

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Executive

4 December 2019

TITLE:	Leisure Centre Options
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Damien Greenhalgh - Deputy Leader & Executive Councillor for Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
CONTACT OFFICER:	Robert Wilks - Principal Officer (Leisure and Recreation)
WARDS INVOLVED:	Non specific

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider the work required to establish clear plans for future investment and management options for the Council's leisure centres in line with the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive:
- Approve plans to recruit external consultancy support in order to assist the Council in progressing plans for future investment and management options for the Council's leisure centres

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 Asset condition surveys were completed during 2016, the outcomes from which were considered by the Executive in July 2016. The findings highlighted that significant capital investment is required in the Council's leisure assets over the next 30 years in order that they remain fit for purpose.
- 3.2 In June 2017 the Executive adopted a new Strategy for Physical Activity and Sport. The strategy provides for opportunities for participation be developed and maintained for a widest possible range of the High Peak community and establishes priorities that will target particular groups of people and communities where inactivity and poor health is more prevalent.
- 3.3 At a similar time, the Council also commissioned FMG Consulting to review its

leisure centre provision in the context of its sports facility needs focusing on sports halls, swimming pools and other indoor provision. The purpose of undertaking this review was to inform the Council on options for future provision of council leisure centres and other sports facility based services from 2018 and beyond.

- 3.4 The outcome of this review, in effect sets out a position statement on the suggested facility hierarchy and approach, along with recommendations for phasing of future facility developments and rationalisation. The aim is to ensure that the Council can develop a more sustainable solution in relation to meeting customer needs, affordability and partner aspirations, whilst supporting the overall vision of the Council's Physical Activity & Sport strategy.
- 3.5 The conclusion of the review was that the Council should consider the following investment requirements:
 - Replacement of Glossop LC and Glossop Pool – single wet & dry community facility;
 - Refurbishment and essential works at New Mills;
 - Ongoing maintenance at Buxton;
 - 3G pitch development at Chapel – change sand-dressed pitch to 3G, plus an additional 3G pitch to achieve the total of 3x 3G pitches advocated in the Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) and Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS).
- 3.6 In December 2018 the Executive approved the award of a new contract to Parkwood Leisure Ltd operating as Lex Leisure to manage the Council leisure centres from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2024.
- 3.7 Whilst approving the contract award, the Council committed to commence a process to consider longer term future management options for the leisure centres in further detail.
- 3.8 There are a number of different delivery options available for the Council to consider for the future management arrangements for leisure centres once the contract with Parkwood Leisure comes to an end in March 2024. Recommendations for further consideration, taken from the FMG report are as follows:
 - A new outsourced single contract (i.e. an evolution of the current arrangements with Parkwood or other external provider); or
 - Set up a local delivery vehicle – either a wholly owned subsidiary of the Council or a new trust.
- 3.9 It is recommended that the Council now seeks further consultancy support in order to assist the development of plans for continued service transformation, in line with the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, which should include;
 - A refresh of the current position highlighted in the 2017 FMG report, taking into account changes to participation trends, leisure centre performance data and improvements to community facilities, which build on the aspirations in the physical activity and sport strategy;

- Development of a clear and affordable capital investment plan and proposed delivery schedule for each investment option;
 - Detailed work to establish the preferred management options and the financial impact of these to the Council; and
 - Engagement with partners to establish meaningful joint investment plans if/where there is opportunity to do so.
- 3.10 Initial scoping meetings have taken place with Sport England in order to begin to develop a robust specification for the work, including the use of the Sport England, Strategic Outcome Planning Guidance (SOPG). SOPG guidance has a clear, strategic and sustainable approach to making effective investment into sport and physical activity provision – both facilities and services.
- 3.11 It is recognised that wider aspirations for the Council involving regeneration, housing and health should feed into this work so as to ensure a holistic approach is taken to addressing physical inactivity and health inequalities in the broadest sense.
- 3.12 Work by the Council’s Regeneration Service is being undertaken to establish wider facility planning issues in the High Peak, especially in Glossop relating to the One Public Estate (OPE) project. Any proposals to improve leisure centre provision will be integrated into these plans where possible, in order to maximise resources and opportunities to engage more residents in physical activity.

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The provision of high quality leisure facilities both in formal leisure centres and swimming pools and out in the communities is an objective of the Council as set out in the new Corporate Plan.

5 Options and Analysis

- 5.1 A number of options will be considered as part of the work undertaken

6 Implications

- 6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)
None
- 6.2 Workforce
None
- 6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment
This report has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity policies.
- 6.4 Financial Considerations

The cost of this work will be met from existing resources

An outcome from this next piece of work will be a clear and affordable capital investment plan and proposed delivery schedule for each investment option

- 6.5 Legal
None
- 6.6 Sustainability
None
- 6.7 External Consultation
Extensive stakehold consultation will be necessary before investment options are finanised
- 6.8 Risk Assessment
Not applcable at this stage

ANDREW P STOKES
Executive Director (Transformation) & Chief Finance Officer

Web Links and

Background Papers

21.7.16 - Development of the Asset Management Plan - Asset Condition Surveys (Non-Housing Stock)

15.6.17 – [Strategy for physical activity and sport](#)

6.12.18 – Leisure centre operating contract award

[Sport England – Strategic outcomes planning guidance:](#)

Location: Fowlchurch Depot

Location

Contact details

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7. Background and Introduction

- 7.1 In order to provide the foundations for the development of a strategy for new investment options and operating arrangements for the leisure centres, the Council appointed FMG Consulting Ltd in 2017 to review the leisure centre provision and sports facility needs, focusing on sports halls, swimming pools and other indoor provision.
- 7.2 The purpose of undertaking the review was to inform the Council on options for future provision of leisure centres and other sports facility based services from 2019 and beyond. The review and assessments also provide data and information to inform the development of the Local Plan, emerging planning policy and infrastructure planning.
- 7.3 The four core objectives of the review were to:
- Audit and report on the wider supply and demand for sports facilities in the High Peak area and identify a mixed model of provision (public/private/voluntary) capable of meeting future demand for sport and physical activity.
 - Review the existing and provide options for the future provision of Council leisure centres across the High Peak.
 - Identify opportunities for allocating resources into existing local facilities (council owned or third party) to achieve better outcomes for people in relation to health, social and economic inclusion, crime reduction etc.
 - Provide a headline procurement and management model options appraisal, for future council owned sports and leisure facilities. The model should try and provide an optimal balance between meeting (sport and physical activity) market demands, providing sufficient capacity, being financially self sufficient and addressing local sport and physical activity development needs.
- 7.4 The final report in effect sets out a position statement on the suggested facility hierarchy and approach, along with recommendations for phasing of future facility developments and rationalisation. The aim is to ensure that the Council can develop a more sustainable solution in relation to meeting customer needs, affordability and partner aspirations, whilst supporting the overall vision of the Council's Physical Activity & Sport Strategy.
- 7.5 The report stresses the importance of a multi-agency approach to delivery of the service in the High Peak if the Council's strategic priorities are to be achieved. The services are reliant on a network of well maintained, accessible facilities throughout the district in order to facilitate the delivery of such intervention programmes, alongside supporting positive habits amongst the general population.
- 7.6 If the Council is to be effective in raising activity levels in the High Peak, a clear approach to facility provision is required. It will be necessary to maximise the use of assets and coordinate provision from a number of sources. The Council along with schools, colleges and clubs all have pivotal roles to play.

7.7 Future facility provision needs to be considered from four aspects:

- Facilities required to enable physical activity for health benefits on a mass and localised basis (particularly linked to the Physical Activity & Sport Strategy);
- Facilities required to meet educational need, particularly school swimming;
- Facilities required for sport, particularly sports development and sports clubs;
- Facilities required for disability sport, including sports development and education links.

7.8 For the services provided to be effective ensuring an appropriate location of the facilities is vital. The figure below identifies an initial framework of provision in the district going forward – this can form the basis for refinement and prioritising investment in future years. Importantly, the tiers are not exclusive and many facilities will cater for a range of users.



7.9 Within the context of this framework of provision, particularly in relation to district-wide and 'locality' or town-based provision, the Council invests significant resources in delivering a number of sporting facilities which provide a range of essential services such as learn to swim programmes, exercise referral services and support for local schools. In addition, the centres are bases for numerous clubs and groups, enabling many clubs to deliver and develop their sports in a safe and suitable environment.

7.10 At the time of the report, the Councils current leisure stock delivered c.800,000 visits per year and c.£3.0m of income across 3 sites, but it is recognised that the stock is very old and requires approx. £7.25m of essential maintenance works to extend the life cycle of the current buildings. Secondary spend (food, retail) is low in all of the Councils leisure centres, indicating that comfort and quality may also need to be addressed.

7.11 The report summarises that the leisure centres are broadly in the right areas of the High Peak, for maximising access. Key messages that informed the preferred way forward are therefore:

- The need to address quality issues across all sites;
- Recognition that there is no need for additional swimming pool or sports hall provision and that residential growth is not a driver of future facility need;
- Future facilities and programmes need to be cognisant of the needs of focus groups and ageing of the resident population;
- Refurbishment and re-provision are the main drivers to achieve a 'fit for purpose' estate, but with limited opportunities for rationalisation given the geographically unique catchments;
- Glossop is the area of highest demand, with potential to rationalise provision onto a single site and expand pool size. However, Glossopdale Community College offers significant dry-side provision in the area, which needs to be considered in relation to community use;
- To ensure, where possible, that all school sports halls are accessible to the local community for as much time as is feasibly possible. This should be written into community use agreements with schools where possible;
- To ensure that the programming of all sports halls is complementary and works to achieve maximum benefit for the local community and catchment which it serves;
- In parallel, there is also a need to ensure that the cost of accessing facilities is appropriate for different client groups.

7.12 The identified way forward focuses on core sustainable provision (leisure focused, sustainable model), including:

- Possible replacement of Glossop LC and Glossop Pool – to a single wet & dry community facility or alternative options if the pool is retained;
- Refurbishment and essential works at New Mills;
- Ongoing maintenance at Buxton;
- 3G pitch development at Chapel – change sand-dressed pitch to 3G, plus an additional 3G pitch to achieve the total of 3x 3G pitches advocated in the Playing Pitch Strategy;
- Increased access to school sites for sports hall provision / club use.

7.13 The investment required to achieve this has been costed at £16.75m, with an associated annual revenue saving of close to £300,000 pa in the medium term.

8. Consultancy Support and Consultation with Key Partners

8.1 It is recommended that the Council now seeks further consultancy support in order to develop its plans for continued service transformation, in line with the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, which should include;

- A refresh of the current position highlighted in the 2017 FMG report, taking

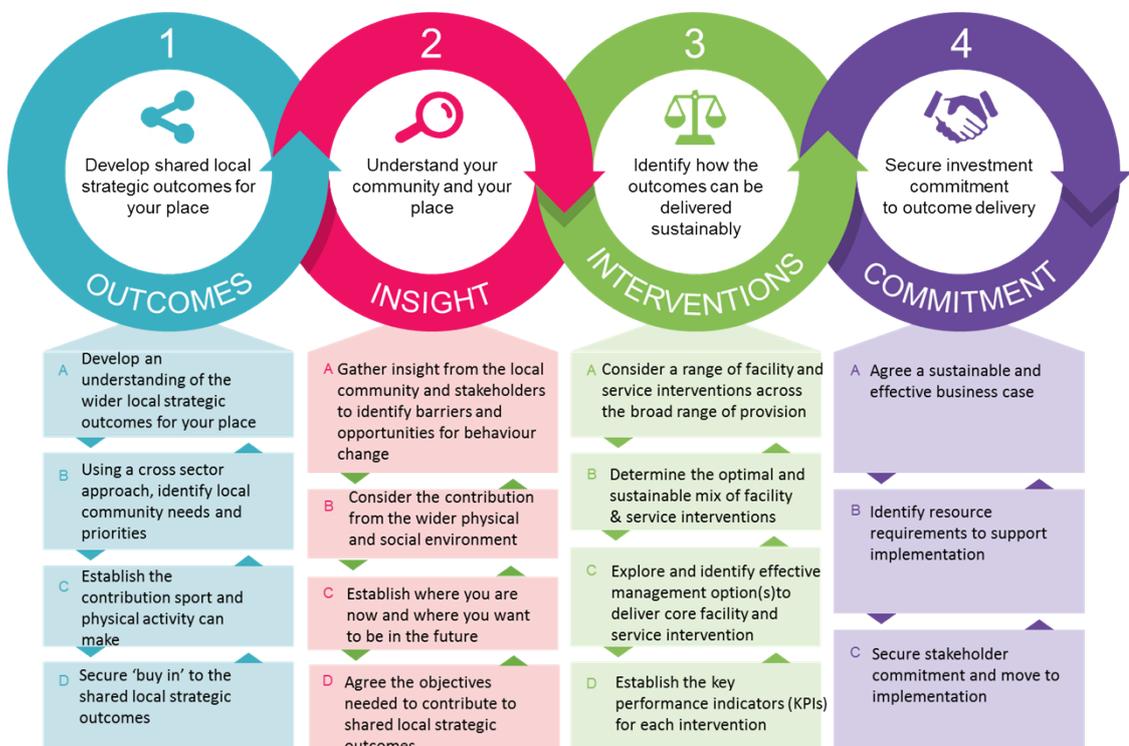
into account changes to participation trends, leisure centre performance data and improvements to community facilities, which build on the aspirations in the physical activity and sport strategy;

- Development of a clear and affordable capital investment plan and proposed delivery schedule for each investment option;
- Detailed work to establish the preferred management options and the financial impact of these to the Council; and
- Engagement with partners to establish meaningful joint investment plans if/where there is opportunity to do so.

8.2 Sport England is a national organisation responsible for grass roots sport in England. They have a wide focus which encompasses many aspects, including providing specialist support and guidance to local authorities regarding the development of new leisure facilities and operating models.

8.3 It is important that the Council works closely with Sport England throughout the next steps to ensure the it maximises the support, guidance and external funding opportunities available to it.

8.4 Initial scoping meetings have taken place with Sport England in order to begin to develop a robust specification for this work, this will include the use of their Strategic Outcome Planning Guidance (SOPG). The SOPG guidance (a summary of which is shown below) has a clear, strategic and sustainable approach to making effective investment into sport and physical activity provision – both facilities and services.



8.5 For each for the four sections of the SOGP is a checklist which can be utilised to ensure that the key areas for consideration have been met and any potential gaps have been addressed.

- 8.6 The proposed timetable for delivery of this next stage of consultancy work is summarised in the table below:

Stage	Date
Member approval for consultancy support	December 2019
Tender for consultancy support advertised	Winter 2019/20
Appointment of consultant	Spring 2020/21
Consultancy work undertaken	Spring-Summer 2020/21
Recommendations reported back to Members	Winter 2020/21

- 8.7 It is recognised that wider aspirations for the Council involving regeneration, housing and health should feed into this work so as to ensure a holistic approach is taken to addressing physical inactivity and health inequalities in the broadest sense
- 8.8 Work by the Council's Regeneration Service is being undertaken to establish wider facility planning issues in the High Peak, especially in Glossop relating to the One Public Estate (OPE) project. Any proposals to improve leisure centre provision should be integrated into these plans where possible, in order to maximise resources and opportunities to engage more residents in physical activity. The consultancy support will continue to feed into this project and will explore the feasibility of this option in greater detail.

9. Future Operating Model - Options

- 9.1 There are a number of different delivery options available for the Council to consider for the future management arrangements when the contract with Parkwood comes to an end in March 2024. These options are as follows:
- In-house delivery;
 - Outsourcing to an existing trust or private contractor;
 - Establishing an alternative delivery vehicle, for example a new trust / mutual or other form of social enterprise or a wholly-owned subsidiary;
 - Asset transfer;
 - Establishing a Joint Venture.
- 9.2 It is proposed that the consultancy support to be procured will undertake an assessment of the various options available to the Council in order that a recommendation for future delivery can be identified.
- 9.3 As the leisure operating contracts in the High Peak and Staffordshire Moorlands have now been aligned in regards to the contract end date, any future provision can now be considered across both council areas. Especially as provision across the Alliance may generate additional benefits or issues not previously identified.