

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Presentation to Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel

Date: 14 November 2023

Report of: Assistant Director (Democracy)

Subject: Leisure and Community Projects Update

SUMMARY

This report seeks to update Members on a variety of ongoing projects which are being managed within the Leisure and Community function that do not require a full report in their own right. This method of reporting will be supported by a presentation which will provide the most up to date summary of the progress of these projects and workstreams.

RECOMMENDATION

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel notes the contents of the summary report and updates contained within the presentation.

Introduction

1. This report provides Members with an update on the various projects and workstreams currently being managed within the Leisure and Community function.
2. The published report will be further updated by a short presentation delivered to the Panel, which will provide up to date information for each of the projects, thus ensuring that Panel Members receive the most recent status updates.

Fareham Live

3. Fareham Live is currently planned to open as a new community, arts and entertainment venue in 2024 and will be operated by Trafalgar Theatres on behalf of the Council through a management agreement.
4. The construction of Fareham Live is progressing at pace and in October the gold panelling was secured to the fly-tower - a significant milestone for the project. The foyer stairs were installed, the timber framework for the balcony seating was completed, blockwork to north and west elevation got underway and some of the doors and windows started to be installed.
5. Works scheduled for November will include:
 - floor screed will start to be laid
 - ongoing works to prepare for and install the mechanical installation
 - ongoing works to the electrical installation
 - the frame being installed for the cladding to the north elevation
 - continuing to install the doors and windows – south elevation, followed by the north and east elevations
 - the installation of the internal partitioning

Donor Wall – A Wave of Thanks

6. The Council earlier this year commissioned 'A Wave of Thanks', a permanent and bespoke piece of wall art for the foyer in Fareham Live.
7. Individuals, community groups, organisations, clubs and businesses have been given the opportunity to become part of the building's history by sponsoring their own small piece of this unique artwork. This opportunity has been well received with many businesses, groups and individuals having already purchased a bar.
8. A Wave of Thanks will be made up of coloured bars, which will be inscribed with the name of each sponsor. These engraved bars will be used to create a 'sound wave' design depicting both the audio and visual spectacle that Fareham Live will provide.

Leisure Centre Contract

9. In November 2019, when the Executive agreed to award a 15-year contract for the management of Fareham and Holly Hill Leisure Centres to Everyone Active, it also agreed to the capital investment required, particularly at Fareham Leisure Centre, to help deliver improved revenue and thereby increase the annual management fee income which the Council receives.
10. Included in the capital investment proposal was to upgrade the gym at Holly Hill Leisure Centre in 2023/24 (year 3 of the current contract) by which time the equipment will be 7+years old and requiring an upgrade. In addition, it also provides an opportunity to change the equipment arrangement so that it is in line with the current behaviour of customers. These works are expected to be carried out in December 2023.

Performance Monitoring

11. The performance of the contract is closely monitored with client monitoring meetings taking place on a monthly basis between the Council's Leisure and Community Manager and the Everyone Active Contracts Manager.
12. Overall usage figures for both leisure centres are outlined in the table below for October 2022 to September 2023 with a comparison for the same period prior to the pandemic and investment at Fareham Leisure Centre that was completed in October 2021.
13. Both Centres are performing well across all areas and continue to provide a wide range of facilities, classes and activities for all ages and abilities.

Site	2018/19	2022/23	Overall % increase
Fareham Leisure Centre	597,112	757,690	21.2%
Holly Hill Leisure Centre	514,621	519,551	0.9%
Total	1,111,733	1,277,241	11.1%

Swimming Pool Funding

14. Earlier this year the Government's Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) was launched, providing funding to local authorities in England with a support package for public leisure facilities with swimming pools. This funding was split into two phases.
 - **Phase I** - Revenue: £20m was made available to support facilities with swimming pools with increased cost pressures, leaving them most vulnerable to closure or significant service reduction.
 - **Phase 2** - Capital: £60m was made available for capital investment to improve the energy efficiency of public facilities with pools in the medium to long term.
15. The Council was unsuccessful in its application for revenue funding but has applied for phase 2 and will be notified of the outcome by the end of January 2024.

UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF)

16. The Government launched its UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in 2022, as part of its Levelling Up agenda, providing £2.6 billion of funding intended to reduce inequalities between communities. Following a successful application, Fareham Borough Council was allocated a total of £1m.

17. In July 2022, the Council submitted a plan outlining how this funding would be used to reduce inequalities. Two of the proposals contained within that plan are to be overseen by the Leisure and Community Team:

Crossfell Walk (Fareham South)

18. This project will include improvements to the play and recreational facilities. The allocation from the UKSPF towards these improvements is up to £100,000 and will include redirecting the existing cycle path currently running through the middle of the children's play area.

19. During September, consultation with residents and interested parties was carried out. Three engagement methods were employed; an online survey, the Facebook consultation group 'Let's Talk Fareham' and a pop-up engagement event was held at the play area.

20. The consultation was well received with 345 responses.

21. Subject to contractor availability and ground conditions, improvement works to the play and recreational facilities at Crossfell Walk are expected to be carried out in Spring 2024.

Henry Cort Drive (Fareham North-West)

22. This project will allow for the creation of a community-led Masterplan for much needed affordable housing alongside the first phase of works to improve the community, sport and leisure facilities on the open space at Henry Cort Drive.

23. The allocation from the UKSPF to the Fareham North-West Vision of £700,000 (£500,000 capital and £200,000 revenue) will be combined with £1.75 million of Section 106 developers' contributions (for outdoor recreation and maintenance) which has been reallocated from the Cams Alders Vision.

24. The cost to deliver the leisure and community improvements is estimated to be £4.6m and while funds totalling £2.25m have been secured, this leaves a shortfall of approx. £2.35m which will need to be funded through external grants.

25. This project will be divided into phases, with phase 1 needing to be delivered by March 2025 because of the time constraints imposed by the Shared Prosperity Funding.

26. The delivery of phase 2 will be subject to securing additional funding and the delivering of phase 3 will be subject to the existing community facilities having been relocated.

27. A summary of the phases can be seen in the table below:

Phase 1	Relocation and enhancement of the existing play and recreational facilities i.e. multi-use games area and a children's play area
	Sports pitch orientation and drainage improvements
	Ecological site surveys
Phase 2	A new community centre (larger, fit-for-purpose, more energy efficient)
	Accessible facilities for use by hirers of the football pitches
	Replacement pétanque court
	Car parking to serve the leisure and community facilities
	Site landscaping
Phase 3	Provide affordable housing <i>This element of the project will be managed by the Councils Housing Team.</i>

Play Area Improvement Programme

28. The Council has 47 play areas located across the Borough for children and young people up to the age of 15, including three large destination play areas at Holly Hill, Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park and Abbey Meadows.
29. In November 2022, the Executive approved a new five-year play and recreational facilities improvement programme to help ensure the Council's existing facilities continue to be accessible and well maintained. This included £500,000 (£100,000 per annum) for play area improvement works and a one-off sum of £200,000 to improving the skate park facilities at Stubbington and Wicor Recreation Grounds.
30. To help identify the play areas that hadn't received any recent investment and to help prioritise those that require attention over the next five years, an initial review of play areas was carried out by Leisure and Community and Streetscene Officers to help inform which play areas would be improved in year 1 (2023/24) and year 2 (2024/25) of the programme. The outcome of that review is detailed in the table below.
31. A further assessment to help determine the play areas that will undergo improvement works in years 3 to 5 will be carried out by Officers next year.

Year 1 (2023/24)	Year 2 (2024/25)
Seafield Park Play Area (Hill Head)	Course Park Play Area (Titchfield Common)
Badgers Copse Play Area (Park Gate)	Bellfield Play Area (Titchfield)
Fielding Road Play Area (Whiteley)	Laurel Gardens Play Area (Locks Heath)

Christmas Light Switch-On Event 2023

32. The annual Christmas Light Switch-On event will take place on Saturday 18 November 2023 from 10:00am – 7:00pm in the pedestrianised area of West Street and will include:
- Festive gift stalls
 - Food and drinks concessions
 - Fun fair rides
 - Children's activities including face painting and circus skills
 - Performers and Father Christmas
 - Special finale
33. This year, the Council will be unveiling a new festive lighting display as part of a five-year contract with The Festive Lighting Company. The previous Christmas lights will be recycled.
34. The new lighting scheme, with its warm and cool toned white lights, is twice as energy efficient than the previous LED lighting, whilst delivering much brighter and more impressive lights.
35. Unlike previous years, the lights will be switched on by the winner of the Council's summer colouring competition, along with the Mayor and Mayoress. The lights will be switched on at 5:30pm.
36. This event has been given a 'golden' theme to help officially announce the campaign to mark Fareham Borough Council's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Westbury Manor Museum

37. In response to economic pressures, Hampshire Cultural Trust carried out a review of its managed venues, with a specific focus on those venues receiving no local authority funding.
38. Hampshire Cultural Trust have 4 years remaining on the current 10-year management agreement with a 12-month notice period required by either party under the current agreement and lease conditions if there was a desire to end the agreement.
39. Hampshire Cultural Trust had requested a variation to the management agreement, but this was not supported at the May 2023 Executive meeting due to the significant level of investment that was initially made by the Council.
40. The performance of the contract is closely monitored with client monitoring meetings taking place on a bi-monthly basis between the Council's Leisure and Community Manager and senior representatives from Hampshire Cultural Trust including the Venue Manager.

41. Annual footfall for Westbury Manor Museum for the period October 2022 to September 2023 was 12,180. This figure is down by 39.33% when compared to the same period prior to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Risk Assessment

42. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report.

Conclusion

43. Members are asked to note the contents of this report and the updates contained within the accompanying presentation.

Background Papers: Project files and correspondence

Reference Papers: None

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Emma Bowler on 01329 824440