

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Environment and Projects	Report Number: S12
To: Executive Committee Strategy Committee	Date of meeting: 9 May 2016 12 May 2016

DEVELOPING OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH TO LEISURE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 A key project within the Councils' Joint Strategic Plan delivery programme is a strategic leisure review which recognises the health and wellbeing challenges among sections of our communities' and the Councils' need to understand and develop its role in encouraging healthier lifestyles both in delivering leisure and cultural activities, supporting those of our partner organisations and those that are led and organised by communities themselves.
- 1.2 This will involve the development of a planned, evidence based, strategic approach to the delivery of sports, recreational and leisure facilities, which includes how these services should be delivered across both districts in future.
- 1.3 This report sets out the phases of the project and outlines the next key phase of work which will involve significant input from elected Members.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the contents of this report be noted.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as it is for Members to note only. Additional resource has been commissioned to undertake the focussed work outlined in the report and the cost has been allocated from an underspend in last year's leisure budget which has been requested for Members approval.
- 3.2 Although the work outlined in this report has limited financial implications, the outcomes of the work may have significant future implications.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report but there could be legal issues arising from the outcomes of the work.

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 There are no significant corporate or business risks in this report.

6. Consultations

- 6.1 There have been no consultations associated with this report.

7. Equality Analysis

- 7.1 An equality analysis will be required and carried out at the appropriate time.

8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 8.1 This is a joint approach for both Councils although the outcomes may be tailored to the individual requirements of both Councils.

9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

- 9.1 The outcomes of the strategic leisure review will contribute significantly to the delivery of the Councils strategic priorities. The Joint Strategic Plan puts active, healthy, safe, self-sufficient and strong communities at the centre of the Councils priorities and clearly recognises the link between economic prosperity, health and well-being.

10. Key Information

Background:

- 10.1 The Councils' visions are for communities that thrive and flourish and where people reach their full potential. With that in mind, the refreshed Joint Strategic Plan puts active, healthy, safe, self-sufficient and strong communities' front and centre in both Councils' priorities and recognises rightly the link between economic prosperity and health and wellbeing. In these challenging times with changes to the funding available to public services (linked to the delivery of growth) and greater demands and expectations on our services, it is vital that we build and strengthen economic prosperity within our communities and target our resources to help local people stay safe and healthy and reach their full potential in terms of prosperity.
- 10.2 So a key project within the Joint Strategic Plan delivery programme is this strategic leisure review and recognising that there are specific health and wellbeing challenges among sections of our communities. The Councils' need to understand and develop its role in encouraging healthier lifestyles both in delivering leisure and cultural activities, supporting those of our partner organisations and those that are led and organised by communities themselves.
- 10.3 The aim of the review is to ensure that a planned, evidence based, strategic approach is taken to the provision and delivery of sports, recreational and leisure facilities, which includes both how to determine the level of resources made available for leisure services, how to ensure those resources are targeted at those activities that will have the greatest impact on the Councils' priorities and vision as well as how these services should be delivered across both districts in future.

10.4 This project has 4 specific phases:

- Phase 1 – Completion of comprehensive evidence base of need in the form of new Built Sports Facility and Playing Pitch strategic assessments for both Councils; these are part funded by our partners Sport England.
- Phase 2 – Independent expert review of the evidence and the development of a Joint Leisure Strategy, that addresses from an outcome perspective the level of resources needed for provision, the nature and target of that provision and the allocation of resources to optimise outcomes.
- Phase 3 – Undertake an options appraisal to determine the future outcomes focus, targeting of resources and commissioning intentions for the operation of BDC/MSDC owned facilities and wider partner or community based provision.
- Phase 4 – Implementation/delivery of new operating model and construction of new/enhanced facilities (as agreed at phase 2) – with a view to achieving as near to cost neutral position for Council operated facilities as is possible given the strategic outcomes set by the review.

10.5 The first phase of this project was to undertake a comprehensive evidence base of need in the form of new Built Sports Facility and Playing Pitch strategic assessments for both Councils. This work was commissioned in partnership with Sport England. The evidence base work has largely been complete and the purpose of the report is set out how these documents will assist in developing the Council's strategic approach.

10.6 The two evidence base documents are currently being finalised and will enable Members to be informed of the future issues and opportunities in relation to sport, physical activity and more general health and wellbeing and to allow the Council's to consider its future role as a leisure provider. This will enable Members to develop a clear vision of the future that is sustainable and achievable.

10.7 This clear vision can then be used to shape the Councils approach to partnership working, future leisure facility provision, commissioning and procurement.

10.8 In developing a clear vision and strategy the Council will set out the following:

- Its future role in sport and physical activity alongside its partners and stakeholders
- How much the Council is (or is not) prepared to invest in sport and physical activity and leisure assets in the short, medium and long term
- Its approach to the management of those assets it wishes to continue providing
- Its approach to any rationalisation, divestment or asset transfer of leisure assets
- Its approach to use of open space, playing pitches and outdoor recreation
- Its approach to facility investment and improvement.
- Its approach to risk transfer.
- Its approach to commissioning outcomes linked to wider commissioning from key partners such as Health and Suffolk County Council.

10.9 In order to assist the Council to scope and develop this project, experienced leisure consultants have been commissioned to undertake a focussed piece of work over the next 2 to 3 months.

10.10 The Sport, Leisure and Culture (SLC) consultancy will be working with members and Officers to establish and identify the requirements to support the Council's prioritisation and decision making over the next three years which may include the development of:

- Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- Leisure Investment Strategy
- Leisure Procurement and Commissioning Strategy

10.11 There are a number of key issues which SLC will help the Council's address:

- What the Council wants to continue to do in relation to the provision of sport and physical activity services and the management of its indoor and outdoor leisure assets
- What the Council wants to stop doing in future
- What the Council wants others to provide in future through partnership in an enabling role.

10.12 SLC are proposing a 3 stage approach in helping the Council to position itself to address the issues highlighted above. These are set out in Appendix 1.

11. Appendices

Title	Location
1. Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy – Proposed 3 stage approach to assist the Council scope future strategic approach to leisure	Attached

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Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy – Proposed 3 stage approach to assist the Council scope future strategic approach to leisure

Stage 1: Desk Top Review

SLC will conduct a focused review of all key strategic documents including the Leisure Built Facilities Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy, Councils Strategic Plan, Core Strategies, Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan plus relevant Health and Wellbeing strategies etc.

SLC will review the Council's neighbouring authorities to identify any future planned developments which could impact upon the future strategic direction of sport and leisure provision in Babergh and Mid Suffolk District.

SLC will also review the available information on the condition of the Council's leisure assets and monitoring reports from SLM and South Suffolk Leisure's respective Leisure Contracts. This will include possible quick win investment opportunities and identify key issues from their perspective.

The above work will provide a good indication of the current position and will enable SLC to identify opportunities to share and explore with elected members through a workshop approach.

Stage 2: Member Workshop

SLC will present a short briefing paper in consultation with officers for elected members prior to the workshop. This will enable some of the baseline information to be shared and understood by members in advance of the session to enable the session to be more strategically focused. A half day workshop will cover the following:

- Establish a high level understanding of the current state of indoor and outdoor leisure provision, condition and longer term maintenance liabilities for assets under the Councils control
- Establish a high level understanding of how well the contracts are performing financially and how well the leisure provision is meeting local need and contributing to wider outcomes (compared to other authorities)
- Establish what role elected members wish the Council to play in improving the district's health and wellbeing and explore opportunities to invest in this / incorporate this into any future leisure management contract. (This will be linked to the new Government Sports Strategy).
- Seek Members views on future management arrangements for the two leisure contracts.
- Seek to establish a Member's Leisure Working Party (or equivalent) to oversee the scoping work and any subsequent Leisure projects.

Stage 3: Report and Implementation Plan

Following the workshop, SLC will develop a short report outlining its findings and the strategic steer provided by members. This will then be translated into a set of proposed actions to support the Council in taking the next steps to address its strategic Leisure issues. This could include the development of strategies, an options appraisal and a pre procurement strategy.

The report would also include some high level costings linked to its recommendations to enable the Council to establish what budgets it may need to ring-fence to support any external input.

Timescales

SLC have commenced stage 1, the desk top review of key strategic documents, and this should be complete by the end of May. The outcome of this work will lead to the Member workshop in June.

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