

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET: 7th October 2021

TELFORD & WREKIN INDOOR SPORTS & LEISURE STRATEGY

REPORT OF: FELICITY MERCER. DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES, CUSTOMER AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR EILEEN CALLEAR. CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, LIBRARIES & CULTURE.

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 In 2007, the council published its Sports and Leisure Facilities Framework (2007-2027). Nearly 15 years since the strategy was launched and despite the unforeseen changes and financial challenges faced by Local Authorities, many of its key recommendations have been delivered. Current council priorities, local drivers and the wider national sport and physical activity context have moved on and the need therefore exists to develop a new strategy for the borough.
- 1.2 The new strategy will provide a framework to ensure that the council's indoor sports and leisure provision is able to continue to meet current and future demands, contribute to the council's commitment to 'Protect, Care and Invest' and to ensure every child, young person and adult lives well in their community. It will sit alongside the Outdoor Recreation Facilities Strategy to provide a robust assessment of need and evidence base for future sports and leisure planning, investment and policy decision making and be used to inform the Local Plan review.
- 1.3 In keeping with the key recommendations of the 2007 Strategy and despite the unprecedented and unforeseeable financial climate the Council has retained all of its leisure centres, added new and replaced, extended, or refurbished all of its leisure centre facilities. New facilities have been developed at Abraham Darby, Telford Tennis Centre, Telford Park and Telford Langley schools. Wellington, Oakengates, Newport, Horsehay, Telford Ice Rink and Telford Ski Centre have all been extended or refurbished and improved community access to a number of school sports facilities has also been secured. **(Appendix 1 – Facility Images and Links to virtual tours of each of the facilities).**
- 1.4 Alongside the improvements to the physical facility stock the council has invested in local policies to encourage, enable and support young people and disadvantaged groups to access high quality community leisure provision. In particular through its continued support and extension of an extensive leisure concessions policy and initiatives such as free swimming for under 18's, recently extended to residents under 25, £1 swimming for the over 50's, £1 children's holiday activities and discounted gym memberships for concessionary groups and young people. **(Appendix 2 - Local swimming price comparisons, Appendix 3 Leisure Concessions Policy).**

- 1.5 Telford & Wrekin Council is the only local leisure provider offering free swimming for U25's and swimming for £1 in respect of concessionary groups and over 50's. In 2019, 156,159 public swim admissions were recorded of which 64,385 were free and 42,699 were £1. Over 2,000 children are currently enrolled on the council's Swim4Life lessons programme. One of the key priorities for this new strategy continues the theme of investment into our swimming provision by looking to deliver new swimming facilities in Dawley, providing a greater number of residents with the opportunity to walk to their local leisure facilities.
- 1.6 This report summarises progress against the key priorities identified within the 2007 Framework and the rationale supporting the need for a new Indoor Sports & Leisure Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

2.1.1 Note the successful progress made in respect of the previous strategy and endorse the proposals for a new strategy to reflect current and future community priorities and to actively contribute towards improved levels of physical activity and public health across the borough.

2.1.2 Delegates authority to the Director: Customer, Community & Commercial Services. In consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Libraries & Culture to finalise a brief and procure the services of consultants to produce an Indoor Sports Strategy for the borough.

2.1.3 Delegates authority to the Associate Director: Policy & Governance to negotiate and execute any necessary contractual agreements required in respect of 2.1.2 above.

SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	Sports and Leisure services provide both formal and Informal opportunities for sport and physical activity and as Such contribute significantly towards our priority that Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	The strategy will be used to inform future service planning and policy to provide enhanced community and sporting provision for a range of community groups including people of all ages, different genders, those with a disability and affected by deprivation. The resulting projects will also impact positively on people's health and will help to reduce health inequalities.
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	It is intended that the strategy will be published in summer 2022	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR	Yes	The overall gross revenue budget for Leisure Services is

MONEY IMPACT		<p>£8million for 2021/22 with income totalling £5.8million including income from sales, fees and charges of £4.4million.</p> <p>Since 2010 the Council has invested £13.4million into Leisure sites through the capital programme including significant investment into the Ice Rink as part of the Southwater development.</p> <p>Subject to a tendering process the estimated cost of commissioning consultants to produce the strategy is £50k. This will be funded from existing Leisure and Public Health budgets.</p> <p>Costs and investment priorities and potential funding opportunities arising from the findings and recommendations of the Strategy will need to be considered as appropriate and further financial implications considered as part of the Council's overall budget strategy. MLB 28/09/2021</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	No	There are no direct legal implications from these proposals in this report. Appropriate legal advice will be provided at the relevant time as needed. RP 11/08/2021
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The Indoor Sports Strategy will help ensure that the council's leisure services remain well placed to deliver high quality and accessible sports and leisure provision that continues to support the delivery of council priorities.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	Borough wide.

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

3. INFORMATION

3.1 It is recommended by Sport England, both as champions of sport but also as statutory planning consultees in respect of sports facilities and playing fields, that all local authorities should have an up to date and robust strategy to ensure there is a sufficient provision to meet the sporting needs of local communities.

3.2 The new strategy will seek to identify:

- How sports and leisure services can contribute to the delivery of council priorities
- How sports and leisure services can pro-actively contribute to improving health across the borough
- Through facility modelling and stakeholder engagement assess to what extent provision meets current and projected future needs (taking account population growth)
- What additional or alternative provision may be required
- Current condition of the physical assets and investment priorities/timescales
- Which National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) see Telford as a priority area for development and investment

- Examples of evidence based interventions and policies that have been proven to further breakdown barriers to access, address inactivity levels and health inequalities
 - Potential future funding opportunities
- 3.3 Undertaking a review of the supply and demand data and stakeholder views will allow for a more up to date evidence base to inform decisions around facility planning. The findings and recommendations will be considered as part of the review of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan and the current Leisure Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).
- 3.4 The timing of the new strategy will also enable the council, in this ‘Year of Wellbeing’, to ensure that its Leisure Services are well placed to support the community recovery following the Covid pandemic and to help address current health inequalities.
- 3.5 In keeping with the council’s co-operative values the review will provide an opportunity to consult and engage with a range of stakeholders including residents, town and parish councils, local groups, and colleagues from public health, planning, social care and education. Engagement with the various National Governing Bodies of Sport (through whom the bulk of Sport England funding is channelled) to identify both their needs and aspirations and the extent to which Telford represents a strategic fit and opportunity for development and investment.
- 3.6 The new strategy will identify evidence based interventions and policies that have been proven to further breakdown barriers to access, address inactivity levels and health inequalities including amongst BAME and other harder to reach communities. Alongside the Outdoor Recreation Facilities Strategy, it will provide a robust assessment of need and evidence base for future sports and leisure planning, investment and policy decision making.
- 3.7 Key findings of the 2007-2027 report and consultation included:
- Generally sufficient provision of accessible sports facilities
 - Ageing facility stock
 - Limited access to school based leisure facilities
 - Lack of a teaching pool
 - Opportunity to improve school curricula swimming
 - Gap in health & fitness provision in the north/north west of the borough
 - Imbalance in swimming pool distribution across the borough
 - Questions over capacity to support Dawley/Lawley population growth
 - Opportunity to increase and enhance sports development
 - Leisure provision for disadvantaged groups is strong and should be continued
 - Consideration be given to specialist sports facilities to enable competition and events
 - A desire to improve Leisure provision within the Town Centre
- 3.7.1 Despite significant changes to the national BSF programme and schools academisation significantly enhanced school sports and leisure facilities have been delivered through the council’s Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. Additional formal Community Use Agreements are in place to open up and protect access to these facilities by the community, including at Charlton School, Holly Trinity Academy and Ercall Wood School in addition to the council operated joint use sites at Telford Park, Telford Langley and Telford

Priory schools. A specialist gymnastics facility was also developed in partnership with the Park Wrekin Gymnastics club converting the former Charlton School sports hall.

- 3.7.2 The council took over responsibility for and invested in the former Old Hall School Pool (Shortwood Pool) which now provides the key location for the delivery of a primary schools swimming programme, co-ordinated by Leisure Services. This provides increased dedicated schools swimming capacity and frees up more community use swimming sessions across the other pools. The site also provides a number of targeted swimming sessions such as those for Asian Women and Swimming After Surgery groups.
- 3.7.3 The 2007 report highlighted the lack of a swimming teaching pool in the borough. In response to this the pool at Abraham Darby was designed with a moveable floor which means that the depth of the whole 25m pool can be adjusted to provide a much larger than normal learner pool area. This addition has supported the growth of the Swim 4 Life programme, including dedicated disability lessons, with over 2,000 young people enrolled.
- 3.7.4 Through an 'invest to save' initiative a purpose designed extension was constructed at Newport Pool to house a new aspirations health & fitness facility along with a full refurbishment of the changing rooms to create a more family friendly accessible facility.
- 3.7.5 Further 'invest to save' initiatives resulted in the extending of Horsehay Village Golf Centre to house a new aspirations health & fitness facility to serve the growing Lawley population. Further developments include the introduction of the Footgolf course.
- 3.7.6 New school and community sports facilities were developed as part of the Telford Langley (Phoenix) school in Dawley. The development secured 'Iconic' facility funding through Sport England and incorporates a double sized (8 court) sports hall, specialist netball facilities, a specialist rugby 3G artificial turf pitch and a national standard BMX track. The facility regularly hosts regional and national events for the sports of Netball, Indoor Hockey and BMX racing.
- 3.7.7 The sports and leisure facilities at Wellington were extended and refurbished both as part of the co-location of council services and more recently in partnership with Wellington Town Council. The centre houses the council's largest and busiest health and fitness facility with an extensive programme of classes. Currently there are over 140 health & fitness classes per week provided across the council facilities through a co-ordinated programme as part of the aspirations health and fitness brand.
- 3.7.8 Telford Ice Rink has been extensively refurbished and extended to incorporate a soft play facility and remains a key leisure facility within the Southwater development, providing for both residents and visitors from across the wider region as well as being home to professional Ice Hockey and figure and dance skating within Telford. The wider Town Centre Leisure offer has been further improved through the introduction of an Adventure Golf Course, Disc Golf Course and High Ropes course within Telford Town Park.
- 3.7.9 The facilities at the Oakengates Leisure Centre site have been extended and improved including extending the health & fitness facilities, full swimming pool changing refurbishment, sports hall refurbishment and a replacement 3G artificial turf pitch. In addition, the Telford Tennis Centre was opened on the site in 2011 providing specialist

indoor and outdoor provision. Most recently, Telford Athletic Stadium, home of Telford Athletics Club, has undergone an extensive refurbishment including a complete resurfacing of the track, replacement of the hammer cage and reinstatement of spectator provision enabling ongoing use for regional competitions.

- 3.7.10 The facilities at Telford Snowboard and Ski Centre have been extended to include a new 3G artificial grass pitch along with specialist dedicated changing provision and refurbishment of the Ski Lodge to provide a Football Hub in addition to the Ski and Snowboard provision.
- 3.7.11 Plans are being drawn up to bring forward the development of a new swimming pool in the Dawley area to address the imbalance in swimming pool distribution identified within the 2007 framework and to enable and encourage swimming participation amongst residents of South Telford.
- 3.8 Alongside the investment into the physical facility stock the council has invested in local policies to break down barriers to participation and to encourage, enable and support young people and disadvantaged groups to access high quality community leisure provision. In particular through its continued support and extension of an extensive leisure concessions policy and initiatives such as free swimming.
- 3.8.1 Following the cessation of the Government's free swimming initiative in 2010 the council continued with its own local free swimming programme enabling all residents under 18 years of age to swim for free and residents aged over 50 and all-concessionary groups to swim for £1. From October 2021 free swimming was extended further to residents aged under 25 in recognition that young people have been hit hardest by the Covid pandemic and may need additional support.
- 3.9 Leisure Services also work with the council's Public Health Team to deliver a range of targeted interventions working with inactive groups and those in need of additional support. A one to one physical activity referral scheme is available along with a selection of free virtual workouts aimed a beginners, those who are returning to exercise or those that need low impact exercise sessions. A free virtual exercise class programme was provided throughout the lockdown periods, whilst other operational staff were engaged in providing vital community support initiatives such as delivering free packed lunches, supporting household recycling centres, staffing Covid testing and vaccination centres and running a community shopping support scheme.
- 3.10 Throughout the recent summer holidays the council's leisure centres provided a programme of free hoiliday activities and a meal for children and families in receipt of free school meals as part of the Holiday Hunger programme. Just under 200 children attended the half day holiday clubs at Abraham Darby and Oakengates leisure centres and over 1,700 bookings were made for the free children and family leisure activities.
- 3.11 Whilst data is not available to directly compare current leisure centre usage with admissions before 2007, in excess of 1.1m community visits are made to council leisure sites each year, excluding use by schools for curricular and extra-curricular activities. Further development of our digital offer through a new website and Telford Loyalty Card (TLC) app will expand the reach of the service and improve customer experience.

- 3.12 The council's investment and commitment has encouraged and enabled more residents to access the extensive range of quality sports and leisure facilities, supported both new and existing voluntary community sports clubs to develop and grow and provided enhanced physical activity provision for our schoolchildren. Maintaining and enhancing our regional and national facilities such as Telford Ice Rink, Telford Ski Centre, Telford Athletics stadium and the BMX track has attracted visitors to the borough and supported the development of local sporting talent.
- 3.13 The development of the facilities and key activities has enabled the service to continue to be a net positive contributor to the council budget and deliver significant additional income through increased usage. The 2020/21 financial year budgeted income for the service in was £5.98m. This income growth, along with operational efficiencies, has contributed toward the enforced programme of council savings whilst improving the offer for residents. The service has won or been shortlisted for a number of national awards including the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), Leisure Services Team of the Year, Most Improved/Best Performer (Newport Pool and Abraham Darby) and the Quest award for the highest Customer Satisfaction Survey (Phoenix Sports Centre).

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

NA

5. PREVIOUS MINUTES

CB-84. Telford & Wrekin Council Cabinet, 10 December 2007

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Telford & Wrekin Sports and Leisure Facilities Framework 2007-2027

Report prepared by: Stuart Davidson, Service Delivery Manager (Operations) T.(382601)

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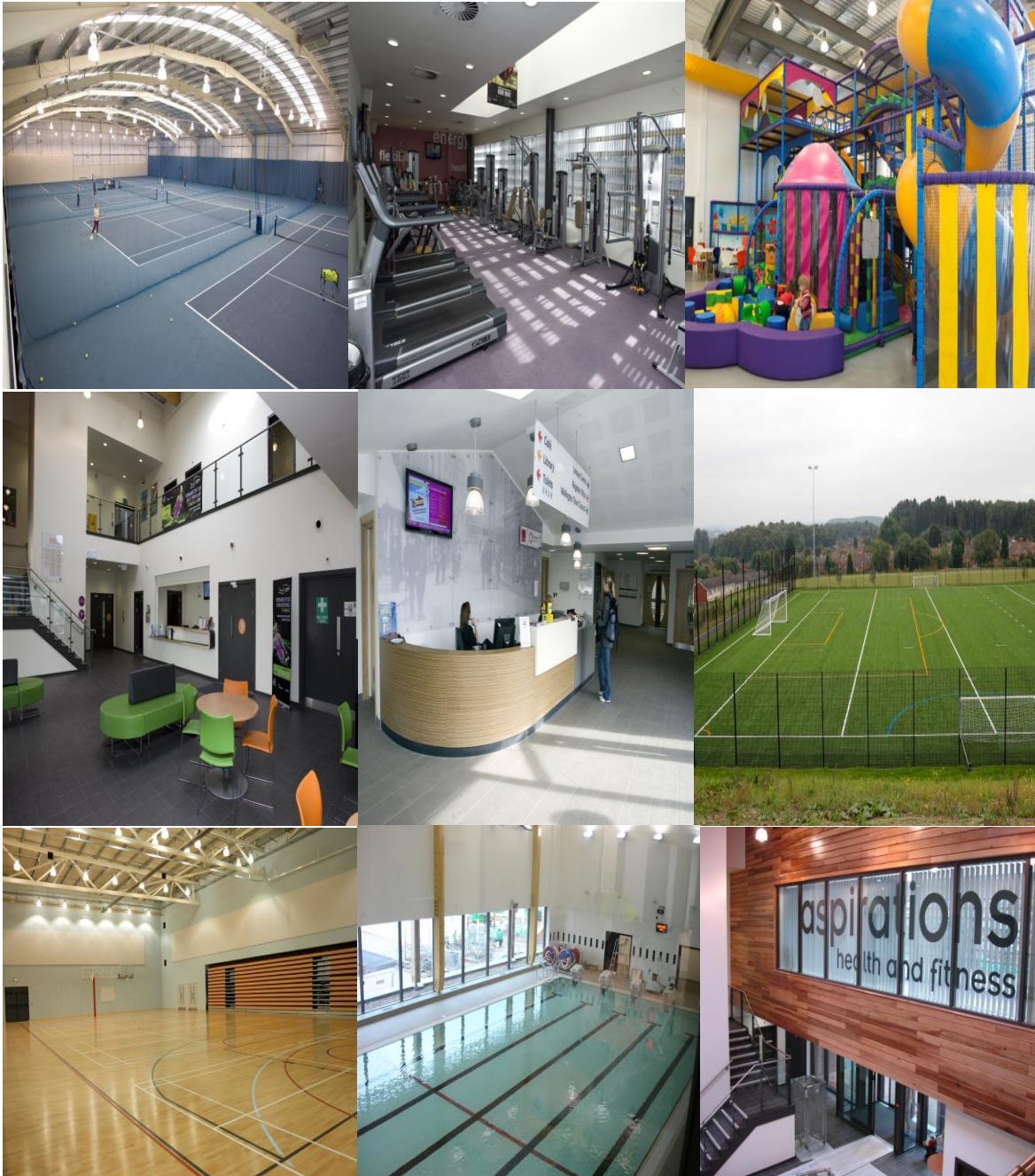
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Appendix 1 – Image Gallery and Virtual Tours



From this....

.....To this



The links below can be used to access a virtual tour of the council leisure facilities and additional information as to the facilities and services.

Abraham Darby Sports & Leisure Centre - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=BnNXVFnRKCT>

Horsehay Golf and Fitness - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=e6mPcGKRgAv>
 Newport Swimming Pool - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=5HY2wBTWWSu>
 Oakengates Leisure Centre - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=hBdv4ryyNBa>
 Phoenix Sports Centre (Langley School) - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=HAGuDraiF8M>
 Stirchley Leisure (Park School) - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=q72SoaMgUdP>
 Telford Tennis Centre - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=6Zj4LFzFLnp>
 Wellington Civic & Leisure Centre - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=Ks6AgJrFmcU>

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Appendix 2 – Concessionary/Junior Swimming Charges

Location	Provider	Concessionary/Junior Swim charges
Telford	Telford & Wrekin Council	Free for U25's £1 for over 50's £1 for concessionary groups
Shrewsbury	Shropshire Leisure Trust	Adult £1 discount off std price Juniors £2.95
Bridgnorth	Halo Leisure	£2.35-£3.55 £2.85 Juniors
Ludlow	Teme Leisure	£2.30 Junior £2.70 Senior £27 for 12 sessions
Stafford	Freedom Leisure	£2.55 inc Juniors
Wolverhampton	WV Active	Free for u16's
Stoke	Active Lifestyle Centres	£2.25-£3.00
Walsall	Walsall Council	Adult £2.65 Junior £1.65
Sandwell	Sandwell Leisure Trust	Free for 16&U and 60+
Much Wenlock	Shropshire Council	Adult £2.30 Junior £1.20
Dudley	Dudley MBC	Adult £2.30 Junior £1.55
Cannock Chase	Wigan Leisure Trust	Adult £1.95-£2.65 Junior £1.15 - £1.20

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Appendix 3 – Concessionary/TLC Policy



Telford & Wrekin Council Leisure Concessions

Telford & Wrekin Council's Leisure Concession Scheme affords reduced price access to a range of sports and leisure facilities for the following groups:

Group 1

People/families in receipt of one or more of the following:

- council tax benefit
- healthy start vouchers
- housing benefit
- leaving care allowance
- pension credit

Group 2

People in receipt of one or more of the following (plus carer)

- attendance allowance
- disability living allowance
- disabled person's tax credit
- disability working allowance
- employment and support allowance
- industrial disablement
- mobility allowance
- personal independence payments
- severe disablement allowance.

Group 3

People in receipt of:

- carer's allowance.

Group 4

- Full time students aged 16 or over.

Group 5

- Active serving Armed Forces or Veterans.

Group 6

- Young carers

Concession rates

People in groups 1, 2 and 3 and 5 are entitled to a discounted rate of £1 for a swim during public sessions (unless covered by a **free** swimming initiative), all groups are entitled to at least 40% off other non-instructed activities and at least 15% off instructed activities and memberships.

People in group 6 are also entitled to free Ice Skating.

The Concessions scheme is available to Telford and Wrekin residents listed above (except group 2 where concessionary admission is also available to non-residents). Concessionary visits may be limited to one per day and do not apply to group/ block bookings or special offers.



Telford Loyalty Card (TLC) Leisure Discounts

Telford & Wrekin Council offers a range of targeted initiatives and incentives to encourage physical activity participation including:

- **Free** swimming for all resident TLC holders aged under 25's
- **£1** Swimming for all resident TLC holders aged over 50's
- Discounted Health & Fitness memberships for teenagers
- Discounted Health & Fitness memberships for local employers
- Discounted Health & Fitness memberships for over 60's
- Football pitch hire discounts for local Junior Clubs
- Kids for £1 holiday activities

In addition to the above Telford Loyalty Card Holders receive a discount on a host of Leisure activities for more information about our facilities and services please visit [Telford and Wrekin Leisure Services](#)

