

RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 SEPTEMBER 2021

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE AND TOURISM

A.1 ENQUIRY INTO PARTICULAR ELEMENTS OF THE COUNCIL'S SPORT AND LEISURE SERVICE

(Prepared by Kieran Charles, Acting Head of Sport and Leisure.)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with the information requested for its programmed enquiry into particular elements of the Council's Sport and Leisure Service.

BACKGROUND

On 13 July 2021, Council approved the work programme for this Committee (based on its recommendation). This work programme included an enquiry into particular elements of the Leisure and Sport Service of the Council at this meeting of the Committee.

In summary, the enquiry was to consider the developing Leisure Strategy of the Council (and how this would inform investment to address areas where Tendring was below comparable averages in activity levels), the commissioned works being undertaken at Clacton Leisure Centre (CLC) and the refurbishment of the Skate Park at Clacton Leisure Centre. To support the enquiry, a range of information was requested relevant to those elements.

This report details the information requested and sets out progress on key projects.

DETAILED INFORMATION

The pandemic has significantly impacted Leisure Services nationally over the last eighteen months, as three waves of lockdown have shut Facilities and reduced memberships. Tendring District Council Leisure Service has not been immune. A tactical response throughout the pandemic has been required as the operating environment changed on a monthly basis. The downtime in the pandemic has enabled progress on major refurbishment works to our main Facility at Clacton. The Council, in its post Covid recovery strategy – Back to Business - has committed to further improvements to the external offer at Clacton, with a complete redevelopment of the Skate Park.

As requested by the Chairman of the Committee, this update sets out the Facilities usage over the previous five years and projections for usage in the current and next following four years, demonstrating the impact of the pandemic and future trends. The report also shows some of the financial consequences of the pandemic in the budget over the last five years, including revenue income, expenditure, capital/one-off investments and grants to the Council.

The report provides an update on the Clacton Leisure Centre refurbishment, an assessment of the costs relating to works undertaken in 2021/22, demonstrating how value for money was secured. In addition, how a positive contribution has been made to the Council's aims of reducing its carbon footprint, including lessons learnt for future works at Leisure Facilities.

Finally, the report details the plans, timescales, revenue budget for maintenance impact, and envisaged lifespan of the new Skate Park.

The Leisure Service is one of many ways to stay active in Tendring. The report sets out the population percentage who are inactive, fairly active and active over the same five year period and compared with all District Councils in the East of England. Finally, the report notes the future district-wide Leisure Strategy and consultation proposals for users of the Facilities.

Set out below is specific information requested by the Committee:

a) Facilities usage over the previous five years and projection for usage in the current and next following four years

Attendance Figures				COVID	Projected
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Brightlingsea Sports Centre	38,536	45,416	36,158	10,299	30,000
Clacton Leisure Centre	451,075	434,000	425,975	60,826	332,00
Walton on the Naze Lifestyles	98,278	105,013	101,537	41,219	85,500
Dovercourt bay Lifestyles	103,493	105,456	102,546	38,160	87,000
Harwich Sports Centre	38,484	38,121	35,658	5,550	20,500

**2021/22 Low attendance figures due to Covid restrictions in place

Best Yearly Attendances

Projected Attendance Figures				
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2026/27
Brightlingsea Sports Centre	39,000	44,000	43,000	42,500
Clacton Leisure Centre	425,000	437,000	435,000	430,000
Walton on the Naze Lifestyles	98,000	104,000	101,500	103,000
Dovercourt bay Lifestyles	100,500	104,000	102,000	103,500
Harwich Sports Centre	30,000	36,000	34,500	35,500

Headlines on usage of Leisure Facilities in Tendring:

- Brightlingsea: 2018/19 was the highest attendance figure shown across the Gym, fitness classes, birthday parties, children's courses, squash, and astro usage.

- Clacton: Gym attendances and swim lessons are highest in 2019/20 (pre-covid), and Astro 2019/20 (pre-covid) were on par with the highest attendance year in 2017/18.
- Walton: Swimming lessons reach the highest point in 2019/20 (pre-covid), Gym usage/aqua aerobics and pool birthday parties consistent attendances from 2018/19 to 2019/20.
- Dovercourt: Consistent attendances from April 2017 - March 2020. Swimming lessons performed better in 2018/19, however very consistent across those three years, and the Gym had the highest attendance in 2019/20 (pre-covid).
- Harwich: Squash attendances were highest in 2017/18, birthday party bookings reached the highest in 2018/19.

b) Budget over the last five years including revenue income and expenditure and capital/one-off investments and grants to the Council

The figures show the impact of Covid on budgeted income; the support received to mitigate its impact, and the effect of the 2019/20 pay award on budgeted costs since that date.

Revenue (Direct)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£	£	£	£	£
Expenditure	3,047,870	2,987,160	3,111,840	3,290,910	3,205,050
Income	(2,265,240)	(2,203,130)	(2,203,060)	(590,884)	(2,163,820)
Income – Grants (COVID General)	0	0	0	(481,070)*	
Income – Grants (COVID SFC Scheme)	0	0	0	(1,121,276)	TBC**
Subsidy	782,630	784,030	908,780	1,097,680	1,041,230

*This relates to the first 25% of 'lost' income not covered by the SFC scheme, which has been met by general Covid support funding from the Government.

** No adjustment has been made yet to reflect the extension of the SFC scheme into 2021/22.

Capital

Scheme	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£	£	£	£	£
CLC Air handling Units	210,540				
Dovercourt Bay Lifestyles CCTV			26,000		
CLC – Spa and Wet Side Redevelopment					613,480
Walton Leisure Centre – Replacement Boilers					44,180
CLC – Replacement of All Weather Pitch*					668,750

- *Funded by grant receivable as part of a land 'swap' arrangement with ECC

c) Population percentage inactive, fairly active and active over the same five year period and how that compares with all District Councils in the East of England

Graphs from Active Lives, Sport England, illustrate the inactive population percentage, fairly active and active from 2017 until 2020 for Tendring and Essex County. There is no information available to date for the last year, 2020/21 or the current year, 2021/22.

Fig 1: Levels of activity in Tendring LA from below 30 minutes to over 150 minutes.

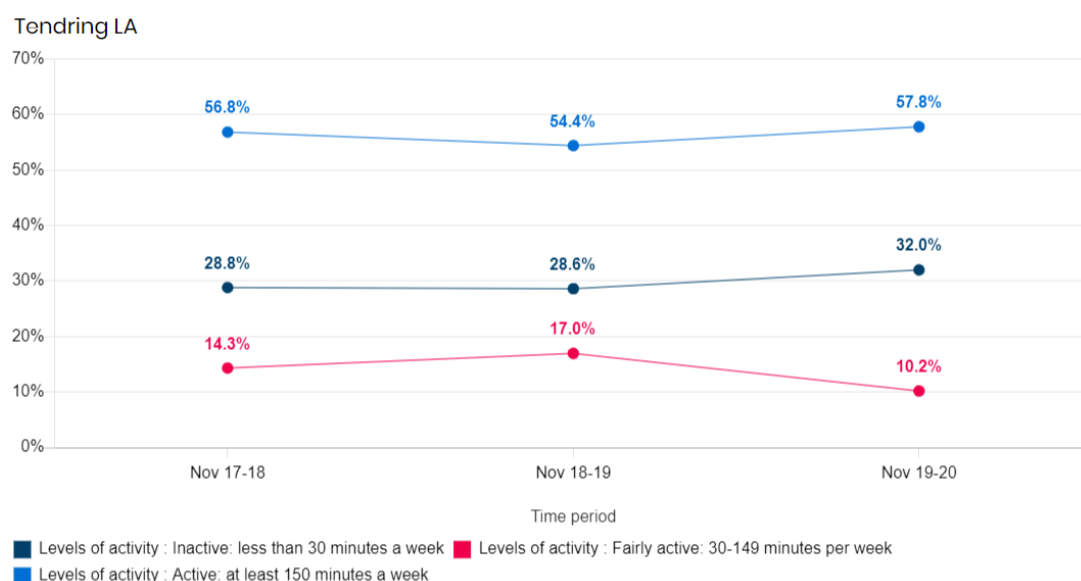
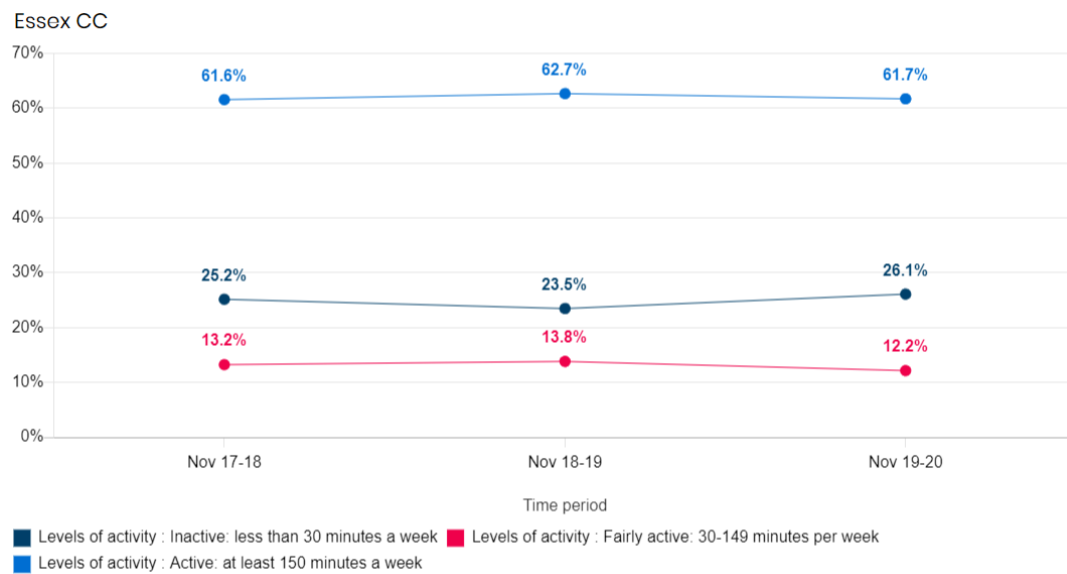


Fig 2: Levels of activity in Essex from below 30 minutes to over 150 minutes.



Note: The above data has been based on Adults 16+

Headlines on activity in Tendring and Essex

1. On average, over the last three years, Essex is 24.9% inactive, meaning they complete less than 30 minutes a week vs Tendring at 29.8%.
2. Essex is 13% fairly active, meaning individuals complete between 30-149 minutes a week vs Tendring at 13.8% across an average of the three years.
3. Averaging the three years, Essex is 62% active, completing at least 150 minutes a week vs Tendring at 56.3%.
4. A clear trend has been identified: fewer people were active in 2019/20 due to the pandemic, with Tendring increasing by 3.4% year on year (YOY) in inactivity. The same trend is noted in Essex; however, it is lower at 2.6% YOY.
5. Tendring District saw a decrease in people being active between 2017/18 & 2018/19 by 2.4%, whereas Essex increased by 1.1% within the same period of time. Tendring has seen an increase of 3.4% between the years 2018/19 to 2019/20.
6. Tendring's fairly active group decreased in 2019/20 by 6.8%, with half of those becoming inactive and half becoming active (both increased by 3.4%). Essex fairly active group decreased by 1.6%.

The bar graph below from Active Lives, Sport England, demonstrates the inactive population percentage, fairly active and active from 2017 to 2020 for Tendring and other Essex District Councils. The data for the last year, 2020/21 or the current year, 2021/22, is not available.

Fig 3 Level of activity in selected Essex Districts, 2019-20

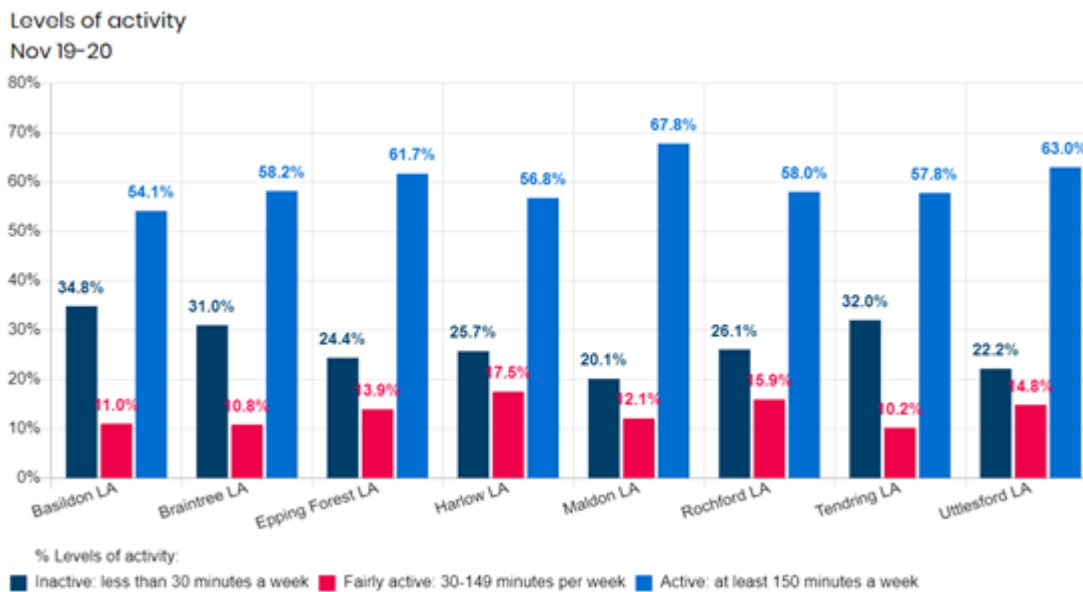


Fig 4 Level of activity in selected Essex Districts, 2018-19

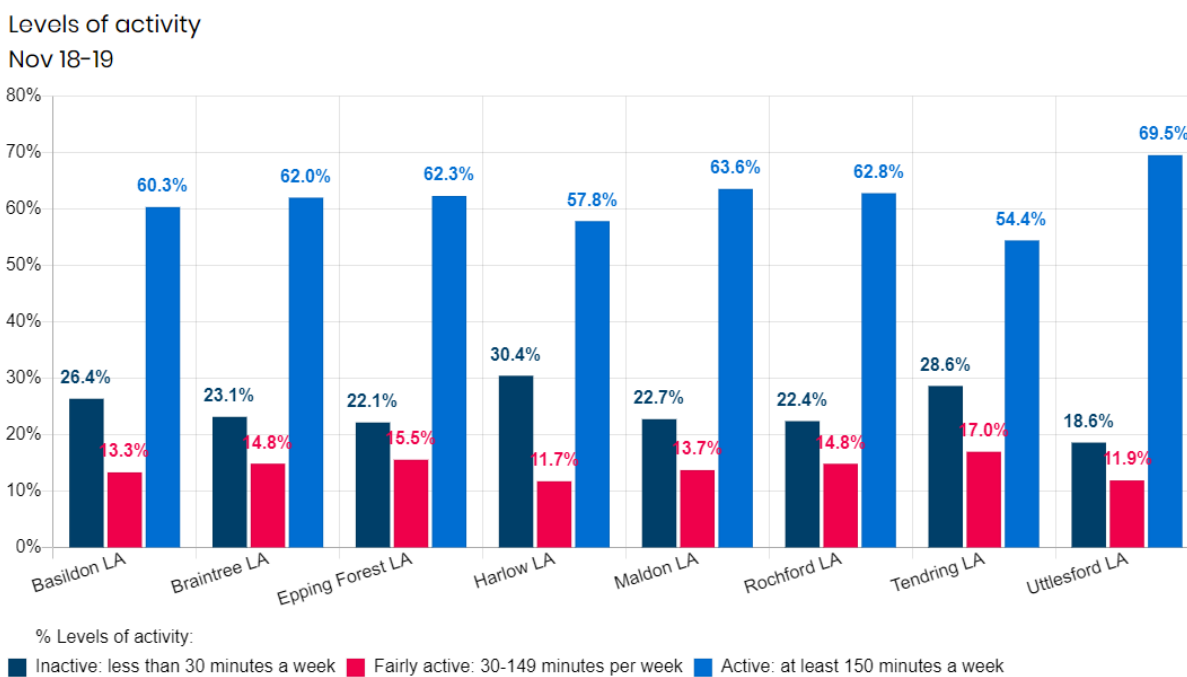
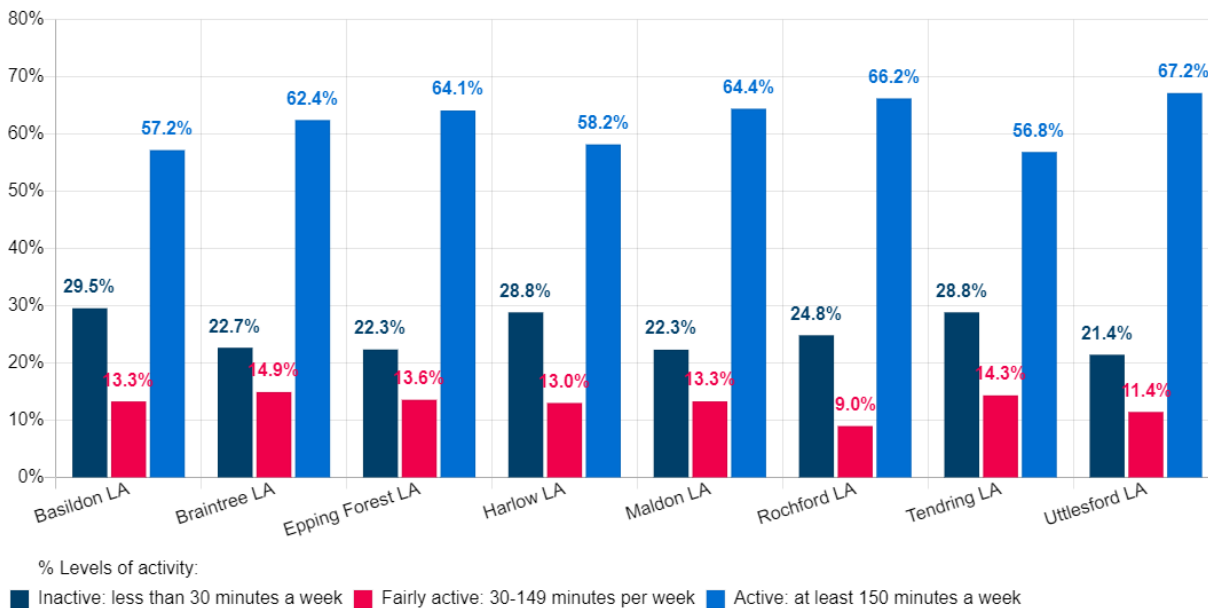


Fig 5 Level of activity in selected Essex Districts, 2017-18

Levels of activity

Nov 17-18



Note: The above data has been based on Adults 16+

Headlines on levels of activity in Tendring compared to other Essex Districts.

1. Inactivity in Tendring remained the same year on year between 2017/18 and 2018/19 and increased 3.4% in 2019/20, sitting alongside Basildon and Braintree.
2. Active activity levels in Tendring were at 56.8% in the year 2017/18, which was one of the lowest, and this decreased further by 2.4% in 2018/19; however, it saw a rise of 3.4% in 2019/20 and was slightly ahead of Harlow and Basildon Districts.
3. Fairly active levels in Tendring were reasonably high in 2017/18 compared to other Districts and increased in 18/19 by 2.7%, the highest across all Districts. Unfortunately, it became the lowest level at 10.2% in 19/20, sitting alongside Basildon and Braintree.

Note: Tendring has a larger older population than other Essex Districts, and the survey did not include some gentle activity such as gardening.

d) Update on the refurbishment of the Clacton Leisure Centre – An assessment of the costs of the works undertaken at Clacton Leisure Centre in 2021/22 as to how they secured value for money and made a positive contribution to the Council's aims of reducing its carbon footprint including lessons learnt for future works at Leisure facilities

Cabinet decided on 19 July 2019 to allocate £525,000 towards the refurbishment of Clacton Leisure Centre. A further £92,000 was allocated in the quarterly financial report on 19 March 2021, totalling £617,000.

Value for money was ensured through the procurement process and best advice. Architectural Design and Contract Administration company (Daniel Connal Partnerships)

act on behalf of the Council through the tender evaluation process and construction phase.

After receiving and evaluating the tender submissions, the lowest bids were scrutinised for quality and selected based on cost. The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism concurred with the Assistant Director's decision to appoint Lexden Contracts to complete the refurbishment on 19 May 2021, following the consultant's (Daniel Connal Partnership) recommendations. Work began on 21 June 2021.

Phase one has focused on the health suite. This phase includes; new showers and wall tiles, creating four new family changing rooms from the removal of existing lift and alteration to existing toilets, replacement sauna, replacement air handling unit and ducting, replacement of suspended ceiling and grid - finally, the creation of a viewing section in the partition wall between Health Suite and Pool.

The second phase involves work to the wet-side changing rooms. This phase is expected to be completed by October. The initial plan was to start the second phase once the first had been completed; however, to keep the programme on track, a new temporary entry has been formed to allow customers to access the pool from the dry side (sports hall) changing rooms. In turn, this allowed the centre to close the wet side changing rooms to start the phase two works on 16 August 2021.

Finally, the legionnaire contract was due to renew during the project; however, a procurement exemption was agreed as it would not be sensible to change contractors during a refurbishment based on previous history and lessons learned. Rest assured that all control measures are in place, and areas will be certified and tested before reopening.

Air Handling Unit for the Health Suite provides a positive contribution to the Council's aims of reducing its carbon footprint. The existing unit was a Calorex Delta; this worked by dehumidifying and recirculating the air. The new unit works by introducing the right amount of fresh air to control the internal conditions. The existing system generated an atmosphere that deteriorated furnishings, and due to its poor performance, began to corrode the Health Suite. The new unit will provide a good atmosphere and will be cheaper to run. Estimated at £4,500-£5,000 per year, it comes with a 12-month warranty from commissioning.

Typically a Recotherm fresh air unit runs at 60% of the cost of a refrigerated unit. It protects the building fabric better, removes stale air and odours and is expected to last over 20 years if maintained properly (regular servicing, costing £450 per year). Additionally, the proposed Recotherm unit fans are inverter driven and have the capability to modulate the fan speed to suit the demands of the room. The Calorex unit has a fixed fan speed. The running cost saving will be around 10%.

Further action on climate change to reduce electricity usage includes pool lighting upgrades to LED during the closure months at Clacton Leisure Centre, Walton on the Naze Lifestyles and Dovercourt Bay Lifestyles. In addition, variable speed drives were installed on pool plant pumps at Clacton. The variable speed drives estimated annual saving of 16,060 kW multiplied by £0.15 = £2,409.00 / annum and Co2 saving of 8,922 Kgs/annum. Sensor lighting will also be installed as part of the project in suitable locations. These are steps designed to assist the Council overall in reaching its action plan to reduce carbon usage for its buildings.

Progress Pictures:



Artist Impression:



e) The refurbishment of the Skate Park at Clacton Leisure Centre – plans, timescales, revenue budget for maintenance impact, and envisaged lifespan of the Skate Park.

Since the last Resources and Services Committee meeting that considered Leisure items, Cabinet agreed as part of the 'Back to Business' report that an estimated sum of £250,000 would be allocated to upgrade the Skate Park.

This will deliver a comprehensive Skate Park refurbishment upgrading to a concrete design, including the main ramp. Most concrete designs come with a 20-year guarantee, and the lifespan can be 30 years or more depending on usage. Due to the concrete design, it is expected that the revenue budget for maintenance would be relevantly low. Lessons learned from the site in Dovercourt as delivered to Harwich Town Council (21 September 2020 (Minute 87 refers)) have and will be utilised in the refurbishment of the Clacton Skate Park.

The exact cost would be subject to the scope identified as the park has a large footprint. A full specification has been written in consultation with Skate Parker users. It has been agreed to use the Braintree District Council Playground, Gym & Urban Play Framework Agreement.

It is anticipated that bids will be evaluated by the close of January 2022, with contractors appointed at the end of February 2022. The project will start once the new 3G Pitch is

installed. This timeline aims to minimise disturbance to users of Clacton Leisure Centre, given the investment in Clacton County High School, the Wet Side refurbishment and the 3G Pitch all taking place, in addition to the planned Skate Park refurbishment at the Facility.

f) The emerging district-wide Leisure Strategy and consultation proposals for users of the facilities

The Leisure Service has responded tactically to the changing conditions faced as a result of the three lockdowns over the last 18 months. It has not been the right time to develop a Sports Facilities Strategy. The operating environment remains in flux, so we postponed the Strategy from consideration by Cabinet earlier this year. We expect to bring the Strategy forward in 2022, assuming that no further lockdowns affect Leisure Service usage.

As set out in a) above, usage, and membership numbers, have fluctuated significantly through the last period of lockdowns. The Council has reduced membership subscription costs to 75% to acknowledge that members have not received the full benefit of their membership. As we review fees and charges in the months ahead, we will consult with users.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee determine whether it has comments or recommendations to put forward to the relevant Portfolio Holder or to Cabinet.