



Cabinet

Tuesday, 13 December 2022

Leisure Facilities Strategy Mid-point Review

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change,
Councillor A Brennan**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the mid-point review of the Leisure Facilities Strategy 2017-2027.
- 1.2. On 13 June 2017, Cabinet adopted the Leisure Facilities Strategy following recommendations made by the Community Development Group, which had met four times over the year, agreeing the underlying rationale, strategic influences, reviewing the detailed analysis of supply and demand for the next 10 years, considering industry trends and the views of stakeholders.
- 1.3. A mid-point review has been undertaken to assess progress to date on the agreed objectives, highlight the work already completed and identify any changing or emerging priorities driven by strategic influences, industry trends and stakeholder consultation.
- 1.4. The full version of the updated Leisure Facilities Strategy 2017-2027 incorporating the mid-point review 2022 is attached at Appendix 1 and is recommended for approval. A draft Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan is attached at Appendix 2.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) adopts the updated Leisure Facilities Strategy 2017-2027 incorporating the mid-point review 2022;
- b) supports work to develop the detailed specification for Capital investment into Cotgrave Leisure Centre and Keyworth Leisure Centre, which are already included in the Capital Programme for 2023-2024; and
- c) delegates authority to the Director – Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change to approve the final content of the associated Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan refresh.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. It is imperative that Rushcliffe Borough Council has an up-to-date Leisure Facilities Strategy to guide future provision to ensure that facilities continue to meet the needs of residents and contribute to community wellbeing.
- 3.2. The Strategy has been developed through a robust process adopting industry recognised methodology. This included a detailed assessment of playing pitches and user consultation, as well as two bespoke runs of the Sport England Facility Planning model to factor in the impact of projected population growth. The mid-point review has not deviated from this approach but built upon the findings and progress against original targets and projected population.
- 3.3. The associated Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan, which was refreshed in 2019/20 is again being refreshed for 2022/23. However, this is not yet complete due to outstanding information required from some National Governing Bodies (NGB's). The outstanding data will help inform priority projects and sites for future investment and has therefore delayed the finalisation of this aspect of the Leisure Facilities Strategy.
- 3.4. In undertaking the mid-point review, several consultation surveys were made available to enable the Council to understand the wider leisure provision in Rushcliffe and seek views from across the Borough. The consultation surveys targeted sports clubs and organisations, secondary schools, and the wider resident population. We received 18 responses from sports clubs and organisations, three secondary schools and 184 residents, informing the emerging priorities up to the end of the current Strategy in 2027.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. The mid-point review now identifies Cotgrave Leisure Centre and Keyworth Leisure Centre as a priority for capital refurbishment within the next two years to ensure the facilities are fit for the future.
- 4.2. The mid-point review acknowledges the work that has been undertaken to realise a replacement for the existing Bingham Leisure Centre, which was identified as a priority for capital investment. Following a successful business case and despite significant challenges related to Covid-19, Bingham Arena, a state-of-the-art Leisure Centre, is due to open its doors to the public in early 2023.
- 4.3. Additionally, in mid-2021, the Department for Education confirmed that Toot Hill School is to be part of the School Rebuilding Programme. Nova Education Trust continue to work with officers on continued joint use arrangements of the sports hall and outdoor facilities as part of this redevelopment.
- 4.4. The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the whole leisure sector and the Council worked closely with its leisure contractor to support facilities to remain open when they were allowed to do so and to implement changes to

comply with Covid restrictions. As part of the Leisure Recovery Plan, Cabinet approved a report on 13 July 2021, which reviewed Rushcliffe Arena's facilities and resolved to convert the existing and underutilised bowls hall at Rushcliffe Arena into a multipurpose group exercise space called Studio 3. This facility has proved very popular with leisure users and has greatly assisted the retention and growth of leisure membership. Studio 3 also plays host to several other club activities such as martial arts and functions including the annual Celebrating Rushcliffe Awards.

- 4.5. The linked Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan update highlights the significant progress that has been made against the original shortfall of four (rising to six within five years) artificial turf pitches across the Borough. The redevelopment of Gresham Sport Park and Keyworth United 3G pitches has helped address this shortfall; however, supporting our partners and parishes in delivering the priority projects identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy remains a strategic objective over the next five years.
- 4.6. The initial Playing Pitch Strategy identified the need for a strategic approach for skate parks to address the longevity of these facilities. The development of a Capital Grants Programme to transform the existing Skate Parks to concrete alternatives has enabled all our existing skate facilities to be replaced or enhanced to ensure the long-term sustainability of these facilities. A particular highlight has been the investment and stakeholder involvement in developing these schemes which has resulted in the new skate parks receiving national recognition for their inclusive design and how they support the wider skate infrastructure across Nottinghamshire.
- 4.7. The Leisure Facilities Strategy sets out an overall vision and is supported by four guiding principles

To provide high quality, financially sustainable leisure facilities to support Rushcliffe residents to enjoy healthy, active lives.

- To protect and enhance facilities where there is evidence of need
 - To invest in major facility enhancements only where a sound business case exists
 - To work in partnership to meet the needs of communities
 - To focus on improving community health and wellbeing
- 4.8. The Strategy vision and principles are further articulated by several objectives, which have been refreshed as part of the midterm review particularly in respect of the Council's carbon reduction commitments and the growing importance of outdoor and green/blue spaces as 'leisure' facilities.
 - Retain five leisure facilities and ensure they are fit for the future
 - Support partners/parishes to deliver the priority projects within the playing pitch strategy
 - Address inequalities in participation
 - Work in partnership with local health services to support the 'inactive' into regular activity

- Maintain the existing local standards for provision of open space, children's play, and allotments
- Creating more outdoor wellbeing opportunities including walking and cycling throughout the Borough to encourage active travel and support our Carbon Reduction objectives to be carbon neutral as a Borough by 2050.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

There is no statutory requirement to produce a Leisure Facilities Strategy so a decision could be made not to accept the mid-point Strategy review and to allow the current Strategy to expire. However, the mid-point review has highlighted how the Strategy vision and guiding principles has been a key driver in delivering the strategic objectives of the Strategy. It would also be increasingly difficult to secure developer and other external funding contributions towards sustainable fit for purpose leisure provision.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

6.1.1. Capital estimates are in the region of £2m over the next five years and are included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy from 2023/24 to 2027/28, to be approved by Council in March 2023.

6.1.2. There are ongoing revenue costs associated with running the Council's leisure facilities and these are included within existing budgets. There is a risk that further inflationary pressures may increase costs significantly and consequently this may have implications on service provision contracts.

6.1.3. If the Council has recourse to externally borrow to fund Capital works there could be an additional borrowing cost. If interest rates remain high this cost could be significant.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report

6.3. Equalities Implications

Any capital redevelopments would be built to meet current building control standards to ensure people with disabilities have access to the facilities and the services provided as required by the Equality Act 2010.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

All design and development of capital infrastructure will follow the Section 17 basic design principles to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	By re-developing and creating new leisure infrastructure for residents to meet, create friendships, reduce loneliness and social isolation, and take part in physical exercise this will improve the quality of life of users
Efficient Services	With the current cost pressures on all aspects of local government, the Council need to ensure that it delivers efficient services that meet the needs of our residents. The review of the Leisure Facilities Strategy is designed to achieve the pareto optimum of leisure provision across the Borough and to be both economically efficient and meet the need of our growing resident population.
Sustainable Growth	Over the period of the Leisure Facilities Strategy 2017-2028 the local authority area is required to deliver 13,000 new homes to meet the growing population of the Borough. At the mid-point review (March 2022) 5,597 homes have been delivered. Therefore, our leisure provision needs to accommodate these new residents by continual improvement and investment to ensure that our leisure provision grows sustainably with our resident population.
The Environment	<p>Leisure centres consume large amounts of energy and so are also significant carbon emitters. Therefore, working with our leisure operators, local authorities will need to prioritise new strategies and operational changes to tackle these emissions. To achieve the Council's target to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 from our own operations every facet of our leisure centres stock will need to be reviewed and will be a significant focus over the next five years of the Strategy period leading up to 2028.</p> <p>In addition, our emerging priority of walking and cycling and to encourage active travel supports our Carbon reduction objectives of the Borough to be Carbon Neutral by 2050.</p>

8. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

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- b) supports work to develop the detailed specification for Capital investment into Cotgrave Leisure Centre and Keyworth Leisure Centre, which are already included in the Capital Programme for 2023-2024; and
- c) delegates authority to the Director – Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change to approve the final content of the associated Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan refresh.

For more information contact:	David Banks Director – Neighbourhoods 0115 9148 438 dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Report to Cabinet 13 June 2017 - Leisure Facilities Strategy Report to Cabinet 13 July 2021 – Rushcliffe Arena Facilities Review
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Rushcliffe Leisure Facilities Strategy 2017-2027 Mid-point Review 2022 Appendix 2 – Draft Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan Refresh 2022