

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	1 November 2011
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge update
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/11/211

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the progress made of Aberdeen's entry in the "National Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge" campaign following the report to the 10 May 2011 Housing and Environment Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- i) Note progress with registering the six sites with Fields in Trust for inclusion to the National nominations.
- ii) Instructs Officers to submit the report to the Asset Management Group and to keep this group up to date with progress on the project.
- iii) Instructs Officers to report back to Committee in January 2012 on the progress with the Queen Elizabeth Fields designation and the next stages process for the nomination of the six sites previously identified. (Alan Douglas Park; Bucksburn Community Garden; Coronation Park, Peterculter; Kaimhill Residents Site; Eric Hendry Park and Westerton Park, Northfield.)
- iv) Refers this report to the Finance & Resources Committee 6 December 2011 for final approval.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial cost implications as a result of this report; however the Campaign has £2 million of funding to disperse over 2012 sites within the UK, with Scotland receiving funding for 214 sites. The six sites put forward for potential funding could receive around £1,500 each which could be used to lever in additional funding from other sources to deliver projects on the sites.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The implementation of this project will be undertaken by existing officers in Housing and Environment.

Any agreement undertaken for the designation of any site as a Queen Elizabeth II Field will require the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into a legally binding document between Aberdeen City Council and Fields in Trust legal services.

Implications for approved PBB options

No direct implications from this report but if sites are selected for the Queen Elizabeth II Fields designation limited grant funding will be available for the sites from Fields in Trust which can be used to lever in additional funding from other external sources.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge commenced in April 2011 and seeks to identify and protect over 2012 open space sites in the UK including 214 in Scotland.

It aims to safeguard hundreds of outdoor recreational spaces in the UK, in perpetuity for future generations in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee and as a permanent tribute to Queen Elizabeth II. The initiative has particular pertinence given the other landmark event scheduled to take place in the UK in 2012, the London Olympics.

The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge is an opportunity to be part of a high profile national campaign that has a real impact and benefit on local communities. It represents a cost effective way for Aberdeen to mark both the Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Olympics whilst also securing a platform to help achieve key targets around increasing physical activity and promoting the sustainability agenda along with the possibility of leveraging in other potential funding opportunities.

The Challenge aims to protect outdoor recreational spaces and facilities for communities now and for generations to come, whilst providing a focal point for celebrations in 2012. It is not a grant aid programme though some funding will be available.

The benefits of protection are:

- Making a recognisable commitment to local people to safeguard land, facilities and opportunities for sport, play and outdoor recreation both now and for the future.
- Protecting public access to outdoor space and providing reassurance to potential investors regarding viability and sustainability

- Ensuring that a site is sold or developed, proceeds are invested to replacement facilities, with a priority on new outdoor facilities.
- Raising awareness of the importance of such facilities in the context of quality of life, health, the environment and amenity.

The scheme recognises a wide range of sites as candidates for nomination to the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. This range includes gardens, children's play areas, bicycle trails, nature reserves, sports pitches and many more.

The Minimum Criteria for nominations of the Queen Elizabeth II Fields challenge include: -

- The site must be owned by the organisation putting the field forward to become a Queen Elizabeth II Field.
- Evidence of title permitting site use for outdoor, sport, play and/or recreation must be produced.
- Sites may include facilities and equipment or used as general open space.
- Be established for that purpose by way of planning requirements.
- The sites principal use should be outdoor sport, play or recreation.
- Evidence that the use or proposed use is a lawful use in planning terms.
- The minimum size is 0.2 hectare (0.5 acre).
- Sites need to be in accessible locations.
- Sites need to be affordable for the local community.
- Sites should all be open to the public and either established charitably, held by a sports club under the Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC) regime or held as Public Open Space.

Land ownership status of all the sites has now been confirmed with Legal Services and this now allows the nominations process to proceed.

6. IMPACT

The Queen Elizabeth II Challenge will be used to inform and link with Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking commitment to "adopt and implement policies which safeguard Aberdeen's green belt and green wedges". It will also assist the Council in delivering the Single Outcome Agreement's National Outcome 12 "We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and enhance it for future generations" and will contribute to several other outcomes including No.6 "We live longer, healthier lives", No. 7 "Tackling inequalities" and No. 10 "We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need".

The Campaign seeks to protect areas in perpetuity although should any Authority choose to develop on these protected areas, there is a

requirement, that the amount of land lost to development, will have to be identified elsewhere within the City and undergo the same protection process. The sites proposed for Aberdeen currently are protected from development as they are all designated as Urban Greenspace or Greenspace Network in the Local Plan.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

(i) Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge
[http://www.qe2fields.com/Upload/file/Information%20LA%20Website\(5\).pdf](http://www.qe2fields.com/Upload/file/Information%20LA%20Website(5).pdf)

(ii) Housing and Environment Committee 1 March 2010 item 9.7
Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge.

(ii) Housing and Environment Committee 10 May 2011 item 8.2

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