

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Executive to be held on 6th February 2024

AK

Subject:

Sports Facilities Service Review

Summary statement:

This report sets out the proposed approach to conducting a Review of Bradford Sports facilities Service during 2024, in order to make savings of £60K in 2024/25 rising to £1,250,000 by 2025/6 financial year.

This report has not been included on the published forward plan as an issue for consideration, because the proposal to undertake a review of the Sports Facilities was put forward only very recently as part of the Council's 2024/5 budget proposals. As it is impractical to defer the decision until it has been included in the published Forward Plan the report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 10 of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out for this proposed Review. At this stage the assessment is a Low impact on people with protected characteristics, as the outcomes of the Review are unknown. However, it is recognised that, as specific proposals are developed, a number of communities that share a protected characteristic could be affected. It is expected that public, staff and union consultation will be carried out on any changes proposed as an outcome of the Review, and the EIA will be kept updated as the Review progresses. Consultees will be encouraged to comment on the proposals and any impacts they believe might be felt by particular groups of people (in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty). Where possible arrangements will be made to reduce any negative impacts of the proposals; these mitigations will be set out in the EIA.

David Shepherd
Strategic Director of Place

Portfolio: Cllr Sarah Ferriby

Healthy People & Places

Report Contact: Phil Barker
Phone: 01274 43 2616
E-mail: phil.barker@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Environment and Regeneration

1. SUMMARY

This report sets out the proposed scope, process, timeline and governance for a Review of Sports Facilities, as proposed in the Council's budget proposals for 2024/5, in order to achieve savings of £60K in 2024/25 rising to £1,250,000 in 2025/6 financial year.

Whilst the proposal to conduct a review of Sports Facilities itself forms part of the public consultation on the Council's budget proposals for 2024/5, it is important to agree the approach to the Review in advance to ensure it is successful in achieving the required objectives assuming it goes ahead.

2. BACKGROUND

The report of the Director of Finance to Executive on 11 January, clearly set out the Council's challenging financial position. It stated that "Effectively the Council will require re-shaping to become affordable within the resources that are available" and "there will be a reduction in the level of services provided and the number of staff employed by the Council" as a result.

It said "An approach to strategic financial management is required based on the following objectives" which included:

- Transform and reduce levels of service provision, ensuring that services that continue are as high performing as possible
- Minimise impacts on prevention services that are reducing demand
And went on to say that the development of a sustainable plan requires (among other things):
- Intelligent use of data and sector good practice to identify how to deliver the highest performance within the available resources
- A programme of strategic service reviews to reduce demand and cost

This included a strategic review of the *Sport and Leisure facilities* (Paragraph 4.37) as follows:

Strategic Review of Sport and Leisure facilities (£60k in 2024-25 rising to £1.25m by 2025-26) – The Council is undertaking a strategic review of its sports and leisure facilities to identify how operating costs can be reduced. Reductions of this scale are likely to impact on the overall number of swimming pools, gyms and indoor recreation centres. The review will focus on facility operating costs, usage data, income generation, property and asset stock-condition and the potential for alternative operating models to be adopted. The review will also consider if the Squire Lane project should go ahead.

The proposed approach to the Sports Facility Review, set out in section 3 below, is based on the strategic principles taken from the budget report, as set out above and the work that has already taken place to indicate that this service has a realistic potential to financially achieve the level of savings proposed in the budget report.

Public consultation on this and all other budget proposals opened on 11th January and will close on 17 February and the outcome will be presented to the Council's Executive on 20 February.

3. PROPOSED APPROACH TO REVIEW

The driver for the Review is the need to find savings of £60K in 2024/25 and £1,250,000 in 2025/26 with the full year effect and additional changes as required. It is highly likely that as the costs of the service are substantially based on utility and staff costs, a review will require a rationalisation of the service, with some reductions in the number of sports facilities available.

The purpose of the Review will be to determine the best approach and scale of Sports Facilities that the Council can continue to provide across the District with the available budget.

4. METHODOLOGY

Officers will review and update the data and assessments that were carried out as part of the Facility Planning Model and review Sport England's Strategic Outcome Planning Guidance and make use of industry best practice regarding facility catchment areas and a 20-minute drive time.

The review will focus on:

- Geographic location
- Facility operating costs
- Usage data
- income generation
- Property and asset stock-condition
- Potential for alternative operating models to be adopted

The outcome of the review could identify a hierarchy of provision including facilities which are proposed to stay, have some merit is remaining open and those that might need to close if the budget priorities are to be realised, this review will also consider any new facilities that have not been commissioned at the current time e.g.Squire Lane Sports Facilities.

5. TIMELINE

January – March: commence data and needs analysis work and identify any 'quick wins' that will deliver savings with minimal impact on the service.

5th March Executive: progress update, decision on any 'quick wins' and if there are any options that can be considered for consultation.

April – July: identify specific savings proposals and determine what service can be delivered within available budget resources and carry out public consultation as required.

July Executive: decision on service specification and savings proposals and feedback on any public consultation and agree further site-specific engagement work that maybe required.

September Executive: report results of any public consultation and agree implementation of final savings proposals by April 2025.

6. GOVERNANCE

The Sports Facility Review will be overseen by senior officer Review Group comprised of the Strategic Director of Place, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources, the Assistant Director for Assets and Facilities Management, the Assistant Director for Culture, Sport and Leisure, the Director of Human Resources, and the Head of Finance. The Head of Sports Facilities, supported by the Council's Transformation Team, will report to this Review Group as required.

7. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

The Service Managed cost of the Sport Facility Service was £5.073m for the financial year 2023/24 which represents an overall subsidy for the delivery of sports facilities. Throughout 2024-25 the Service has been reporting an overspend of 0.5m, largely due to structural issues within the existing budget, and additional pressures mainly related to premises costs. The saving required for 2024/5 financial year is £60k, and a further saving of £1.25m in the 2025/26 financial year.

.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Risk assessments will also be carried out for individual savings proposals as required.

9. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There is no statutory duty to provide sports facilities.

It will be necessary for the Council to have regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 when conducting the Sports Facility Review.

Consideration will be given to legal issues that arise in conducting the Review.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

10.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

No significant implications have been identified.

10.2 TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS

No significant implications have been identified.

10.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

No significant implications have been identified.

10.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

No significant implications have been identified.

10.5 TRADE UNION

Trade Unions will be consulted on any staffing impact of proposals.

10.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

No significant implications have been identified at this stage.

10.7 AREA COMMITTEE LOCALITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

No significant implications have been identified at this stage.

10.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

No significant implications have been identified at this stage.

10.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

No significant implications have been identified.

11. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to agree a review of the Sports Facilities Service and as detailed in this report the proposed approach, methodology and timeline to achieve the proposed savings of £60K in 2024/25 and a further £1.25M as contained in the 2024/25 Budget Proposals report (Executive Committee 11th January 2024).

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Background documents are documents relating to the subject matter of the report which disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based, and have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report. Published works are not included.
- All documents referred to in the report must be listed, including exempt documents.
- All documents used in the compilation of the report but not specifically referred to, must be listed.