CHAPTER 12: COMMUNITY SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

12.1 Community services are concerned with many aspects that are important to the promotion of people's quality of life. They are often essential if people are to live in a civilised society. They cover areas such as health and education services, religious, ethnic and community groups, local clubs and societies. They also include emergency and regulatory services such as the fire service, the courts and the police. In many instances, community facilities and organisations can serve a recreational function as well.

12.2 Most services are still provided by the public sector. However, the Borough Council has a limited statutory role in the provision of these services, with the health service, the County Council and national government departments having the greatest responsibility. The Borough Council as local planning authority does, however, have an important enabling role through identifying opportunities and sites for the development of community services. The voluntary sector also has an important role. The private sector's role, although relatively small, is expanding, either through operating a service on behalf of one of the community services, or by offering a service to rival the public sector equivalent.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

12.3 As a planned New Town, Crawley was provided with a range of purpose built facilities for community services, both within the town as a whole and within each neighbourhood. Local facilities are commonly within walking distance of homes. Since then, Crawley has grown to be an important sub-regional centre. Many of the community services provided now serve an area much wider than just the borough and its resident population.

12.4 Despite recent improvements, shortfalls exist for some services. Some facilities, such as the library, are no longer large enough while others such as the hospital, are not designed to meet contemporary needs. With the expansion in Crawley's population and the forecast growth in the numbers of the elderly and very young within the borough, a number of facilities are under-supplied. Facilities such as residential day care centres for the elderly and buildings for respite care are also in demand due to the Government's community care policies.

PLANNING CONTEXT

12.5 There is very limited legislation, Government advice or strategic guidance about how town planning can help meet community service needs and the advice there is tends to be concerned with general principles. Of particular note, Planning Policy Guidance Notes 13 "Transport", and 1 "General Policy" advise that many developments shouvicntissrpl7(i)5(c)-5(y4(s

be provided by a number of small units distributed throughout the borough, rather than being on one large, centralised site.

STRATEGY, ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

12.8   Policy STRAT 1 states that the aim of the Local Plan is to improve the quality of life for those living and working in Crawley whilst protecting the environment. Community services have a considerable role to play in improving quality of life within Crawley. However, Policy STRAT 3 notes that where facilities are provided it is important that they do not have a detrimental impact upon the environment, either because of their location or the amount of non-renewable resources that are used in their development or operation.

12.9

12.13 For Crawley's residents to make use of public buildings, they must be easily accessible. This is important as many of those using certain community services experience mobility problems, for example, through disability, lack of access to a car or by having to take children in a pram or pushchair. The most effective way of achieving good accessibility is by ensuring that facilities are well designed and located conveniently for the catchment they are intended to serve. Some facilities will need to be in neighbourhoods, whilst others should be where they can be reached by a variety of modes of transport.

Objective 5
To encourage, through appropriate location and design, the efficient and effective use of community services facilities and resources.

Policy COM 2
Proposals for development involving the loss of community services facilities will not normally be permitted unless:

- **(i)** the facility is clearly surplus to requirements; or

- **(ii)** shared use of the facility with other activities is not possible; or

- **(iii)** the existing use cannot be accommodated on the site after redevelopment; or

- **(iv)** alternative provision, accessible by a variety of means of transport, can be made within the built up area.

12.16 When community services are lost, the quality of life for many citizens can be diminished. Accordingly, the Borough Council will normally oppose the loss of community services, unless they are surplus to all requirements and, therefore, there will be no loss in the quality of service provided. In such instances, the Borough Council will need to be satisfied that all options to share the facility with another community or recreational activity have been exhausted. If this is not possible, the provision of a new facility of the same standard or better, may be acceptable, provided that it is appropriately located within the built up area.

Implementation: CBC development control process; public, voluntary and private sector agencies.

Sites for Community Uses

Policy COM 3
Land at the following sites is allocated for small scale community uses:

- **(1)** St Sampson Road, Broadfield;

- **(2)** Bewbush neighbourhood centre;

- **(3)** Overdene Drive, Ifield;

- **(4)** The Ridings, Crabbet Park, Pound Hill;

- **(5)** Rackham Close, Southgate;

Land at the following sites will be reserved for a mixed use development including small scale community uses:

- **(6)** Dobbins Place, Ifield;

- **(7)** Turners Hill Road, Pound Hill;

- **(8)** Oak Road / Denne Road, Southgate.

12.17   There is a wide range of community groups that desire their own premises. These include, amongst others, youth, elderly, first aid and religious groups. Some of these groups use existing facilities that no longer suit their needs. Some share facilities and are looking for their own premises, while others are relatively new groups who lack their own facilities. The Borough Council recognises it is unlikely that enough sites will become available on the open market to meet the requirements of all community groups. Therefore, it has identified a number of sites in its own or other authorities' ownership to contribute to meeting these needs.

12.18   Suitable uses for these sites are those which serve a local community function and with a catchment area which does not extend far beyond the immediate neighbourhood. The Dobbins Place facility could be used as part of a mixed development. All the sites are close to existing housing and the uses must therefore be compatible with the character of the area in which the site is located. The proposals for a new neighbourhood (see Chapter 13) include a requirement to make provision for premises for youth, religious and other local groups.

Implementation: CBC development control process; CBC Property and Construction Services; other public, voluntary and private sector agencies.

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Policy COM 6
The Borough Council will support proposals for a day centre for the elderly within, or close to, the town centre, provided that:

(i)   **the site is accessible by a variety of means of transport;**

(ii)   **it is appropriately located for the catchment population served; and**

(iii)   **there is no adverse impact on the environment and amenity of the surrounding area.**

12.21   A deficiency in the provision of community care and support facilities close to the town centre has been identified. In several instances, the residential areas around the town centre were developed before the New Town and were not well provided with buildings suitable for community services and community groups. Such areas would benefit from the provision of more community and recreational facilities, particularly as Policy H3 makes provision for further residential development within and around the town centre.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes; CBC Property and Construction Services; WSCC as social services authority; other public, private, voluntary and private sector agencies.

Health Care

12.22   Primary health care is concerned with the provision of services locally rather than hospital based, secondary health care. Primary health care normally requires relatively small sites serving the immediate neighbourhood. The Borough Council recognises the importance of providing accessible facilities for primary health care and will therefore reserve land for such purposes where appropriate. A large new general practitioners surgery has been constructed at the Maidenbower neighbourhood centre to serve the neighbourhood. The proposals for a new neighbourhood (see Chapter 13) include a requirement to make provision for a primary health care facility to serve this area.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes; Crawley Primary Care Group.

Policy COM 7
The Borough Council will support proposals for facilities for secondary health care and related activities within the existing hospital site and outlying buildings provided that:

(i)   **there is no adverse impact upon the amenity and environment of the surrounding area or upon highway conditions and safety by virtue of any resulting increase in traffic or general activity;**

(ii) when ancillary uses are displaced, they can be accommodated elsewhere within the hospital's grounds

12.27   The site at Sedgefield Close has been allocated for a school for some time, although the County Council has not allocated monies under its Capital Programme for it. Population forecasts, however, suggest that there may eventually be a need to expand school capacity in this part of the borough. In Maidenbower, one first school has already been developed, and the middle school is under construction. The

proposals for a new neighbourhood (see Chapter 13) include a requirement to make provision for new first and middle schools to serve this area.

Implementation: CBC development control process; WSCC as education authority.

Policy COM 11

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Cemeteries

Policy COM 17
Land to the north of Snell Hatch Cemetery is allocated for use as an extension to the cemetery.

12.36   Most of the plots in the existing cemetery have now been used so there is only another seven to eight years capacity left. The site to the north offers the opportunity to expand the cemetery.

Implementation: CBC development control process, CBC Leisure Services.

Libraries

Policy COM 18
The Borough Council will support proposals by the County Council for the provision of a new public library within the town centre to replace the existing Crawley library provided that:

    (i)   **the design of the facility complements Policy SH2 which aims to consolidate Crawley's role as a sub-regional shopping centre; and**

    (ii)   **sufficient capacity is provided to meet anticipated future demand.**

12.37   The existing library is no longer large enough to cope with a population the size of Crawley. Accordingly, it is necessary to find a site for larger premises. The new library will need to be on an appropriate site within the town centre, to ensure that it is accessible to all sectors of the community. Attracting the public into the town centre, particularly in the evening, will also add vitality to the centre. The library could be mainly on an upper floor level, provided that its ground floor entrance is prominent enough to attract users and it is fully accessible to those with disabilities.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes; WSCC as library authority; landowners; private sector and other developers.

Fire Stations

12.38   The location of the existing fire station in Ifield Avenue enables a good service to be provided to most parts of Crawley, especially the town centre and surrounding areas. Continuing development in the outlying parts of the town and general increases in traffic and congestion, however, are making it more difficult on occasions to guarantee response times for some areas. For the eastern and northern parts of the borough, one solution could be to provide a second fire station within the development of the North East Sector. The proposals for a new neighbourhood forming part of Chapter 13 include a requirement to provide a site or sites for an additional fire station, (see Policy NES 5). The existing fire station would then serve mainly the town centre and the southern and western parts of the borough.

Implementation: CBC development control; WSCC as fire authority.

Waste Disposal

Policy COM 19
The Borough Council will support proposals for the provision of local waste collection sites, provided that:

> **(i)   they are accessible by a variety of means of transport;**
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> **(ii)   they are appropriately located for the catchment population they serve; and**
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> **(iii)   there is no adverse impact on the environment and amenity of the surrounding area.**

12.39   The Borough Council relies on residents bringing their most common recyclable waste to a collection point. It is important that waste collection sites for this are convenient to use, yet also do not give rise to problems for neighbouring development. The proposals for a new neighbourhood (see Chapter 13) include a requirement to make provision for local recycling centres and points.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes; CBC Planning and Environmental Services; WSCC as refuse disposal authority.

Policy COM 20
The Borough Council will encourage West Sussex County Council to identify a site capable of accommodating most, or all, of the following borough wide services:

> **(i)   recycl**