

20 June 2017

Policy, Projects and Resources Committee

Leisure Strategy

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

Wards Affected: *All Brentwood Borough Wards*

This report is: *Public report*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 It was agreed by Members at the 5 December 2016, Community, Health and Leisure Committee (min ref.207) that the Council commissioned a report to be undertaken by 4Global to review the Value for Money options and appraisal of the Council leisure facilities which. The leisure facilities include the Brentwood Centre, six community halls, Hartswood Golf Course and the Council's play areas.
- 1.2 It is proposed to adopt a three-phased approach to deliver the Leisure Strategy and that the Community, Health and Housing Committee will be tasked with the delivery of the strategy. It is also proposed that the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee will look at each of the phases at the appropriate time and that this will be added to the Committee's work programme for 2017/18.
- 1.3 There is a separate report at Item 12 of this agenda which will request the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee to review other corporate projects including the Leisure Strategy.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members agree to adopt the following phased approach to the delivery of the Leisure Strategy:**

Phase 1 – King Georges Playing Fields and Warley Playing Fields
Phase 2 - Play areas, open spaces and options for ongoing maintenance and halls management
Phase 3 – Brentwood Centre and provision for sport across the borough

- 2.2 That the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee review the Leisure Strategy in accordance with the scope as set out in Item No.12 on this agenda and make recommendations to the Community, Health and Housing Committee.**

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 In order to ascertain the true running costs of the Council's leisure facilities, it commissioned a value for money review and options appraisal of the its facilities which included the Brentwood Centre, six community halls (currently managed by Brentwood Leisure Trust), Hartswood Golf Course and the Council's play areas.
- 3.3 4Global were appointed in 2016 to undertake this piece of work and this was completed in November 2016.
- 3.4 A subsequent soft market testing exercise was also undertaken to further inform the discussion, particularly around any decisions to re-procure operational management, which could potentially realize some capital investment into the Council's leisure facilities.

4 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies as 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, the future options available to them, together with any risk profiles associated with its leisure facilities.
- 4.2 The key decision for Brentwood Borough Council is how to best provide the level of leisure provision for both current and future Brentwood residents, bearing in mind that it has existing but ageing facilities and the future development pressures.
- 4.3 The consultant's report has set out a number of possible options in respect of the Brentwood Centre, the community halls, Hartswood Golf Course and the Council's play areas. It also set out other possible operational management and procurement options that could be available to the Council.

- 4.4 The existing lease arrangements between Brentwood Leisure Trust and Brentwood Leisure Trading Limited will continue for six months (until December 2017) in relation to the Grant and Service Level agreement and the leases for the six community halls whilst officers explore other operational management options for the halls.
- 4.5 As the Leisure Strategy is a large and important piece of work it is proposed that a three-phased approach be adopted to ensure that there is a clear structure and approach to the Leisure Strategy, which will enable the Council to manage the capacity to deliver each phase in turn. There will still be some flexibility in this approach if urgent decisions are required in some of the phases e.g. lease arrangements.
- 4.6 The strategy will have interdependencies with other council strategies and projects that could have an effect on proposed timelines. In addition proposed timelines may alter as a results of options and decisions taken.
- 4.7 The Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee will establish a cross party working group to work through the priority areas in the three-phased approach and make recommendations to the Community Health and Housing Committee.
- 4.8 To take advantage of the Council's Strawberry Fair event on the 17 June, officers will start a consultation with residents and visitors on options of new activities for King George's Playing Fields. Using token collection boxes, Brentwood residents and park visitors can indicate their preferred choice between the following options. A suggestion box will also be available for any other alternative suggestions.

- 4.8.1 Option 1 - Water play such as a splash park
- 4.8.2 Option 2 – Indoor soft play facility
- 4.8.3 Option 3 – High Ropes

- 4.9 The consultation will also be used at the Council's Family Fun Day events that take place every Friday during the school summer holidays.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 As part of the Council's due diligence in delivering a successful Leisure Strategy, opportunities for income generation will be explored as part of the process.

- 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.
- 5.3 The Council's Asset Management Strategy also sets out the need to maximise income where possible from its asset portfolio.

6 References to Council Priorities

- 6.1 The Leisure Strategy sits under two main 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 are also strong links for the priorities of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017, the Local Development Plan, Active Brentwood/Essex and the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

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 current revenue and capital costs on its leisure facilities and provide strong and sustainable leisure facilities for the future.
- 7.2 Once the feasibility studies have been undertaken then the Council will have a clearer picture on the associated costs of the relevant options that Members would like to examine more.

Legal Implications

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- 8.1 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. Background documents

- Local Development Plan
- National Planning Policy framework
- Fields in Trust - Guidance for Outdoor sport Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard
- PLC report
- Sport England
- Leisure Strategy summary report

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