

Cherwell District Council

Executive

3 June 2019

Active Communities Strategy

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing

This report is public

Purpose of report

To provide the rationale and context for the proposed Active Communities Strategy.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the Active Communities Strategy and associated Delivery Plan.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Cherwell is a district that has diverse leisure opportunities – from playing a sport with one of our local clubs, or swimming in one of our pools, or taking a walk in one of our parks, there is something for everyone, whatever your age or ability. Maintaining and developing these opportunities for the community is important to ensure that Cherwell continues to be a great place to live, work and visit.
- 2.2 This paper sets out the context within which this strategy sits and then sets out a vision, strategic priorities and key indicators that the Council will focus on over the coming years.
- 2.3 The challenge facing Cherwell is clear; we have considerable health inequalities when compared with the rest of Oxfordshire, including poor physical activity levels. Increasing the level of participation in sport and physical activity can reduce those health inequalities and active people will remain healthy and so contribute to the vision of the District Council “Ensuring that Cherwell continues to be a great place to live, work and visit”
- 2.4 With a clear path to follow, the Council will be able to apply resources effectively, ensuring that local people enjoy high quality leisure opportunities that suit their lifestyle and maintain and improve the quality of their lives.
- 2.5 The continued offer of excellent leisure centres, supported by a variety of physical activity programmes delivered by our sport and physical activity function, focusing

on health inequalities and inactivity levels., will contribute to the health of our community and the prosperity of the district. This strategy will ensure that a focus is maintained on providing leisure opportunities that our communities deserve. This strategy should not be read in isolation and complements other national, regional and local strategies and information briefings

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 Utilising a wide range of research and source reports the ambition of the strategy is to identify the key priorities for Cherwell District Council in enabling active communities
- 3.2 Working with partners to identify need, secure investment and developer contributions, the strategy will allow us to co-create programmes and facilities to improve the outcomes for residents in terms of their health and their active participation in physical activity, sport and use of informal open spaces.
- 3.2 The three studies commissioned and published last year into Open Spaces, Sports Pitches and Leisure Facilities and the accompanying Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), sets out anticipated developer contributions and articulates how it is envisaged significant financial support for new and expanded facilities will be realised.
- 3.3 The financial contributions derived from strategic housing development sites, in each urban centre, will need to be pooled to enable the scale of investment necessary to provide the leisure facilities for our future communities. This can be a complex process, with each development contributing at various times depending on build out rate and it may take several years for the proposed contributions to be realised. The delivery plan therefore focuses on projects that Cherwell District Council can deliver without reliance on developer contributions. As the pool of developer contributions grows, future work will be required to determine phased development of facilities and open spaces.
- 3.4 Reference within the strategy is made to the commitment Cherwell has made to the concept of Healthy Place Shaping and the delivery plan gives clarity on the programmes of work that will help embed the learning from the Bicester Healthy New Town programme.
- 3.5 The delivery plan also refers to the Active Oxfordshire strategic plan. By working closely with the countywide organisation, funded by Sport England, Cherwell District Council is able to tap into funds to expand the success of the FAST(Families Active and Sporting Together) programme into other communities and broaden the reach of other work. We are sharing our learning from the healthy place shaping initiative with other districts across the county and feeding into the Oxfordshire Growth board to share good practice.
- 3.6 The delivery plan is intended to promote programmes of work in areas where there are noticeable health inequalities as well as some universal projects that can be accessed by anyone wanting to improve their physical health.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Active Communities Strategy places the focus of the Council's investment into sports, recreation and physical activity into programmes of work and facilities that can improve the quality of people's experience and their health outcomes. The aspiration is to reduce the occurrence of preventable health conditions by encouraging residents to be more active, more often in good quality facilities and outdoor space. This will be achieved by linking with partners to deliver a wide range of attractive activities that will improve physical health and general wellbeing.
- 4.2 The strategy is recommended for approval as it serves to provide a context for the delivery plan and why we will be undertaking certain investment and activity over its lifespan

5.0 Consultation

As part of the previously published studies there was significant consultation with a range of partners; leisure providers, sports clubs, Active Oxfordshire. Elected members were consulted last autumn to help prioritise the actions in the delivery plan and the consideration of new or expanded facilities in each urban area. The results of that consultation are reflected in the strategy and delivery plan.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not have a strategy

Rejected. The importance of structuring future work is essential if we are to make progress in tackling the identified priorities.

Option 2: Develop a strategy focused solely on built development

Rejected. The combination of facility development and flexible projects and programmes is felt to provide the best combination of opportunities to tackle inactive communities

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The delivery plan can be met from existing resources including external fixed term funding.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

7.2 No legal implications arise from the adoption of this strategy

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: Yes

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

- *Thriving Communities & Wellbeing*
- *Clean, Green and Safe*
- *District of Opportunity & Growth*

Lead Councillor

Councillor George Reynolds, Deputy Leader

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Draft Active Communities strategy
Background Papers	
None	
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