

REPORT TO STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 16th November 2023

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORT TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Cllr Duncan Wood – Leisure Services and Physical Activity

1. Issues relating to achieving the Council's published priorities

'Deepening' Work' with Sport England . Live and Move and Sport England are working together to shape the next phase of the partnership. Officers are working on the plan to both demonstrate impact to date and the city's ambitions for the next five years to deliver transformational systemic change focused on tackling inactivity and inequalities.

An in-depth update on the work of the Live and Move project is being provided through a specific paper being presented at this meeting.

Wonford – The business case behind a new redeveloped community facility is nearing completion after months of listening and supported conversations with the community.

2. Update or commentary on any major ongoing programmes of work

Built Facility Evidence Base – There is a clear need for a strategic and sustainable approach to planning for future physical activity provision, based on local insight and locality evidence. We are commissioning an update of the city's current leisure strategy to reflect the findings of the built facilities strategy and existing playing pitch strategy

Financial Performance - Exeter Leisure continues to perform ahead of target. Quarter 2 results show the service is significantly ahead on predictions. It follows from a reduction in staffing, reduction in operating budget, changes to opening hours and increases in costs.

Physical Activity as a route to health - We work closely with the NHS who not only refer into our scheme they also use our facilities to deliver some of their rehabilitation classes. These include cardiac rehab, heart failure, falls prevention, lower limb, back fit, knee fit and neurofit.

Some 36 exercise Referral gym based sessions/classes ran each week at our leisure centres.

ECC works closely with FORCE cancer charity, as well as delivering referral classes for FORCE patients we also run a class for non-curative patients.

Northbrook – An extensive drive has taken place to try to increase the use of Northbrook pool. It has seen an increase in numbers, but nowhere near what would be needed for the centre to become financially viable.

Walking and cycling wins – Officers have been working with Exeter Cycling Campaign on mapping small things that could be done to improve walking and cycling routes. The preparation work is nearing completion with the next phase being to carry out the works.

3. Issues that may impact : services delivery/financial performance/future budget requirements

Sport England Swimming Pool Fund. Exeter City Council was unsuccessful in its bid to support Northbrook Pool

Staffing - there is still a shortage of swimming instructors and lifeguards nationally and we are not immune.

Aging Stock- aside from St Sidwell's Point, the majority of the Leisure Stock is aging and in need of repairs.

Cost of living – Disposable income is down and the gap between those that want to exercise but can't afford to is increasing

4. Potential changes to services/provisions being considered

Concessions to memberships- A pilot offering a discount to residents in Exeter who may not be able to afford membership is being rolled out. It will also include a discount to care leavers in line with the Council's responsibilities as corporate parents.

Repairs to Leisure stock- we submitted an application to the Government's decarbonisation fund to address some of the repairs needed. It was successful and work has been ongoing to assess the potential impact to Riverside and our ability to fix the remaining section of roof.