

## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>TO:</b> Council	<b>REPORT NUMBER:</b> <b>MC/22/10</b>
<b>FROM:</b> Cabinet Members for Economic Growth and Health and Wellbeing	<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b> 23 June 2022
<b>OFFICER:</b> Fiona Duhamel	<b>KEY DECISION REF NO.</b> N/A

### STOWMARKET, HEALTH, EDUCATION AND LEISURE FACILITIES (SHELF)

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Mid Suffolk Council on progress on the Stowmarket, health, education, and leisure facility (SHELF) project and to acknowledge Mid Suffolk Cabinet approval for the initial business case and Masterplan designs.
- 1.2 To update members on the proposed costs of the scheme, the draft funding strategy and request Council to approve the next stage costings to take the project to detailed design phase and submission of a planning application.

#### 2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Several options for the scheme have been considered with partners, other landowners and key stakeholders, and the option presented in this report provides for the optimum use of the land available to secure maximum wellbeing outcomes.
- 2.2 An initial option to just provide additional facilities on the High school site was considered but this does not create the best opportunities for maximising partnerships and collaboration across all stakeholders.

#### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

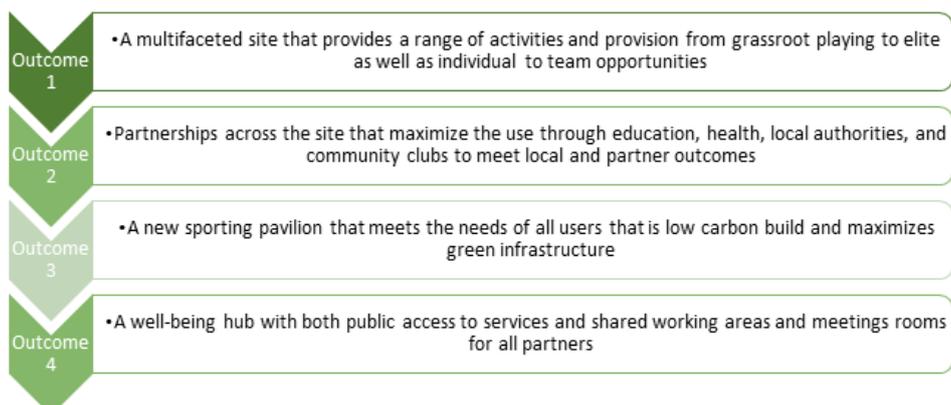
- 3.1 Council to note Cabinets' approval of the Masterplan (appendix a), and initial Business case (appendix b - restricted) for the proposed scheme which includes an indicative cost plan and funding strategy
- 3.2 Council to note the work to date on the partnership strategy (appendix e - restricted) and future management models (appendix d – restricted) for the new scheme.
- 3.3 Council recommended to approve the funding of £700,000 (as outlined in 6.2) to complete detailed design stage and submission of a planning application, next stage of operational management modelling and to appoint a partnership co-ordinator to fully maximise current and future partnership working and collaboration across the site, outlined in 6.4
- 3.4 To create a Member advisory working group for the development of the scheme that includes relevant Cabinet Members and local Ward Members.

## REASON FOR DECISION

This development provides a unique opportunity to create a holistic wellbeing hub in Stowmarket which brings together on one site, education, sport, leisure and health facilities and users. The proposal meets many Council, local partnership and government outcomes but also creates the conditions to stimulate some new and exciting partnerships which enhance opportunities for local communities and provide a regionally significant centre in the town.

## 4. KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 The proposed Masterplan brings together two key sites, shown in Appendix A. Currently the facilities are operated by different organisations and are home to a high school, leisure centre, three sports clubs and a children's nursery. The sites, whilst operating well, do not benefit from the wider opportunities which could be created in terms of partnership working; including better sharing of facilities to maximise use day and night.
- 4.2 Whilst initially a project set up to resolve issues the school site had with poor quality and a lack of sports facilities for students, it became obvious that opportunities existed to review a wider site area and to take a more holistic look at the partnerships which could be created on the site to maximise use, increase sports participation, and provide positive health and wellbeing impacts for the local community.
- 4.3 The proposed Masterplan and Initial Business Case in Appendix B (restricted) have been developed in partnership with a number of key stakeholders and with Suffolk County Council as owners of part of the site, along with Mid Suffolk Council who own the remainder of the land. These partners range from the High school, a current local primary school and a new primary school under development, the Leisure centre operator, representatives from the local Clinical Commissioning Groups, Active Suffolk, and Sport England.
- 4.4 The Council and its partners commissioned local architects Saunders Bolton, alongside specialist sports management consultants to develop a masterplan which was capable to operating across stakeholders and provided real benefits to the local community.
- 4.5 The initial business case outlines the strategic, economic, commercial, financial and management case for the proposals and outlines the proposed outcomes to be achieved from the scheme. In summary these are:



4.6 Specifically, the Masterplan will create the following facilities which directly contribute to the Councils refreshed Sport and Leisure Strategy adopted in 2021. It is important to acknowledge that *'Physical activity is the single most important thing you can do to improve your physical and mental health and with 25.4% of adults in Mid Suffolk doing less than 30 minutes of exercise per week improved facilities and integrated support is more important than ever.* This was documented within the Sport England Active Lives Survey within the April 2022 Data Release.

Proposed facilities on the site are;

- A 4g football pitch
- A 2g pitch (a range of sports and activities can be played on the pitch)
- A mini track athletics facility
- A new Sport pavilion to replace existing
- A multi-agency wellbeing hub for use by a range of partners
- A Multi Use Games area
- 4 new indoor sport courts
- Additional parking at the Wellbeing hub and pavilion
- Reshaping of the current car parking on the Chilton Fields site
- New cricket square and new nets
- Multi surface perimeter track to encourage information walking and cycling

4.6 Early in the project the Council established a Sports Stakeholder Forum which includes a large number of local sports clubs and societies but particularly those clubs currently using the wider site in some way. The Forum has met regularly and worked with the Council to review plans and provide information on current and planned future use.

4.7 The Council has also engaged with a range of national and regional governing bodies for sport including Suffolk FA, England Athletics, England Netball, Suffolk Rugby and Cricket, British Gymnastics, England Hockey, and others. Their input into the masterplan has been significant as will their ongoing involvement be with their local clubs to support growth, development and future partnership working.

4.8 More recently discussions with health partners have expanded to consider a new Wellbeing Hub building on the site. Whilst discussions with Health and County Council partners are still at an early stage, there is an exciting opportunity to explore new ways to deliver community wellbeing services on a single site, bring together health teams in one place and develop more collaborative working across education, sport and leisure and health services. Some of this work is already underway on the site with the development by the High school of new mental health provision for its students, working alongside local provider, the Mix and mental health services. The delivery of this scheme could enable further development of such partnerships.

## **5. LINKS to CORPORATE PLAN**

5.1 Our organisational vision is "Great communities with bright & healthy futures that everyone is proud to call home" alongside our mission to provide strong, proud, and inspirational leadership; striving for excellence, and together building great communities for everyone to live, work, visit and invest in. This project is more than buildings; the site will enable stakeholders to form stronger partnerships to deliver a range of services to benefit local communities, ensuring that provision is accessible to all.

- 5.2 The project will encourage and provide a wide range of opportunities for our communities to become active. The partnerships between health, sport clubs, leisure provider and education can provide targeted interventions linked to increased activity and promote wellbeing. This will specifically address the pockets of health inequality within Stowmarket.
- 5.3 The project links directly to the Council's Communities and Wellbeing Strategies and its Economic Recovery Plan but also meets partners strategic outcomes and the recently launched Sport England "Uniting the Movement" strategy 2022-25.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The initial business case and supporting cost plan outlines the projected capital costs of the scheme although much more detailed work will be carried out over the coming months. As part of the business case there is a draft funding strategy outlining external and internal funding opportunities to support the scheme delivery. At this stage it should be stressed that the Funding Strategy requires further detailed conversations both locally and with national funders and this will take place over the coming months. However, it is likely that there will be a need for the Council to become a primary funder of the scheme.
- 6.2 Further work is now required to refine the Masterplan design to obtain more robust capital costs and explore long term financial sustainability and management costs of the site and its proposed facilities. For the next stage of work consultants will be instructed to carry out the work packages identified below.
- Further detailed design work to RIBA 3 – which will enable a planning application to be submitted, a detailed cost plan to be developed and enable detailed funding requests and bids to be submitted
  - Further income and cost projection and modelling to better understand the operational running costs of the new site, any income produced and assess new and existing legal and occupational structures to ensure long term and financial sustainability of the site, facilities, and partnerships
  - Consideration will need to be given in particular to funding of the Wellbeing Hub the costs of which are a large part of the overall project. It is anticipated that space will be leased out to partnership organisations and any subsequent rent could form part of a wider Final Business case on scheme viability. However, this analysis will form the next stage of financial assessment, although it should be noted that any borrowing request will include Minimum Revenue Provision and interest costs to be built into cost projections.
- 6.3 In respect of the modelling and economic forecasting of the site several assumptions have been made.
- The operational of the site will be revenue cost neutral to the Council except for the early years of the scheme which may require some seed funding
  - That all net revenues from site operations will be re invested into the long-term maintenance (whole life cost) and management of the site to achieve set objectives and outcomes

- That existing partners operating on the site will be left in no worse financial position from the new facilities and operating model

6.4 The next stage of costs outlined under 6.2 above are detailed in the table below.

Cost for next stage of delivery	Total
Further detailed design work	£450,000
Surveys	£87,000
Stakeholder action plan delivery and governance model	£32,000
Sport England grant application costs (if invited to submit)	£15,000
Partnership officer (2-year post)	£62,000
Pre app and Planning application fee (estimated)	£22,000
Building control fee	£2,000
Legal fees	£5,000
Contingency cost	£25,000
Total	700,000

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The current legal structures on the site are complex and require further analysis before any final business case is approved. The sites are broadly in 2 ownerships; Mid Suffolk Council who own the leisure centre, land adjacent and the Chilton Fields Sports sites and Suffolk County Council who own the high school site as education authority. The school site is leased to the Waveney Valley Academies Trust and strict guideline exist in respect of sale or alternatives uses of school land.
- 7.2 The Chilton Fields sports site whilst in MSDC ownership is subject to a lease to the Stowmarket Rugby Club. Negotiations regarding a new lease to the club are currently on hold whilst we move forward discussions around the new facilities.
- 7.3 Whilst it is assumed that no existing clubs or partners will be left in any worse position in terms of site occupancy than they currently have, there is a need to review all structures to ensure that future operation of the whole site is managed in accordance with a set of agreed outcomes and principles. The Councils Sports consultants have outlined some initial concepts in respect of the future management of the site and respective legal structures but as outlined above, further work is required with stakeholders to conclude this area of work and any future recommendations will be brought back to Cabinet as part of the final business case.
- 7.4 The new Wellbeing Hub building is likely to have a range of partners sharing space and consequently will need to have careful consideration of long terms management and legal and operational structures. This will also form part of the final report and Business case to be presented to Cabinet at a later stage.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

8.1 The key risks are set out in the initial business case RESTRICTED appendix B, page 24.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

9.1 Extensive engagement and consultation have been carried out with a range of partners and this is detailed in the initial business case.

9.2 However following approval of the initial business case and recommendations contained in this report it is intended to carry out further consultation in Stowmarket Town Centre as part of the “What’s next for Stowmarket Vision event planned for early September. It is planned to commence consultation with students at the primary and high school, teachers, and users of the sports facilities currently on the site in July.

9.3 Work is ongoing in terms of consultation with sports clubs, national governing bodies, NHS partners and other potential occupiers of the site. The partnership project group continues to provide overarching governance to the project through monthly meetings and internal officer project group also meets monthly.

9.4 Formal consultation will be carried out as part of any future planning application.

## **10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS**

An initial screening Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been completed highlighting the need for a full EQIA will be required at a later stage. The initial screening Equality Impact Assessment is attached in Appendix F.

## **11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 Development of the site would have associated environment impacts requiring assessment and mitigation. The initial design work has proposed roof mounted solar PV and air source heat pumps, to provide self-consumption energy opportunities and cost savings for occupiers. Electric vehicle and bicycle charging points and biodiversity planting and features are proposed to further embed green infrastructure and mitigate carbon impacts.

## **12. APPENDICES**

Title	Location
(a) Masterplan	Attached
(b) RESTRICTED Initial business case – Stowmarket Health, Education and Leisure Facilities	Attached in Part 2
(c) RESTRICTED Funding strategy	Attached in Part 2
(d) RESTRICTED Stowmarket SHELF Management models	Attached in Part 2

(e) RESTRICTED Stowmarket SHELF Partnership strategies	Attached in Part 2
(f) EQIA Initial Screening SHELF	Attached

### **13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

13.1 Leisure, Sport, and Physical Activity Strategy – Update 2021

13.2 Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 2027

13.3 Communities Strategy 2019 - 2036

### **14. REPORT AUTHORS**

14.1 Kate Parnum, Project Regeneration Manager