

25 September 2017

Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee

Leisure Strategy – Phase 1 update and recommendations

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

Wards Affected: *All Brentwood Borough Wards*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. It was agreed at the 3 July 2017 Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee to establish a Leisure Strategy Working Group (LSWG) to inform and assist the Community, Health and Housing Committee in agreeing recommendations on each of the three phases of the Leisure Strategy. These three phases were agreed by the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 20 June 2017. The report before Members is an update on the progress under Phase 1.
- 1.2. The LSWG consists of Cllrs Pound, Middlehurst, Murphy, Davies and Hubbard and met on the 2 August and 6 September 2017.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. **That Members agree the update on the progress of Phase 1 of the Leisure Strategy work and that the following recommendations are provided to a future Community Health and Housing Committee for consideration:**
 - a) **That officers work with partners to develop a unique selling point for Brentwood's leisure facilities.**
 - b) **That any development plans ensure that all facilities are accessible for all, including paths.**
 - c) **That use is made of existing trails and paths to link the Council's leisure facilities.**
 - d) **That any building development considered will be sustainable/eco-friendly and sympathetic to its surroundings.**
 - e) **That officers liaise with other authorities about their own leisure facilities to identify opportunities and issues.**
 - f) **That officers explore potential external funding models.**
 - g) **That representatives from Bellway Homes are invited to the official opening of the refurbished Warley Play Area.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1. The Council commissioned a Value for Money and Options Appraisal of its Leisure and Cultural facilities. This was completed in February 2017 and a copy of the 4Global report was circulated to all Members after the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee in June 2017.
- 3.2. It was agreed at the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee that the Leisure Strategy work be split into three phases and that the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee would set up a cross party working group to scrutinize the work within each of those phases.
- 3.3. The report before Members is to update on the progress on, and any proposed work to be undertaken in each of those phases and come back to this committee with their recommendations.
- 3.4. The LSWG has met in August and September and the initial meeting set out the scope for the group in respect of the Leisure Strategy work, agreed the Terms of Reference of the group and the frequency of the meetings. The first phase looked at the areas of improvement proposed for King George's Playing Fields and Warley Playing Fields, together with the Council's Community Halls which are currently managed by Brentwood Leisure Trust and Brentwood Leisure Trading.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1. The 4Global report set out a number of options and recommendations which were not necessarily agreed by Members. In order to ensure that the Council makes sound decisions on the future of its leisure facilities it was proposed that the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee be set up to scrutinize the Council's key projects, one of which is the progression of the Leisure Strategy.
- 4.2. Phase 1 of the Leisure Strategy focusses on future leisure requirements in King George's Playing Fields, Warley Playing Fields and the Council's Community Halls.
- 4.3. From June until September at the Council's Strawberry Fair and Family Fun Days events the Council undertook a consultation with residents and visitors on possible options for the new facilities for the park. The results were as follows: Option1 – Water Play such as a splash park 305 responses; Option 2 – Indoor Soft Play facility 64 responses; Option 3 High Ropes 53 responses. However, it is recommended that officers also look at other new and innovative facilities that could also prove to be commercially viable in the parks.

- 4.4. The Section106 developer contribution from Bellway Homes from the development of Warley Training Centre has been received by the Council and ward Members have been involved in the consultation of the refurbishment of the play area. It is expected that the refurbishment should be completed by December 2017 and an official opening will be planned with representatives from Bellway Homes and Brentwood Borough Council.
- 4.5. A feasibility study on the Council's Community Halls is currently being undertaken and a report will be presented to the Council's Policy, Projects and Resources Committee with recommendations.
- 4.6. The following areas were also identified by the working group for further investigation which included:
- a) Decision on areas of investment in King George's Playing Fields and Warley Playing Fields
 - b) Paddling pools future options
 - c) Pavillion building future options and requirements
 - d) Golf Course operational options
 - e) Warley Pavillion improvements
 - f) Other opportunities
- 4.7. It is recommended when looking at leisure facilities or activities that officers identify industry experts to work with to develop plans for new or innovative leisure facilities that could also prove to be commercially viable for the Council.
- 4.8. It is also recommended that there is a balance with the existing use of the parks and any potential planned development.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The Council needs to ensure that its Leisure Facilities are fit for purpose, sustainable, accessible to the residents and visitors, and support the Council's priorities of improving health and wellbeing of its residents.

6. References to Council Priorities

The Leisure Strategy sits across a number of corporate priorities. Under the Environment and Housing Management strand, the Council will develop a Leisure Strategy to provide strong and sustainable leisure facilities for residents and visitors and work with partners to make best use of leisure facilities across the Borough. Under the Community and Health strand to review community assets and Under the Economic Development strand to maximise the Council's assets to deliver corporate objectives and ensure community benefits.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: John Chance, Finance Director

Tel & Email: 01277 312542/john.chance@brentwood.gov.uk

- 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.

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

Name & Title: Daniel Toohey, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312860/daniel.toohey@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.2 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.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 7.3 None.

- 8. Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

Local Development Plan

National Planning Policy Framework

Fields in Trust – Guidance for outdoor sport: Beyond the six Acre Standard

Sport England priorities

Active Essex priorities

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager

Telephone: 01277 312634

E-mail: kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk