

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

#### Off-site Recreation Contributions

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Development Control Committee Members of the approach to be taken in applying off-site contributions towards flatted developments. The proposal is to expect a contribution towards children's playing spaces from flats with two bedrooms or more.

#### 2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The delivery of the County Borough's statutory planning function has links to the Council's corporate priorities in particular number 1 – supporting a successful economy.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Outdoor recreation space comprises 'children's playing space' and 'outdoor sport facilities' (such as playing fields) and the issue of potential off-site contributions from developers to fund all types of outdoor recreational space will be fully addressed as part of the future Recreational Space SPG. The SPG will provide more detail and clarification on the interpretation of Policy COM 11 of the LDP, including whether there should be certain exceptions to providing contributions.
- 3.2 The emerging view is that 'off-site contributions' towards children's playing space, is entirely justified and reasonable from flats that have 2 bedrooms or more on the basis that such developments can reasonably be expected to generate children who are likely to benefit from local children's playing space. However, it is not reasonable to expect such a contribution from one bedroom flats, as these will not generate children. One bedroom flats should therefore be exempt.
- 3.3 This principle is currently applied with respect to the Education Facilities and Residential Development (SPG 16), which also specifically exempts education contributions from bedsits, 1 bedroom dwellings/flats and sheltered or elderly accommodation. This is on the basis that such developments do not generate children who require school places and, as such, a contribution is not justified.
- 3.4 However it is expected that all new housing developments (including 1 bed flats) should contribute to other outdoor sport facilities, such as playing fields and associated facilities as such facilities are used by the general population and not exclusively children.
- 3.5 All of these issues will be fully clarified as part of the forthcoming Recreation Space SPG.

#### 4. Current Situation

- 4.1 Currently, the Parks and Playing Fields Manager only requests contributions towards children's play spaces for dwellings (£470 per dwelling) and not flats.

## **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 Where required, the children's play space contribution will be applied to flats of 2 bedrooms or more in line with the Education contribution; Bedsits, 1 bed flats, sheltered or elderly accommodation will remain exempt.
- 5.2 The forthcoming Recreational Space Supplementary Planning Guidance will clarify this situation.

## **6. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules**

- 6.1 The change in approach will be incorporated into the forthcoming Recreational Space SPG.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment.**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken and the proposed recommendation is unlikely to have an impact on equality issues.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 In future Section 106 Legal Agreements, where required, there will be a contribution towards children's play spaces for residential developments that include flats with 2 or more bedrooms which will increase the monies available to the Parks and Playing Fields Manager to provide, or improve and maintain, existing children's play spaces.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 That Members of the Development Control Committee:

(1) Note the content of this report on the approach to be taken when applying children's play space contributions to flatted developments.

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**Corporate Director Communities**

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### **Background documents**

None