



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 20 February 2024

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Susan Crosby, Health, Wellbeing & Leisure

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Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Key Decision
Report Title	Newark & Sherwood’s Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy 2023-2033
Purpose of Report	To present the 2023-2033 Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy for approval.
Recommendations	That Cabinet approve Newark & Sherwood’s Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy 2023-2033 (as at Appendix A which has been published separately to the main agenda).
Alternative Options Considered	<p>The alternative option is to not adopt a Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy.</p> <p>Neither the strategy itself, nor direct investment in sport and recreation facilities, are a statutory responsibility of the district council. However, as articulated in section 1.2 of this report and within the strategy itself, the evidence to support the district council contributing to the delivery of facilities through its role as Local Planning Authority and in its role supporting healthy, active and sustainable communities, is strong.</p>
Reason for Recommendations	<p>The adoption of this strategy directly supports delivery across a number of community plan objectives, provides an evidence base for planning policy and future funding, and sets out the strategic approach to identify priorities for investment to ensure that sports and recreation facilities provided across the District meet the needs of Newark & Sherwood’s growing population.</p> <p>Specifically, the adoption of the strategy supports the following community plan objectives: Objective 1: ‘Improve health and wellbeing’ and</p>

	Objective 7: ‘Celebrate and invigorate community spirit, pride of place and a sense of belonging’ and will contribute to Objective 4 ‘Reduce Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour’.
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The District Council adopted the Sport & Recreation Facilities Improvement Plan 2014 – 2021 in 2014 and delivered a number of strategic projects (whether directly by the District Council or in collaboration with partners) that improved the facilities on offer across our district.
- 1.2 Whilst the provision of sport and recreational facilities is not a statutory responsibility for a District Council, when it comes to why councils, health and wider partners should invest in creating the conditions and opportunities for communities to be active, the evidence is very clear. Not only does movement, physical activity and exercise reduce the risk of major illnesses, improve mental wellbeing and help manage existing health conditions, being physically active leads to better outcomes, including:
- improved learning and attainment
 - increasing productivity in the workplace
 - stress management
 - the development of social skills
 - better social interaction
 - improved air quality
 - increasing social cohesion
 - reducing the burden on social care and NHS services
- 1.3 This strategy outlines how we will assess future investment in sport and recreation facilities against a ‘Hierarchy of Provision’, taking into consideration key factors including predicted population growth, impact on demand and current facilities – type, number and condition, and the aspirations of local clubs and sports to develop.
- 1.4 Accordingly, the Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy 2023 – 2033 (Appendix A and published separately to this agenda) will help the Council, its community partners and residents, over the duration of the Strategy, secure access to high quality sport and recreation facilities across the district that are accessible, affordable and sustainable, thereby contributing to improving the health and wellbeing of our residents.
- 1.5 The Strategy will also align to the National Planning Policy Framework, Sport England and local policies of the District Council including the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan to provide an evidence base of current and future needs based on population growth through housing development.
- 1.6 This strategy is brought forward in support of the wider objectives within the Community Plan including: ‘to Improve health and wellbeing’, and ‘celebrate and invigorate community spirit, pride of place and a sense of belonging’ and to contribute to ‘reducing crime and anti-social behaviour’.

2.0 Strategy Vision

- 2.1 The over-arching vision for this strategy is:

‘To support all residents to improve their health and wellbeing by enabling the provision of accessible and sustainable sport and recreation facilities that meet the current and future need’.

2.2 This Strategy will help to guide the future provision of sports and recreation facilities across Newark and Sherwood to ensure that as a district council we play our part in ensuring that facilities meet the needs of residents now and in the future. The strategy will do this by:

2.2.1 **Protecting our Existing Facilities**

It will:

- Provide an updated audit of current formal sports and recreation facilities provision, developing an evidence base that supports the case for funding opportunities.
- Optimise the use of and economic viability of existing facilities through promotion and support.
- Promote the role of leisure, sports and recreation facilities in health improvement, active lifestyles and contribution to the local economy.
- Increase public awareness of the district’s sports and recreation facilities.
- Maintain dialogue with local providers and clubs to support their continued delivery and growth ambitions.

2.2.2 **Improving/Improving Access to our Existing Facilities**

It will:

- Improve the quality of current assets by working across partners to secure funding.
- Identify and unlock facilities that are currently not accessible to community use e.g. through the development of ‘Community Use Agreements’ where appropriate to secure community access to non-district Council owned or controlled facilities.
- Identify where community use of school facilities is feasible and most needed to address any identified deficits in local facility provision.
- Promote sports and recreation development initiatives to unlock latent demand by identifying where the lack of facilities might be suppressing participation levels.
- Use insight data to identify future trends in sports participation and provision and align to social need to balance supply and demand challenges and opportunities.

2.2.3 **Planning for and Providing New Facilities**

It will:

- Inform the development and implementation of planning policy by providing an evidence base for the review of the Local Plan and other associated planning and strategic policies and documents.
- Inform the assessment of planning applications that will affect existing facilities or may provide an opportunity to enhance or supplement the existing facilities to improve local standards of provision.
- Assess future supply and demand for facilities as a result of new housing development and associated population growth through the ‘planning gain’ and Section 106 Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.

- Work with partners across government, health, sport and community groups to support partnerships that facilitate improvements to sport and recreation facilities in our communities.

3.0 Scope of the Strategy

- 3.1 Sport and recreation facility infrastructure can be ordered within a ‘Hierarchy of Provision’ with a smaller number of large multi-use sites which are located in strategic locations with high population density and a greater number of smaller, local community facilities.
- 3.2 For the purpose of this strategy these facilities have been stratified in to three distinct categories, ‘District Council Owned Lesiure Centres’, ‘Strategic Sport Hubs’ and ‘Local Community Sports Facilities’ whereby the Council’s four leisure facilities are supplemented by a further eight large sporting hubs and under pinned by a significant number of smaller local community sports facilities across the whole district.
- 3.3 The council also recognises the importance of informal provision in helping to address physical inactivity and wellbeing within the community, including the very significant contribution made by parks, open spaces and public rights of way. These are not, however, considered as part of this strategy, which focusses on primarily indoor formal sports and recreation facilities.
- 3.4 Further detail on open spaces can be found in our ‘Open Space’ Strategy 2022 and Playing Pitch Strategy 2023, which details sports pitch provision covering, Athletics, Bowls, Cricket, Football, Hockey, Netball, Rugby and Tennis at all sites across the district.
- 3.5 The Strategy applies the principles of Sport England’s ‘Strategic Planning Model’ aims and will allow the Council to align its objectives to the three Planning and Strategy objectives which seek to ‘Protect’, ‘Enhance’ and ‘Provide’ sport and recreation facilities as below:-
- 3.5.1 **TO PROTECT THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE RIGHT PLACES.** Existing provision should be protected unless an assessment has demonstrated there is an excess of the provision and the specific buildings or land are surplus to requirements; or the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the former or current use.
- 3.5.2 **TO ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH BETTER USE OF EXISTING PROVISION.** The use of existing provision should be optimised, for example through quality, access and management improvements supported by appropriate ancillary facilities.
- 3.5.3 **TO PROVIDE NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.** Appropriate new provision that meets needs and encourages people to play sport and be physically active should be provided by adapting existing places and through new development.

4.0 Meeting the Future Need

4.1 This strategy demonstrates, that whilst the provision of sport and recreational facilities is not a statutory responsibility for Newark and Sherwood District Council, it does recognise the significant benefits from the provision of facilities for its residents, communities and economy.

4.2 Strategic partnerships will therefore be essential to meeting future need and the ongoing delivery of sport and recreation facilities, including unlocking access to facilities not currently accessible to the public and in unlocking funding. Section 1.2 of this strategy outlines how we will work strategically across planning policy, partners and funders to ensure that the framework for prioritising investment in facilities is clear.

4.3 Accordingly the District Council will work with key partners to ensure there is a shared understanding of the demand for facilities, the benefits of provision and the shared responsibility to deliver for its communities through collaboration with:

- Central Government Funders e.g. to access Levelling Up/ Shared Prosperity/ Other funding
- Housing Developers – in the negotiation of S106/ CIL contributions
- Sport England
- Private Sector Investors e.g The Premier League
- National Sporting Bodies e.g. The Football Foundation
- Grant making bodies
- Local sports clubs and providers
- Nottinghamshire County Council and Public Health
- The NHS
- Town and Parish Councils
- Schools and other providers of local facilities

5.0 Determining Future Priority Projects

5.1 In order to achieve the Strategies Vision, the district council will, when considering its future priority projects, will align actions to the 'Hierarchy of Provision' categories whereby Category 1 facilities will remain the council's immediate priority, thereafter Category 2 and 3 will be considered to determine what support and potential investment may be secured for such facilities from funding sources available to the Council, in order to align to Sport England's Protect, Enhance, Provide model.

5.2 When considering the provision of new facilities or enhancements to existing facilities outside of council ownership, the council will consider:

- Demand and need data
- Existing local provision
- Availability of funding
- Alignment with priorities

5.3 In progressing projects there are various avenues to pursue to secure investment in the provision or improvement of sport and recreation facilities in the

district. However, to secure funding for a project, consideration needs to be given to where the funding will come from and how much will be required to deliver a successful outcome.

5.4 Accordingly, the District Council will work with partners to secure the necessary funding to deliver its aspirations which are based on evidence of need. Sources of funding will include but are not restricted to:

- Sport England
- National Governing Bodies of Sport
- The Football Foundation
- County, District and Town/Parish Councils
- Section 106 Developer Contributions
- Government Grant Programmes
- Health Funding
- Grant Making Trusts
- Private Sector Funding

5.5 The success of such negotiations will be driven by the alignment of individual project objectives to the expectations and requirements of the funding partners, where outputs and outcomes assessed to deliver a value for money return on the investment and the delivery of significant community, health and social benefits.

6.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

6.1 Financial Implications – FIN23-24/2070

There are no further direct costs associated with this strategy, however, further capital and revenue budget provision to progress a selected number of the Council's ambitions to improve sports and recreation facilities in the district has been included in the Draft 2024-25 budget for member consideration. Revenue budget will enable schemes to be developed through appropriate project management whilst capital monies will be used for direct provision and leverage where appropriate to secure external capital and revenue investment.

6.2 Equality and Diversity

The Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy is designed to increase the accessibility of indoor facilities across the district. Projects brought forward by the council under this strategy will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that the project does not place barriers to participation or cause disadvantage to any protected groups.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None