

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 10 September 2013

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PART I **CONSIDERATION AND COMMENT**

LEISURE STRATEGY

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report outlines the objectives and main elements for a leisure strategy for Slough, identifying community priorities and needs. In that context, it sets out options for council owned facilities to replace those currently at the Montem site. These options play an important part in delivering the aims of the leisure strategy, complementing other community, commercial facilities.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to consider and comment on the leisure strategy in advance of a report being considered at Cabinet on 16 September 2013.

3 Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

- **Economy and skills**
- **Health and wellbeing**
- **Regeneration and environment**
- **Safer Slough**
- **Civic responsibility**
- **Improving the town's image**

- 3.1 People who are physically active reduce the risk of premature death by 20% to 30% and have a reduced risk of type-2 diabetes, coronary heart disease or cancer. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Slough confirms that reducing obesity and the incidence of diabetes and heart disease in particular are high priorities for Slough. The Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2013) acknowledges the role of sport and physical activity in addressing the town's health inequalities.

- 3.2 Leisure and physical activity contribute to building sustainable communities, creating environments where people feel safe and wish to live, as well as contributing to healthy living, environment and regeneration.

4 Other Implications

4.1 Financial

The proposals contained within this report to develop anew leisure centre and community facility will carry significant financial costs, both capital and revenue. All capital provision will need to be subject to a business case. The current capital strategy highlights costs of £23m for the replacement of the Montem leisure centre and the ice arena.

- 4.2 The Council currently spends £345,000 of revenue expenditure on leisure facilities. The proposals contained within this report to develop anew leisure centre and community facility will carry significant financial costs, both capital and revenue. At present, there is an indicative figure of £23m in the capital strategy for the replacement of the leisure centre and the Ice Arena. It is likely that the funding for this project would include some additional borrowing. This will have an impact on the Council's revenue budget as well by increasing the amount of repayment required in the future to fund capital expenditure. Any capital expenditure on such a significant project would require a separate Business Case to be considered and approved.

- 4.3 A programme of investment for 3-5 years is included in the planned capital programme from 2013/14, costing £1,169,000 over 3 years to 2016 for Montem and the ice arena. If the facilities were retained for 7 years there would be a cost up to £8m.

4.4 Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no direct Human Rights Act issues arising from this report. Any legal comments will be given at the Committee meeting.

4.5 Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed for proposed new leisure facilities when they have been developed.

4.6 Workforce

There are no direct workforce implications arising from this report.

5 Leisure strategy

- 5.1 An overarching leisure strategy for the council has been developed and the executive summary is attached to this report as Appendix A. The strategy draws on and links together a number of existing plans and strategies, including the 2013 Physical Activity and Sport Strategy. It addresses community needs and priorities for the council's role in increasing levels of physical activity in Slough.

- 5.2 There is a wide diversity of leisure facilities in the town, including parks and open spaces, sports pitches and indoor facilities in a variety of schools, community buildings and commercial venues as well as facilities provided directly by the council. The strategy identifies where the council's resources will be focused to

make the greatest difference and opportunities to improve how the many providers in the town could improve public access to facilities.

5.3 The proposed strategy will help achieve the council's vision for leisure:

“To enhance the health and wellbeing of Slough residents by ensuring leisure activity is adopted as a habit for life for all - more people, more active, more often”

5.4 Improved participation in leisure activities will help deliver broader outcomes for the community:

- 1 Reduction in the incidence of chronic health conditions, including obesity, heart and diabetes and increase life expectancy
- 2 Increased sense of place and improve social cohesion through bringing together people from all parts of the community
- 3 Improved progression for sports participation through schools, clubs and high quality facilities for mass participation sports
- 4 Reduced crime and anti social behaviour through constructive and diversionary activities

5.5 **Participation and needs**

Adult participation in physical activity is low in Slough (the number taking part in for 3 x 30 minutes per week has fallen from 19% in 2005/6 to 17%, compared with a national average figure of 22%. Among children, there is evidence of an improvement in the number taking part in regular exercise, but there is a significant level of childhood obesity. 21% of children aged 10-11 are obese compared with a national figure of 19%.

5.6 Because participation rates in physical activity in Slough are so low, the council's resources will be focused on increasing participation. This will mean focusing not on elite sport but on targeting high priority groups> it will also mean a focus on pricing and programming to ensure that a wider and larger audience are engaged in physical activity. Key priority groups are:

- Women (41% male participation and 31% female participation. Particularly low among Asian women)
- Children (at year 6 more than one in 5 children in Slough is obese)
- Adults over 25 years (32% participation compared with 54% for 16-25 group; largest gap is white community)
- Lower socio economic groups (participation rates are higher and increasing faster among higher income socio-economic groups)

5.7 **Leisure facilities in Slough**

There are very substantial facilities and opportunities for participation in physical activity and sport in Slough, which are not resulting in broad community involvement. Many of these are shown on a map in Appendix B. They include:

- Over 90 formally established sports clubs
- 62 pitches with community use on 20 sites
- 85 parks and open spaces for community use

- 5 artificial grass pitches
- 70 courts for tennis and netball use
- Non council leisure centres available for public use, including Herschel School, Falcon Centre
- Langley and Montem leisure centres
- Ice skating rink
- Tenpin bowling centre

5.8 The council will work with local schools, clubs and other providers to maximise public access and use of these resources. In particular, a number of schools have excellent leisure facilities which are not open for general public use at any time, while some such as Herschel School do provide a good level of public access. The council will work with schools and other providers to encourage and enable wider access to facilities not currently open to the public.

5.9 **Council leisure centres and future facilities**

There are over 1 million individual visits made to Council leisure facilities each year. The most visited facilities are the swimming pool, ice arena and gym. Detailed figures are shown in Appendix C.

5.10 Most of these activities are showing no significant change in levels of use over the past 3 years. Synergy membership (108,000 at Montem) is continuing to rise, while there is a gradual decline in casual swimming.

6 **Future development options**

6.1 **Leisure contract and the condition of current facilities**

Council leisure facilities are operated by Slough Community Leisure Ltd under a contract running to 2017. Appendix C gives a brief profile of these facilities:

- Montem Leisure Centre
- Slough Ice Arena, Montem
- Langley Leisure Centre
- Ten Pin Bowling, Salt Hill Park
- Tennis Centre, Salt Hill Park
- The Centre, Farnham Road

6.2 Tendering the contract to run the council's leisure facilities in 2017 is an opportunity to ensure best value and to focus provision on the priority for increased participation, particularly because of the impact of programming on interest and take up.

6.3 In June 2012 a comprehensive condition survey was carried out on both the Montem Leisure Centre and Slough Ice Arena. The leisure centre was built in the 1970s and the ice arena in the 1980s. Both sites are showing significant wear and in the short to medium term they will need substantial capital investment to maintain current services.

6.4 Over the three years 2013/14 – 2015/16, based on site condition surveys, the council has allowed £1,169,000 for essential repairs at these two sites, which will

enable the facilities to be kept open. This though will not improve the attractiveness or customer appeal of facilities.

- 6.5 If Montem and the ice arena were to be kept open for more than 7 years, the capital cost of repairs and maintenance is estimated to increase to £8m. If the council were to identify a way to invest in new facilities that sum could be better used towards the cost of something with a long term community and customer value. Any new provision would be designed to meet anticipated future community needs.

6.6 Core and non core facilities for a new leisure centre

Development options for new facilities are subject to funding and approval of financial business cases. Should the opportunity exist, the following table shows proposed core and non core facilities, based on an assessment of what is available in the town and trends in use.

Core facilities	Non core facilities – subject to business case	Comment
8 lane 25 metre pool	10 lane 25 metre pool	Maximises recreational use
20 metre training pool		Swimming classes show strong growing demand; improves effective use of pool space
150 station gym	200 station gym	Subject to market evaluation in relation to commercial provision
2 studios/dance suites		Include space for spinning and flexibility for programming
Full size ice arena		Most cost effective solution at Farnham Road site
	8 court sports hall	There is good court capacity at other sites in Slough but this depends on improving public access to it
	Climbing wall	Growing demand identified
	2 squash courts	Modern designs allow greater flexibility for other uses

- 6.7 In addition, any new leisure facility is an opportunity to consider broader community and regeneration outcomes which could make feasible services such as a café, doctors or dentists surgery, community centre, or a small library function. All these elements would be subject to a business case. They would need to cover capital purchase and running costs including routine and non routine maintenance – the full lifetime cost or provision.
- 6.8 The business case for a new facility will establish how far the current £350,000 annual management fee paid by the council for leisure facilities provision could be reduced through more efficient operation and better design or whether a surplus might be achieved.
- 6.9 Three options to provide a new main leisure facility were assessed:

Site	Description	Assessment
Montem	New build Refurbishment	Cost. £20m - £24m For. Large site with good car parking Against. Added cost not included above with loss of planned development value estimated at £5m
Centre Farnham Road	Refurbishment and extension	Cost. £23.5m - £30m For. Regeneration value for the area; link wider community use with leisure Against. Higher cost than new build and doesn't make best use of site to address parking and access issues
Centre Farnham Road	New build	Cost. £19m – £29m For. Regeneration value for the area; can include community and leisure spaces; optimal functional design; lower cost than refurbishment Against. Loss of Centre and revenue impact during building works

- 6.10 It is proposed that further development of proposals for new leisure provision, which would replace the Montem leisure centre and ice arena, will focus on the two options at the site of the Centre in Farnham Road. At this stage, the new build solution appears to offer the most cost effective solution for both ice and the main leisure centre. It also makes best use of the site to address parking and access issues.
- 6.11 The proposed development on the Farnham Road site provides a focus for significant regeneration for the Farnham and Baylis and Stoke wards. The potential to bring together with leisure a range of other community facilities to comprise a community hub will be explored. These include possible health facilities, community hall and meeting rooms, and a satellite library.
- 6.12 Detailed design options will be developed for refurbishment and extension and a new build on the Farnham Road site. These will include solutions to parking and access issues and proposals to address functions currently provided at the Centre, along with business cases for non core leisure facilities as identified in section 6.6 of this report.

7 Comments of Other Committees

7.1 Not applicable.

8 Conclusion and next steps

8.1 The leisure strategy identifies clear priorities to widen and increase participation in physical activity for both adults and children. While there is a wide range of leisure provision in the borough, the council has an important strategic role in facilitating a cohesive offer and improving public access. The strategy also

proposes clear priorities for indoor leisure facilities provided through the borough council and its contracted leisure services.

- 8.2 Through the new leisure contract and the need to address issues arising from the age and condition of the Montem leisure centre and ice arena, there is an opportunity to maximise value for money and invest in facilities that will meet future leisure needs in Slough. Options for facilities provided on the site of the Centre in the Farnham Road will be developed in detail and reported to Cabinet in February 2014 for decision.
- 8.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the leisure strategy in advance of a report being considered at Cabinet on 16 September 2013.

Appendices Attached

- A Active Slough: a leisure strategy for Slough 2013-2018. Executive summary
- B Map of current facilities
- C Profile of current council facilities

Background papers

Leisure capital strategy. Cabinet report, 21 November 2011

APPENDIX A Active Slough: a leisure strategy for Slough 2013-2018

Executive summary

- 1 This strategy defines Slough Borough Council's priorities to improve levels of physical activity by local people over the next five years to 2018 with the aim of improving health, social cohesion and community safety outcomes for local people through involvement in physical activity. It will help achieve the council's vision for leisure:

"To enhance the health and wellbeing of Slough residents by ensuring leisure activity is adopted as a habit for life for all - more people, more active, more often"

- 2 Leisure services in the context of this strategy are defined as facilities and programmes which enable people to engage in physical activity which promotes better health and wellbeing. This takes many forms and can include:
 - Everyday living and recreation (e.g. dancing; exercise classes; active play)
 - Sport (e.g. swimming; football; climbing; rowing, ice skating)
- 3 All these activities can take place in a wide variety of settings, including parks and open spaces, community run clubs and leisure facilities, school facilities, commercially provided facilities and Borough council contracted services and facilities.
- 4 The benefits of physical activity include:
 - Improved health outcomes
 - Improved enjoyment and wellbeing
 - Social cohesion and safer communities
- 5 Adult participation in physical activity is low in Slough (the number taking part in for 3 x 30 minutes per week has fallen from 19.4% in 2005/6 to 17.1%, compared with a national average figure of 22%).
- 6 Because participation rates in physical activity in Slough are so low, the council's resources will be focused on increasing participation. It is the council's priority to maximise participation and involve more people in regular physical activity to improve personal and community wellbeing, not elite sport. Key priority groups are:
 - Women (41% male participation and 31% female participation. Particularly low among Asian women)
 - Children (at year 6 more than one in 5 children in Slough is obese)
 - Adults over 25 years (32% participation compared with 54% for 16-25 group; largest gap is white community)
 - Lower socio economic groups (participation higher and increasing faster among higher income socio-economic groups)
- 7 Through delivering these objectives, leisure services will help deliver broader outcomes for the community:
 - 5 Reduction in the incidence of chronic health conditions, including obesity, heart and diabetes and increase life expectancy

- 6 Increased sense of place and improve social cohesion through bringing together people from all parts of the community
 - 7 Improved progression for sports participation through schools, clubs and high quality facilities for mass participation sports
 - 8 Reduced crime and anti social behaviour through constructive and diversionary activities
- 8 There are very substantial facilities and opportunities for participation in physical activity and sport in Slough, which are not resulting in broad community involvement. The council will lead the implementation of these priorities through:
- Working with schools and community facilities to improve and promote access to quality provision in their local neighbourhood
 - Implementing the play and parks strategies to provide formal and informal opportunities for leisure
 - Helping local sports clubs work together and offer a mix of formal and informal opportunities for local people to participate in activity and through volunteering
- 9 There are over 1 million individual visits made to Council run leisure facilities each year. The most visited facilities are the swimming pool, ice arena and gym. In addition, local and national trends show increasing interest in climbing, cycling, gymnastics and trampolining.
- 10 There is an opportunity to refocus and modernise leisure provision through the new leisure contract from 2017 and addressing the poor condition of the existing Montem leisure centre and ice arena.
- 11 If Montem and the ice arena were to be kept open for more than 7 years, the capital cost of repairs and maintenance is estimated to increase to £8m. If the council were to identify a way to invest in new facilities, that sum could be better used towards the cost of something with a long term community and customer value.
- 12 Development options for new facilities are subject to funding and approval of financial business cases. Core facilities for any new main leisure facility will be:
- 8 lane swimming pool; option for 10 lane pool
 - 20 metre training pool
 - 150 station gym; option for 200 station gym
 - 2 studios/dance suites
 - Full sized ice arena
- 13 In addition, any new leisure facility is an opportunity to consider, subject to affordability and business cases, broader community and regeneration outcomes which could make feasible community hub facilities that will deliver broader social and regeneration benefits such as a café, doctors or dentists surgery, community centre, or a small library function.

APPENDIX B

Map of current facilities



NB These Council owned facilities complement outdoor and other indoor community and commercial provision in the town.

Montem Leisure Centre

A single building with facilities over three floors and comprising a dated, yet comprehensive offer, of wet led and sports hall facilities together with a health and fitness suite which incorporates aerobic classes. The facilities, and in particular, the wet led activities are in need of significant investment to keep them operational for any meaningful period beyond the existing management contract. The building is not efficiently laid out and this must translate into higher than necessary operational and managerial staffing costs. The building itself is close to being past its useful life without major investment. Furthermore its position and location within the whole Montem Lane site does not maximise the potential of the site.

Slough Ice Arena

This building shares the same site as the Montem Leisure Centre. It is a more modern structure but one that does not lend itself to having the operations expanded within the existing envelope to any significant degree. Whilst ancillary uses and activities are included within the building the principle use is as an Ice Arena for recreational ice skating with facilities for additional team and individual ice related activities. There is staged seating surrounding the ice pad for spectator orientated events. The plant is understood to be in need of modernisation and the building needs some refurbishment.

Ten pin bowling

Formally a tennis centre, this building is modern enough for the activity that occupies it. The Tenpin lanes together with the bar/cafe area and pool/snooker and gaming machine areas are modern and have recently been the subject of a total refit. This represents a good modern facility although it is isolated from the usual commercial leisure uses of a cinema, family orientated restaurants and other family related leisure activities that would normally be adjacent to such an offer. The building is set in Salt Hill Park which offers good quality and comprehensive outdoor rackets and ball related activities. The vehicular access and signage to the venue are very poor and in need of significant upgrade to enable this facility to maximise its potential.

Langley Leisure Centre

This is a self contained building providing water led, health and fitness and associated sports facilities to the specific area of Langley. The building is in a reasonable state of repair and the offer is fresh. With the usual programme of general maintenance and management it should be capable of continuing in its present format for the foreseeable future. There is little potential for expansion.

The Centre (Farnham Road)

A modern steel framed building in a prominent location with a long frontage to Farnham Road and positioned opposite the Farnham Road retail and trade parks. Designed essentially over a single floor to offer events and limited community facilities. This has been well used as a wedding venue facility and conferencing/meeting facility.

Slough Tennis Centre

The existing court provision, based in Salt Hill Park, was redeveloped using funding from the LTA and SBC in 2011. SCL have a formal lease for the next 20 years to manage the facility. The facility comprises 8 all-weather surfaced courts with floodlighting and a club house. In very good condition.

Overall use at SBC facilities

Montem Leisure Centre

Activity	2011/12
Spinning	11,524
Squash	6,299
Badminton	5,634
5 aside	18,070
Basketball	914
Swimming	44,997
Classes (All)	45,357
Gym (pay as you go)	5,778
Spa	3,475
Volleyball	490
Swimskool	37,004
Synergy Members	107,635
Spectators	21,074
Feel Good Factory	-
Total	308,251

Langley Leisure Centre

Activity	2011/12
Spinning	11,461
Swimskool	47,501
Classes	32,192
Swimming	53,313
Gym (pay as you go)	4,359
Synergy Members	78,988
Spectators	17,290
Total	245,104

Slough Ice Arena	
Activity	2011/12
Hockey training	17,099
Slough Jets matches	9,425
Skating Courses	17,983
General admissions and patch ice	86,094
Ice karting	1,316
Total	131,917