

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council (TMBC), Trafford Community Leisure Trust (TCLT) and Trafford PCT

Leisure Management Review

Visioning Document

July 2009



Table of Contents

1	Introduction, Context and Key Challenges	01
2	Vision and Strategic Principles	03
3	Delivering the Vision	04
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facility Hierarchy• Facility Options and Priorities	

1 Introduction, Context and Key Challenges

- 1.1 This Visioning Paper summarises the context, key challenges and options for the future provision of sport and leisure facilities in Trafford. It provides a baseline for consideration of the detailed options and their implications.

Context

- 1.2 The context for the review of existing leisure provision, and the way forward, is provided by the Trafford Partnership's Vision 2021. The review is not based on 'change for change sake', but on recognition that existing sports and leisure facility provision needs investment to meet the needs of the community. The overall aim of improving quality of life for the Borough's local communities has informed the assessment of existing leisure provision, and the identified options for the future, linked to improving community health, increasing participation and reducing inequality.

VISION - Trafford Partnership's VISION 2021:

- 1.3 Trafford is thriving, prosperous and culturally vibrant. A Borough at the heart of the Manchester City Region celebrated as the enterprise capital of the region and home to internationally renowned cultural and sporting attractions.
- 1.4 Trafford Partnership has made a number of commitments on how to deliver the Vision for 2021:
- Ensuring that people are at the heart of all plans, policies and actions.
 - Ensuring that actions are sustainable in that they promote the social, environmental and economic well-being of Trafford and its citizens in a balanced manner that does not compromise the needs of future generations.
 - Trafford will show how the Strategy will improve the quality of life for all communities and neighbourhoods.
- 1.5 The Local Plan, with its emphasis on improving quality of life in the Borough through a number of regeneration and development initiatives, including the re-vitalisation of the 5 town centres (including Partington), also provides important context for the review of leisure provision. Other relevant policy influences include the new Sport England Strategy with its focus on provision of opportunities for participants to 'Grow, Sustain and Excel', the strategic principles of the NW Regional Strategy which recognises the need in the region for improved facilities linked to rationalisation and refurbishment at local level, and the opportunities to deliver participation legacy linked to 2012.

Key Challenges

- 1.6 The analysis and consultation to date has highlighted a number of key challenges and potential opportunities in relation to the provision of sport and leisure facilities and opportunities across the borough. These have been identified by a number of key themes:
- **Facilities - Location and Distribution** - Overall, the supply and demand analysis indicates a current overprovision (based on all facilities in the Borough) of sports halls, swimming pools and health and fitness facilities to meet the required needs of the population. However, when the level of community accessibility i.e. pay and play, is taken into account the surplus is reduced, particularly for swimming pools. The quality of existing facility provision also needs to be taken into account, given the age of some of the TCLT facilities. Given the demographics of the Borough, it is important to ensure access for all sectors of the community through offering appropriate subsidy, programming etc to ensure long term sustainability of access and provision.

- **Facilities - Capital Investment and Revenue Sustainability** - The condition surveys indicative investment summaries suggest that there is significant need for capital investment in the facilities (around £10m, and this will only address current infrastructure improvement needs, not actually enhance or develop the provision itself). Funding this level of investment is a key challenge. There is a need to consider whether existing capital commitments e.g. Walton Park, STPs on school sites (4) represent good value for money in terms of investment for the benefit of the Borough's communities, in the context of the overall portfolio and sustaining this provision. In revenue terms the leisure facilities compare well with benchmarks and the net cost is low. The sustainability of that position is however questionable given their deteriorating condition. This is compounded by the fact that even if the £10m capital can be found, this is likely to 'protect' the current income streams rather than generate any new income. The 'cost' of capital will therefore impact directly on the net cost of the service.
- **Partnerships** - Whilst there are many existing partnerships in the Borough, particularly related to increasing and facilitating participation and addressing inclusion, there is potential to build further on these, particularly in relation to delivery. A significant opportunity for TCLT is the potential to work in partnership with local schools and to manage their sports facilities for community use; there are new partnerships with both schools and clubs developing, and BSF presents further potential to extend this approach. Other key partnership opportunities are future collaboration with Trafford Housing Trust (THT) and the Primary Care Trust (PCT).
- **Participation Patterns** - The Borough has a higher adult participation rate than the national average; however, nearly 80% of the Borough does not participate on a regular basis. Whilst there is high school age participation, as evidenced by the 2007 PESSCL Partnership figures (Flixton Girls School, 83%, Ashton-on-Mersey 86%), the statistics for participation post 16 demonstrate a significant drop off. There is a need to address this and ensure that participation is maintained as this will have a significant benefit on community health. There are currently very limited participative opportunities for people with a disability given the age and design of existing facilities. This would be addressed through the provision of fit for purpose facilities, with full DDA access. Developing fully inclusive facilities would reflect national policy which now recognises more disability sports at national level.
- **Area Specific Issues** - Given the differences between the various areas in the Borough, and specifically in terms of geographical location, affluence and health, it is important that the contribution of sport and leisure provision is optimised in relation to the identified priorities for each locality.

2 Project Background

Vision

2.1 The proposed Vision for future provision of sport and leisure facilities in Trafford is to:

‘Provide a network of strategically located, better quality ‘fit for purpose’ facilities to meet the needs of local communities through accessible opportunities for increased participation which will help to reduce health inequalities, and maximise the potential for local partnerships within the Borough’.

2.2 In order to implement and establish this Vision, TCLT will need to continue to develop and maintain effective partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders within the private, education and voluntary sectors.

Key Principles

2.3 Given the differences in the five main urban areas of the Borough it is critical that the leisure offer in each reflects the specific needs of the community which it predominately serves, in addition to reflecting the needs of the Borough as a whole. Wherever possible, leisure facilities should be part of the town centre fabric, or at least be accessible from the town centre, to overcome issues of accessibility. Given the existing mixed portfolio of facilities it will be important to retain a balance between sport specific and community provision, whilst ensuring an improvement in quality to help to deliver more cost-effective services. Sport development initiatives and key opportunities must be clearly linked to the facilities, to provide a suitable programme of activities, at affordable levels, to ensure participation is maintained and increased where feasible. The role of other providers, and particularly the commercial sector in the more affluent areas of the Borough, needs to be recognised and reflected in planning for public sector investment. It is also critical to ensure equity of provision and opportunity across the Borough across localities, abilities and facilities. Provision of participative opportunities for both able-bodied and disability sport need to be considered in this respect.

Developing the Strategic Framework

2.4 To develop a strategic planning approach to the development of all facilities to be underpinned by the adoption of a ‘hierarchy of provision’ – based on the recognition that some specialist or larger provision will serve the whole borough. The proposed facility hierarchy is as follows:

- Key large wet and dry facilities to cover the main catchment areas of Stretford, Urmston, Sale/Altrincham, and Partington
- Key multi- sports clubs and speciality ‘borough-wide’ provision
- Local provision i.e. – education sites and community centres
- Provision to be linked to development opportunities to provide larger key facilities as the ‘main hubs’ for activity within an area.
- Provision to be linked to defined standards (in accordance with available strategic planning tools), to provide good quality, accessible provision for increasing populations – town centre developments including increased housing stock
- To provide ‘in partnership’ with key stakeholders including clubs, education, health and community regeneration in recognition of the hierarchy of provision. This includes potential for managing schools provision (linked to Building Schools for the Future (BSF)) and also developing formal agreements with established clubs making the most effective use of resources to use facilities and develop opportunities for increased participation
- To develop programming and pricing policies across the Borough to facilitate access by the whole community
- To develop inclusive participative opportunities for both able-bodied and disability sport e.g. swimming. To ensure equity and equality of access; for some specialist activities partnerships with the commercial sector may provide the optimum means of delivery

3 Delivering the Vision

3.1 There are a number of significant challenges to be addressed in delivering the identified options for future facility development. These are predominantly related to:

- Level of capital investment
- Implementing different levels and types of facility provision across the Borough, based on a facility hierarchy, reflecting the facility role and the specific needs of the relevant local communities
- Developing alternative delivery models
- Revenue funding
- Change management
- Timescales for implementation

Facility Hierarchy

3.2 In developing the future Vision and strategic principles for the provision of sport and leisure facilities and activities in the Borough, the research and consultation to date suggests three key strands on which to focus:

- Long term sustainability i.e. Capital investment to make the service more sustainable:
- Improving the quality and fit for purpose nature of provision
- Developing a clear hierarchy of facilities across the Borough, based on 3 types of provision:
 - Major wet and dry facilities (Stretford, Sale/Altrincham, Urmston, and Partington)
 - Satellite facilities (dry only), based in neighbourhoods (could be on school sites)
 - Multi-sport club facilities

Partnerships

3.3 There are significant opportunities to look at providing leisure and sport facilities through alternative partnerships, given the development proposals in the Borough. These include BSF (£180m investment across the Borough), town centre related regeneration, the local planning agenda, partnerships with the commercial sector, health, and education.

Facility Delivery Options and Priorities

3.4 The identified options for future facility provision across the Borough are summarised below, to provide an overview of the way forward. It is important to emphasise at this stage that of these options there are a few key priorities which will make a real difference in terms of both capital and revenue expenditure, and critically, opportunities for participation.

3.5 However, the overall Vision for the future provision of sports and leisure facilities in the Borough includes all identified options, as they are integrated, and whilst may not all be achievable immediately, will, if implemented over a period of time change the way (and therefore the resources and roles of deliverers) in which provision is made in the Borough, to ensure a more sustainable approach in the long term. Of particular importance is the need to maximise opportunities for capital receipts to contribute to new facility provision; the developments in Stretford, Altrincham and Sale could contribute significantly to capital funding for future leisure facilities in the Borough.

Capital and Revenue Funding

- 3.6 Delivering the vision is going to involve significant sums of capital and funding this in the current economic climate will be challenging. It is worth noting that in terms of capital investment there is no do-nothing option because the condition survey requirement is circa £10m. If capital is spent on new and improved facilities there would be the potential to improve the revenue position rather than simply maintaining it. The cost of funding £10m of investment in the existing facilities would be prohibitive. Funding this level of expenditure would be circa £750k to £1m per annum in revenue terms using Prudential Borrowing depending on prevailing interest rates and repayment periods.
- 3.7 Any improvement in the net revenue position brought about by new and improved facilities could be used to fund Prudential Borrowing (although it is recognised that the Council does not ordinarily utilise this method of funding). If there was to be an improvement in the revenue position of (say) £500k per annum (which is considered reasonable) this would fund circa £7.5m of capital (based on interest of 5.5% over 25 years).
- 3.8 In this regard, there is an irony in that the current revenue efficiency is working against the Trust and it could be described as the 'victim of its own success'. There would still be a significant funding gap to bridge. In delivering the vision, the re-provision of facilities would enable capital receipts to be generated from the disposal of existing sites and/or Section 106 and other partnership funding to be levered in. This would reduce the net capital required. It is likely that a phased approach will be required to deliver the vision with priorities being decided.

Partnerships

- 3.9 There are significant opportunities to look at providing leisure and sport facilities through alternative partnerships, given the development proposals in the Borough. These include BSF, town centre related regeneration, the local planning agenda, partnerships with the commercial sector, health, and education. There may also be further opportunities to work in partnership with local clubs to support them in delivering participation opportunities borough-wide e.g. Bowdon Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club and Timperley Sports Club.

Sport Development

- 3.10 The role of sport development is critical to increasing participation in the Borough, and in particular in relation to working with under-represented groups, and specific sports. Based on the findings of the leisure review and the Vision for future facility provision and partnerships for provision, sport development has a crucial role in facilitating access, informing programming and access policy, and in focussing resources on encouraging and supporting increased participation.

Priorities

3.11 Based on the above strategic needs, the three key priorities for future facility provision in the Borough are:

- **Replacement of the existing Walton Park facility – based on provision of a new boathouse with some social space to facilitate club development, coaching development and delivery; provision of specialist gymnastic facilities in an alternative venue, to enable re-location of the club (realistic hire fees need to be charged to the club) to the existing facilities; provision of weight lifting / gym facilities in an alternative location and development of a new Sports Barn in Sale Moor, to which the existing football programme would be relocated**
- **Investment in the William Wroe golf course, including development of a driving range and re-orientation of the golf course**
- **Development of a new replacement facility at Stretford, integrated with the proposals for Lancashire CC, the adjacent school and the new Tesco store; a replacement facility should include a swimming pool, a sports hall and fitness facility as the core offer**

Strategic Outcomes

3.12 Addressing the above priorities will make a significant difference in both future levels of capital investment required, and ongoing revenue resources. In addition to these priorities the developing Vision for future facility provision would support:

- **The rationalisation of two facilities in Urmston, to create one wet and dry facility on a single site, and relocation of the existing conference/event venue to the outdoor pitch site (re-development of one of the existing barns). G H Carnall becomes a Sports Barn plus Conference venue (loss of fitness suite), but provision at Urmston is extended.**
- **Development of the programme and participative opportunities in Old Trafford through increasing access to, and use of, the existing Youth Club/community centre facility**
- **Continued integration and partnership working between Broadoak School and the Trust in terms of facility provision and operational management on the one facility site in Partington, to facilitate delivery of participative opportunities for both the community and curriculum delivery**
- **Additional delivery partnerships with local multi-sport clubs (club marked and accredited)**
- **Additional operational management partnerships between the Trust and local schools in relation to leisure facilities to increase access, and facilitate increased participation e.g. The Grammar partnership with Altrincham Grammar school for Boys**
- **Ongoing improvements to existing grass pitches and pavilions, particularly in the south of the Borough**

Making your visiona reality



Strategic Leisure
3rd Floor
Rutherford House
Warrington Road
Birchwood Science Park
Warrington
WA3 6ZH

Tel: 01925 855 550
Fax: 01928 585 769

E-mail: www.strategicleisure.co.uk
Web: www.strategicleisure.co.uk