

6 June 2016

Community, Health and Leisure Committee

Leisure Strategy

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

Wards Affected: *All wards*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1.** In March 2015 the Council commissioned Ploszajski Lynch Consulting to assist in the development of a Leisure Strategy for the Borough. 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.
- 1.2.** Now the Council is in possession of the needs analysis, It is proposed that the Council commission a full and thorough value for money review and options appraisal of the Council’s leisure facilities (Phase 2 of the leisure strategy) within the Borough which will include the Brentwood Centre, six community halls (which will include Bishops Hall, Hutton Poplars Hall, Hutton Poplars Lodge, Merrymeades, Nightingale Centre, Willowbrook Hall) and Hartswood Golf Course.
- 1.3.** The value for money review and options appraisal will provide Members with a complete picture of the current provision. It will also provide them with an understanding of the various options available to them and associated risk profiles for securing future leisure provision in the Borough. It will also help members identify the ‘best fit’ for Brentwood. This work will inform any formal tender process which may follow the review.

2. Recommendations

That Members agree:

- 2.1 To commission a Value for Money Review and Options Appraisal of the Council's Leisure facilities to include the Brentwood Centre, Community Halls (to include Bishops Hall, Hutton Poplars Hall, Hutton Poplars Lodge, Merrymeades, Nightingale Centre, Willowbrook Hall) and Hartswood Golf Course.**
- 2.2 For Officers to request support from the LGA Productivity Expert Programme in respect of the Consultancy costs.**
- 2.3 Approve the release from the Transformation reserve of £30k, as allowed for in the 2016/2017 budget, to support the work of the Leisure Strategy and Value for Money Review and Options Appraisal.**
- 2.4 This budget be delegated to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Chair of Community, Health and Leisure Committee.**
- 2.5 That Officers report back to Members the outcomes of the Value for Money Review and Options Appraisal.**

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 LDP. 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.**
- 3.2 One of the key priorities is to establish baseline data associated with each of the leisure facilities to enable members to make informed decisions so that the Council can deliver a sustainable leisure strategy for Brentwood.**
- 3.3 In Brentwood, 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: Hutton Poplars**

Hall, Hutton Poplars Lodge, Nightingale Centre, Willowbrook, Bishops Hall and Merrymeades.

- 3.4 The Service Level Agreement with Brentwood Leisure Trading Limited to manage these halls expires in June 2016 together with the individual leases for each of the halls. It has been agreed that this agreement will be extended until March 2017, and new leases granted from the 6th June 2016 until 31st March 2017. This enables officers to ascertain the current running costs including repairs and maintenance, establish the value for money of the current arrangements and the options available to the Council for securing this leisure provision in the longer term.
- 3.5 In order to ascertain the true running costs of these leisure facilities it is proposed that the Council commission a value for money review and options appraisal of the Council's Leisure facilities which will include Brentwood Leisure Trust, six community halls and Hartwood Golf Course. We will also review the provision of playing pitches, such to include King Georges Playing Field and Warley Playing Field
- 3.6 Brentwood Borough Council is requesting some financial support from the Local Government Association (LGA) Productivity Expert Programme to assist in the commissioning of the value for money review and options analysis.

4 Issue, 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 along with any risk profiles associated with its leisure facilities. As such it will be necessary for a full and thorough value for money review and options appraisal to be undertaken to identify the 'best fit' for Brentwood to ensure the Borough has sustainable leisure facilities moving forward and the optimum strategy for securing them.
- 4.2 It is envisaged that the options appraisal will include agreed criteria and weighting which will support the Councils priorities.

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 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 Corporate Plan

- 6.1 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 The report recommends providing a budget to support the work of the Leisure Strategy, which will provide a range of information to enable Members to make informed decisions on the future on leisure across the Borough. The cost of this will be around £30k. If agreed any expenditure will need to be funded from the Council's balances.
- 7.2 An application for financial support from the Local Government Association will be submitted to potentially secure £6k of funding to support the commissioning of the value for money review and options analysis.

8 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.

9 Appendices to this report

Appendix A - Productivity Expert Programme, Draft Project Outline 2016

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