

5 December 2016

Community, Health and Leisure Committee

Leisure Strategy

Report of: *Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1.** It was agreed by Members at the 6 June, Community, Health and Leisure Committee (min ref.33) that the Council commission a specialist team of consultants to undertake a Value for Money Review and options appraisal of the Council leisure facilities which would include the Brentwood Centre, six community halls managed by Brentwood Leisure Trust, Hartswood Golf Course and the Council's play areas. The consultants appointed after following procurement guidelines was 4Global.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Officers note the update from 4Global and review the suggested recommendations.**
- 2.2 That an additional special Community Health and Leisure Committee be convened in February 2017 to discuss the recommendations for the Leisure Strategy.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1.** In March 2015 the Council commissioned Ploszajski Lynch Consulting to assist in the development of a Leisure Strategy for the Borough. This was primarily to support the Local Development Plan. The initial draft was completed and became a "needs analysis" (Phase 1 of a complete leisure strategy) of leisure requirements and provided an evidence base of facilities in the Borough. A cross party Member Working Group was established in January 2016 to identify the key priorities and to develop a work programme to deliver the Leisure Strategy. A key priority identified by the working group was to establish income and expenditure on the Council's current leisure facilities to inform the next stages of the strategy.

- 3.2. Working in conjunction with the Local Development Plan the Leisure Strategy will identify the future provision required in Brentwood to meet the needs of the residents.
- 3.3. The Brentwood Leisure Trust is the largest leisure provider in the Borough and currently manages six of the borough's community halls through its subsidiary Brentwood Leisure Trading Limited. These include Hutton Poplars Hall, Hutton Poplars Lodge, Nightingale Centre, Willowbrook, Bishops Hall and Merrymeade.
- 3.4. The Service Level Agreement with Brentwood Leisure Trading Limited to manage these halls expired in June 2016 together with the individual leases for each of the halls. It was agreed that this agreement will be extended until March 2017, and new leases were granted from the 6th June 2016 until 31st March 2017.
- 3.5. In order to ascertain the true running costs of these leisure facilities the Council has commissioned a value for money review and options appraisal of the Council's Leisure facilities which will include Brentwood Leisure Trust, six community halls, Hartswood Golf Course and the Council's play areas.
- 3.6. A draft report was received by officers on 25 November from 4Global and it is suggested that officers review the report in detail and come back to a special additional Community Health and Leisure Committee in February 2017, with recommendations for Members.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1. The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies set out in the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19 document. In order to deliver a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and Officers need to have a complete picture of the cost of the current provision, how it measures in value for money terms and the options available to them with any risk profiles associated with its leisure facilities.
- 4.2. The draft report was received by officers on 25 November and it is proposed to allow officers time to analysis, interrogate and challenge all of the recommendations within the report and their respective implications, that officers will then report back to Community Health and Leisure Committee with final recommendations for Members. As this is a large and important piece of work it is proposed that a special Community, Health and Leisure Committee is convened in February to discuss the recommendations fully.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 As part of the Council's due diligence in delivering a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and officers need to have a complete picture of the current associated costs and the risk profiles of the Borough's Leisure facilities.
- 5.2 Comments received from Sport England as part of the Local Development Plan consultation, stated that a Leisure Strategy is required that assesses Council owned sports and leisure facilities in order that the Council can continue to work with partners to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the residents of Brentwood. The strategy should not only consider how the Council can provide services, but also how other partners can. The strategy should also use current sports facility evidence to identify strategic priorities to then inform what will be included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Following this feasibility work, the Council will then be able to determine which projects will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and those funded by planning obligations.

6. References to Council Priorities

The Leisure Strategy sits under two strands of the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19: Environment and Housing Management – to develop a Leisure strategy to provide strong and sustainable leisure facilities for residents and businesses; and Community and Health - to work with community and voluntary organisations to develop the priorities for community development. There will also be strong links for the priorities of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

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- 7.1 One of the key drivers for the Leisure Strategy is to reduce the Council's revenue and capital costs on its leisure facilities and provide sustainable leisure facilities in the future.

Legal Implications

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- 8.1 The current five year Service Level Agreement with Brentwood Leisure Trading Limited which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Brentwood Leisure Trust, for the management of six of the Borough's community halls expires in June 2016.

- 8.2 Under conditions of the lease the Council must give six months termination of the agreement. It was therefore agreed that the agreement for the hall management would be extended until March 2017 to enable officers to gather information before going through a formal tender process for the management of the halls.
- 8.3 As part of the Council's due diligence a full and thorough options analysis will inform Members of the options available to them in the development of the Leisure Strategy priorities.

Background documents:

Local Development Plan

National Planning Policy framework

Fields in Trust - Guidance for Outdoor sport Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard

PLC report

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