

Key Decision Required:	No	In the Forward Plan:	No
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RESOURCES AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2020

SPORT AND LEISURE SERVICE

(Report prepared by Mike Carran)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update the committee on a number of key Sport and Leisure Projects, as requested.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Resources and Services Committee have requested updates on a number of items on the Sport and Leisure work programme. The Assistant Director for Economic Growth and Leisure has provided this background report and will attend the committee meeting on 21 September;
- Updates on each of the items requested are set out in Part 2, including the following:
 - The emerging district-wide Leisure Strategy
 - The refurbishment of the Clacton Leisure Centre
 - The sale of land to Clacton County High School and community access arrangements
 - The refurbishment of the Skate Park at the Leisure Centre – plans and timescales

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the committee note the contents of the report

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

This work stream will support a number of priorities in the Corporate Plan as set below:

- Modern, high quality buildings and facilities for customers and staff
- Health and wellbeing - foreffective services and improved public health
- Education - for improved outcomes
- Sport England and ActiveEssex- for physical activity and wellbeing
- Balanced annual budget
- 10 year financial plan
- Use assets to support priorities

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

The budget cost for the refurbishment of Clacton Leisure Centre is £520,267 for the works to both the swimming pool changing area and health suite. It takes into consideration professional fees and allows for a 20% contingency.

The appropriate resources for the other projects will be set out in the respective reports, once they are considered by Cabinet.

LEGAL

The proposals are within the Council's powers. Any Request for allocation of budget will be in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework, as set out in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities / Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement.

UPDATES ON THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMITTEE

a) The emerging district-wide Leisure Strategy as previously reported to it – progress with the development of the Strategy

The Sports Facilities Strategy was due to be presented for consideration by Cabinet earlier in the year. One of the key focusses of this plan was a wholesale review of pricing and recommendations for a change in direction, based on an external review of the local fitness market and an evaluation of the number of the volume and value of pre-paid members. Due to the pandemic, this strategy has been postponed and is likely to be brought forward for consideration early in 2021.

Membership numbers have fluctuated significantly due to the forced closure and phased approach to re-opening. In this state of flux, membership subscriptions have been halved to recognise the reduction in services available to those who pre pay, wither annually or through bank transfer. Further to this, the wider market has been drastically effected by the pandemic and it would not be an appropriate time to make radical decisions, without a clear understanding of when stability will resume.

b) The refurbishment of the Clacton Leisure Centre – to review arrangements for the refurbishment since they were last presented to the Committee

In July 2019, Cabinet committed a budget for the refurbishment of the swimming pool changing rooms and health suite areas at Clacton Leisure Centre.

A tender process for this works was postponed earlier in the year due to the forced closure of the Sports Facilities. A full specification has been prepared by a specialist organisation acting on behalf of the Council and is now in a position to be advertised to prospective contractors. This Architectural Design and Contract Administration company will also act on behalf of the Council during the evaluation

of tenders and throughout the construction phase.

Following receipt and evaluation of the subsequent submissions, it is anticipated that the work will be undertaken at the end of the year, which is historically the quietest period.

c) The sale of land to Clacton County High School, community access to the pitches on that land, management of that community access and the conditional works on the existing 3G pitches at the Leisure Centre – progress/timescales

The transfer of land to Clacton County High School (CCHS) has yet to be concluded and final agreements are not as yet in place.

In anticipation of conclusion however, agreement has been reached with the school and Essex County Council (ECC) on arrangements for community use.

Grass Pitch

The grass pitch which is marked out on the 'new' school land, will remain available for community use outside of school hours. This will be booked through the same process as all other grass sports pitches under the management of the Council.

Artificial Grass Pitch

Officers have been working with the Essex Football Association and the Football Foundation (FF) to develop a 3G strategy for the District. Essentially, a 3G pitch is artificial grass suitable for football. A refurbishment of the current sand filled pitch into a 3G is part of the agreement with ECC/CCHS

Working with the FF opens the door to the potential of external funding and a planning application for the refurbishment of the Clacton Leisure Centre pitch has been submitted. This is an essential requirement prior to a funding application being submitted.

d) The refurbishment of the Skate Park at the Leisure Centre – plans and timescales

Clacton Skate Park opened in 2004 and has historically fallen under the management of the Clacton Leisure Centre team.

The park is a traditional wooden design and comprised of a number of small independent ramps, with a large main ramp as a key focal point. The main ramp failed in summer 2019 and it was originally envisaged that this could be rectified by replacing parts and undertaking a service. Once the ramp was lifted however, the damage was more significant than envisaged and the ramp required replacing, together with additional groundworks required underneath. The park has remained closed since and a number of options have been considered on how to proceed.

The park is the only one in the Clacton area and was originally designed for both skate boards and BMX users. It is extremely well used and valued by young people and there is indicative evidence that it has significantly reduced anti-social skate board activity in the town centre and residential areas.

The following options are currently being considered and Cabinet will be asked to consider the way forward through the emerging 'Back to Business' report.

Repair the Main Ramp & ancillary works

This is the most economical and short term option, which would allow the park to re-open in a fairly short space of time. It would include the required groundworks.

There are also outstanding works required to the wider park, following an inspection by a play inspection company.

A budget cost for this work would be in the region of £60k.

Upgrade the Main Ramp to a concrete concept design

Two alternative proposals were requested last year, which would involve installing a new main ramp designed from concrete. This is a modern approach to skate park design, which is lower maintenance and less subject to vandalism.

A budget cost for this work would be in the region of £120-£160k.

Wider upgrade of the Skate Park

This would involve a wider refurbishment of the park to a concrete design, on top of the main ramp. The exact cost would be subject to the scope identified, as the park has a large footprint.

A budget cost for this work would be in the region of £220k.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None.

APPENDICES

None