

REPORT TO: CABINET **DATE:** 13th October 2016
HEADING: LEISURE REVIEW – TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: HEALTH AND WELLBEING
KEY DECISION: YES **SUBJECT TO CALL-IN:** YES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Cabinet on the Leisure Facilities Review consultation and the feasibility for the replacement of Festival Hall Leisure Centre. To seek authorisation to proceed with the recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. To endorse the Leisure Review Consultation analysis contained within the body of the report and consult further on future options for Huthwaite and Edgewood Centres.
2. To endorse the findings from Feasibility Studies for the replacement of Festival Hall Leisure Centre in Kirkby; and:
 - i) To proceed with further feasibility works for the two preferred sites identified, to encompass two floor plans for:-
 - a. Dry only leisure centre
 - b. Wet and dry leisure centre with 25m pool
 - ii) A grant application has been submitted to the Nottinghamshire Pre Development Fund to fund the feasibility study. If the bid is unsuccessful, it is recommended that the Revenue Budget is increased by £28,500 for 2016/17 and the increase recommended to Council.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

This report is to update Cabinet on Key Projects within the Council's Corporate Plan (2016-2019) including, the Leisure Review and the feasibility for a replacement for the Festival Hall Leisure Centre (informed by the Leisure Review).

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED (with reasons why not adopted)

To do nothing is not an option as the Leisure Facilities Review has allowed the Council to understand the appropriateness of its leisure stock in relation to the district's health profile and future requirements. The provision of effective facility infrastructure will be central to the successful delivery of the health and wellbeing objectives within the Corporate Plan (2016-2019).

5.1 Strategic Vision

Ashfield District Council's Corporate Plan recognises that the health and wellbeing of our residents is a priority in order to ensure our residents are healthy and happy. We also recognise that the health of people in Ashfield is generally worse than the England average, with a related reduction in life expectancies for both men and women. A number of diseases are currently on the increase and affecting people at an earlier age including cancer, diabetes, obesity, hypertension and depression.

The Council recognises that it can directly support the improvement of health and wellbeing of its residents through its own services and in partnership. A wealth of evidence shows that an active

life is essential for physical and mental health and wellbeing. Whilst Ashfield District Council has 6 leisure centres, multiple outdoor facilities, award winning parks and an upward trend in attendance by the local population visiting these sites there remains a worrying increase in preventable ill health, inactivity and adult and child obesity.

The Council wants local people to have access to modern leisure facilities to help lead healthier lifestyles. We are currently working on a five year transformation Programme for our Leisure Centre provision and a clear approach to providing facilities is required, including maximizing and rationalizing the use of the Councils assets alongside coordinated provision from other sources.

The Councils Vision is *'to secure a district-wide network of quality, affordable, accessible and sustainable Leisure Centre's and services for the benefit of all residents of Ashfield'*

Corporate Plan Key Projects

In order to achieve the Councils Vision there are two Key Projects identified within the Corporate Plan, firstly to carry out a Leisure Facilities Review and secondly, to explore the feasibility for a replacement for the Festival Hall Leisure Centre (informed by the Leisure Review).

In order to address these priorities an extensive Leisure Facilities Review was undertaken, Cabinet endorsed the findings on 14th July 2106 and agreed to carry out extensive consultation with residents, leisure users and partners on the Transformation Programme. Cabinet also agreed to carry out a feasibility of potential sites for the replacement of the Festival Hall Leisure Centre. This report updates Cabinet on the Leisure Review consultation analysis and the findings from the feasibility work in Kirkby.

5.2 Consultation Analysis and Findings

Background

The Council has carried out a public consultation exercise to seek views on options for the future transformation of Leisure Centres which will help the Council to shape future provision. In August 2016, Ashfield District Council consulted members of the public through an online survey and drop-in sessions at three sites.

Consultation also included various partners, the Councils Citizen's Panel and Scrutiny. The Leisure Centres Transformation Survey captured public opinion around the future options for Edgewood, Huthwaite and Festival Hall Leisure Centres.

5.2.1 Transformation Survey Summary - Headline Findings

Of the three sites the most respondents were users of Festival Hall, followed by Edgewood and then Huthwaite. A number of respondents indicated that they used more than one Leisure Centre and responses were also received from people who used leisure facilities outside of the District.

In total, the survey attracted 781 responses which comprised of 524 completed responses and 257 partial/incomplete responses. Below is an analysis of the responses received:

- Of the 781 respondents there was a heavy bias towards females responding with 365 female respondents in comparison with 201 male responses received (the remaining respondents did not provide the information)
- The largest response group was aged 35-44 accounting for 33.4% of the total response. This was followed by the 25-34 years' age group which comprised 14.2% of the response and then over 65's which represented 13.7% of all respondents. The lowest level of response came from the 18-24 years' age group which accounted for only 3.32% of all

responses. 7.68% of all respondents to the survey regarded themselves as being disabled persons

- In terms of religion or belief, the largest response group was Christians (46.72%), although no religion (31.04%) and no answer (18.9%) scored strongly. Muslims accounted for 0.48% of respondents with other minority responses received including Jewish, Pagan, Polish, Unitarian and Catholic
- 78.2% of respondents described themselves as heterosexual, 1.6% of respondents as gay or lesbian, 0.80% as bisexual and 0.96% as other
- 416 people (66.08% of respondents) completing the survey were leisure centre users whilst 391 respondents (62.5%) were Ashfield residents. Other respondents completed the survey in the capacity of Citizens Panel Members, former residents, instructors, community development workers or parents with children at Edgewood School

5.2.2 Festival Hall Analysis

Exclusively for questions about Festival Hall.

- Respondents were firstly asked if they were a user of Festival Hall Leisure Centre and 208 respondents (36.1%) reported that they were versus 37.2% who were non-users and 26.7% who did not provide a response to this question
- 19.9% of respondents currently use Festival Hall for fitness classes, 9.2% take part in badminton and 1.9% play squash. The 'other' response category accounted for 12.8% of respondents and included an extremely diverse variety of activities
- Of the 224 respondents to this question, car was the most popular mode of transport (55.3%) followed by walking (37.5%) then bus (2.7%) and cycling (1.3%)
- Typical travel time to Festival Hall amongst respondents was also analysed and 5-10 minutes proved to be the most popular category (105 responses) followed by less than 5 minutes (59 responses). Only 6 people who responded to this question travelled more than 20 minutes to get to Festival Hall Leisure Centre
- In terms of how often they use the Festival Hall, 64.7% of 204 respondents to this question use the facility weekly, 14.2% monthly, 13.7% 1 or 2 times a year and 7.4% 3 or 4 times a year
- Respondents were asked whether Festival Hall fulfils the needs of the local community and 67.2% of respondents felt that it did so, versus 32.8% of respondents who felt that it did not
- Of those who answered that Festival Hall did not fulfil the needs of the local community, explanations given included the standard of facilities (noted by 56 respondents), unsuitable programming (noted by 32 respondents), location of facilities (noted by 24 respondents) and the cost being prohibitive (noted by 15 respondents)

Table 1 – Preferred Activities if a new Kirkby in Ashfield facility could be provided

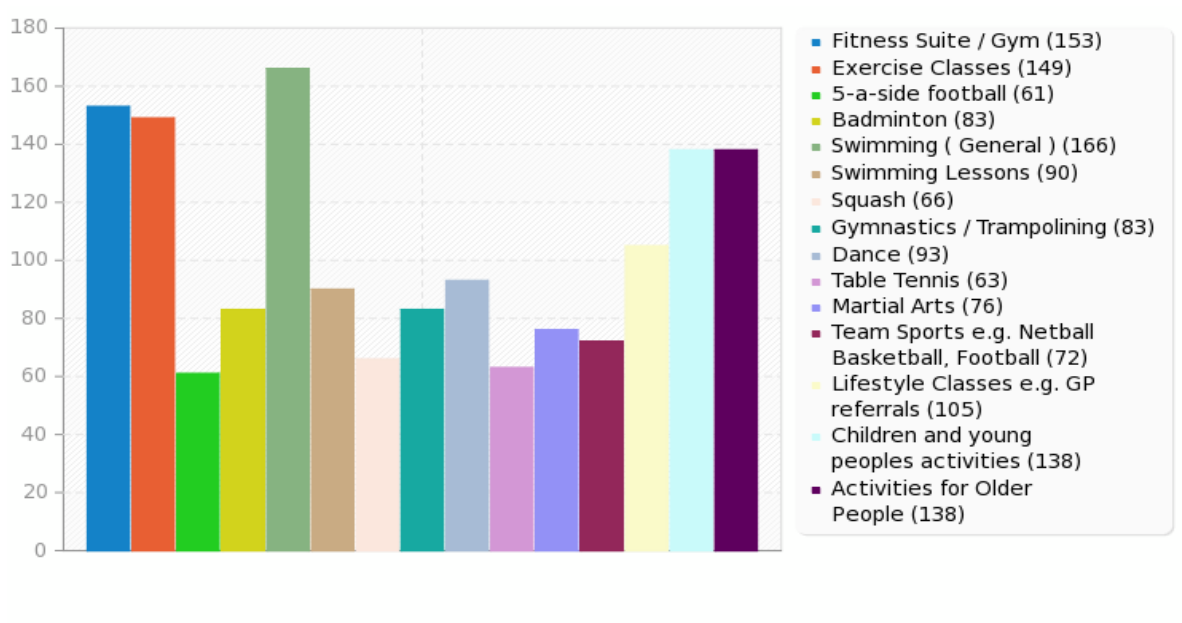


Table 1 shows that the most popular request, if a new facility in Kirkby-in-Ashfield could be provided, was for Swimming which was mentioned by 166 respondents. This was followed by a Fitness Suite or Gym which was mentioned by 153 respondents, exercise classes mentioned by 149 respondents and Children and young Peoples' activities and Activities for older people mentioned by 138 respondents respectively.

A number of specific comments were noted in terms of improvements that could be made to Festival Hall Leisure Centre. Responses included:

- The facility is not modern, needs upgrading
- Lack of good facility training equipment
- It's too small for the community
- It's an old outdated facility
- Swimming would enhance the offer to local residents as would an upgrade to the general facilities

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were provided with an open box in order that they could provide any other comments. A number of the comments provided related specifically to Festival Hall Leisure Centre. A summary of the open comments received highlighted that the Festival Hall is well located in the town centre and is seen as an asset for the local community. The sites ability to hold sporting activities and entertainment events is appreciated and valued and would be expected to be available in any new build.

Summary of the findings for Festival Hall

There is widespread support for a new facility in Kirkby and that facilities could be improved to meet the needs of the town now and in the future. The location is crucial with proximity to good public transport and suitable car parking facilities to attract people to the centre.

The most popular request, if a new facility in Kirkby-in-Ashfield could be provided, was for Swimming this was closely followed by Fitness Gym and Exercise Classes with some activities for younger children and older people.

Other popular response requests were for integrated GP referrals, swimming lessons, dance, badminton, gymnastics, trampolining, martial arts, team sports, and 5-a-side.

There were a number of comments relating to the use of the Festival Hall for social events, including bands, choirs and special occasions and a new facility should be designed to accommodate this as well as sport.

There was also representation from the current gym users at the Festival Hall who requested a larger 'performance gym' as part of the new centre as this was a growing market in the area and the current centre was too small to accommodate demand.

5.2.3 Edgewood – Headline Findings

This section of the analysis looks at survey responses received specifically relating to Edgewood;

- Of all respondents, 163 people or 29% of respondents said that they are currently users of Edgewood Leisure Centre versus 32.7% of non-users
- Swimming Lessons was the most popular activity taking place at the centre accounting for 104 respondents (18.5%), this was followed by Swimming (94 respondents and 16.7%) and Badminton (17 respondents and 3.02%)
- Other activities respondents were using Edgewood Leisure Centre for included Judo, Taekwondo, Library, parties and social group meetings
- When visiting Edgewood Leisure Centre, the most popular mode of transport amongst respondents was car (17.4%), followed by walking (12.6%), cycling (0.36%) and bus (0.18%)
- 13.2% of respondents travel between 5 and 10 minutes to use Edgewood Leisure Centre which was the highest response category. All but 1.25% of respondents are travelling under 20 minutes to use Edgewood Leisure Centre
- Of all 171 responses to the question, 72.5% are using Edgewood weekly, 9.4% monthly, 8.2% 3 or 4 times a year and 4.68% once or twice a year. The remaining respondents answered 'other'

Table 2 – Aspects of Edgewood Leisure Centre most valued

Aspect	%
Location of the facility	27.1
Size of the facility	18.5
Range of activities on offer	9.9
Opening hours	10.3
Customer service	18.3

Respondents were asked what they most valued about Edgewood Leisure Centre and Table 2 shows that respondents most valued the location of the facility (27.1%), followed by the size (18.5%) and customer service (18.3%). A further 17 comments in the 'other' section related to the swimming pool facilities and their suitability for toddlers to learn to swim with depth and temperature of the water cited repeatedly as positive factors.

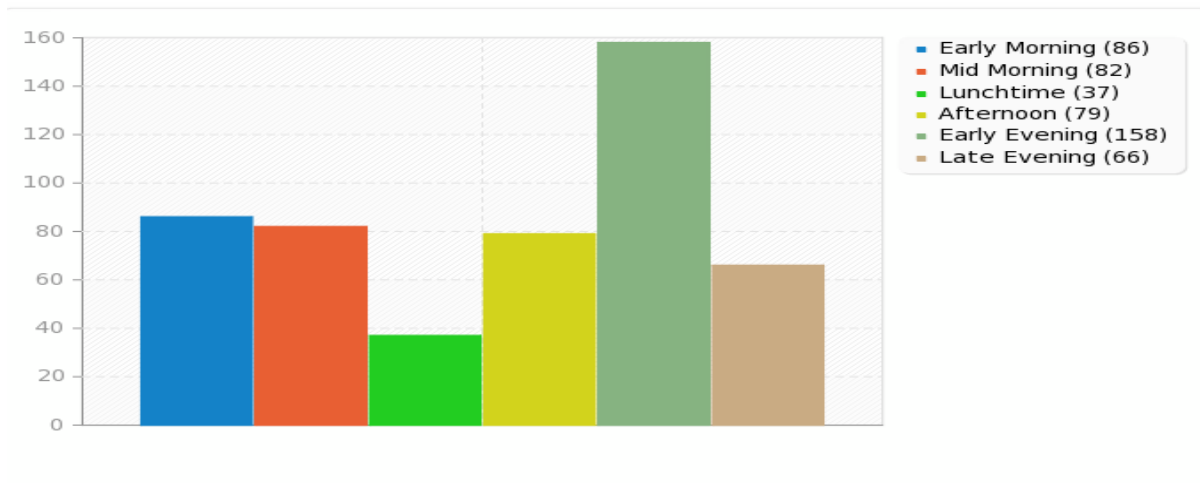
Table 3 – Alternative Centre if Edgewood closed

Aspect	%
Hucknall	22.4
Other	12.9
Festival Hall	5.5
Lammas	3.4
Selston	0.9
Huthwaite	0.9

Respondents were asked which other facilities they would consider using if Edgewood Leisure Centre were to close in the future and Table 3 demonstrates that by far the centre with the largest response in terms of potential migration from Edgewood is Hucknall Leisure Centre (22.4%). The remaining Leisure Centres scored much lower in terms of potential migration and 12.9% of respondents stated that they would make other arrangements.

In terms of a preferred time to use the Leisure Centre at Edgewood, early evenings proved the most popular with 158 responses, which is attributable to the popular swimming lesson programme provided at the facility. Responses are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – Preferred times to visit Edgewood Leisure Centre



At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were provided with an open box in order that they could provide any other comments. A number of the comments provided related specifically to Edgewood Leisure Centre. A summary of the open comments received highlighted that Edgewood is good for children to gain confidence in the pools environment. Limited parking is an issue and the public transport bus service is sparse, particularly in the evening.

Edgewood - Summary

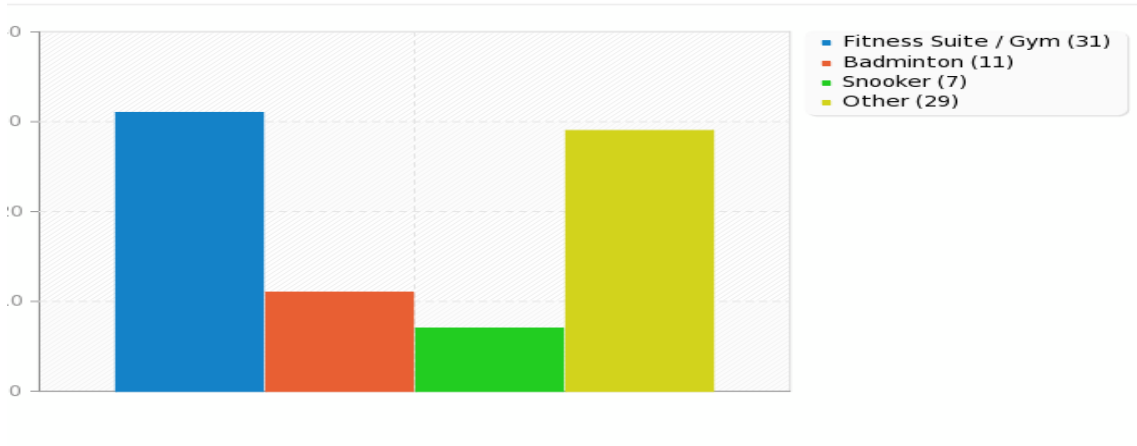
The results from the transformation survey relating to Edgewood suggested that the highest proportion of customers used the centre for weekly swimming lessons and travelled by car. Customers enjoy the intimacy that the centre offers compared to larger facilities and were supportive of the quality of service they received from staff. There were a number of comments relating to advertising and how the centre is a valuable local resource for younger children. When specifically asked which centre they would consider using if Edgewood was not available in the future, Hucknall Leisure Centre was the understandably highest response by some way.

5.2.4 Huthwaite – Headline Findings

This section of the analysis reviews the survey findings specific to Huthwaite Leisure Centre.

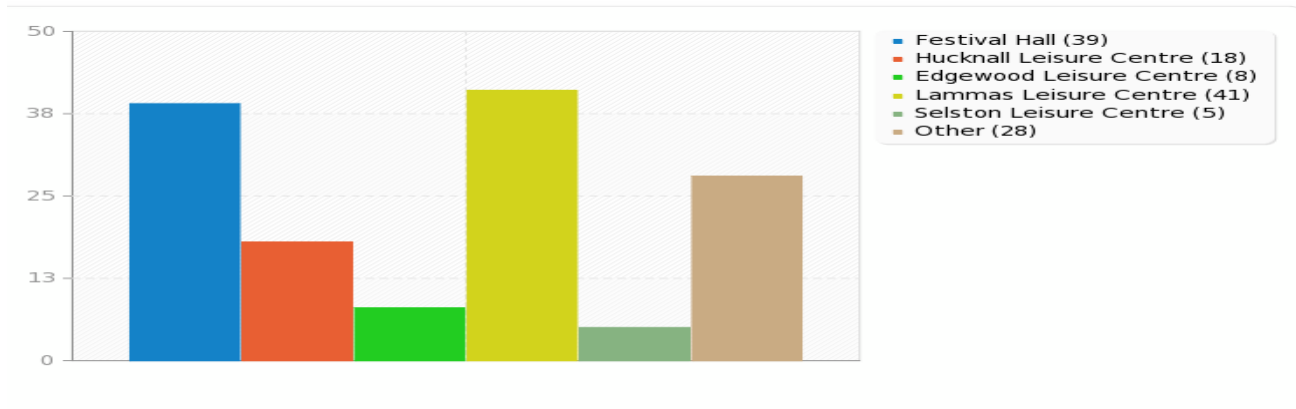
- 55 of the 206 respondents who answered this question (26.7%) are currently users of Huthwaite Leisure Centre compared with 211 respondents who are non-users
- Table 5 below shows the most popular activities that Huthwaite Leisure Centre is used for amongst respondents

Table 5 – most popular activities at Huthwaite Leisure Centre



- The most popular use is the Fitness/suite or Gym which was cited by 31 respondents followed by Badminton (11 respondents) and Snooker (7 respondents)
- When visiting Huthwaite Leisure Centre 43.2% of respondents visited by car, which was marginally ahead of walking (43.1%). 3.4% travelled by bus whilst cycling was the preferred choice of 1.72% of respondents
- In terms of distance travelled to visit Huthwaite Leisure Centre, the most popular response category was under 5 minutes which accounted for 43.1% of respondents. All but 3.44% (2 respondents) made journeys of under 20 minutes to get to Huthwaite Leisure Centre
- 50% of survey respondents said that they used Huthwaite Leisure Centre weekly, 17.9% responded monthly, 14.2% answered 3 or 4 times a year and 5.4% said once or twice.
- Respondents were asked what they most value about Huthwaite Leisure Centre and responded that the location of the facility was the most valued aspect, mentioned by 27.9% of respondents. This was followed by customer service (18.9%), size (13.2) %, opening hours (11.0%) and range of activities on offer (9.5%)
- Respondents were asked which alternative facility they might consider using if Huthwaite was unavailable and responses are displayed in Table 6 below.

Table 6 – Alternative site choices if Huthwaite was not available



The most popular alternative facility suggested amongst Huthwaite users responding was Lammas Leisure Centre (29.5%), followed by Festival Hall (28.1%) and Hucknall Leisure Centre (12.9%).

- Respondents were also asked about their preferred times to use Huthwaite Leisure Centre and early evening was the most popular with 34.4% of the response rate. This was followed by mid-morning 20.8% and early morning 15.6%. Of significance is that none of the 96 users (0%) said that they preferred to use the facility at lunchtime

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were provided with an open box in order that they could provide any other comments. A number of the comments provided related specifically to Huthwaite Leisure Centre. A summary of the open comments received highlighted that the centre and its location is valued as part of the community.

Huthwaite Summary

The results from the transformation survey relating to Huthwaite suggested that a highest proportion of customers used the centre for the gym, and travelled by car, which was marginally higher than walking. When specifically asked which Centre they would consider using if Huthwaite was not available in the future, Lammas was highest with the Festival Hall a close second.

Interestingly, no one considered using the centre at lunchtimes and generally Monday to Thursday evenings are the most popular.

5. 3 Feasibility Study for Kirkby in Ashfield

5.3.1 Introduction

Ashfield District Council appointed specialist Leisure Consultants FMG Consulting Ltd to undertake a feasibility study to examine the potential for a new indoor leisure facility in the town of Kirkby-in-Ashfield to replace the existing Festival Hall. The Council wish to take the opportunity to review the options for the Festival Hall and to future proof the facilities to meet the aspirations of the town. This forms part of a wider Council transformation strategy for leisure centres across the District.

The feasibility study considers both 'dry' and 'wet and dry' facility types and site assessments have been carried out on seven potential sites for development and they have been evaluated to identify the best opportunity to deliver a leisure facility in Kirkby.

5.3.2 Background

The Festival Hall is situated in the centre of Kirkby-in-Ashfield and was built in the 1960's. It has a very dated look and historically was used for a range of social events, as well as leisure and sport. The use for events has reduced over time and the remaining three court sports hall is not fit for purpose from a modern sports perspective as no ball sports can be played due to potential damage this would cause to lighting and sound equipment located around the hall, as well as the low hall ceiling height which restricts use.

The sports hall is currently at 100% capacity at peak times. The three court hall is however restrictive and the events programme has noticeably reduced over the past few years.

There is an opportunity to meet new participation needs from a new facility as well as more traditional provision as the current building is old, requiring investment and significant remodelling.

The objective of the study is to test and confirm the viability of the potential to build and operate a facility in Kirkby to replace the existing Festival Hall. The work has been informed by assessing the supply and demand balance in the catchment area through the analysis presented in the indoor facilities strategy, a review of previous work, consultation with the public and local stakeholders, a review of operational performance and opportunities presented by the consultants' team bringing industry best practise and experience.

5.3.3 Site Evaluation

Seven potential locations for a new leisure and sports facility have been evaluated, using an evaluation matrix which covered twenty-five weighted criteria in three categories; deliverability, site details and access. The evaluation provided a range of scores for each location.

The study has identified key points from the evaluation relating to the two highest scoring sites:-

- They are both based within close proximity to Kirkby town centre and therefore offer significant opportunities in relation to both the impact on the urban landscape and regeneration of Kirkby
- They have central locations providing excellent connectivity by car, public transport, cycle or on foot, and from an operational and performance viability perspective, the sites provide high profile centre of town locations.
- There are no continuation of services issues, no known planning policy issues
- Importantly, one of the site provides potential for co-location of related services with further opportunities for service integration, particularly when developing mental health and older person services such as falls prevention, weight management, and cardiac rehabilitation and other services such as a library services for instance

5.3.4 Supply and Demand

Ashfield currently has enough sports halls to meet demand from Ashfield residents with a supply/demand balance of plus 5 courts. However, in terms of future demand from projected population growth, there will be a further requirement of 3.8 badminton courts in the Sutton and Kirkby area. Whilst overall the District will still be broadly in balance with regard to available supply of courts, there will be a need to retain existing sports halls due to high occupancy levels and future pressures from population growth and any replacement provision in Kirkby should therefore consider indoor court provision of between 4 to 6 courts as part of a facility mix.

In terms of swimming provision, taking into account 'exported demand' there does not appear to be sufficient levels of unmet demand in Ashfield at 96sqm to warrant additional pool provision. In

addition, the modelling does not identify any one 'hotspot' where unmet demand is at higher levels. The future population growth is projecting a requirement of an additional 190sqm water space.

This is not quite equal to a 4-lane pool. However, this requirement is dispersed across the housing growth areas, with no identified hotspots where unmet demand is at higher levels.

There is a need to get more use out of the existing venues and ease the peak time capacity pressure points on the Local Authority stock by creating better links with the school venues so that these facilities can be further opened up to public use. Coordination of delivery with the school sites is likely to be a key issue in Ashfield in future.

5.3.5 Capital cost

The study looked at the capital costs, including associated professional fees, of two project options:

- a. Dry only leisure centre
- b. Wet and dry leisure centre with 25m pool

The gross internal floor areas and earlier floor plans have been based upon similar projects and through designs prepared by GT3 Architects utilising Sport England's design principles. The cost estimates have been developed with professional guidance from Walker Sime Quantity Surveyors. The further feasibility works will allow the Council to develop the project with full cost option appraisals for the two sites, for both options above.

Additional capital expenditure may be required on other sites e.g. refurbishment of Hucknall Leisure Centre changing rooms to accommodate the increased footfall and improve accessibility.

5.3.6 Summary - Feasibility Study for Kirkby in Ashfield

The aim of the study was to understand if a new leisure facility could be built in Kirkby, where it could be built, how much a new facility would cost to build, and how much it would cost to keep running.

The public consultation was carried out in August on future transformation of the leisure service with over 700 responses. A strong message of support for investment in sport and leisure was received from the public, confirming the value and importance local people put on their local leisure services.

A site evaluation and optimum facility mix utilising previous work, including the facilities strategy, review of strategic documents, consultation with key stakeholders, and assessment of the current financial performance and future potential supply and demand for facilities in Kirkby was carried out.

The analysis has recommended two facility types options and identified two potential sites where a new facility could be accommodated. This report is asking cabinet to proceed with further feasibility works for the two preferred sites identified, to encompass two floor plans for:-

- a. Dry only leisure centre
- b. Wet and dry leisure centre with 25m pool.

A bid has been submitted to the Nottinghamshire Pre Development fund for £28,500 to fund the further feasibility work. If the bid is unsuccessful, funding will be required from the Revenue Budget for 2016/17. There is the opportunity to capitalise such costs at a later date if the project comes to fruition.

5.4 Executive Summary and the Next steps

The evidence and consultation findings for the transformation programme for our leisure centre provision has a clear approach to providing future facilities, including maximising and rationalising the use of Council assets, alongside coordinated provision from other sources.

The larger leisure facilities, Lammas Leisure Centre in Sutton, Festival Hall in Kirkby and Hucknall Leisure Centre have 92.5% of the customer base. The Council is proposing to prioritise investment and seek to sustain these sites in the long term.

To achieve the Council's vision, further consultation and feasibility work is required for the replacement of Festival Hall in Kirkby and to seek views on a number of options for the smaller facilities in Huthwaite and Edgewood Leisure Centres is required.

The Council is carrying out a service-wide consultation across the District throughout November and the Leisure Transformation Programme options will be included to seek the public's views.

The intention is to go back to Cabinet with the evaluation of the public consultation on the proposed options at a later date.

To fully consider the authorities leisure provision, future options for Selston Leisure Centre are due to be considered in light of the leisure review findings at a date yet to be determined.

8. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Plan:

Health and Wellbeing Theme

- 1) Identify and focus on the area with the biggest health inequality in the District and increase access to leisure for non-participants
- 2) Take a targeted approach to improving health and well-being in the area of greatest need

Key Projects:

- 1) Review leisure facilities
- 2) To explore the feasibility for a replacement for Festival Hall Leisure Centre

Legal:

'There are no significant issues identified in the report'

Financial:

'As outlined in the report – if the grant application is successful there will be no impact on the budget. If unsuccessful an increase to the revenue budget of £28,500 will be required. Such a change would require a recommendation to Council.'

Health and Well-Being / Environmental Management and Sustainability:

'Any new build would need be consider its impact on the environment as part of its design and maximise the usage of renewable material and renewable energy in its construction and its ongoing use.'

Human Resources:

'No direct HR implications are contained within the report'

Diversity/Equality:

'An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out which considers all the equality implications within the report.'

Community Safety:

'Access to leisure facilities helps to ensure communities have opportunity to be proactively physically and mentally healthy and active. Health and wellbeing of our residents is a priority and intrinsically connects into Community Safety'

Other Implications:

None

REASON(S) FOR URGENCY (if applicable)

N/A

EXEMPT REPORT (if applicable)

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet - 24th January 2009, Leisure Centres Review.

Cabinet - 10th April 2014, Leisure Management Contract.

Corporate Plan (2016 – 2019)

Cabinet – 24th March 2016, Targeted Activities Programme.

Cabinet - 14th July 2016, Leisure Review Transformation Programme.

REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTACT OFFICER

Mrs Theresa Hodgkinson, Corporate Manager, Locality and Community Empowerment

Tel: 01623 457588 Email : t.hodgkinson@ashfield-dc.gov.uk

Craig Bonar

Service Director – Corporate Services