

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### **Report to Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel**

**Date**                    **24 July 2013**

**Report of:**            **Director of Community**

**Subject:**              **LEISURE STRATEGY REVIEW**

#### **SUMMARY**

The Leisure Strategy was last presented to the Panel in May 2012. This report contains a copy of the latest revised strategy document that reflects the changes and achievements that have occurred in 2012/13.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive adopt the revised Leisure Strategy for 2013 to 2018, as set out in Appendix A.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Leisure Strategy sets out the vision and key priorities for the next five years and contains a series of actions that will primary focus for the Leisure and Community team.
2. The previous version of the strategy was presented to the Community Policy Development and Review Panel on 16 May 2012. Since then there have been a number of changes and emerging issues which have impacted on the service and these are summarised in the report along with the main achievements over the last year. A copy of the Leisure Strategy 2013 to 2018 is contained in Appendix A.

## **EMERGING ISSUES**

3. The Diamond Jubilee and London 2012 Olympic celebrations ensured that 2012 was a memorable year. The events and activities organised to mark these occasions coincided with the culmination of the Council's sports development function. Funding for the post of Football Development Officer expired in September 2012 and the revenue budget to support this and the sports development activities were withdrawn as part of the efficiency savings programme.
4. A decision by the County Council to withdraw funding for community schools resulted in the management of Lockwood Community Centre being handed back to the Council from Brookfield School in April 2012. This resulted in an added financial pressure for the Council as the centre was operating at a budget shortfall in the region of £60k. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to establish a charitable body to take over the management of the facility. This arrangement has the potential to eradicate the revenue budget deficit and provide a sustainable operation for the future. However, no long term decisions can be made until the future of the Locks Heath Shopping Centre development is decided.
5. Preparation has begun on planning for the transfer of 33 hectares of land at Coldeast into the Council's ownership. This will involve plans to construct new community infrastructure including the possibility of a swimming pool. There are also large areas of woodland and parkland that need to be prepared and maintained for public access. The later will be the responsibility of the Countryside Ranger Service who will need the requisite resources to ensure this process can be managed effectively.
6. Another significant project involves the renewal of the Fareham Leisure Centre management contract that expires in May 2015. Consideration is being given to the future management arrangements that include capital investment in the pool and changing areas as part of the new agreement.
7. The review of community buildings in the Fareham Town CAT area highlighted a strategic need for a community centre located in the town centre area. Work is now underway to evaluate potential sites in the town centre and establish the build costs to inform a master plan.
8. Hampshire County Council's reorganisation of youth provision has resulted in a lack of resources to deliver open access youth provision across the Borough. This has had a detrimental impact on both the management and the range of services provided in Council owned youth centres, particularly at Genesis and X-perience (in Trinity Street). The future management arrangements of these facilities will need to be considered to

determine how best to meet the current demand for youth provision in Council -owned buildings and other local facilities.

9. Hampshire County Council is currently in the process of reviewing both the Museum and Arts Service and the funding arrangements for Council for Voluntary Services, Community Action Fareham. These reviews are scheduled to conclude in 2013 but in both cases it is likely to impact on the way these services are delivered in the future.
10. The 2012 Indoor Sports Study and Playing Pitch Strategy considered the related need for provision in the new community at Welborne and the results have been included in the master planning work. In addition there is a requirement to identify opportunities to mitigate the impacts of the increase in population from the Welborne development on the Solent Special Protection Area. This will require identifying new green infrastructure and improvements in existing infrastructure to help mitigate the impact.
11. In May 2013 the Council implemented new arrangements for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This will largely replace the provision of section 106 agreements relating to new development. The Open Space Supplementary Planning Guidance has been very effective at collecting contributions for providing new and improved infrastructure for outdoor sport, play areas and open space. In future funding is likely to be much harder to come by as open space provision competes for funding with other infrastructure needs such as highways, health and education.

### **MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS**

12. A brief summary of the main achievements for Leisure & Community services in 2012/13 are set out in the following section.
13. **Olympic Torch Relay** - On Sunday 15 July 1000,s of people descended on Fareham Town Centre to celebrate the arrival of the Olympic Torch. The event was the culmination of a series of events that took place across the Borough to celebrate the London 2012 Olympic Games.
14. **Queens Diamond Jubilee Celebrations** - Community events were organised over the spring bank holiday weekend to celebrate the Queens Diamond Jubilee. The events were held in the four parks that were awarded QE II Fields in Trust status and included the unveiling of a stone and plaque to mark the occasion.
15. **Portchester Community Centre** - The construction of a new £2m community centre to serve the residents of Portchester was completed in December 2012 and opened in January 2013. The old dilapidated community centre building has been demolished along with the old tennis courts and additional car parking is being created.
16. **Wicor Pavilion** - The construction of a new £700k 6 team changing room pavilion was completed in December 2012 ahead of schedule and was opened for use in January 2013. The facility was jointly funded by the Football Foundation in partnership with the Council and AFC Portchester.
17. **Lockswood Community Centre** - The management of the Lockswood Community Centre at Centre Way, Locks Heath, transferred from the Brookfield Community School to Fareham Borough Council on 1 April 2012. Six individuals from groups who use the Lockswood Community Centre have set up a charitable organisation with the

aim of taking on the management of the facility. The group have developed a business plan that has been approved by the Executive and are in the final stages of agreeing the arrangements to take over the management of the building.

18. **Assets of Community Value** - Under the Localism Act 2011, voluntary and community organisations and parish councils can nominate an asset to be included in a 'list of assets of community value'. A new procedure for nominating such assets has been developed and published on the Council's website.
19. **Review of Community Buildings** - The review of Community Buildings is a corporate priority and the third phase of the process, the Fareham CAT area needs assessment and draft master plan, was completed in March 2012.
20. **Fareham Park Project** - Fareham Park has been identified as one of the most deprived areas of the Borough and nationally, as evidenced by national deprivation indices. Following the demise of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in 2010, the Council adopted the project as a corporate priority with the aim of reducing deprivation and poverty in Fareham Park. A new steering group has been formed to lead the project and a Project Officer appointed on a 3 year contract. £17,500 "Have Your Say" funding has already been secured and work is currently being undertaken to organise community event to help determine how this money will be allocated.
21. **Indoor Sport Study & Playing Pitch Strategy** - These two key studies were completed in 2012 and will inform the future provision of sports pitches and indoor sports facilities in the Borough.
22. **Play Area Improvements** - New play areas were installed at Laurel Gardens and Locks Heath Park.
23. **Tennis Court Improvements** - Improvements to the court surface and fencing was undertaken at Locks Heath and Titchfield Tennis Courts.
24. **Matched Funding Grants** - The Council awarded matched funding grants to the following groups to provide new and improved sport and community facilities in the Borough; Titchfield Boxing Club £25,000, Fareham Bowls Club, £25,000, Sarisbury Community Centre £7,500, Salmiakki Indoor Sports Centre £21,500 and Portchester Community School All Weather Pitch £50,000.
25. **Bath Lane Pavillion** - Plans have been developed to refurbish the existing changing rooms at Bath Lane which include the provision of a new club house for Fareham & Crofton Cricket Club. The old dilapidated clubhouse will be demolished and a new grounds maintenance store provided.
26. **Community Action Fareham - SLA Review** - Review completed and reported to March Executive with decision to reduce funding by 4% and review again in 6 months when results of County Council review of Council for Voluntary Services funding have been finalised.
27. **Play Ranger Service** - The 3 year Play Ranger programme, funded by the Big Lottery, came to an end in August 2012. The service was very popular with children and young people across the borough, seeing record user figures for the service.

28. **Fareham Community Savers** - The Council has developed local access to the services of Hampshire credit union in partnership with First Wessex Housing Association and the Southern Co-operative, this is the first year of a three year initiative.
29. **Broadlaw Walk** - Support and guidance has been given to First Wessex and local Broadlaw Community Volunteers to assist with the development of the new Broadlaw Walk Community building and the sustainability of the project over the next three years.
30. **Safeguarding Policy** - The current policy has been revised and updated to take account of safeguarding arrangements and now includes provision for the welfare of vulnerable adults in addition to children and young people.
31. **Red Barn Allotments** – Refurbishment of building including a new pitch roof, new electrics and redecoration.
32. **Linden Lea** - Creation of Wildflower Meadow and successful Botanical Art event with local school children.
33. **South and South East in Bloom** - Gold Award in large Town/City Category, also Gold Awards for other Parks including Westbury Manor Garden, Sensory Garden, Holly Hill and Warsash Common plus Green Flag Awards for Holly Hill and Sensory Garden.
34. **Roman Grove Cemetery** - New entrance gates, pillars and walls.
35. **Parks and Countryside Events** - Successful programme of events organised across the Borough.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

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

### **CONCLUSION**

37. The past year has seen a wide variety of high profile events and new community facilities provided for residents and visitors to the borough to enjoy. The 2013-2018 Leisure Strategy provides an overview of what influences the demand for, and provision of, leisure and cultural facilities and activities in the Borough of Fareham.
38. The strategy document contained in Appendix A includes an action plan that sets out the programme for delivering activities and new leisure and cultural facilities over the next five years.

### **Background Papers:**

None

**Appendices:** [Appendix A - Leisure Strategy 2013 - 2018](#)

**Reference Papers:**

Leisure & Community Policy Development & Review Panel - 16 May 2012 - Leisure Strategy Review.

**Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Mark Bowler, Head of Leisure and Community (Ext 4420 )