

SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Project Name	Sports Facilities Strategy	Version	V_1
		Date	July 2014
Project Sponsor	Lesley Palumbo	Project Manager	Paul Rabbitts

Purpose of Engagement and Communications plan

The Sports Facilities Strategy has identified engagement and communications as critical to the successful development and delivery of the strategy.

The complexity of the elements being brought together through the Strategy and the extensive number of sports clubs and organisations within the borough mean that an effective engagement and communications plans is essential in:

- Securing involvement of all stakeholder so that they understand the rationale for the Sport Facilities Strategy and are motivated by and committed to any changes it recommends
- Ensuring that those with the knowledge, experience and skills to take forward the Strategy have the opportunity to influence its recommendations and engage in its delivery
- Identifying areas and issues that the council might not have identified
- Reducing inaccurate messages being circulated and incorrect conclusions being drawn
- Providing channels for people to air issues and test assumptions

Approach

A three stage approach to engagement and communications has been identified for the Strategy:

1. Early engagement on emerging draft Strategy: July / August 2014

- Engagement with sports clubs and organisations that operate within or in proximity to the four strategic sites identified within the original Sports Facilities Study in 2012. This is relatively informal, face to face and based on 3 areas of question:
 - What are the clubs/organisations current issues
 - What are the clubs/organisations future plans
 - What opportunities do the clubs/organisations see in the strategic sites proposal

This engagement has helped identify any potential issues/areas that need to be considered within the draft Strategy before it is submitted to Cabinet in September. It has also opened up useful communication channels with clubs and organisations, which will be important to the future delivery of the Strategy. So far around 20 clubs / organisations have been involved.

2. Consultation on the draft Strategy: September / November 2014

- **More formal consultation with the wider community and a range of identified stakeholders including:**
 - All sports clubs and organisations within the borough including:
 - Football clubs
 - Rugby clubs
 - Cricket clubs – including Watford Town Cricket Club
 - Bowling clubs
 - Tennis clubs
 - SLM
 - Sports England and other relevant national, regional and local (county) bodies
 - Councillors
 - Watford community
 - Relevant local authorities
 - Relevant local organisations
- **Recommendations for this stage:**
 - **Questionnaire** to all identified stakeholders: these will be sent out electronically where possible but paper copies will be sent where no email address is available
 - Formal request for response to draft strategy from key public bodies
 - **Consultation event** (suggested October) to invited stakeholders: details to be confirmed but will be at central location
- **Communication on consultation**
 - Online, social media to advise on consultation and raise awareness that feedback is sought
- **Results collated in time for Cabinet report**
 - To inform final version of Strategy

3. Feedback on final Strategy following Cabinet in December 2014

- To all those who took part in engagement and to outline next steps