

Committee(s): Community and Health Committee	Date: 9 March 2021
Subject: Leisure Strategy Review and action plan update	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Kim Anderson	Public
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Summary

The Leisure Strategy 2018-28 is one of the key strategies for the Council to ensure that its leisure facilities are not only fit for purpose now, but for the future. The Strategy and annual action plan set the vision, what the Council needs to achieve, the challenges it faces and how the priorities and outcomes have been identified.

In light of the Covid pandemic and with the liquidation of Brentwood Leisure Trust it is proposed to undertake a review the Leisure Strategy and ensure that it will still meet the needs of Brentwood residents.

The report before members also provides an update on the Leisure Strategy annual action plan 2020-21.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

R1. Note the update on the Leisure Strategy annual action plan 2020-2021 attached in Appendix A.

R2. Agree that officers will undertake a review of the Leisure Strategy and bring a revised Leisure Strategy back to this committee with the recommendations.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. The Leisure Strategy 2018-28 was agreed by Members and it was also agreed that an annual action plan would come back to Committee to inform Members of the progress made on the implementation of the Leisure Strategy.
2. The Strategy is split into six workstreams:

- Built facilities
- Open Spaces
- Play areas
- Sport
- Health and Wellbeing
- Leadership, Management and Oversight

The annual action plan attached in Appendix A, sets out the work that has been delivered in April 2020-March 2021.

3. The Council also realise the longer-term impact that the Covid pandemic will have on our residents and needs to understand how we can best support them.
4. Sport England's new 10year vision is to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. In light of the coronavirus pandemic they are looking at how collectively they keep movement, sport activity central to the lives of everyone, as it will improve people's lives in so many ways. They are looking at 5 big issues where they see the greatest potential for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity.
 - **Recover and reinvent** – recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network or organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
 - **Connecting Communities** – focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together
 - **Positive experiences for children and young people** – Focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life
 - **Connecting with Health and wellbeing** - Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life
 - **Active environments** – creating places and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active
5. The Council continues to work closely with Active Essex through Active Brentwood to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing. Active Essex put together over 200 on-line activities for all ages during the pandemic.
6. Brentwood's Health and Wellbeing Board has a number of subgroups that look to reduce health inequalities and in turn support the implementation of the Leisure Strategy.

7. There is also an opportunity to look at how the Council can reduce the Health inequalities across a number of socio-economic factors.
8. The Council can also ensure that with any new built facilities it looks to adopt some key principles – carbon neutral, passive house so that we look to maximise energy efficiency and reduce utility costs.
9. In light of Brentwood Leisure Trust's insolvency and with the Council currently managing the Brentwood Centre directly, it is important that the Council ensures that the future facility mix supports residents needs and works to procure a new operator.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

10. The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies for the Council. To deliver a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and Officers need to have a complete picture of the costs 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.
11. The Leisure Strategy Working Group identified that without a Leisure Strategy in place the Council has no clear path on how it will deliver its desired outcomes or identify the priorities that will support delivery.
12. 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 that the Council will also be faced with ongoing budgetary and development growth pressures.

Reasons for Recommendation

13. 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, risk profiles of the Borough's Leisure facilities and identify opportunities for income generation.
14. In light of the coronavirus pandemic and its long-term impact, it was felt that the Leisure Strategy should be reviewed to ensure that it remain relevant to the needs of Brentwood residents.

15. 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.

16. As part of the Council Asset Management Strategy there is also a need to maximise income where possible from its asset portfolio.

Consultation

17. Consultation will be undertaken on the revised Leisure Strategy will be undertaken before the final draft is presented by to Members.

References to Corporate Plan

18. The Leisure Strategy sits mainly under the 'Developing Communities' strand to enhance and develop new sustainable leisure facilities. It also supports 'Growing our economy' and protecting our environment.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Director of Corporate Resources
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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 ensure that they are affordable, sustainable and fit for purpose to meet future requirements.

The Council needs to ensure that all costs and income are identified and agreed at all stages of the delivery of the Leisure Strategy and that the appropriate procurement processes are adhered to.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
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Councils have legal duties for promoting wellbeing, both to individuals (Care Act 2014) and to the population across their areas (Local Government Act 2000). Intrinsic in this are new public health duties for improving the health of their populations including “giving information, providing services or facilities to promote healthy living and providing incentives to live more healthily” (Department of Health 2012). There is a strong legislative framework within which local authorities should invest in provision of sport, leisure, physical activity and open space services and infrastructure although many leisure services and facilities are discretionary functions.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director of Strategic Planning

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Improving the health and wellbeing those living, working and visiting the borough can benefit the local economy in a multitude of ways. The regular review of the action plan will help to ensure that the Council is on track towards achieving goals set within the workstreams set out in the report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Partnerships, Leisure & Funding Manager

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Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 of the Equality Act) the Council needs to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The Leisure Strategy will promote accessible leisure facilities that all residents can enjoy supporting their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Health & Wellbeing Implications

Name/Title: Jo Cory, Corporate Health & Wellbeing Officer

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The revised Leisure Strategy will support Brentwood’s Health and Wellbeing Board’s objectives of reducing the borough health inequalities through its workstreams.

Background Papers

Leisure Strategy 2018-28

Appendices to this report

Appendix A: Leisure Strategy Annual Action Plan 2020-21 and workplan 2021- 22