

RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 MARCH 2022

JOINT USE SPORTS FACILITIES UPDATE – ADDENDUM TO FULL REPORT

(Report prepared by Mike Carran and Lee Heley)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide supplementary information to the Resources and Services Committee in addition to the report already published on the Joint Use Sports Facilities, in advance of the next meeting on 14 March 2022.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In addition to the full report the committee should note that:

The public had an opportunity to express their views on the joint use facilities in Brightlingsea at a public meeting held on 9 March 8.00pm, which filled the hall in Brightlingsea Community Centre, and was hosted by the Town Council. Attendees raised a number of points, including:

- A show of hands indicated that there were a number of gym users in attendance, who expressed concern at the closure of the gym at the end of the month. The data on usage shows under 800 attendances of the fitness suite in 2019.
- Two difficulties with booking operations were highlighted. One was accommodating a small number of bookers later into the evening and at weekends. Options for extending opening hours to meet this demand are proposed and a discussion held with one group still seeking to find a booking. The other was the operation of the booking system. It is recognised that during the transition as groups move over from the District Council to the Sigma Trust, the booking processes requires refining. An on line booking system from the Sigma Trust is scheduled to be available from 1 April.
- Non group activities. Without the formation of a club, attendees who used the facilities on a casual basis without booking through a club, for example playing table tennis, would not be able to use the facilities after the transition period ended. The difficulty for those without access to a car to drive to the facilities in Clacton or Colchester was highlighted.

Two additional decisions were made by Cabinet regarding the development of the leisure and sport offer across the district and involvement of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide input into this work. This will provide the platform for how the Council develops its Sports and Activities offer around the District over the lifetime of the strategy.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

In addition to the full report the committee should note:

That the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the contents of this report and determines whether it has any comments or recommendations it wishes to make or put forward to the relevant Portfolio Holder or Cabinet.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Refer to full report

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Refer to full report

LEGAL

In addition to the full report the committee should note that:

It is noted that the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 7th February 2022 requested that the Joint Use Facilities be incorporated into the work programme to scrutinise the item as soon as possible. At the meeting of Cabinet in December 2021, a Key Decision was made and has been actioned upon accordingly.

The Committee's scrutiny and review of executive decisions made, action taken in connection with the discharge of any Council functions or performance in relation to an individual decision is permitted in accordance with Article 6 of the Constitution and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 15(c). Any Cabinet Member or Officer maybe required to attend before the Committee to explain matters within their remit.

Consideration of this report may result with findings and/or any recommendations back to the Cabinet on the progress of the transitional process since the decision in December however this is not a Call-in of the original decision.

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.

In addition to the full report the committee should note that:

Initial consultation took place with both Brightlingsea and Harwich Town Councils, to establish their opinions and whether they would consider future involvement in the operation of BSC and HSC respectively confirmed both organisations were open to discuss future involvement. To date respective Town Councils have not expressed a wish to explore the feasibility of operating BSC and HSC respectively. Brightlingsea Town Council have indicated they have secured the services of a professional consultant to support suggestions on future operation of the facility. It is understood this work has commenced.

Officers are holding discussions with other individuals and organisations, together with the Sigma Trust, with regards to proposals for how parts of the facilities could be operated following the end of the transition period. These conversations are ongoing.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

Refer to full report

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

Refer to full report

APPENDICES
None