

# Cheltenham Borough Council

## 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

---

**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
- 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

Over the past few months, the council has worked with a wide range of stakeholders to develop a draft vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport set within a robust understanding of the Cheltenham context as set out in the attached document (appendix 2).

Alongside the draft vision and outcomes work, the council has also committed to update its playing pitch and built facilities assessments. Together, these studies will provide a rich 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 this has now concluded with consultants Max Associates appointed to carry out both the playing pitch and built sports facilities assessments.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. agrees our draft vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport document as attached as Appendix 2;**
- 2. notes the progress with appointing consultants to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the borough’s playing pitches and built sports facilities up to 2041.**

**1. Implications**

**1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications**

Budget to carry out the playing pitch and built facilities assessments has been identified from within ring-fenced grant income on cost code GBD001 (Community Welfare Grants), which has been carried forward from prior year. (see extract provided by service manager below)

<b>Income on R9100 CPN002 2022/23</b>	
Allocation for sports strategy	27500
active glos payment for sports strat	-5000
former CEV - to be used for sports strat	33500

Signed off by: Andy Taylor, Principal Commercial Accountant, [andy.taylor@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:andy.taylor@cheltenham.gov.uk)

**1.2 Legal implications**

The Council has discretionary powers under various legislative provisions to provide sport and leisure facilities and also provide give financial assistance to others to do so. There are no legal implications associated with the recommendation.

The Council is proposing to procure a consultant under a framework agreement which One Legal has reviewed. The proper use of framework agreements established for use by local authorities is compliant with the Council’s contract rules and procurement legislation. One Legal should be instructed to prepare the contract with the successful bidder. In terms of the contract between the council and the successful bidder for the playing pitch and built facilities assessments, this will be via the Sport England Active Lives framework. One Legal have reviewed the terms of the framework agreement.

Signed off by: [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

**1.3 Environmental and climate change implications**

The completed dashboard and summary report are attached as **appendix 3**. The strategy is generally

positive in its contribution to environmental and social outcomes

### Physical Activity & Sports Strategy



**Signed off by:** Laura Tapping, Climate Emergency Programme Officer,  
[laura.tapping@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:laura.tapping@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### 1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

The Physical Activity and Sports Strategy will contribute to the following Corporate Plan Priorities

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

### 1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

The completed community impact assessment is attached as **appendix 4**. There key action for the board; ensuring the effectiveness of the Equitable Futures group and moving forward to recruit a young person's representative.

### 1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review

As part of the work to undertake the playing pitch and built facilities assessments, a full strategy will be brought back to Cabinet to endorse later in the year. The full strategy will include 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 as set out in **appendix 2**.

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 / organisation is responsible for the action and a timescale.

Progress against the action plan will be monitored via Board 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 CBC 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 COPD. 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. Process**

**3.1** Over the past few months, the council has worked with a wide range of stakeholders to develop a draft vision and shared outcomes for physical activity and sport.

**3.2** Supported by colleagues from the national [Leadership Centre](#) – a national organisation that helps build leadership capacity across the public sector, we began working with stakeholders in October 2022 which saw initial agreement to the emerging themes and cross-cutting issues relating to physical activity.

**3.3** A series of engagement workshops in January were attended by 62 stakeholders representing a wide range of sectors including sports clubs, community organisations, NHS, parish councils and schools. They took part in participatory discussions on the current context, challenges and opportunities, plus consideration of shared values and an emerging vision.

**3.4** At a further stakeholder workshop in April, the draft vision and outcomes were further refined in ahead of them coming to Cabinet for approval.

- 3.5 In addition, colleagues at Active Gloucestershire contributed their knowledge in relation to which groups are active and where inactivity inequalities might exist.
- 3.6 The vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport, if agreed by Cabinet, will then create a framework for the second phase of the strategy. This will comprise an 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.
- 3.7 The assessments will 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.
- 3.8 The assessments will also 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.
- 3.9 The council went out to procurement via Sport England's Active Environments Framework and two bids were received. After a thorough analysis, Max Associates have been appointed to carry out both the playing pitch and built sports facilities assessments.
- 3.10 The intention is that the consultants will commence their work over the summer and to conclude the built facilities assessment by December 2023 and the playing pitch assessment by March 2024.

## 4. Summary of the shared vision and outcomes

4.1 The draft vision is as follows:

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

4.3 The three draft 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.**

## 5. Next steps

- 5.1 Alongside the commissioning of the playing pitch and built facilities assessments, in September, the first meeting of a physical activity and sports network will take place that will share best practice and support organisations via mutual training opportunities.
- 5.2 In October, using expertise from the network, a programme of community engagement will begin with communities where there are inactivity inequalities; people on low incomes, disabled people, women and girls and people from ethnically diverse communities so that insight is used to form future plans for increasing activity levels.

**5.3** In March next year, a final strategy will be prepared that will include the strategic elements from the playing pitch and built facilities assessments alongside the final outcomes and vision, plus detailed engagement and insights from communities where there are inactivity inequalities.

## **6. Key risks**

**6.1** 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.

---

### **Report author:**

Richard Gibson, Head of Communities, Wellbeing & Partnerships

[richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **Appendices:**

1. Risk Assessment
2. Our vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport in Cheltenham
3. Climate Change Impact Assessment
4. Equality Impact Assessment

### **Background information:**

N/A

## 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	source external consultancy support to deliver sports assessment and recommendations for investment  Develop long term investment plan and specific options appraisal of leisure venues	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	Undertake phase 2 work – playing pitch strategy and built facilities assessment.  Once complete incorporate assessments with the review of the statutory development plan for Cheltenham	Richard Gibson	