**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the A6 Towns Forum about the **Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge**

**2. INFORMATION**

2.1 The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge is a new programme to mark Her Majesty The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, led by its Patron HRH The Prince William of Wales. It is a landmark project to create a permanent, tangible and relevant legacy from the two major events scheduled to occur in the UK in 2012; Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Olympics.

The campaign will create a branded network of 2012 permanently protected playing fields in communities all across the UK – the Queen Elizabeth II Fields, in Scotland the Queen Elizabeth Fields - as a visible, permanent, grassroots legacy arising from 2012.

2.2 The campaign is being led by Fields in Trust whichis the only independent UK wide charity dedicated to protecting and improving outdoor space for sport, play and recreation. Formed in 1925 as the National Playing Fields Association it aims to ensure that everyone has access to free, local facilities for healthy outdoor activities. Currently it protects 1271 sites all across the country totalling 8584 acres.

A Frequently Asked Questions about the programme and the process is attached as Appendix A.

The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge will culminate in Have a Field Day, a nationwide mass participation community event on protected sites all across the country.

**3.** **THE CRITERIA FOR NOMINATIONS**

3.1 Fields in Trust (FIT) needs around 1,500 sites to be secured to make the 2,012 target. It wants each Local Authority throughout the United Kingdom to nominate a series of playing fields in their area that they would be happy to protect as a Queen Elizabeth II Field.

3.2 On a secondary level Fields in Trust also want to encourage any town, parish or community council; sports club, recreational charity, voluntary body or private landowner who might want to get involved with the initiative and so will be accepting submission of individual fields to the scheme providing they meet the set criteria. There are nine criteria which need to be met which are listed in paragraph 21 of Appendix A. Appendix B shows a provisional application of these criteria to our playing fields. Some sites have been excluded for example if they are strategic sites in Area Action Plans, where we are not the freehold owner or are in discussions about future management of the site.

**4. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT**

The public will vote for their favourite local playing field through a new website [www.qeIIfields.com](http://www.qeIIfields.com) to be set up by FIT. All playing fields nominated by Local Authorities will be uploaded to this site so that people can search for their area and cast a vote for the field they would like to be protected as a Queen Elizabeth II Field. FIT is hoping to provide a mechanism to enable the public to cast votes by phone and text. Voting will commence in 2011.

**5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Access to outdoor space has been shown to help with community cohesion, reducing anti-social behaviour and improving the health and well being of people of all age groups. The QEII Fields (similar to the King George V Fields) will celebrate Her Majesty’s 60 years on the throne in a long-lasting way for their communities.

1. **USE OF RESOURCES**

There will be costs associated with the legal process of protecting the sites (a Memorandum of Understanding and a deed of dedication are required) and with several of the criteria. For example:

* Sites should be open to the public, and established charitably or, as facilities held by a sports club under the CASC regime or as Public Open Space
* All sites will need local managers, who will be responsible for the quality of facilities, their maintenance and development, improving participation and use, and financial and operational sustainability

**7. RECOMMENDATION**

 The Forum is asked whether it wishes to support this initiative and identify potential playing fields for recommendation to the Borough Council Executive Committee.

Background Papers: Previous Reports/Minutes:

Title of Document: Ref:

Date: Date:

Contact Officer:

**Further information on The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge visit** [**www.qe2fields.com**](http://www.qe2fields.com)**.**