

APPROVAL OF NOMINATIONS FOR THE QUEEN ELIZABETH FIELDS CHALLENGE

Report by Ricky Moffat, Head of Commercial Operations

1 Purpose of Report

Following a presentation to elected members and relevant officials by Fields in Trust on 19 January 2012, officers from Landscape and Countryside and Sport and Leisure were requested to nominate suitable open spaces as areas for Queen Elizabeth Fields designation.

In turn a report was presented to Council on 26 June 2012 and this report provides Council with an update for consideration.

2 Background

2.1 Council Meeting 26 June 2012

The Council at its meeting on 26 June 2012 agreed the following:

- a) To continue the matter to allow Members to consult within their communities regarding the proposed sites, as well as any others that might be deemed appropriate (eg Roslin Park, Rosewell Park and Vogrie Country Park).
- b) To note that the Director, Resources, would liaise with Members to assist them as required in the consultation process, and that Members were thereafter requested to provide feedback to the Director to facilitate his reporting back to Council, and
- c) To note the need to safeguard land for the replacement of Hawthornden Primary School, for example by redrawing the boundary between the school and Poltonhall Playing Fields along the pathway between the two.

2.2 Queen Elizabeth Fields Challenge

As advised prior in Scotland the Queen Elizabeth Fields Challenge is headed by its Patron, Prince William, the Earl of Strathearn, and is being promoted by Fields in Trust (FIT) formerly known as the National Playing Fields Association, to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in 2012 and create a permanent, tangible and relevant legacy arising from the London 2012 Olympics and the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014.

Local authorities were asked to nominate areas to be designated by the public in recognition for their importance relating to sport, play or recreation. A wide range of sites are being sought, including gardens, children's play areas, bicycle trails, nature reserves and sports pitches, which must be owned by the nominee. These sites are to be seen as the heart of the community and offering facilities or space for the improvement of general health and wellbeing.

A copy of the June 2012 Council report is available via the following link:

http://intranet/meetings/public/Midlothian%20Council/20120626/CM_MC_20120626_23_1.pdf

Furthermore it is not proposed that nominated sites would be renamed given the limited resources being offered through the scheme but would form a protected legacy.

The following sites in Midlothian's main settlements were felt to be suitable candidates for Queen Elizabeth status based on the above criteria (please note maps have also been included in the Appendices).

This list has been updated to take cognisance of the comments raised previously by Council.

Area	Town	Size (Ha)	Appendix	Note
Cowden Park	Dalkeith	3.67	A	June 2012
Penicuik Playing Fields	Penicuik	4.48	B	June 2012
Arniston Park	Gorebridge	2.41	C	June 2012
Poltonhall Playing Fields	Bonnyrigg	7.00	D	June 2012
Ironmills Park	Dalkeith	15.43	E	June 2012
Mayfield Park	Mayfield	6.48	F	June 2012
Welfare Park	Newtongrange	6.79	G	June 2012
Roslin Park	Roslin	2.39	H	February 2015
Rosewell Park	Rosewell	4.85	I	February 2015
Danderhall Park	Danderhall	3.22	J	February 2015
Vogrie Country Park	Gorebridge	105.00	K	February 2015

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no resource implications consequent upon this report.

3.2 Risk

There are no risks associated with this proposal and any subsequent designation would complement the Council's approach to the management of Open Spaces.

There is however obligation on the Council that should a part or all of one of these sites be required for development, the Council would need to agree with Fields in Trust another site to compensate for this loss. In accordance with Scottish Planning Policy on open space, agreement may also be reached on an increase in the quality of local open spaces rather than a replacement site.

3.3 Policy

Strategy

By providing a clear basis upon which to protect some of Midlothian's open spaces in principal settlements, this will support:

Objective 3: Maintaining Midlothian as a safe place to live, work and visit.

Objective 4: Conserving and improving Midlothian's environment.

Consultation

No public consultation has taken place at this stage.

Equalities

There are no equalities issues since the designations will not alter the existing arrangements for access to public open spaces.

Sustainability

The designations will afford protection to key open spaces from development thereby ensuring that parks and open spaces will contribute to the health and well-being of local communities.

3.4 IT Issues

There are no IT issues associated with the proposals outlined in this report.

4 Recommendations

Council are invited to:

- a) confirm the nominations for designation as Queen Elizabeth Fields are acceptable;
- b) approve submission of applications to Fields in Trust for consideration;

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