mean that there will be significant increases in the number of elderly people in the region. Meeting the needs of the elderly population will have spatial implications, for example in terms of access to transport, community facilities (community centres and meeting halls) and housing.

Local

- 14.13 The basis of North Lincolnshire's Sustainable Community Strategy, Many Faces, One Community (2006) is to achieve community well-being and the council have developed four ambitions which are shared by the North Lincolnshire Strategic Partnership (NLSP). This is to help focus the council's efforts on improving the area, communities, and the lives of individual residents. The Strategy specifically identifies the themes of more rewarding leisure and the development of healthier communities. The aim is to ensure residents in North Lincolnshire lead healthy lifestyles and make use of a wide range of quality leisure and community facilities. Local community facilities provide a focus for people to meet and socialise and assist in developing a sense of community. Community facilities can include community centres, meeting halls, village halls, schools, parks, sports facilities, public houses, cultural facilities, religious buildings and libraries.
- 14.14 The council has, a Strategy for Sport, Physical Activity and Active Recreation, a Strategy for Health and Well Being and a Playing Pitch Strategy to identify shortfalls in provision and to guide investment. Work is nearing completion on a PPG17-compliant Open Space Audit. This will provide an assessment of existing green space across North Lincolnshire together with identifying local needs and aspirations. This will be done through consultation, a strategic review and a review of existing provision standards. The audit will recommend standards of provision based around quantity, quality and accessibility.
- 14.15 The council has a variety of core leisure and recreation facilities that serve the whole community, including 20-21 and the Ropewalk visual arts centres, North Lincolnshire Museum and Waters' Edge Country Park and Visitor Centre. Scunthorpe also offers a number of managed indoor and outdoor sport and recreation facilities for active and competitive sports. The area's exceptional natural setting and wealth of open spaces also provides a wonderful stage and a range of opportunities for outdoor recreation and leisure.
- 14.16 The Sustainable Community Strategy acknowledges the contribution that sport can make to the quality of life. Taking part in sport and physical activity makes a significant contribution to creating healthier communities by reducing levels of inactivity. These facilities and the existing network of community centres, recreational facilities and open spaces have assisted in bringing communities together. In shaping the future development of the area, it is essential that these existing networks and facilities are built upon and enhanced.
- 14.17 The council is also promoting the development of Children's Centres, which underpin much of Government policy on early years education and reducing poverty. Their aim is to ensure every child gets the best start in life and that families receive the help and support they need. The Centres give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life and so have the opportunity for returning to education, training or work if they wish. The Council is also responsible for the Sure Start programme, the main aims of which are to:
- Integrate services for young children and their families;
 - Create and sustain childcare;
 - Quality, access and inclusion;
 - Develop the early years and childcare workforce.
- 14.18 Many factors influence the community's health, including the lifestyles, the living environment, the opportunities to exercise and the access to health facilities. A wider sense of well-being is influenced by a variety of factors such as opportunities for work and recreation, personal relations, feelings of safety and community. It is also about living in a safe environment and feeling part of a community.

- 14.19 The Director of Public Health's 2007 Report for North Lincolnshire identified three key priority areas for health improvement over the next three years, which are likely to have a major impact on our population's future health if they are not adequately addressed. They include tackling coronary heart disease, maintaining a healthy bodyweight, and tobacco control. Other important issues include the promotion of mental health and emotional well being amongst the local population and encouraging sensible drinking.
- 14.20 North Lincolnshire Council and NHS North Lincolnshire have identified key actions over the next five years that will provide the right health services for North Lincolnshire's growing population in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. These include improved access to high quality stop smoking services, developing programmes aimed at helping people stay physically active, target people in deprived communities who are most at risk of poor heart health for early treatment and advice and developing services which help people with long term conditions better at home.
- 14.21 Health in North Lincolnshire is good overall, but there are significant variations in health levels across the area with neighbourhoods in Scunthorpe experiencing high levels of deprivation. NHS North Lincolnshire identified rising levels of obesity in the area - statistically it is one of the worst areas in the country, estimated obesity prevalence (27.1%) is significantly higher than the England average (22%). The Obesity Strategy (2006) identifies its commitment to a multi agency approach to promote healthier lifestyles for adults and young people. This includes a number of initiatives aimed at increasing physical activity levels.
- 14.22 In 2006, Sport England found that 19.1% of people in North Lincolnshire participate in 30 minutes of moderate sport and active recreation three times a week, which is below the national average of 20.1%. They also identified that 53.4% of residents are inactive (compared to a regional average 50.6%). There is also significant evidence that a high number of people in the area have health related problems that can be linked to physical inactivity.
- 14.23 Active Choices, Active Futures - A Strategy for Sport, Physical Activity & Active Recreation in North Lincolnshire 2007 – 2012 sets out a project of developing better quality environments and opportunities for participation in sport and active recreation. Young people and families and older people in particular are identified as target groups to focus resources on.
- 14.24 Regularly taking part in sport and active recreation can increase life expectancy. For people later in life, regular activity can help them lead an independent life and it also promotes healthy growth in young people. Improving the health of the community also has an economic benefit by reducing sickness absence in the work place.

Approach

- 14.25 A critically important aspect of achieving a sustainable future for North Lincolnshire is the need to encourage more sustainable settlements and communities, with a rich and diverse community life. It is important to promote an improvement in the health and well being of North Lincolnshire's people by maintaining and providing quality open spaces, play and sports facilities, better access to the countryside and improved health facilities.
- 14.26 The social and cultural infrastructure of a settlement provided by local services and community facilities can add vibrancy to communities and by providing a focus for activities and foster community spirit. They are essential ingredients contributing to the quality of life for many residents. Many projects are being carried out around the area in order to improve, refurbish or create additional community facilities. They can also provide an essential service to communities and their potential loss can have adverse consequences in the form of unsustainable travel patterns and social exclusion.

- 14.27 To be sustainable, suitable good quality facilities must be provided locally, whilst ensuring those that attract larger numbers of visitors are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. This particularly benefits the less mobile and more deprived members of the community. Working in partnership with other providers and the voluntary sector, the council will seek to ensure that community facilities and services are provided in the most effective and accessible way. In rural communities, services must be protected as much as possible, as their loss can have a major impact on communities. On occasions leisure or recreation facilities need to be provided where a particular attraction or feature is located. In these cases attention has to be paid to possible conflicts with environmental objectives. Open spaces are often threatened by competing land uses, and it is important that they are offered appropriate protection.
- 14.28 In order to implement North Lincolnshire's Strategy for Sport, Physical Activity & Active Recreation there is a need for a more coordinated and strategic approach to managing the council's sports facilities, as well as investment in improving facility provision and these include developing a modern leisure facility. As part of Scunthorpe's Urban Renaissance Programme, work is now underway to create a high quality sports facility called The Pods located at Brumby Hall, Scunthorpe. The new facility will include a swimming pool, fitness suite, dance studio and a six-court sports hall.
- 14.29 The Lincolnshire Lakes project which proposes the creation of a new sustainable waterside setting and neighbourhood for Scunthorpe will provide among other things, new sport and active recreation opportunities including a range of water sports to maximise the lakeland setting.
- 14.30 A key priority in the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009 is being healthy as participation in sport play and active recreation contributes to a healthy lifestyle, and reducing obesity and the risks of ill health. The £70m Building Schools for the Future programme in North Lincolnshire aims to rebuild and modernise secondary schools in Scunthorpe. This presents a great opportunity for Scunthorpe based schools to maximise impact on the physical activity levels of children and families.
- 14.31 North Lincolnshire's £900,000 Freshstart centres programme aims to transform the way recreation, leisure, care and support for older people is organised. It has a clear focus on preventative care and supporting independent living which shifts away from focussing care on the sick and needy but towards a more preventative approach.
- 14.32 The local infrastructure and network for walking and cycling play an important role in promoting increased physical activity. The Local Transport Plan proposes to improve the cycling network in Scunthorpe by filling in the gaps between cycle routes and providing links to the key employment, shopping, education and hospital locations. This includes plans for Central Park and The Pods sporting and leisure facility.
- 14.33 The council's Playing Pitch Strategy 2005 assessed the overall quality of pitch provision as reasonable. There is an overall supply of adult provision and an under supply of mini soccer pitches, which is a common problem for many council's. It may be addressed by changing some adult pitches to junior, mini soccer or junior rugby pitches to meet identified shortfalls and improve the quality of key pitches. Partnership working will continue to be a key factor to ensure the priorities of the Playing Pitch Strategy are implemented and to ensure that facilities are sustained and improved.

- 14.34 NHS North Lincolnshire's Strategic Service Development Plan (SSDP) presents a vision for the delivery of primary care services over the next ten years. It aims to constantly improve the quality of care provided, ensure services are more responsive, convenient and delivered in the most appropriate setting. It envisages services moving from the secondary (hospital) to primary care setting, where appropriate. This will enable patients to receive advice and treatment in local settings. Due to the geography and differing health needs of the area, the SSDP recommends that a greater range of facilities be provided and that a number of integrated health and social care centres should be developed. These centres would operate as a 'one-stop shop' with a range of different services and facilities under one roof to provide better patient-centred care. A network of branch surgeries would then support these facilities.
- 14.35 To support these proposals a new Integrated Health and Social Care Centre is proposed in the Crosby area of Scunthorpe, providing a range of core and enhanced GP services, 365 days per year. The scheme will provide users with access to a wide range of additional health and social care services, which have traditionally been difficult for patients to access.
- 14.36 A key priority set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy is to lead healthy lifestyles and make use of a wide range of quality leisure and cultural facilities. New development should provide opportunities for communities to be naturally active by integrating physical activity with high quality design and active travel modes. The benefits of this approach will include; better health of residents and social inclusion; reduced disparities and levels of poor health; increased activity rates and opportunities to participate in sport and recreation; increased wealth from increased productivity; healthier workforce and increased resilience to respiratory and other conditions. It is the aim of the core strategy to protect and enhance the existing community facilities in developing sustainable communities.

CS22: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The provision of new community facilities, or the improvement of existing community facilities, which meet the needs of local residents will be supported in principle.

Good quality services and facilities will be provided that meet the needs of local communities and are accessible by public transport, cycling or on foot.

The provision of new facilities should be focused in the following locations:

- a) Sites allocated for such purposes, or as part of a mixed use allocation.
- b) In town centres, market town centres, district centres or local centres subject to policies in the local development documents.
- c) In market towns, rural settlements and rural settlements in the countryside where the facility is needed to serve the immediate local area and could not be provided elsewhere.
- d) In residential areas where there is no adverse affect on the amenities of neighbouring properties.

The provision of services and facilities will be of the scale appropriate to the type and size of the settlement.

The loss of community facilities or land allocated for such purposes will be resisted, unless there is no longer a need for the land or building in any form of community use, or there is an acceptable alternative means of meeting such need.

Developers will be expected to make an appropriate contribution towards necessary improvements or additional provision for community services and facilities arising from their development proposals.

- 14.37 The policy is needed to protect and improve community facilities. The provision of local community facilities and services is essential to the quality of life of local residents, and will reduce the need for people to travel to obtain essential services.
- 14.38 Any loss of community facilities will not be supported, unless an alternative facility to meet local needs is available, or can be provided, at an equally accessible location, or all options for continued use have been fully explored and none remain that would be financially viable.
- 14.39 Proposals involving the loss of community facilities including land in community use, for example relating to facilities such as community/village halls, village shops and post offices, schools, colleges, nurseries, places of worship, health services, care homes, convenience stores, libraries and public houses will not be supported.
- 14.40 Working in partnership with other providers and the voluntary sector, the council will seek to ensure that community facilities and services are provided in the most effective and accessible way. In rural communities, existing services must be protected as much as possible, as their loss can have a major impact on communities.
- 14.41 Details of the approach to be adopted in relation to the addition or potential loss of community facilities will be addressed in the General Policies DPD. The approach must include the close involvement of the local community itself and be informed by the context and priorities set by the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 14.42 The policy will be implemented through:
- Policy area designations and any subsequent reviews
 - The identification of sites to meet additional need generated by new development
 - Protection of existing facilities to meet current and future need and demand
 - Negotiating developer contributions
 - Development management, informed by PPG 17- compliant audits.

CS23: SPORT, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The council will work with its partners, appropriate agencies and the voluntary sector to ensure the provision of good quality, well maintained leisure, recreation and open space facilities, which meet the needs of the local communities, will be secured and improved. In particular, provision will be sought to address identified deficiencies or that will benefit deprived groups and meet the needs of local communities.

To significantly enhance North Lincolnshire's leisure and recreation facilities a new sport and leisure centre called The Pods at Brumby Sports Ground, Central Park will be provided. The new facility will be a centre of excellence for sports, recreation and a hub for the development and delivery of sports education and leadership training.

Development proposals for new leisure and recreation facilities, children's play facilities and open space or the extension/enhancement of an existing facility should be on a scale appropriate to the type and size of settlement. Wherever possible facilities that attract large numbers of people should be located in the larger settlements and be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

Proposals will be permitted provided that:

1. There is no adverse impact to nearby properties or habitats, by reason of noise, general disturbance, fumes or external lighting; and
2. The development contributes to meet identified shortfalls in provisions or enhances the quality of existing provision.

Development proposals that will result in the loss of an existing leisure, recreation facility, natural green space, open space or playing pitches will not be supported unless:

1. There is currently an excess of provision; or
2. Satisfactory alternative provision equivalent or better quality and quantity in a suitable location is made; or
3. The facility is no longer needed.

Developers will be expected to make an appropriate contribution towards necessary improvements or additional provision for recreation facilities and open space arising from their development proposals, in accordance with the standards set out in the LDF.

The implementation of new facilities supported by this policy will be permitted subject to other relevant plan policies.

- 14.43 The aim of this policy is to ensure that North Lincolnshire's leisure and recreation facilities are sustained and improved so that they continue to make an important contribution to the quality of life for local people. The policy supports the aims and implementations of A Strategy for Sport, Physical Activity and Active Recreation in North Lincolnshire 2007-2012, the council's Playing Pitch Strategy 2005 and The Local Transport Plan 2006.
- 14.44 Responsibility for the provision of good quality, well maintained leisure, recreation, open space and ancillary facilities, which meet the needs of local communities, rests with the Council and its partners, including Humber Sports Partnership and the voluntary sector.
- 14.45 The policy will be implemented through:
- The identification of sites in the General Policies DPD to support the implementation of the Strategy for Sport, Physical Activity & Active Recreation in North Lincolnshire 2007 – 2012 and the Playing Pitch Strategy

- The identification of sites to meet additional need generated by new development
- The protection of existing facilities to meet current and future need and demand
- Negotiating developer contributions
- Applying for funding
- Open space audit
- Development management, informed by PPG 17- compliant audits.

CS24: HEALTH CARE PROVISION

The council will support the implementation of health care provision in North Lincolnshire, in order to modernise and improve the primary health care facilities, and to improve the health of residents through safeguarding and enhancing open space, facilities for sports and recreation and improving walking and cycling routes.

The council will work with NHS North Lincolnshire to identify sites and premises for health facilities that are accessible by sustainable transport modes, contribute to strengthening sustainable communities and that deliver a new Health and Social Care Centre in Scunthorpe.

Proposals for new health care facilities should provide high standards of accessibility to all sectors of the community.

The loss of health care facilities or land allocated for such purposes will be resisted, unless there is no longer a need for the land or building in any form of health care use, or there is an acceptable alternative means of meeting such need.

Developers will be expected to make an appropriate contribution towards necessary improvements, additional provision improvements or additional provision for health care services and facilities arising from their development proposals, in accordance with the Planning Obligations policy and Developer Contributions SPD.

The implementation of new facilities supported by this policy will be permitted subject to other relevant plan policies.

- 14.46 The aim of this policy is to ensure the development of primary and social care buildings facilitate improvements in the range and quality of services offered in primary care. The development of health care provision must enable safe and effective services, which are provided as locally as possible.
- 14.47 NHS North Lincolnshire are responsible for the provision of hospitals and health services, in partnership with other agencies including the council. In turn, the council works with its partners, appropriate agencies and the voluntary sector to secure the provision of a wider range of good quality community services and facilities, which meet the needs of local communities, either through direct funding or improvements provided in connection with new development.
- 14.48 The policy will be implemented through:
- The identification of sites to meet additional need generated by new development
 - The protection of existing facilities to meet current and future need and demand
 - The delivery of new investment in healthcare infrastructure
 - Site allocations and any subsequent reviews
 - Negotiating developer contributions.

Monitoring

14.49 The following indicators and targets will be used to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the policies contained in this chapter.

Indicator	Target
Area of parks and open spaces with a current Green Flag Award compared to the total amount of parks and open spaces.	Annual increase in percentage of local authority managed parks and open spaces with a current Green Flag Award compared to the total amount of parks and open spaces .
Improving and safeguarding of open space	No reduction in number of facilities and open space.
Development granted planning permission contrary to advice from Sport England.	No planning applications approved against the policy requirements.
Improvement in local health care facilities.	Annual number of new and expanded primary and secondary health care facilities by type.
Improvements and new additions to Community Facilities	Annual number of new and improved facilities by type.
Safeguarding of existing Community facilities.	No community facilities to be lost.
Participation in sport and recreation	Increase by 1% per year.

Key Documents

- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM, 2005)
- Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport & Recreation (ODPM, 2002)
- Companion Guide to (PPG) 17 Assessing Needs and Opportunities (ODPM, 2001).
- Sustainable Communities - A Shared Agenda, A Share of the Action – July 2006 (DEFRA, 2006)
- Sustainable Communities - People, Places and Prosperity (ODPM, 2005)
- Strategic Service Development Plan (North Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust, 2007)
- Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction For Community Services – White Paper (Department of Health, 2006)
- Many Faces, One Community – North Lincolnshire’s Sustainable Community Strategy (NLSP, 2006)
- Playing Pitch Strategy (NLC, 2005)
- Strategy for Sport, Physical Activity & Active Recreation in North Lincolnshire 2007 – 2012 (NLC, 2007)
- Health and Well Being Strategy 2009-2011 (NLC)
- North Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan 2006 to 2011 (NLC, 2006)
- Children and Young People’s Plan 2006-2009 (NLC, 2006)
- The Egan Review - Skills for Sustainable Communities (ODPM, 2004)
- Game Plan: A Strategy for Delivering Governments Sports and Physical Activity Objectives (DCMS/Strategy Unit 2002)

- North Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust Strategic Plan 2008-2009 (North Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust, 2008)
- Rural Strategy for Hull and Humber Ports City Region May 2009 (Humber Rural Partnership, 2009)
- Our Region Our Health (2004) The Regional Strategic Framework for Health (RSFH) Yorkshire and Humber Region

Link to Key Objectives

Spatial Objectives:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

SA Objectives:

SA1; SA2; SA3; SA4; SA5; SA7; SA8; SA9; SA10; SA15; SA18; SA24; SA26; SA27