

REPORT FOR: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	15 November 2018
Subject:	Harrow Indoor Sports Facility Strategy
Key Decision:	Yes – affects all wards
Responsible Officer:	Paul Walker, Corporate Director - Community
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Keith Ferry, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder, Regeneration, Planning and Employment
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Harrow Draft Indoor Sports Facility Strategy Appendix 2: Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the strategic objectives identified in the Harrow Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2018-2026 and seeks Cabinet approval for the Strategy and its implementation.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

- i) Approve the adoption of the Harrow Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2018-2026 including the Action Plan as outlined in Sections 6.4-6.15 of the Strategy and in Paragraph 5.5 of this report.
- ii) Authorise the Corporate Director, Community following consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder, Regeneration, Planning, and Employment to proceed with the implementation of the Action Plan provided by the Strategy and take any action necessary.

Reason: (for recommendations)

The Harrow Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2018-2026 will enable Harrow to plan for current and future community needs in the Borough for indoor sports facilities with recommendations to inform future facility investment. The Strategy will allow Harrow to provide better access to indoor sports facilities and increase people's participation in sport and physical activity to achieve improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Harrow.

Section 2 – Report

1. Introduction

1.1 Harrow Council has conducted a review of its indoor sports facilities and an analysis of need in the Borough in consultation with key local sports clubs, facility operators and managers, local educational establishments, and national governing bodies. The key Strategic Priorities identified as a result of this review are:

- Investigate options and progress proposals as appropriate for the improvement, replacement and redevelopment of Council leisure sites.
- To support the development of indoor sports facilities in the Borough by collaboration with developers, other providers, and neighbouring boroughs to that they are developed to be inclusive and welcoming to all groups.
- To increase participation in physical activity by protecting and enhancing community use of sports facilities on educational sites; ensuring that sports facility charges are reasonable in terms of affordability to residents on low income or unemployed; increasing access to existing facilities in areas with the largest identified shortfalls in provision of sports halls and swimming pools in the south of the Borough; addressing specific issues relating to the Borough's demographic profile; reducing inactivity among priority groups by reducing barriers to participation and supporting the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

To progress the replacement/redevelopment of Harrow Leisure Centre, Hatch End Pool, and Bannister Sports Centre, detailed feasibility studies will be required and will depend on the projects being affordable and financially viable. Internal capital funding bids, and external funding opportunities, will be explored to fund improvements to existing Council leisure facilities. Any other planned indoor sports facility developments need to be flagged up within the Council at an early stage to ensure officers can engage in discussions to progress. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 development contributions provide opportunities to fund indoor leisure facilities on an on-going basis. The protection and enhancement of community use of sports facilities on educational sites will require partnership working between all parties involved. The development of Community Use Agreements as part of the planning approval process provides opportunities to increase community use of facilities. Sports facility charges must be kept under review and benchmarked against nearest neighbour authorities to ensure that the charges are reasonable and affordable for residents on low incomes or unemployed.

1..2 The Harrow Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2018-2026 supports the Council's priorities to make a difference for communities and make a difference for families. The Strategy also supports the Harrow Ambition Plan to 'Build a Better Harrow' and in particular to provide 'a good cultural, leisure and night-life offer that is celebrated and well used', and 'to support people to be healthy and our environment to be safe, clean and accessible'

2. Background

2.1 An audit and assessment of indoor sports facilities was commissioned in September 2016 to enable the production of an indoor sports facility strategy and action plan for Harrow.

2.2 The review was to provide information and evidence of the current condition of the Council's leisure facilities, as well as the future community needs of Harrow. The following indoor sports facility types were included in the assessment:

- Indoor swimming pools
- Sports halls
- Health and fitness suites
- Squash courts
- Indoor tennis centres
- Indoor bowls
- Indoor Climbing walls
- Gymnastics Centres
- Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)

2.3 The audit and assessment has been completed according to Sport England's guidelines (Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance, July 2014) to ensure that it reflects current best practice for the provision of indoor sports facilities.

2.4 The assessment has included a review of relevant local and national policies and information relevant to the development of the assessment and subsequent strategy and action plan.

2.5 National policies reviewed include:

- A New Strategy for Sport (Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), 2016)
- Sport England: Towards an Active Nation (Strategy 2016-2021)
- National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
- Everybody Active, Everyday (Public Health England, 2014)
- UKActive's Blueprint for an Active Britain (2016)
- Sport England: Economic Value of Sport in England (2013)

Local policies reviewed include:

- Active Harrow: Harrow Physical Activity and Sports Strategy 2016-20
- Harrow Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020

2.6 Demographic information, health and sports participation trends and Sport England market segmentation has also been reviewed. The key points identified from this review are:

- The population of Harrow is expected to rise from 243,400 (2012) by 40,000 in 2026 increasing demand on existing indoor facilities, and is one of the most diverse among London boroughs.

- 31% of adults (16+) in Harrow are physically inactive doing less than 30 minutes physical activity per week. Harrow has a lower percentage of fairly active adults compared to its neighbouring authorities.
- 39.9% of adults (16+) were classified as overweight in Harrow in 2014-15 which is higher than both regional (30.9%) and national rates (33.7%).
- Sport England's market segmentation shows that the dominant profiles would benefit from the provision of indoor facilities to support keep fit/gym, swimming and football. The majority of other popular activities are outdoor based and include cycling and golf.

2.7 As part of the development of the draft strategy consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders and facility operators, Sport England, National Governing Bodies of Sport, local educational establishments with indoor sports facilities, facility users, council officers, key local sports clubs, neighbouring local authorities, and London Sport.

2.8 Public consultation on the completed draft strategy was also undertaken from 28th August 2018 to 26th September 2018. The survey was available electronically online via the Harrow Council website. Local sport and leisure clubs and organisations were notified of the consultation and it was also promoted on social media. There were 33 responses to the consultation. 24 people strongly agreed or agreed with the strategic priorities included in the Action Plan, 5 neither agreed nor disagreed, and 2 disagreed. Following the feedback, the draft Strategy has been amended to include a reference the indoor tennis court at Harrow Leisure Centre and to ensure that Hatch End Swimming Pool is included consistently in the strategy as a community swimming pool in addition to Harrow Leisure Centre.

The main comments received about specific facility types were as follows:

- i. *Indoor Tennis* - Suggested that there is a large demand for indoor tennis by Under 16s. Outdoor tennis courts should also be made more useable. *Response:* As detailed in the Strategy, the Lawn Tennis Association has not identified a particular need for more indoor facilities in Harrow. Facilities are available in neighbouring boroughs. The Council is currently working with the Lawn Tennis Association to undertake an audit of outdoor courts in the Borough so that a programme of improvements can be identified.
- ii. *Indoor Swimming Pools* - Feedback supported the need for new swimming pools in Harrow with the pool at Harrow Leisure Centre currently heavily used. There was support for swimming pools in Harrow being the standard 25m in length, and ideally there should be a 50m pool available. The size of training pools to be provided in the future should be included in the strategy. *Response:* Subject to further review it is envisaged that if there was a replacement for the existing Harrow Leisure Centre, the swimming pool would be 10 lanes 25m in length with a full moveable floor, and the teaching pool would be 10 x 20 metres with a full moveable floor.

- iii. *Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)* – Feedback that the size of the current pitches available in the Borough, and whether they have floodlights, should be included in the strategy. Ideally the surfaces and pitch sizes should allow a number of sports to be played on the pitches. *Response:* The sizes of the current pitches and the information about floodlights have now been included in the strategy. The programming of future Council 3G AGPs would aim to include use by other sports where possible i.e. tag rugby. Sports generally, however, need a particular type of surface ideally. External grant funders may also stipulate the sports able to use the facility for which they have provided funding.
- iv. *Gymnastic Centres* – Feedback stressed the need to expand the centre at the Harrow Leisure Centre site due to the lack of alternative facilities and the long waiting list. *Response:* The draft Strategy acknowledges this need and states that options to develop facilities should be investigated, and the Council should support Harrow School of Gymnastics to investigate feasible options to expand.
- v. *Squash Courts* – Feedback received that the number of squash courts should not be reduced at Harrow Leisure Centre as the current number are required during peak times. *Response:* The Strategy states that reducing the number of squash courts at Harrow Leisure Centre should be considered if Harrow Leisure Centre is redeveloped due to decreasing demand, but that an assessment of the impact on current users will be needed.

3. Options considered

3.1 The following options are offered for Cabinet consideration:

Option A: To continue the current situation and not adopt an Indoor Sports Facility Strategy, 2018-2026 for Harrow

Under this option, the Council would not have a strategic plan to ensure indoor sports facilities meet the future community needs of the Borough. This is likely to have a negative impact on people's participation in sport and physical activity.

This option is not recommended.

Option B: Adopt an Indoor Sports Facility Strategy, 2018-2026 for Harrow

By adopting a strategy, Harrow Council will have a plan to inform decisions on future indoor facility investment including a long term view to 2026. The strategy prioritises recommendations for what needs to be done to the Council's portfolio of leisure facilities so current and future community needs can be met.

This option is recommended.

4. Current situation

4.1 The key findings from the needs assessment undertaken to develop the strategy by facility type are as detailed below. For indoor swimming pools and sports halls, a Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM) report was undertaken. For swimming pools, two runs were undertaken. Run 1 addressed supply, demand and access to swimming pools based on the population in Harrow and the neighbouring authorities in 2017. The second run assessed supply, demand and access to swimming pools in 2026, based on the projected change in population from 2017 in the Borough of Harrow and neighbouring authorities. The same runs were undertaken for sports halls, but also a further run was undertaken to assess supply, demand and access to sports halls in 2026, and to test the impact if all secondary schools in the Borough are open for community use in the peak periods of weekday evenings and weekend days.

- i. Indoor Swimming Pools* – The total supply of water space is below neighbouring authorities with the exception of Brent, and the used capacity figures in peak periods are above the Sport England pool comfort levels. Harrow is exporting approximately 50% of its own demand for swimming and the pools in the borough are ageing.
- ii. Sports Halls* – Demand for sports halls exceeds supply by 23 badminton courts in 2017, increasing to 26 courts in 2026. The facility stock is also ageing.
- iii. Health and Fitness Studios* – There is a good supply of facilities in the borough with health and fitness suites having high levels of usage.
- iv. Squash Courts* – There is no requirement for increased squash provision with the demand for squash falling nationally as well as locally.
- v. Indoor Tennis Centres* – There are currently no dedicated indoor tennis centres in Harrow and no need was identified for these facilities in the future.
- vi. Indoor Bowls* – There is one dedicated indoor bowls facility in Harrow located next to Harrow Leisure Centre. The current provision is meeting existing needs with the number of people participating in bowls over the last 10 years falling by approximately 30%.
- vii. Indoor Climbing Walls* – There was no evidence to suggest that additional climbing walls are required in the Borough.
- viii. Gymnastic Centres* – Significant interest in gymnastics in the borough was identified with a current waiting list of 2,000 people at Harrow School of Gymnastics.
- ix. Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)* – Although not indoor facilities AGPs have been included in the needs analysis due to the link between 5 a side football which can take up a significant amount of sports hall programming time. The Harrow Outdoor Sports Strategy (2012) identified a need for 7.4 additional AGPs in the Borough. If the two pitches at Harrow School are included there is still a shortfall of 3 AGPs.

5. Why a change is needed

5.1 The draft strategy identifies the following key areas for consideration by facility type:

- i. *Indoor Swimming Pools* – There is a need to provide a new stock of pools which would increase the demand retained at pools within Harrow. The analysis highlights the need to retain at least the overall amount of water space there is at present so as to meet the projected demand for swimming. The provision of teacher/learner pools at a minimum of two pool sites would also create a better balance of pool provision. Currently there is only a teacher/learner pool at Harrow Leisure Centre.
- ii. *Sports Halls* – There is a need to modernise, maintain, and refurbish sports hall venues in the Borough. Current unmet demand could be met at sports halls situated at educational sites. There is a need to work with educational partners to try and increase community use at these sites.
- iii. *Health and Fitness Suites* – The health and fitness offering at Harrow Leisure Centre could be expanded, based on the latent demand reports. This could increase membership by up to 467 generating important additional income.
- iv. *Squash Courts* – Consideration should be given to reducing squash provision at Harrow Leisure Centre if the Centre is redeveloped due to decreasing demand. The impact on Harrow Squash Club, however, must be given careful consideration.
- v. *Indoor Bowls* – If demand for indoor bowls continues to decrease the need for the existing level of provision in the Borough will decrease. This needs to be monitored regularly during the lifetime of the strategy.
- vi. *Climbing Walls* – The future provision of climbing walls should be considered carefully as part of any redevelopment of Harrow Leisure Centre particularly since the opening of the Harrowall Climbing Centre in central Harrow.
- vii. *Gymnastics Centres* – There is a requirement to investigate options for additional dedicated gymnastics facilities in the borough. The Council should work closely with Harrow School of Gymnastics to develop feasible options for expansion.
- viii. *Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)* – The provision of additional AGPs could help reduce use of sports halls for 5 a side football, and the relationship between sports halls and AGPs should be considered when planning any new facilities in the Borough.

5.2 The strategy will support the Council to secure funding from Sport England and provide the evidence base to promote investment into the Borough by leisure operators and secure planning gain with developers.

5.3 The strategy will enable a clear understanding of needs and service provision can be tailored to these needs, and makes it more likely that the Council will secure funding for internal sports facilities.

5.4 The action plan in section 6.4 to 6.15 of the draft strategy includes general strategic priorities and the actions required to deliver them, implementing partners, and timescales. The timescales have been divided into short (1 to 2

years), medium (3 to 5 years), and long term (5 to 10 years). The action plan then lists the priorities by facility type and the actions required to address the needs identified; these link to the key areas identified in 5.1.

5.5 The key strategic priorities listed in the Action Plan are as follows:

- a. Investigate options and progress proposals as appropriate for the improvement, replacement and redevelopment of Council leisure sites.** A detailed feasibility study and site investigations have been undertaken of the Harrow Leisure Centre site by the Council's Regeneration Team. Proceeding with the development of a new leisure centre will be subject to the findings of the detailed feasibility study and on the project being affordable and financially viable. An options appraisal and feasibility work to establish the viability of new facilities at Hatch End Swimming Pool and Bannister Sports Centre will be required subject to funding. The Council's leisure facilities also include indoor community sports facilities in the Council's housing portfolio. Capital funding bids in accordance with the Council's annual budget process will also be made as appropriate to enable improvements to existing Council leisure facilities. External funding opportunities to fund improvements will also be explored with applications being submitted where appropriate.
- b. To support the development of indoor sports facilities in the borough by collaboration with developers, other providers, and neighbouring boroughs so that they are developed to be inclusive and welcoming to all groups.** Engagement on a regular basis with existing providers to discuss new proposals, and the flagging up of planned new developments within the council at an earlier stage, is required to achieve this. Advantage to be taken where possible of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 development contributions for leisure facilities linked to developments in the borough working with colleagues in the Planning Department. Costed facility priorities to be developed and incorporated into the borough's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Close working with stakeholders to identify and maximise opportunities to make the best use of resources and to attract new funding for facility development in the borough will be needed.
- c. To increase participation in physical activity.**
 - i. Protect and enhance community use of sports facilities on educational sites where required, and ensure that where possible any new sports facilities provided as part of educational provision in Harrow are designed for curricular, extra-curricular, community and sport development use and support the opportunities for community use. For new facilities Council officers with responsibility for sport and leisure to work with colleagues in the Planning Department to develop Community Use Agreements as part of the planning approval process that enable community use of the facilities. For existing facilities this requires the promotion of partnership working between schools, the Council and other facility operators in the borough. Council

officers with responsibility for sport and leisure to work with colleagues in the Council's Education Department to engage with relevant schools regarding increased community use particularly in the south of the Borough where there is a current shortfall in provision. Any new developments must be flagged up within the council at an early stage.

- ii. Ensure that sports facility charges are reasonable in terms of affordability to residents on low incomes or unemployed, and are comparable with similar facilities elsewhere. This requires Council owned community accessible sports facility charges to be kept under review and benchmarked against neighbouring authorities. Under the terms of the Council's current contract with Sport and Leisure Management (SLM) Ltd. proposed annual increases in core pricing must be agreed with the Council.
- iii. Increase access to existing facilities in areas with the largest identified shortfalls in provision of sports halls and swimming pools towards the south of the Borough and encourage the development of new facilities. Opportunities to increase access to facilities such as schools and colleges in the south of the borough are to be explored. Council officers with responsibility for sport and leisure to work closely with colleagues in the Council's Education Department to progress this.
- iv. Improve the accessibility to the Council's facilities through their appropriate location relative to the population they serve and sustainable transport links. The location of new developments to be considered within the context of maximising sustainable transport. This is to include public transport, walking and cycling.
- v. Contribute towards addressing specific issues relating to the Borough's demographic profile. Planned facilities to be designed so that they assist stakeholders in addressing issues in the borough such as high levels of physically inactive adults and relatively low levels of sports participation. The current target gym space at Harrow Leisure Centre which is bookable by specific community groups is an example of design initiatives that can be incorporated into physical spaces to increase levels of activity by specific community groups.
- vi. Support a reduction in inactivity among priority groups by increasing awareness and reducing barriers to participation, and support the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Promote more active lifestyles by working with schools, health bodies including Public Health, and Housing Services. Work with the Council's leisure contractor, SLM, to deliver targeted programmes as required under the leisure contract, and to promote initiatives such as free swimming for older people. Work with the leisure contractor and other stakeholders to promote more active lifestyles.

6. Performance Issues

6.1 Adult participation in sport and active recreation is measured through Sport England's new 'Active Lives Survey' which replaced the 'Active People Survey' in 2017. Harrow achieved a score of 72.5% in the first statistics released in November 2017. The London average was 75.8% and the national average score was 74.4%

7. Environmental Implications

7.1 The Strategy will result in improvements to the quality of indoor sports facilities which are accessible to the public. Physical improvements to indoor sports facilities could result in reduced energy consumption.

8. Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No – Separate risk registers will be developed for the delivery of discrete projects.

The main risks identified for the proposals contained within this report are as follows:

1. Reductions in the Council's capital budget, and inability to secure external funding.

Funding opportunities for delivering the Strategy will include as part of the Council's Regeneration Programme the potential use of capital receipts from the sale of existing assets and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 development contributions linked to developments in the borough. By adopting the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy the Council would be able to maximise its potential ability to maximise external grant funding.

2. Changes in national priorities in connection with indoor sports facilities.

The Council will maintain strong links with National Governing Bodies and Sport England. The Action Plan will be reviewed as appropriate.

9. Procurement Implications

9.1 There are no procurement implications for the proposed adoption of the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy, 2018-2026. Procurement for Council projects that will contribute to the delivery of the Strategy Action Plan will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

10. Legal Implications

10.1 The Council has the statutory power to provide indoor sports facilities as it thinks fit in accordance with Section 19 (Recreational Facilities) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 The Action Plan included in the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2018-2026 consists of a number of strategic priorities and actions required to deliver them, which are also summarised in Section 5.3 of this report. The majority of the actions will be delivered by existing staffing resources within Sports and Leisure service in collaboration with the leisure contractor and other internal departments, except for two where feasibility study work will be required to identify options:

- Progress proposals to investigate options for the replacement/ redevelopment of Harrow Leisure Centre. This has been completed as part of the Regeneration programme.
- Investigate options for the replacement / redevelopment of Hatch End pool, and improvements to the facilities at Bannister Sports Centre to contribute towards the provision of additional indoor facilities in the north of the Borough. An estimated funding of £20k will be required to complete a comprehensive options appraisal including site surveys and a cost estimate for the re-provision of a new pool elsewhere, and the cost will be accommodated from within existing budgets.

The delivery of the strategy is likely to require capital investment to meet its objectives. Each proposed project will be assessed on a case by case basis to ensure that it is financially viable and is subject to a funding bid in accordance with the Council's annual budget process. External funding opportunities will be explored to minimise the need for council borrowing.

12. Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

12.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been conducted (Appendix B). The proposed Strategy would have a positive impact on all protected characteristics as it will provide the Council with a strategic plan to ensure that indoor sports facilities meet the future community needs of all.

13. Council Priorities

This proposal supports the following Council corporate priorities by helping to ensure that indoor sports facilities meet the future community needs of all residents:

- Making a difference for communities
- Making a difference for families

The proposal also supports the Harrow Ambition Plan by supporting the strategic theme to 'Build a Better Harrow' by helping to deliver a better leisure offer to residents.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: ...Jessie Man.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:17/09/18.....		
Name: ...Karen King.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:14/09/18.....		

Section 3 - Procurement Officer Clearance

Name:Nimesh Mehta.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date:17/09/18.....	

Ward Councillors notified:	NO, as it impacts on all Wards
EqIA carried out:	YES
EqIA cleared by:	Dave Corby

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Tim Bryan, Service Manager – Libraries, Sport and Leisure. Tel. 020 8416 8639, Email: tim.bryan@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

**Call-In Waived by the
Chair of Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

NO – CALL IN APPLIES