

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet - 02 April 2024

Physical activity and sport strategy for Cheltenham – Phase 2 – built facilities and playing pitch assessments

Accountable member:

Councillor Max Wilkinson - Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing

Accountable officer:

Richard Gibson - Head of Communities, wellbeing & partnerships

Ward(s) affected:

All

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

In the council's corporate plan 2023-2027, we set out our commitment to work with partner organisations to develop a sports strategy for Cheltenham in the expectation that this will improve sports provision and help improve health and wellbeing opportunities for local people.

The strategy is needed to help the council address some of the following challenges:

- Determining the longer-term future of Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales Stadium;
- Addressing long-term health inequalities within some of our communities; and
- Addressing inequalities in access to community-based physical activity opportunities.

But also needed to harness some significant opportunities:

- How we support communities to meet their own ambitions to be physically active and help secure investment into improving local facilities;
- How we use sport and physical activity to support the longer-term growth ambitions of Cheltenham by ensuring people lead healthy, fulfilling and productive lives.

In July, Cabinet agreed a draft vision and outcomes for physical activity and sports which was the result of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Cabinet also committed

to updating its playing pitch and built facilities assessments. These assessments are needed to provide a picture of our current infrastructure and how well it will meet the future needs in our communities, along with an investment plan for how we secure funding to improve provision.

This second phase of work was the subject of a procurement exercise and Max Associates was appointed to carry out both the playing pitch and built sports facilities assessments.

Work on the assessments commenced in July 2023 with work on the Built Facilities assessment concluding in January 2024 and the Playing Pitch assessment reaching stage C by March 2024.

The two assessments are presented to Cabinet and agreement sought to move to the third phase which will see the final Playing Pitch Strategy, along with the over-arching physical activity and sports strategy and accompanying action plan required to support future investment into our sporting facilities and also to guide the Council's future work.

Alongside the playing pitch and built facilities assessments, the Council has also undertaken a physical activity survey to understand how we keep people being active but also understand the barriers that might be preventing people from being active in the first place. The results of the survey, which closed on 21 March are set out in section 7.

Recommendations: That Cabinet:

- 1. notes the findings and recommendations from the Max Associates' Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Report as set out in section 4 and attached as appendix 2.**
- 2. notes the provisional findings and indicative recommendations from stage C of the Playing Pitch Assessment as set out in section 5.**
- 3. notes the initial findings from the Physical Activity Survey as set out in section 7.**
- 4. notes that a reports will be brought back to Cabinet to agree and finalise the playing pitch strategy, along with the over-arching physical activity and sports strategy and accompanying action plan that will deliver the Council's vision and outcomes for physical activity and sports as set out in section 3.**
- 5. commissions consultants to undertake an options appraisal of the future provision of Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales stadium to include indicative capital costs.**

1. Implications

1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

The budget to undertake the options appraisal for Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales Stadium was agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget.

Priorities

Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity

1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

1.6 The completed community impact assessment is attached as **appendix 4**. We will monitor responses to the physical activity survey and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate

1.7 Performance management – monitoring and review

Once the built facilities and playing pitch assessments are signed off, work will commence on an action plan that will set out how the Council and its partners can deliver against the strategy in order that we can demonstrate that it is making progress towards the achieving the vision.

The action plan, which will be refreshed on an annual basis, will set out what actions will be taken under each of the objectives and shared commitments. The actions will be identified for those to be taken in the next year, in the medium-term and in the longer-term.

The plan will also identify which person or organisation is responsible for the action and a timescale.

Progress against the action plan will be monitored via meetings at which those that are accountable for actions will be asked to supply updates.

Consideration will also be given to placing the strategy on the forward plan for the council's overview and scrutiny committee

2. Background

2.1 In the council's corporate plan 2023-2027, we set out our commitment to work with partner organisations to develop a sports strategy for Cheltenham in the expectation that this will improve sports provision and help improve health and wellbeing opportunities for local people.

2.2 The strategy is needed to help the council address some of the following challenges:

- We need to determine the longer-term future of Council physical activity facilities, particularly Leisure at Cheltenham and Prince of Wales Stadium. Due to their age, both facilities require significant investment.
- When looking at health data, it is clear that some of our geographic communities face long-term health inequalities; local partners have assessed data relating to a range of health conditions including obesity, depression and heart disease. The data paints a picture that low income communities have worse health outcomes than more affluent communities.
- We are also aware that some of our low income communities do not have the same access to physical activity opportunities as more affluent communities. For

instance, we are aware that there are no youth football teams serving West Cheltenham in the whole Cheltenham Youth League.

2.3 But the strategy is also needed to harness some significant opportunities:

- Our communities are ambitious and are coming forward with plans to deliver improved activity and sports facilities; both Cheltenham Saracens FC and Belmont School have developed multi-million pound sporting schemes. A new strategy can help create the framework by which these communities can access external investment.
- Creating opportunities to be more physically active and to enjoy sports is going to be central to creating sustainable and healthy communities in our growth areas – Elms Park and Golden Valley. A new strategy will set out how we use physical activity and sports to support the longer-term growth ambitions of Cheltenham.

3. Summary of the vision and outcomes for physical activity and sports

3.1 Cabinet in July 2023 agreed the following draft vision:

3.2 *Cheltenham is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from physical activity and sports, creating active, healthy and happy communities*

3.3 The three outcomes are as follows:

- **Cheltenham is a place where all our communities enjoy and benefit from physical activity;**
- **Our physical and community infrastructure is accessible and affordable but also high-quality and sustainable; and**
- **We will collaborate to create active and inclusive communities.**

3.4 The vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport created a framework for the second phase of the strategy – which is the assessment of the physical infrastructure that underpins sports and physical activity in Cheltenham, split into both an assessment of our playing pitches and an assessment of our built sporting facilities.

3.5 To achieve the vision agreed with partners, the strategy and updated assessments should deliver against the following objectives:

- Cheltenham has the physical sporting infrastructure (playing pitches and built facilities) needed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy sports and physical activity.
- Cheltenham has the community sporting infrastructure (clubs, teams, and groups) needed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy sports and physical activity.
- That this physical and community infrastructure is of appropriate quality, is in the right place to meet current and projected future demand, meets up-to-date standards of accessibility and is sustainable over the longer-term.

- We create active communities where everyone has the chance to be active and thrive.

3.6 The assessments provide a technical evidence base to shape future investments within the context of:

- An up-to-date picture of our population;
- An up-to-date picture of current provision;
- An up-to-date assessment of future needs in respects of sports and recreation facilities, clearly identifying any under/over provision up to 2041.

3.7 The final strategy will set out how the planning system, changes in policy and potential funding bids can deliver improvements to the physical infrastructure that underpins sports and physical activity.

3.8 The council went out to procurement via Sport England's Active Environments Framework and after a thorough analysis, Max Associates was appointed to carry out both the playing pitch and built sports facilities assessments.

4. The Built Facilities assessment

4.1 The Built Facilities report looks at the following sports and leisure provision:

Athletics tracks
Bowls (indoor and outdoor)
Cycling facilities
Gym and fitness facilities
Gymnastics
Indoor cricket
Indoor football and futsal
Indoor Lacrosse
Indoor swimming pools (minimum size 160sqm)
Netball (indoor and outdoor)
Outdoor education type facilities
Sports halls 3+ courts size (badminton, basketball and volleyball)
Squash
Tennis (indoor and dedicated outdoor), plus padel and pickleball
Village halls/community halls and their role in providing sport and physical activity opportunities
Wheeled sports (ramps and facilities for BMX, skateboard, scooters)

4.2 Consultation was undertaken with national governing bodies, sports clubs, schools and parish councils and the assessment uses Sport England Tools such as Active Places Power and Active Lives data.

4.3 In addition, Sport England Facility Planning Models (FPM) were completed for sports halls and swimming pools in October-November 2023, the key findings of these are set out below. These studies are a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access.

4.4 Sports Halls

4.5 The total supply of sports halls in 2023 is 20 halls across 11 sites, the equivalent of 80.7 badminton courts, of which 62.2 are available for community use in the weekly peak period.

4.6 By 2041 the average age of the sites will be 48 years, and Leisure at Cheltenham will be 70 years old. There is an increasing need for modernisation of sports halls as the stock ages.

4.7 Unmet demand is low; 4% of demand in 2023 and 2041. This equates to 1.3 courts in 2023 and 1.4 courts in 2041. All unmet demand is from residents who live too far from a sports hall.

4.8 Subject to negotiations with education providers, there is scope to increase the hours available at peak times.

4.9 The majority of sports halls are based within educational sites. It is, therefore, also worth considering community spaces where physical activities that do not require a high sports hall ceiling can take place e.g. yoga, Pilates and martial arts. This would free up space for activities that require larger and higher ceiling sports courts e.g. basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton.

4.10 Sports Halls Recommendations:

<p>Sports Halls recommendations from Max Associates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future consideration of options for the future of Leisure at Cheltenham due to its importance as the only public facility in the borough, its extensive off-peak availability and its proximity to some of more deprived areas. The size of any new sports hall facilities at Leisure at Cheltenham should take into account the new provision being proposed as part of the strategic allocations at north west and west Cheltenham, as the assessment has shown that there is currently a sufficient supply of sports hall courts across the borough. • Whilst CBC have a responsibility for Leisure at Cheltenham, modernisation of education based sports halls will be the responsibility of the schools. CBC should continue to work in partnership with schools and encourage investment/modernisation where community access is given. The Council could also provide support with regards to applying for funding and supporting any planning applications. • New housing developments to the north and west of the borough will create additional demand on nearby sports halls. Consider securing developer contributions toward modernisation of these facilities, as well as securing continued community access, is key. • The Council should work with education providers to increase community access to sports halls, with increased secured community access provided through formal community use agreements.
<p>Considerations / issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of school facilities are independent and there is a reliance on these schools for community access. Maintaining good relationships with these schools and collaborating with them to support the implementation of the sport and physical activity strategy will be important to maintain community access at these sites. • If new sports halls are provided as part of the community facilities linked to the housing developments, this could enable a reduction in sports hall requirements at Leisure at • Many users of Cheltenham facilities come from Tewkesbury Borough. It will be important to understand their future plans with regards to facility strategies.

4.11 Swimming Pools

4.12 Swimming pool supply is nine pools across seven sites (including Sandford Parks Lido) – though 38% of water space (788 sqm) is unavailable during the weekly peak period due to usage by the schools.

4.13 Cheltenham has an extensive supply in terms of water space, much higher than surrounding local authority areas, resulting in high levels of imported demand, particularly from Tewkesbury Borough

4.14 The average age of swimming pools is 46 years in 2023 and 64 years in 2041. Most sites have been modernised but refurbishments tended to be 15-20 years ago. Therefore there is an increasing need for modernisation and/or replacement as less attractive to residents by 2041.

4.15 Unmet demand is low (only 3% in both 2023 and 2041), 32 sqm of water in 2023 and 36 sqm in 2041. All unmet demand is due to residents being too far from a swimming pool.

<p>Swimming Pool recommendations from Max Associates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need analysis and evidence points to the need to retain and invest in the pool sites. • Large existing supply of water space in Cheltenham relative to demand but the existing swimming pool stock is ageing. • Scope to increase hours for community use at school pools to reduce proportion of used capacity of the pool at peak times. However, this will be dependent on schools being willing to increase access for community use. • Leisure at Cheltenham is major swimming site in borough, both in terms of range of facilities it offers and scale - provides over third of borough’s total peak time supply. The facility is currently 52 years old; maintenance and other operating costs will continue to increase with time. • Start to explore options for Leisure at Cheltenham to ensure the future water space meets the demand of the local population and maximises flexibility in programme deliver, this could mean a different pool configuration to the current offer. • Sandford Parks Lido provides an important facility in the borough. It needs to be recognised that the FPM modelling is based on national parameters for indoor pools, and these may not apply to outdoor heated lidos. • Given number of educational facilities that provide swimming pools in the borough, good communications, partnership working and community use agreements with schools is important to continue and seek to put community agreements in place if they don’t already exist. It should be noted that community use is reliant on schools wanting to increase or provide community access the Council has no direct control to enforce community use agreements. • Discuss findings of the report with Tewkesbury Borough Council. • Unmet demand is low & insufficient to justify new swimming pool.
<p>Considerations / issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community use is reliant on schools wanting to increase or provide community access. The Council has no power to enforce community use agreements.

4.16 Summary of key findings and recommendations for each sector:

Sector	Overview	Max Associates’ Recommendations
<p>Health and fitness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & fitness is not just provided by the council, the private and education sectors also have a role to play in provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider investment into gym facilities at Leisure to meet potential growth in fitness members. Any future changes to Council fitness provision should be subject to a business case to test financial viability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potential to increase fitness membership at Leisure at if investment is made 	
Studios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studios are an important part of the wider health and fitness offer • They provide flexible spaces that can be used for a variety of activities • These additional spaces ensure sports hall activities are not occupied by fitness classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studios should be considered within new builds or refurbishments to ensure sports hall activities are not occupied by fitness classes. • Any future development of investment at Leisure at Cheltenham could consider additional studio provision
Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prince of Wales Athletics Stadium, which is owned by the Council and managed by the Cheltenham Trust, is identified by England Athletics as a venue of strategic importance in the Southwest with three affiliated athletics clubs based there. • However usage and income from athletics activities is relatively low • The track at Prince of Wales Stadium is in need of re-surfacing and does not meet England Athletics standards for competitions. • England Athletics/UK Athletics do not have a specific capital programme for facility development • CBC is subsidising a regional facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council and Cheltenham Harriers to explore fundraising opportunities (including crowd-funding) to support investment into athletic facilities at the Prince of Wales Stadium. • The Council to explore longer-term options for the Prince of Wales Stadium working in partnership with interested parties. • The council to work with the Cheltenham Trust to explore how best to increase levels of activity within the stadium. • Include disability access in any track or facility upgrades. • Recognising the regional facility at the Prince of Wales Stadium, explore wider Community Infrastructure Levy contributions from across Gloucestershire and beyond could be of value in building the business case for investment.
Bowling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no purpose built indoor bowling facilities in Cheltenham and no requirements from England Indoor Bowling Association to provide any as sufficient supply in neighbouring areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure ongoing maintenance of greens to sustain quality. • Protecting existing bowls greens through the Local Plan will be key to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility or create improvements to be able to increase capacity at nearby bowls greens.
Gymnastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Gymnastics identified the main issue for gymnastic development is having access to sufficient dedicated space so that clubs are able to grow and extend their programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council could explore the potential of facilitating club-led development of additional gymnastics facilities. For example, this could be providing support through any planning applications.
Squash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 courts in the borough • England Squash recommend ratio of one court per 10,000 population. The population of 123,373 in 2041 would require 12 squash courts in total. Cheltenham currently has double the amount of courts per 10,000 population than the recommended level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that squash facilities should meet the needs of future population, if the number of courts is reduced there would still be higher than average number of courts for the local population.
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheltenham has been identified by the LTA as a target location for a new indoor tennis venue. However, there is an indoor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheltenham Borough Council to continue to work in partnership with the LTA to increase usage, financial sustainability and

	<p>facility in Gloucester approximately 20 minutes' drive time from Cheltenham town centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LTA priority for the future is that indoor court provision is realised and new outdoor floodlit tennis provision is included in new housing developments. • It is not the Council's responsibility to provide additional indoor tennis facilities, however if the LTA and local club(s) identify a viable opportunity then the Council could support the process, such as via the planning system. 	<p>to identify if there are any possible tennis club-led opportunities for a community indoor tennis facility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain park tennis courts which are important in providing affordable, engaging, and accessible opportunities for more female players and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. • Protect tennis facilities in the Local Plan • Encourage clubs to improve their facilities where appropriate
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Cycling is keen to develop the grassroots of cycling in a safe and control environment such as at Community cycling hubs, which include pump tracks and learn to ride areas. Consider community cycling hubs in future developments. • There is no requirement to provide indoor velodrome facilities. • There are five indoor cycling spin studios within Cheltenham which should be protected. Indoor cycling studios are a key activity/facility that support the wider fitness offer within leisure centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle infrastructure should be considered at planning stage if a new build at Leisure at Cheltenham e.g. cycle network to connect the leisure centre and safe cycle storage. • For outdoor cycling, British Cycling recommends Council engaging with cycle clubs to discuss future facility needs so club can continue to expand
Indoor Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most well equipped facilities for indoor cricket are generally the public-school sites but their availability for community use and hire is limited. • Leisure at Cheltenham provides an important facility for indoor nets and winter indoor cricket for both club training and indoor 6s competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any new provision of sports halls should consider facilities for indoor cricket • Consideration should be given to working with Gloucestershire County Cricket to find and provide suitable accommodation for current cricket clubs to access indoor cricket facilities and to accommodate future identified growth in the game. • Future provision of indoor cricket at Leisure at Cheltenham should be considered as part of any future feasibility study for the centre.
Table Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to include outdoor tables in new housing developments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to start a dialogue with Table Tennis England about future provision of outdoor table tennis tables in schools and public places such as parks.
Wheeled Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no indoor skate or indoor scooter parks in Cheltenham. • There are three outdoor skateparks in Cheltenham; Montpellier Gardens, Pittville Park and the newest Oakley Skatepark, which opened in 2020, featuring the first concrete facility in Cheltenham. • There is one BMX pump track at Burrows park and a cyclo-cross circuit at Pittville Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider building a new skatepark as part of an outdoor play area at North West Cheltenham Strategic Allocation, as the other outdoor skateparks are located within the centre or east of Cheltenham

4.17 The report also sets out specific recommendations in relation to the following supporting elements that will contribute to improving the town’s physical sporting infrastructure.

Community / Village Halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the majority of sports halls based within educational sites, community spaces (particularly in areas of greatest unmet demand) are an important local asset where physical activities, that don't require a high sports hall ceiling, can take place e.g. yoga, Pilates and martial arts. This would free up space for activities that require larger and higher ceiling sports courts e.g. basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton.
Community Use Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheltenham Borough Council needs to continue to work in partnership with schools where sports facilities are provided for community or club use. Formal community use agreements could be negotiated, if possible, at existing educational establishments with sports facilities and new future educational establishments. For older facilities opportunities for a formal community use agreement may arise through the need for additional funding to update facilities or improve playing fields. For new facilities, a community use agreement can be provided as part of planning obligations through the planning process. This should help to secure and safeguard well-managed and safe community use by detailing how the arrangements are intended to operate, and typically should cover things like hours of availability, management arrangements and pricing policy. This is needed to ensure continued community / sports club use of these sites. However, it should be noted the Council has no direct control to enforce community use at schools. If existing community use agreements are lost then there will be additional pressure for provision of sports halls for community use in the Cheltenham Borough Council area.
Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (SLP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect built leisure and sports facilities that are required to meet the need and demand of Cheltenham's population within the SLP. This is to ensure against the loss of strategically valuable sports facilities that are available for community use or could contribute to meeting future community needs, unless replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.
Developer Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where appropriate, Cheltenham Borough Council and its partners should seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development of strategic facilities, additional and safe walking, running and cycling routes, and, where possible, to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active. The Council should develop a detailed approach to securing developer contributions to support the emerging SLP e.g. through a Planning Obligations SPD. The use of Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator should specifically be referenced with assisting to identify demand for and financial contributions towards halls and pools. The Council should look beyond its administrative boundaries in considering the scope of Community Infrastructure Levy and planning obligations, this is particularly relevant in respect of Prince of Wales Stadium which plays a regional role.
Feasibility Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any Council investment for future facility development should be subject to a feasibility study to ensure it is financially viable

5. Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment

5.1 The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) assessment looks at the following outdoor pitch sports:

- Football;
- Rugby Union;
- Rugby League;
- Lacrosse;

- Hockey;
- Cricket: and
- Other Sports (American Football).

5.2 Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) relevant to the sports noted above were also captured, as will any ancillary provision that accompanies any pitches included with the agreed scope.

5.3 The PPS has been developed in line with Sport England’s ‘Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy’, which was published in October 2013.

5.4 The guidance references a 10 step, 5 stage approach:

- Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach (Step 1);
- Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision (Steps 2 & 3);
- Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views (Steps 4, 5 & 6);
- Stage D: Develop the strategy (Steps 7 & 8);
- Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date (Steps 9 & 10).

5.5 The Playing Pitch assessment covers stages A – C of the approach. Following feedback from Sport England and the national governing bodies, work will now move to stage D – development of the playing pitch strategy.

5.6 The table below sets out indicative key findings for each sport along with some provisional areas for consideration that still need to be robustly tested before inclusion within the final playing pitch strategy.

Sector	Overview	Areas to consider
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 44 sites in Cheltenham Borough that provide grass football pitches, this equates to 95 pitches in total. There are 54 pitches that are available for community use across 21 sites; • 41% (39) of pitches assessed as good, 39% (37) of pitches were assessed as standard and 20% (19) of pitches were assessed as poor • All poor quality pitches that are available for community use (12), are located on Council sites • There are currently 167 male teams playing in Cheltenham Borough and 15 female teams • If future demand forecast by clubs who took part in the consultation was realised, an additional 34 football teams would be created in the Borough • The greatest amount of demand generated would be for youth boys' football, this would account for 44% of all new teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a plan for the improvement of the quality of pitches where the quality of pitches is poor • Seek to improve the security of tenure of football club usage at school sites • Consider a plan to improve the ancillary facilities at pitches were these are classed as being poor.

<p>3G AGP's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently one full size 3G AGP in Cheltenham Borough that is located at All Saints Academy, there is also a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch located just outside the Borough at Cheltenham Tigers Rugby Club • There is also a smaller sized 3G AGP at Civil Service Sports Ground which is also located just outside of the Borough • 50 teams currently train on sand based pitches or 3G AGPs outside of the Borough due to a lack of provision • Could also be demand from rugby league and lacrosse to access 3G AGPs in Cheltenham • Shortfall of 4 full size 3G AGPs in Cheltenham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with sport national governing bodies about possible 3G pitch provision at the following council sites with the potential to be suitable for multi-sports, subject to further testing and feasibility studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Petersfield Park ○ Leisure at Cheltenham/Prince of Wales Stadium; • Consider 3G pitch provision at other sites assuming community use agreements in place
<p>Rugby Union</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 43 rugby union pitches identified within Cheltenham Borough across 15 sites, 28 pitches are on education sites • There are three community rugby union clubs located in the Borough and four just outside of it • All grass rugby union pitches in the Borough have been assessed as being basic quality • If demand forecast by community rugby union clubs was realised, there could be up to 24 new teams created • There are two pitches with spare capacity to accommodate rugby union on a Sunday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a plan for the improvement of the quality of pitches through increased maintenance • Seek to improve the security of tenure of rugby clubs • Consider improvements to pavilions at pitches where rugby is played • Consider opportunities to improve senior rugby union pitches with sports lighting to help alleviate some of the demand from midweek training.
<p>Hockey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently five hockey clubs based in Cheltenham Borough who between them have 25 teams • There are seven Hockey AGPs available for community use • There are 12 teams exported outside of the Borough as they are unable to access hockey AGPs for midweek training. This is partially due to them being used by football clubs • There is spare capacity of 8.5 hours per for midweek training on hockey AGPs in the Borough and 14.5 hours of spare capacity at weekends. This spare capacity identified is on sites where tenure is deemed unsecured and is therefore discounted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to improve the security of tenure on sites where hockey clubs are currently playing • Create additional capacity for hockey clubs on existing AGP when 3G pitches are developed by encouraging the relocation of football training demand • Explore opportunities to provide a hockey AGP as part of the North West Cheltenham development
<p>Cricket</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 12 sites in Cheltenham Borough that provide grass cricket pitches, this equates to 22 grass cricket pitches in total. Seventeen of these pitches are currently available for community use • There are currently two cricket clubs playing in Cheltenham Borough and three who are just outside the boundary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the improvement of facilities at local cricket clubs including increasing pitch capacity on CBC owned playing pitches • Identify a club who can take on management of Swindon Village pitch and potentially develop a new pavilion • Secure use of the new cricket pitches provided as part of the North West Cheltenham development

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 20 cricket pitches assessed as good in Cheltenham Borough, one as standard and one as poor • If future demand identified by clubs was realised, there would be seven additional cricket teams created • There are current and future shortfalls identified on cricket pitches in Cheltenham across all three of the peak periods, Saturday, Sunday and midweek 	
Rugby League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheltenham Phoenix play and train outside the Borough at Cheltenham Tigers RFC • Cheltenham Phoenix reported that they are looking to grow two new girls' teams for the 2024 season at under 14's and under 16's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options for a site within the Borough that could provide facilities for the club ensuring that there is a formalised agreement in place that secures their use and provides the opportunity for the club to expand and meet any demand. • This could be provided as part of the North West Cheltenham development
Lacrosse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is one lacrosse club from Cheltenham Borough, which is Cheltenham Lacrosse club. They play at Civil Service Sports Ground. • Cheltenham Lacrosse Club highlighted some issues accessing 3G pitch provision for training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for Cheltenham Lacrosse Club to access any new 3G AGPs that are developed

6. Cross-cutting priorities

6.1 Based on the key recommendations for each sport it is recommended that priority is placed on the following.

- Carry out a feasibility study into options for the future of Leisure at Cheltenham, given the age and condition of the existing building, known demand for facilities set out in the assessments and significant housing growth and provision of facilities as part of these developments. This will present the Council with an understanding of the capital cost and ongoing revenue impact of any new leisure provision.
- Discussions with UK Athletics on the future of the Prince of Wales Stadium should form part of any feasibility linked to Leisure at Cheltenham. As a regional facility, responsibility should not fall solely on Cheltenham Borough Council to fund the facility, both from an investment and revenue perspective. Financial viability needs to be tested through a feasibility study along with considering other options for the future delivery of athletics, which could include looking at alternative site options.
- Ongoing partnership development with local schools, particularly independent schools that currently provide community access across a wide range of sports, with the aim of securing community use for future years. It is recognised that these schools have no obligation to provide community use but access to their facilities plays a critical role in the availability and accessibility of sports facilities for Cheltenham residents.
- Closer working with Sport England, national governing bodies and local clubs to secure investment into sporting facilities
- Closer partnership working with Tewkesbury Borough Council. Given the extent of imported demand from the Tewkesbury council area, plus the shared interest in the strategic development sites at North West Cheltenham and West Cheltenham, ensure

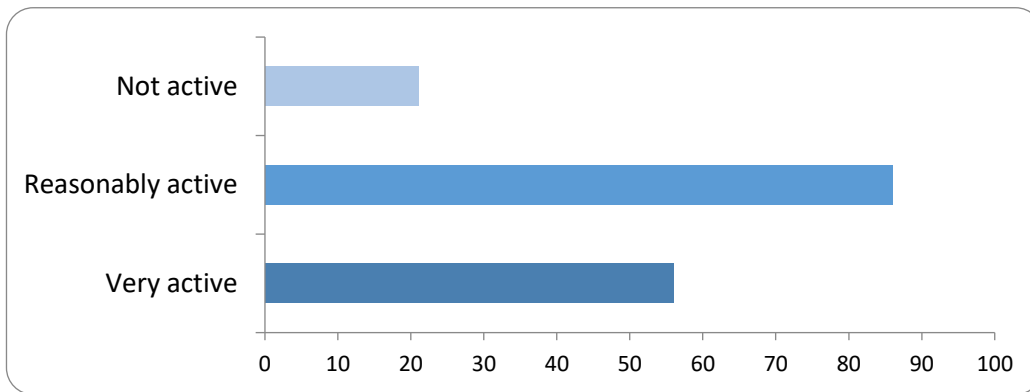
that the Council understands TBC’s plans for its facilities as any additional provision in Tewkesbury could reduce the demand on facilities in Cheltenham.

7. Initial findings from the Cheltenham Physical Activity Survey

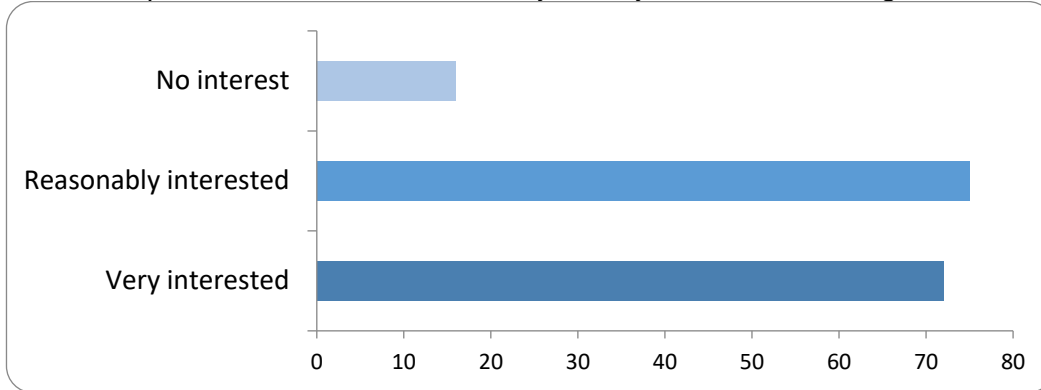
7.1 Alongside the playing pitch and built facilities assessments, the Council has also undertaken a physical activity survey to understand how we keep people being active but also understand the barriers that might be preventing people from being active in the first place. The survey was shared online via a media release, plus additional face to face sessions were held to encourage a wider range of participants to take part in the survey.

7.2 The survey opened on 31 January 2024 and is due to close on 21 March 2024. As at 19 March, there have been 163 responses.

7.3 87% of respondents feel either reasonably or very active



90% of respondents are either reasonably or very interested in being more active



7.4 Over 60% of respondents enjoy being active either around their neighbourhood, in local parks or in the countryside

7.5 Favoured ways of keeping active are as follows:

Option	Total	Percent
1. Walking	104	63.80%
2. Cycling	45	27.61%
3. Running	44	26.99%
4. Pilates / yoga	44	26.99%
5. Indoor swimming	38	23.31%
6. Going to a class	35	21.47%

7. Strength and conditioning	34	20.86%
8. Going to the gym	30	18.40%
9. Outdoor swimming	23	14.11%
10. Dancing	23	14.11%

7.6 The main barriers that are stopping people from being active are as follows:

Option	Total	Percent
1. Costs of taking part	68	41.72%
2. Lack of time	53	32.52%
3. Having to book in advance, or be a member	38	23.31%
4. Feeling nervous to start a new activity or go to a new place	34	20.86%
5. Getting to places to be active	29	17.79%
6. Not knowing what is available	28	17.18%
7. Feeling spaces are not welcoming	26	15.95%
8. Not feeling safe when being active	26	15.95%
9. Not feeling that that I will fit in due to age, ability, gender or any other reason	26	15.95%
10. Lack of skills and confidence	24	14.72%

7.7 When asked who is best placed to motivate you to become more physically active, the majority of respondents replied either friends or the wider community or themselves.

Option	Total	Percent
Yourself without any help	68	41.72%
Friends or your wider community	66	40.49%
People running activity clubs and organisations	57	34.97%
Health professionals	21	12.88%
Leisure centre staff / personal trainers	20	12.27%
Social media and online resources	20	12.27%
Not Answered	14	8.59%
Role models	11	6.75%
Other	6	3.68%

7.8 The results of the survey will be updated once the survey has closed on 21 March.

8. Related physical activity and sports projects

8.1 Feed Cheltenham Concession pass scheme – The scheme was originally launched in May 2023 as a means of supporting people’s physical and mental wellbeing during cost of living crisis. The pass is supported by the NHS and run by the Borough Council, Feed Cheltenham Network and Cheltenham Trust. It gives access to 12 free activities including swim, gym and soft play, in addition to a year of discounted access to pay as you go activities. It also offered holders 20% off Cheltenham Trust events.

8.2 The card has been successful with 150 active uses. As a result, in February this year, the scheme was extended and the active users offered a further 12 free activities and an additional 300 passes made available to food bank and pantry users.

- 8.3** The results from the physical activity survey show that the most significant barrier to people becoming more active is the costs of taking part. The concession pass scheme is actively addressing this barrier.
- 8.4** Health and Wellbeing grants 2023 – From funding allocated to Cheltenham Borough Council from the Gloucestershire NHS Integrated Care Board, it was agreed that a pot of funding worth approx £100k be created that community-based projects could bid into. Through working with the Cheltenham Integrated Locality Partnership, the following priorities were agreed for the grants:
- Connecting - support people to feel more connected to the communities they live in or identify with.
 - Being active – support people to lead active lifestyles
 - Healthy eating - support people to have access to a healthy, balanced diet
 - Culturally engaged – support people to have access to cultural and creative opportunities.
 - Inclusive - support the health and wellbeing of our diverse communities, particularly those that we know are facing health inequalities
- 8.5** Following an assessment process, 17 projects to the value of £112k were approved. Out of these, seven physical activity projects to the value of £60k were supported.
- 8.6** School holiday activity programme – No Child Left Behind is the lead body in Cheltenham for the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme which is funded by the Department of Education for children who receive benefits-related free school meals. The scheme provides a range of opportunities to be physically active.
- 8.7** The Spring HAF programme will run between 25th March and 5th April 2024 and will feature 14 activities that include football camps provided by Cheltenham Town FC community Trust, Holiday camps provided by Move More and gymnastics camps provided by Cheltenham and Gloucester Gymnastics Club.
- 8.8** No Child Left Behind is also planning a party in the park event to take place in August 2024. To link in with the Olympics, and the council's sports and physical activity strategy, the event will include a range of sports taster activities provided by the Cheltenham Trust, local clubs and organisations.
- 9. Consultation and feedback**
- 9.1** Both the built facilities and playing pitch assessments have been prepared on the basis of extensive consultation with Sport England, the national governing bodies, local sporting clubs and associations, plus community organisations.
- 9.2** The council has also undertaken consultation with individuals through the Cheltenham Physical Activity Survey as set out above.
- 9.3** A summary of the findings from the Built Facilities and Playing Pitch assessments was shared with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 March. A verbal summary of the committee's feedback will be provided at the meeting.
- 10. Key risks**
- 10.1** The key risk is that without a robust strategy, the council will be unable to develop a long-

term vision and investment plan for Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales Stadium.

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Appendices:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Built Facilities Assessment
- iii. Climate Change Impact Assessment
- iv. Equality Impact Assessment

Background information:

[Report to Cabinet 25 July 2023 - Physical activity and sport strategy for Cheltenham – Part 1 - our draft vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport in Cheltenham](#)

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
385	If the council does not have a long term vision and investment plan in place for its sports and leisure venues then significant unplanned maintenance, repairs and investment may be required to keep the venues running and it may undermine the ability of the Trust (or any future provider) to run leisure services	Richard Gibson	4	4	16	Reduce	<p>source external consultancy support to deliver sports assessment and recommendations for investment</p> <p>Develop long term investment plan and specific options appraisal of leisure venues</p>	Richard Gibson	
	If the council is not able to set out a robust assessment of current sporting and physical activity provision and a strategy for how to meet demand, there is a risk that provision will not meet demand	Tracey Birkinshaw	3	2	6	Reduce	<p>Undertake phase 2 work – playing pitch strategy and built facilities assessment.</p> <p>Once complete incorporate assessments with the review of the statutory development plan for Cheltenham</p>	Richard Gibson	