

To: The Deputy Leader and Members of the Community and Environment Board

(Councillors Bell, Fowler, Gosling, Hobley, Jackson, Jarvis, Jenns, Melia, H Phillips, Singh, Smith, Turley, Whapples and A Wright)

For the information of other Members of the Council

For general enquiries please contact Democratic Services on 01827 719226 or via e-mail

democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk.

For enquiries about specific reports please contact the officer named in the reports.

The agenda and reports are available in large print and electronic accessible formats if requested.

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD AGENDA

25 MARCH 2024

The Community and Environment Board will meet in The Chamber, The Council House, South Street, Atherstone on Monday 25 March 2024 at 6.30pm.

The meeting can also be viewed on the Council's YouTube channel at [NorthWarks - YouTube](#).

AGENDA

- 1 Evacuation Procedure.**
- 2 Apologies for Absence / Members away on official Council business.**
- 3 Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests.**

4 **Public Participation**

Up to twenty minutes will be set aside for members of the public to put questions to elected Members.

Members of the public wishing to address the Board must register their intention to do so by 9:30am two working days prior to the meeting. Participants are restricted to five minutes each.

If you wish to put a question to the meeting, please register by email to democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk or telephone 01827 719221 / 01827 719237 / 01827 719226.

Once registered to speak, the person asking the question has the option to either:

- a) attend the meeting in person at the Council Chamber.
- b) attend remotely via Teams; or
- c) request that the Chair reads out their written question.

The Council Chamber has level access via a lift to assist those with limited mobility who attend in person however, it may be more convenient to attend remotely.

If attending remotely an invitation will be sent to join the Teams video conferencing for this meeting. Those registered to speak should dial the telephone number and ID number (provided on their invitation) when joining the meeting to ask their question. However, whilst waiting they will be able to hear what is being said at the meeting. They will also be able to view the meeting using the YouTube link provided (if so, they made need to mute the sound on YouTube when they speak on the phone to prevent feedback).

5 **Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 22 January 2024** – copies herewith, to be approved and signed by the Chairman.

PUBLIC BUSINESS (WHITE PAPERS)

6 **Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plan** – Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

Appended to this report, for Members' consideration, is a copy of the approved 2023 / 24 Service Improvement Plan (SIP), through which the Board has agreed to monitor the operational performance of the leisure facilities. In addition, a draft SIP for the 12 months period commencing from April 2024 has been appended for Members' consideration and approval.

The Contact Officer for this report is Russell Simkiss (719257).

7 **Atherstone Leisure Complex** - Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

This report outline appraises, and seeks the Board's views on, current leisure services provision at Atherstone Leisure Complex.

The Contact Officers for this report are Simon Powell (719352) and Russell Simkiss (719257).

8 **North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies – Progress Report** - Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

This report informs Members of the progress made in respect of delivery against the priorities set out in the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) and the recently revised and adopted Playing Pitch Strategy (2024 to 2031).

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719346).

9 **Leisure-related Section 106 Receipts –** Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

This report asks the Board to consider and determine the use of a number of leisure-related Section 106 receipts held by the Borough Council.

The Contact Officers for this report are Simon Powell (719352) and Becky Evans (719346).

10 **Financial Assistance to Outside Organisations –** Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

Borough Council support for outside organisations is provided in many ways, including through its Annual Grants scheme and through wider partnership agreements. This report considers the allocation of the Annual Grants funding for 2024 / 25.

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719346).

- 11 **Local Visitor Economy Partnership** – Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

This report updates Members on the work being undertaken at a sub-regional level to create a Local Visitor Economy Partnership for Coventry and Warwickshire.

The Contact Officer for this report is Rachel Stephens (719301).

- 12 **Update on Current and Future Waste Recycling Options** – Report of the Interim Corporate Director – Streetscape - **TO FOLLOW**

The Contact Officer for this report is Cath James (719295)

- 13 **Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Working Party** held on 26 February 2024 – copies herewith.

- 14 **Minutes of the Climate Change Member Group** held on 17 January 2024 and 5 March 2024 – copies herewith.

- 15 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To consider, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, whether it is in the public interest that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

- 16 **EV Charger Installation** – Report of the Interim Corporate Director – Streetscape

The Contact Officer for this report is Robert Snape (719295)

STEVE MAXEY
Chief Executive

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD**

22 January 2024

Present: Councillor Bell in the Chair.

Councillors Chapman, Fowler, Jackson, Jarvis, Jenns, Melia, H Phillips, Ririe, Singh, Smith, Turley, Whapples and A Wright.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hobley (Substitute Ririe) and Councillor Gosling (Substitute Chapman).

Councillor D Clews was also in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, spoken on Minute No 30 (North Warwickshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031)).

23 Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were declared at the meeting.

24 Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 16 October 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023, copies having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 General Fund Revenue Budget – 2023/24 Revised and 2024/25 Estimates and Fees and Charges

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) detailed the revised budget for 2023/24 and an estimate of expenditure for 2024/25, together with forward commitments for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28. A review of the fees and charges was also detailed, with recommendations for increases.

Resolved:

- a That the revised budget for 2023/24 be accepted;**
- b That the fees and charges, as detailed in Appendix C to the report of the Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) be approved; and**
- c That the Chief Executive be given delegated powers to implement the increase in Garden Waste Collection charges from £40.00 to £43.00 per annum.**

Recommendation to Executive Board:

- b That the 2024/25 estimates, as detailed in the report of the Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) be included in the overall Tax Set 2024/25 report for Executive Board on 12 February 2024;**

26 Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) identified proposals for Community and Environment capital schemes to be included within the Council’s capital programme over the next three years.

Recommendation to Executive Board:

That the schemes detailed in Appendix A to the report of the Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer), be supported as the Council’s current three-year capital programme for Community and Environment.

27 Contaminated Land Update

The Chief Executive provided Members with an update on the work that Environmental Health had undertaken to update the contaminated land strategy.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

28 Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plan

The Director of Leisure and Community Development reported on the approved 2023/24 Service Improvement Plan (SIP), through which the Board had agreed to monitor the operational performance of the leisure facilities.

Resolved:

- a That the progress made against the requirements identified in the approved 2023/24 Leisure Facilities Service Improvement Plan be noted; and**

- b That the proposed schedule of closures of the Borough Council's leisure facilities, as set out in paragraph 5.2 of the report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development, be approved.**

29 Leisure Facilities Provision in Coleshill

The Director of Leisure and Community Development gave an outline appraisal of, and sought the Board's view on, current leisure facilities provision in Coleshill.

Resolved:

That the current position in respect of leisure facilities provision in Coleshill be noted.

30 North Warwickshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031)

The Director of Leisure and Community Development presented a revised draft of the North Warwickshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031), further to a process of review undertaken by external consultants.

Resolved:

That the revised draft of the North Warwickshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031) be adopted.

31 Regeneration Activity in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth

The Director of Leisure and Community Development updated Members on the regeneration work taking place in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth. The report detailed the work being undertaken by the Community Development section, as well as the work of the Institute of Place Management and the consultant undertaking the role of Market Towns Officer.

Resolved:

That the regeneration work being undertaken in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth, including the progress being made by the Market Towns Officer, be noted, and that Officers be instructed to ensure the engagement of Ward Members in the development of regeneration activity in the town centres.

32 **Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Working Party**

The minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Working Party held on 13 December 2023, copies having been previously circulated, were noted.

Margaret Bell
Chair

Agenda Item No 6

Community and Environment Board

25 March 2024

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plan

1 Summary

- 1.1 Appended to this report, for Members' consideration, is a copy of the approved 2023 / 24 Service Improvement Plan (SIP), through which the Board has agreed to monitor the operational performance of the leisure facilities. In addition, a draft SIP for the 12 months period commencing from April 2024 has been appended for Members' consideration and approval.

Recommendation to the Board

- a That the Board notes and comments upon the progress made against the requirements identified in the approved 2023 / 24 Leisure Facilities Service Improvement Plan; and
- b That Members approve or otherwise amend the appended draft Service Improvement Plan against which the operational performance of the leisure facilities will be monitored through to 31 March 2025.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported verbally at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 In order to continue to provide a focused approach to service delivery, at its meeting held in March 2023, the Board approved a 2023 / 24 Leisure Facilities Service Improvement Plan (SIP), which would guide activity through until March 2024. A copy of the adopted Plan, which details the key actions, work programmes and improvements to be achieved by the end of March, is attached at Appendix A. The Plan seeks to highlight those matters that the Board has determined are important in order to enhance the quality and sustainability of the service delivered through its leisure facilities.

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4 Service Improvement Plan: Progress

- 4.1 The SIP attached at Appendix A evidences the progress made by the Leisure Facilities section through to the end of February 2024. Members are invited to

comment on that progress. Any significant changes and / or progress made in March will be reported verbally to the Board at its meeting.

- 4.2 As agreed with Members, this report does not seek to provide detailed commentary on the progress being made in respect of each action identified within the SIP. Instead, it aims to update the Board on the key areas of recent progress made within the leisure facilities. Members, however, are invited to comment and advise on any areas of activity upon which they wish Officers to focus in order to improve the operational viability of the service.
- 4.3 The leisure facilities continue to be welcome venues for activity during the school holidays. During the February half-term, Atherstone Leisure Complex hosted Atherstone Family Fun's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) funded programmes, swimming crash courses, soft play and swimming sessions, whilst Coleshill Leisure Centre delivered bouncy castle combined with "Decorate a Pancake" sessions, which were extremely popular. Overall attendances for the week totalled almost 400 visits, which was a positive response and an improvement on last year's equivalent attendance of just over 300 visits.
- 4.4 The leisure facilities have been gaining feedback and benchmarking their customer experience performance throughout the year for each of the main service areas, using both surveys and the Net Promoter Score. The final survey, which will review the general quality of leisure provision, is open for public engagement until 20 March. The results will provide the service with its final overall Net Promoter Score, which can be used to benchmark against industry standards, as well as provide an assessment of the service's individual performance. Based on results achieved to date, the service's score currently sits just above the national average for the industry. An update on the end of year position will be provided to the Board following the final survey in March.
- 4.5 Leisure Facilities ran a very successful health and fitness promotion in January and February 2024, which achieved 327 new membership sign-ups across the facilities over the two months, which, again, was an improvement on last year's performance for the same period. This level of performance has supported a sustained membership growth of over 10% this year and, in part, has been achieved through the introduction of a health-focused member journey, alongside the success of the evolving fitness class programme.
- 4.6 With a view to strengthening the service's health focus, staff training took place late in February in support of the anticipated launch of the new blood testing service in mid-April. National awareness campaigns, including Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Week in May and Cholesterol Awareness Month in October, will be used as platforms to promote the service and support improved health outcomes for residents in the Borough. Opportunities will also be provided for Borough Council staff to benefit from this service, which very few leisure operators are qualified to offer.

4.7 Leisure Facilities staff have continued to try to engage the local community and improve the service offer, a number of examples of which are shared below:

- Alongside the introduction of the new corporate website, a new leisure website has been launched, which offers a much-improved look and easier navigation capabilities. The service is currently reviewing the Leisure App and other digital functions in order to further improve the user experience
- In February, Atherstone Leisure Complex invited a SEND group to the facility to provide feedback on its accessibility and inclusivity. Feedback has been discussed in team meetings and fed into action plans to further improve the service
- Training, to take place in March, has been arranged for site operations and duty staff and the business team to complete neurodiversity training, which will be delivered by the Warwickshire County Council Autism Friendly Group. The training will be used to inform and shape future service delivery

4.8 The period covered by the current SIP draws to a conclusion at the end of March 2024 and a summary of the key achievements, as well as the key projects required to be carried forward, have been summarised in Appendix A. A draft Service Improvement Plan for the progressive delivery of the service has been prepared for the next 12 months. The Board is invited to consider, approve or otherwise amend this draft Plan, which is attached at Appendix B. Subject to Members' approval, Officers will commence work against the provisions of the new Plan with effect from April 2024.

4.9 The Leisure Facilities team, in conjunction with relevant colleagues throughout the Authority, will continue to manage and monitor the implementation of the requirements of the SIP on a regular basis and to report accordingly to each meeting of this Board, including to its next scheduled meeting to be held in May 2024. This process will continue to afford Members an opportunity to both understand and direct relevant aspects of the performance of the Borough Council's leisure facilities.

5 Report Implications

5.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

5.1.1 Whilst there is no financial implication arising directly out of this report insofar as it relates to the SIP, the Plan will enable the Board to monitor the performance of the leisure facilities at each of its meetings and to advise on activity that will support improved operational sustainability.

5.2 Safer Communities Implications

5.2.1 The Authority's leisure facilities contribute to community safety by providing well-managed services that afford opportunities for positive activity and, therefore, a creative alternative to potential criminal and / or anti-social behaviour.

5.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

5.3.1 There are no direct legal, data protection or human rights implications arising from this report.

5.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

5.4.1 Leisure facilities have a positive impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals and the sustainability of local communities by providing opportunities for formal and informal recreation and by contributing to an improved quality of life.

5.5 Human Resources Implications

5.5.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report, other than those to which reference is made in the appended Service Improvement Plans and upon which commentary is provided therein.

5.6 Risk Management Implications

5.6.1 There are no other direct risk management implications arising from this report. The activity that is included within the Service Improvement Plans, however, will be risk assessed and appropriate controls put in place, where appropriate.

5.7 Equalities Implications

5.7.1 The activity identified in the Service Improvement Plans is intended to advance the Authority's commitment to ensuring equality for all members of the community across its portfolio of service provision.

5.8 Links to Council's Priorities

5.8.1 The proposals contained in this report have direct links to the following corporate priorities:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

5.8.2 Additionally, the Borough Council's leisure facilities contribute directly to the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Raise aspirations, educational attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services

The Contact Officer for this report is Russell Simkiss (719257).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	Director of Leisure and Community Development	Report to Community and Environment Board (Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plan)	January 2024

North Warwickshire Leisure Facilities

Service Improvement Plan - April 2023 to March 2024

Aim: To improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Borough Council's Leisure Facilities

Responsible Officers Key:

D: Director

LFM: Leisure Facilities Manager

SSRO: Service, Sales and Retention Officer

SAEO: Sports, Activities and Events Officer

OO: Operations Officer(s)

LMT: All of the above

Last Updated: 01 March 2024

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
Recover and Reinvent ‘Optimising the opportunity for communities to live an active lifestyle’, ‘Continue to reinvent to be relevant to evolving community needs’	Be pro-active in encouraging more people to live more active lifestyles	Continue to adapt to make services more inclusive, accessible and inviting: At each meeting, to update the Board on service progress in respect of the ‘Poverty Proofing’ action plan; Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) action plan; establish further external reviews and training through the year	April 2024 and ongoing	To identify within the review process	OO	↑	Autism awareness training will be delivered to leisure facilities staff in March to help inform action plans to improve accessibility / inclusivity
	To continue to understand what communities want and work collaboratively to encourage a ‘leadership community’ to do the same	Using community engagement / steering groups where appropriate, adapt to deliver services differently or create new services in their place with the goal to keep the community engaged, more active and living healthier, happier lives	March 2024		LMT	↑	Examples are identified within the C&E report
	Review pricing and packages	To review fees, charges and packages to ensure affordable services in alignment with the local and wider market	January 2024		LMT	↑	Fees and charges have been approved and communicated, ready for implementation in April 2024
	Explore the opportunity to optimise the use of space across facilities	Review opportunities to optimise the use of space in facilities to increase services, attendance and improve financial performance	March 2024		LMT	↑	Although no areas have been converted this financial year, opportunities have been identified for developments to take place at an appropriate time in the future
	Become ‘greener’ within the context provided by the corporate Climate Change Action Plan	Within the context provided by the corporate Climate Change Action Plan, consider climate change in the operation of service and plan to do things differently and to be “greener”	March 2024		LMT	↑	Revised cleaning methods, using ionised water have reduced the use of chemicals. A successful capital SPSF bid would see any implemented projects improve energy efficiency at Atherstone leisure Complex
Connecting with Communities	Actively consult, engage and seek feedback to understand what	Continue to ask questions and gain feedback on current and future services throughout the year. To feedback to the Board regularly about surveys,	March 2024	Provision made within the	OO	↑	Surveys have reviewed all of the service through the year,

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
Continue to be outward looking and community focused	communities want and to shape current and future services	forums, mystery visits and reviewing verbal and written feedback Generate a Net Promoter Score (NPS) for each facility and the service as a feasible measure of performance	Revised to March 2024	revenue budget Identify within the review	OO	↑	providing feedback to inform operational improvements The overall net promoter score this year was 28, which is above the industry benchmark of 25. The score will be used to benchmark the service through 2024 / 25
	Focus on delivering services tailored to the wants and needs of the community	Collaborate with community groups and other appropriate partners to ensure the development and delivery of internal and external services, events and community projects. To report to the Board at each meeting	Ongoing until March 2024	Provision made within the revenue budget	SAEO / SSRO	↑	The facilities have successfully worked with groups to introduce new services (e.g. diabetes awareness courses and the Memory Café) and events (e.g. Job Fayres, health outreach, Santa's Grotto and stalls etc)
Positive Experiences for the community, with a particular focus on: - Children and Young People - Active Ageing - Disabled, Disadvantaged and Special Education	Optimise opportunities for the community, with a particular focus on services for children and young people to be more physically active	Holiday Activities Continue to offer holiday activities through the year (and where possible increase the quality and diversity of the programme). To achieve attendances at or above that in 2022/23	February 2024	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	OO	↑	Activities have been delivered during each of the school holidays through the year, with attendances exceeding 2022 / 23 performance levels
		Parties Optimise party sales to achieve sales and participation levels at or above that in 2022/23	March 2024		OO	↑	Party sales have improved in performance versus 2022 / 23 at both Atherstone and Coleshill, which has increased income receipts. Coleshill has had to sell additional parties in school holidays to cater for demand
		To complete a party review and shape a plan to consider how to improve the quality, choice and packages on offer for achieving this	October 2023	Provision made within the	OO	↑	Following a review of the service, small changes were identified and have been included in 2024 / 25 plans,

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
Special Needs (SEND)		<p align="center">Schools</p> <p>To improve the performance of the school swimming service back to that of 2019/20 (48-50 taught sessions per week)</p>	March 2024	revenue budget process	OO	↑	around improving equipment, and developing more party-based resources for hirers. This year, the leisure team was able to engage with and grow schools sessions back to 50, which will give the service a positive start to 2024 / 25
		Network with schools to understand if / how Leisure Services could offer more to support the curriculum / health and wellbeing / positive experiences for children and young people	February 2024		OO	↓	Detailed consultation with schools to complete a needs assessment has not taken place. The task will however be carried forward to complete in 2024 / 25
		Deliver work experience schemes	July 2023		OO	↑	Work experience took place in the week commencing 10 July 2023
		Explore opportunities to develop apprenticeships and volunteer experiences that may lead to employment	December 2023		OO	→	Having identified opportunities to offer volunteer, training and apprenticeship experiences, the service is involved in a Warwickshire skills development network, and plans to create more opportunities to start a career in leisure throughout 2024 / 25
		<p align="center">Sports and Coaching</p> <p>Optimise the number of junior coached and activity sessions hosted within the facilities, both through increasing the in-house offering and recruiting new groups (restore previous and create new opportunities)</p>	March 2024		LMT	↑	Delivery of gymnastics has seen small increases at both Coleshill and Polesworth. External opportunities have also increased through more coached dance, cheerleading and martial arts at Coleshill Leisure Centre

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	Continue to improve the service offering for the “active ageing” populations within in North Warwickshire	<p style="text-align: center;">Swimming</p> <p>Continue to enhance the number of swimmers on the Learn to Swim scheme, versus 2022 / 23</p>	March 2024		OO	↓	As a result of staff turn-over, swimming lesson numbers have reduced this year from averaging 800 in 2022 / 23 to a forecast 715 in 2023 / 24. The team has since stabilised staffing and have plans to further strengthen structures to build resilience and grow the programme beyond that of 2022 / 23
		Continue to review the pool timetable and make positive changes to optimise attendances, income and best accommodate the diverse needs of the community	March 2024		OO	↑	The team has made changes through the year, including to introduce more inclusive swim lessons in the day, and to embed changes made earlier in the year, like music swim and budget swim within the programme
		<p style="text-align: center;">Health and Fitness</p> <p>Network with schools and communities to increase awareness of junior fitness services, with the aim to increase junior membership sales</p>	March 2024		SSRO	↑	Separate schemes at both Coleshill School and TQEA continue to run to increase junior usage of health and fitness services
		Engage with more community groups to understand their needs. With this information, continue to develop and deliver services that will enhance service quality, increase provision and improve awareness of what is available in the community	December 2023		OO	↑	The team has introduced health checks, adult swim lesson provision and the hosting of the Memory Café, adding to the current walking sports, bowls, tea-dance, class timetable and other general activities available. More community engagement, however, needs

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	Continue to improve the service offering for disabled, disadvantaged and Special Educational Needs (SEN) populations of North Warwickshire	Engage with more community groups to understand their needs. With this information, continue to develop and deliver services that will enhance service quality, increase provision and improve awareness of what is available in the community Secure funding for; and deliver services in the community around tackling inequalities, to ensure a more diverse and inclusive service offer	December 2023		OO LMT	↑ ↑	to be planned through 2024 / 25 to continue progress The team has linked with groups to assess and provide feedback on the service, staff have received funded training in Autism Awareness in March, engaged with schools to include work experience opportunities at Coleshill in 2024 / 25 and scheduled the introduction of more diverse swimming lessons provision and activities to launch early in 2024/25 also Having completed training and community engagement, development of a service offer to better accommodate disability and neurodiversity is a key focus for 2024 / 25
Connecting with Health and Wellbeing	To increase awareness of the importance of health and wellbeing within the community	Report to the Health and Wellbeing Working Party (H&WWP) on the Leisure Facilities-related actions within the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Deliver Health and Wellbeing events and campaigns throughout the year, joining up working with other groups and organisations where possible and linking to charities to enhance the impact where appropriate.	Ongoing March 2024	Provision made within the revenue budget process	LFM SEAO / SSRO	↑ ↑	Leisure Facilities continues to attend and contribute to the work of the H&WWP The service has delivered various engagement activities and promotional activity for health awareness days within facilities; delivered outreach health checks and linked with colleges and companies to deliver job fayres through the year. With the new blood testing function, the ability to

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	To further develop the choice of health and wellbeing services to strive to improve physical and mental wellbeing within the community	Working with Everyone Health, social prescribers and other stakeholders, to increase the capacity and options available on the referral scheme and through social prescription into services	Ongoing		SSRO	↑	deliver a more unique outreach service through 2024 / 25 will be taken to businesses and communities Exercise referral pathways continue to be offered across the facilities. With the health and fitness service starting to take a 'health' focus, service delivery will continue through 2024 / 25
Working with corporate and local businesses, create a "Workplace Wellbeing" pack and service offering, targeting corporate and local / high street businesses		November 2023		SSRO	↓	Although the November timescale was not delivered, the health check development will be a key part of a workplace wellbeing offer. The task will carry forward to take to businesses in 2024 / 25	
Following Mental Health First Aid Training, to embed processes within the service that will optimise the benefit to public and staff		July 2023		LFM	↑	Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) have been included on staff notice boards, along with information about MHFA	
Periodically gain feedback on the impact existing and new services are having on the physical and mental wellbeing of the community and thereafter to improve the focus and impact of the service offer		March 2024		OO	↑	Survey results have provided inspiring examples of how the service has helped people with their wellbeing	
Active Environments	Continue to network and increase opportunities to improve health and wellbeing in alternative environments	To work with groups and organisations to improve participation opportunities delivered externally in alternative environments	October 2022	To identify within the review process	LMT	↑	The service has linked with Mini Bikers to offer bike-ability; delivered outreach health check; attended job fayres; schools; worked with various community groups to deliver activities; and shared funding

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		To work with Community Development to promote active travel, increase opportunities and awareness of opportunities to walk, cycle and run	November 2022		LMT	↑	opportunities externally with groups, to benefit opportunities in alternative environments Leisure Facilities, Community Development and Planning have consulted with the County Council on its plans around cycling, walking and running in Northern Warwickshire
	To explore digital technology in supporting service delivery	To scope digital and technological opportunities that will enhance the service offering and reduce barriers to participation (cost, time, access, other)	March 2024	To identify within the review process	LFM	↑	The service has delivered an updated website, in line with corporate upgrades to systems. The team updated the App and its functionality in line with the web changes With the support of the H&WWP, Leisure Facilities has purchased advanced health testing scales to introduce into the service The team continues to explore the cost-benefit of a number of other technologies, including: CRM and member retention technology; sales management and social value software
Health and Fitness	Improve the quality of the health and fitness service across the facilities, focusing on re-engaging members, improving retention, increasing sales and	Embed the 'Member Journey' for health and fitness customers across Leisure Facilities, including health testing scales and, if successful, blood testing.	August 2023	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	SSRO	↑	Where health testing scales have successfully been implemented, blood testing for health is currently being developed to introduce later this financial year

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	providing a positive customer experience	<p>Ensure the delivery of health and fitness marketing campaigns throughout the year to achieve sales targets</p> <p>Deliver regular member engagements, incentives and service developments to optimise retention</p> <p>Review the group exercise programme to ensure occupancy levels are proactively managed</p> <p>Review the opportunity for funding and cost / benefit of reporting, CRM and sales management software</p>	<p>Ongoing until March 2024</p> <p>Ongoing until March 2024</p> <p>Ongoing until March 2024</p> <p>October 2023</p>		<p>SSRO / LFM</p> <p>SSRO</p> <p>SSRO</p> <p>SSRO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p> <p>↑</p> <p>→</p>	<p>A successful campaign through January and February achieved 330 membership sales, which exceeded the 2023 performance of 300</p> <p>Leisure Facilities continues to offer gym challenges; members of the month; deliver quarterly class launch events and offer engagement and awareness activities</p> <p>Group exercise classes are reviewed regularly. They are currently performing very well across sites. Changes are made quarterly to optimise performance and align with customer demand. A new Les Mill Class programme is being delivered every quarter</p> <p>Moving Communities reporting was introduced from October 2023. Meetings have taken place with three companies to assess the benefits of CRM and sales reporting. Business plans and funding are currently being scoped</p>
Health and Safety / Operations	To ensure appropriate levels of skilled staff are available to maintain service	Ensure staffing levels and development opportunities are appropriately managed throughout the year	Ongoing until March 2024	Divisional and Corporate Training Budget	OO	↑	Recruitment and selection takes place throughout the year as required

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	<p>To ensure all staff are engaged and have a clear role in maintaining service</p> <p>Ensure health and safety is maintained at all times within Leisure Facilities</p>	<p>Ensure appraisals are completed and communication structures are maintained at all levels through the year</p> <p>Continue to review, update and improve facility health and safety. To feedback progress and outcomes of health and safety and building audits</p> <p>Continue to monitor and audit health and safety knowledge and compliance. To feedback training updates and spot check results to the Board</p> <p>Introduce a “staff recognition scheme” to recognise and reward high performance within teams</p>	<p>Ongoing until March 2024</p> <p>Ongoing until March 2024</p> <p>Ongoing until March 2024</p>		<p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>LFM</p> <p>SEAO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p> <p>↑</p> <p>↑</p>	<p>Appraisals are up-to-date</p> <p>Regular one to one sessions and team meetings continue to take place across sites</p> <p>Health and Safety review schedules are set across sites</p> <p>Teams meet regularly to ensure health and safety tasks are completed throughout the year</p> <p>Audits take place throughout the year to assess performance and identify improvements</p> <p>Spot checks take place throughout the year for various areas of health and safety to ensure adherence to procedures</p> <p>Recognition of achievements have been acknowledged for each month, including an award for the “Employee of the Month”</p>
Marketing and Promotion	<p>Ensure effective marketing to the public to optimise engagement and potential return on investment</p>	<p>Create an updated and proactive Marketing Plan, to include events scheduled throughout the year</p>	<p>April 2023</p>	<p>Provision made within the revenue budget Process</p>	<p>SEAO</p> <p>SE</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p>	<p>Planned marketing and promotional campaigns have been identified and delivered throughout the year and updated through the SIP / Board reports</p>

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		<p>To update the Board on campaigns and marketing activity throughout the year</p> <p>Optimise web and App engagements (at or above that of 2022 / 23) and increase social media followers and engagements</p> <p>Deliver internal and external leisure bulletins</p> <p>Re-brand and undertake appropriate marketing activity (Brand Book, web, socials, literature, signage and more)</p>	<p>Ongoing until March 2024</p> <p>Ongoing until March 2024</p> <p>May, August December, March</p> <p>July 2023</p>		<p>SEAO</p> <p>SEAO</p> <p>SEAO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↓</p> <p>→</p>	<p>A successful “New Year” offer operated in January / February. 2024</p> <p>Combined leisure website and App performance remains comparable with that of 2022 / 23</p> <p>Bulletins have not been delivered through the year. The service will be required to celebrate its success better through 2024 / 25</p> <p>Re-design of publicity material was created in line with the launch of the website. External companies have been consulted about the process for the delivery and embedding of a successful re-brand. The service is yet to seek approval for and complete a re-branding exercise for the service</p>
Monitoring, Review and Evaluation	Report on performance against the actions identified in this Service Improvement Plan to each meeting of the C&E Board		Every Community and Environment Board		D / LFM	↑	SIP progress reports are presented to each meeting of the C&E Board

North Warwickshire Leisure Facilities

Service Improvement Plan - April 2024 to March 2025

Aim: To improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Borough Council's Leisure Facilities

Responsible Officers Key:

- D: Director
- LFM: Leisure Facilities Manager
- SSRO: Service, Sales and Retention Officer
- SAEO: Sports, Activities and Events Officer
- OO: Operations Officer(s)
- LMT: All of the above

Last Updated: 01 March 2024

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
1. Recover and Reinvent Optimising the opportunity for communities to live an active lifestyle Continue to re-invent to be relevant to evolving community needs	A. Collaborate with communities and improve opportunities to be active	Update the Board regularly on new or adapted service change and its community benefits Update the Board on service progress on 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) action plan'	Ongoing Ongoing	To identify within the review process	OO LMT		
	B. Maintain awareness of, and adapt to, cost of living pressures	Review fees, charges and packages and ensure the service delivers better information to the public to support cost of living pressures	Jan 2025		LMT		
	C. Optimise the use of space across facilities	Deliver identified projects that better utilise space and improve service within facilities	March 2025		LMT		
	D. Strive to deliver a "greener" service	Throughout the year, update the Board on 'Climate Change Action Plan' progress	Ongoing		LMT		
	E. Re-brand to enhance service awareness and uptake	Seek approval for brand change, embed within facilities and promote within communities	Jan 2025		LMT		
2. Connecting with Communities Continue to be outward looking and community focused	A. Actively consult, engage and seek feedback to understand what communities want and shape current and future services	Gain regular feedback on current and future services and update the Board on how the service has adapted to improve Benchmark all key services using the Net Promoter Score throughout the year	March 2025 March 2025	Provision made within the revenue budget	OO OO		
	B. Focus on delivering services tailored to the wants and needs of the community	Collaborate with community groups and other appropriate partners to ensure the development and delivery of internal and external services, events and community projects. To report to each meeting of the Board	Ongoing until March 2025		SAEO / SSRO		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
<p>3.</p> <p>Positive Experiences for the community, with a particular focus on:</p> <p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Active Ageing</p>	<p>A. Optimise opportunities for the community, with a particular focus on services for children and young people to be more physically active</p>	<p>Offer holiday activities through the year and achieve attendances comparable to 2023 / 24 performance.</p> <p>Optimise party sales to achieve that of 2023 / 24</p> <p>Maintain school swimming taught lessons at 48+ per week and improve annual total attendances versus 2023 / 24 performance</p> <p>Network with schools to understand how Leisure Services could offer more to support the curriculum, and the wellbeing of children and young people</p> <p>Deliver work experience schemes and explore opportunities to develop apprenticeships and volunteer experiences leading to employment</p> <p>Optimise both delivered and hosted coached sports and activity services within facilities</p> <p>Continue to enhance the number of swimmers on the Learn to Swim scheme, versus 2022 / 23 (800 avg)</p> <p>Ensure the pool timetable is regularly reviewed to optimise attendances, income and best accommodate the diverse needs of the community</p> <p>Network with schools to optimise junior fitness services and maintain junior membership sales</p>	<p>Feb 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>Feb 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Provision made within the revenue budget Process</p>	<p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>LMT</p> <p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>SSRO</p>		
	<p>B. Continue to optimise “active ageing” services</p>	<p>Optimise choice and attendance, through maintaining existing and delivering new services, and report to Board on progress throughout the year</p>					

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
Disadvantaged and SEND population	C. Improve the service offering within the Borough	Optimise choice and attendance, through maintaining existing and delivering new services, and report to board on progress throughout the year	March 2025		OO		
4. Connecting with Health and Wellbeing	A. To increase awareness of the importance of health and wellbeing within the community	Report to the Health and Wellbeing Working Party (H&WWP) on the Leisure Facilities-related actions within the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Deliver Health and Wellbeing activity, both individually and in collaboration with communities and report to Board throughout the year.	Ongoing Ongoing	Provision made within the revenue budget process	LFM		
	B. To further develop the choice of health and wellbeing services to strive to improve physical and mental wellbeing within the community.	To optimise referrals, social prescribers and scheme performance. To report to Board on progress throughout the year Deliver "Workplace Wellbeing" outreach services and build stronger relationships within local communities and businesses	Ongoing September 2024		SSRO SSRO		
		Continue to ensure Mental Health First Aiders support service staff and the public	Ongoing		LFM		
Active Environments	A. Improve participation opportunities in alternative environments	To work with groups and organisations to improve participation opportunities delivered externally in alternative environments	October 2024	To identify within the review process	LMT		
	B. To explore digital technology in supporting service delivery	To scope digital and technological opportunities that will enhance the service offering and reduce barriers to participation (cost, time, access, other)	March 2025		LMT		
Health and Fitness	A. Improve the quality of the health and fitness service across the facilities, focusing on re-engaging members, improving retention, increasing sales and	Continue to improve the 'Member Journey' and strengthen the 'Health' position within the market Deliver health and fitness marketing campaigns throughout the year to achieve sales targets	August 2024 Ongoing until March 2025 Ongoing until March 2025	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	SSRO SSRO		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	providing a positive customer experience	Deliver regular member engagements, incentives and service developments to optimise retention Review the group exercise programme to ensure occupancy levels are proactively managed	Ongoing until March 2025		SSRO SSRO		
Health and Safety / Operations	A. Ensure appropriate staff to maintain service	Ensure staffing levels and development opportunities are appropriately managed throughout the year	Ongoing until March 2025	Divisional and Corporate Training Budget	OO		
	B. Ensure staffing resource is motivated and optimised	Ensure appraisals are completed and communication structures are maintained at all levels through the year	Ongoing until March 2025		OO		
		Ensure staff achievement is celebrated throughout the year	Ongoing until March 2025		SEAO		
	C. Ensure health and safety (H&S) is maintained at all times within Facilities	Continue to review, update and improve facilities H&S. To feedback progress at each Board meeting	Ongoing until March 2025		OO		
		Continue to monitor and audit H&S knowledge and compliance. To feedback progress at each Board meeting	Ongoing until March 2025		LFM		
Marketing and Promotion	A. Ensure effective marketing to the public to optimise engagement and potential return on investment	Create an updated and proactive Marketing Plan, to include events scheduled throughout the year	April 2024	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	SEAO		
		To update the Board on campaigns and marketing activity throughout the year	Ongoing until March 2025		SEAO		
		Achieve web and App engagements at or above that of 2023 / 24 and increase social media performance	Ongoing until March 2025		SEAO		
		Update communities on our activity throughout the year, using web, social and other medial and update the Board on engagements throughout the year	Ongoing until March 2025		SEAO		
Monitoring, Review and Evaluation	Report on performance against the actions identified in this Service		Every Community and		D / LFM		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	Improvement Plan to each meeting of the C&E Board		Environment Board				

Agenda Item No 7

Community and Environment Board

25 March 2024

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Atherstone Leisure Complex

1 Summary

This report outline appraises, and seeks the Board's views on, current leisure services provision at Atherstone Leisure Complex.

Recommendation to the Board

That the Board notes and comments upon the current position in respect of leisure services provision at Atherstone Leisure Complex.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Councillors, including Ward Members, and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 Atherstone Leisure Complex was built in 1975. Its facilities comprise a 25 metre, four lane swimming pool, teaching pool, 45 station fitness suite and free weights area, with fitness and cycling classes and associated service programmes taking place in the adjacent Memorial Hall, which was built in 1962. Both facilities are served by an 80 spaces car park. The Leisure Complex building benefitted from an extensive National Lottery funded refurbishment in 2000 / 2001, after which it re-opened to the public in 2002. Nevertheless, both the Leisure Complex and the Memorial Hall are beyond their originally anticipated lifespan.

4 Leisure Facilities Strategy (2017 to 2031)

- 4.1 In January 2016, the Community and Environment Board approved the commissioning of an overarching review of leisure provision in North Warwickshire, including its leisure facilities. One of the objectives of the commission was to prepare a detailed Leisure Facilities Strategy, which addressed the needs for indoor leisure provision and provided evidence to inform future investment decisions.
- 4.2 The Leisure Facilities Strategy was prepared in accordance with guidance from Sport England. In addition to Facility Planning Model data provided by Sport England, the Strategy consultants took account of a number of factors in

drawing their recommendations about how best to plan future facility provision, including:

- The need to provide for increased demand as a result of population growth
- The need to consider how best to replace ageing facilities, which, relatively, are of poor quality and operationally inefficient

4.3 Within the Strategy, the consultants assert a clear need for the Borough Council to plan for the replacement of / investment in a number of leisure facilities due to their age. All Members will be aware of the Borough Council's response, not least those provisions made at the meeting of Full Council held on 21 February 2024. More specifically, however, the Strategy includes recommendations to:

- Prioritise investment into additional swimming pool provision
- Consider the long-term benefits of replacing Atherstone Leisure Complex
- Close Atherstone Memorial Hall at a time that is most appropriate in the context of the operation of the whole Leisure Complex

4.4 The adopted Leisure Facilities Strategy, however, did not go so far as to identify a clear pathway through which to determine the most appropriate and cost-effective means by which to meet current and future demand for indoor leisure provision in the Borough.

5 **Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (November 2020)**

5.1 As previously reported, in response, in March 2020, the Community and Environment Board approved the engagement of an external consultant to undertake a Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) exercise, through which the most appropriate long-term, sustainable portfolio of leisure facilities would be identified.

5.2 Further to a detailed strategic review process (albeit undertaken during the Coronavirus pandemic), the Planning Model exercise concluded that the most sustainable means by which to meet long-term need in Atherstone (and for swimming across the Borough) was to provide a new Leisure Complex, co-located with health and library services, within the current town centre location. The proposed leisure facility mix included the following:

- Six lane, 25 metre, swimming pool
- Teaching pool
- 80 to 100 station fitness suite
- Group exercise / spin / multi-purpose studios
- Clip n climb
- Soft play

- Café

6 Current Position

- 6.1 In response to the outcome of the SOPM exercise, the Borough Council has submitted two bids to the Government for Levelling Up Fund (LUF) support to develop a new leisure facility in Atherstone. The second (August 2022) submission proposed to invest over £20 million to create a new health and wellbeing activity hub on the site of the existing Leisure Complex. Both bids for financial support were unsuccessful.
- 6.2 In the absence of any indication of further sources of financial support, at the meeting of Full Council held last month, the Borough Council reaffirmed its commitment to deliver a new leisure facility in Atherstone, for which £3 million has currently been provided in the capital programme. An additional sum of £750,000 has been provided to support the cost of establishing a proposal to provide a new facility. Management Team is currently working on the development of an associated project plan, which will be reported to Members in due course.
- 6.3 In the meantime, and as Members are aware, the condition of Atherstone Leisure Complex continues to be a cause for concern. There is a risk of mechanical and electrical plant failure, which could result in partial or complete closure of the building. A high-level Lifecycle Analysis / Condition Survey of Atherstone Leisure Complex has been undertaken by external Facilities Management consultants. The consultants have produced a schedule of works, which, if undertaken, would reduce (but not eliminate) the risk of mechanical and / or electrical plant failure at the facility over the next three years. The schedule includes works to the building management system (BMS), plate heat exchangers, air handling units, heat pumps and pipework, but does not include the need to replace the boilers or improve the roof, upon which a lot of heavy plant is located and the condition of which has not yet been the subject of detailed investigation. Officers are currently engaged with external advisers on the planning and programming of the associated programme of works, including the means by which to minimise the disruption to customers. This work will be undertaken within existing budgetary provision.
- 6.4 Plant failures and short-term closures are recurring themes at the Leisure Complex. Carrying out the work referred to above provides no guarantee that the building will not experience further periods of closure, but it will reduce the associated risks.

7 Current Operation

- 7.1 In order to provide the Board with an overview of current performance at the Leisure Complex and the Memorial Hall, in respect of both usage and cost, the following table provides data that compares the position between 2019 / 20 (the last pre-pandemic year) with that recorded in 2022 / 23 (the last full financial year). For simplicity, the financial information details the net controllable expenditure position (it does not include costs that are outside the control of the service).

	ALC 2019/20 Actual	ALC 2022/23 Actual	MH 2019/20 Actual	MH 2022/23 Actual	Comment
Usage					
DD Members	754	684			Currently 820
Swim Visits	87,500	88,400			
Gym Visits	44,000	35,200			
Total Annual Visits	170,000	165,500	12,150	11,500	23 / 24 year end projection for ALC is 180,000 visits
Cost / Income					
Employees	593,589	573,244	95,088	89,150	
Premises	266,486	318,241	41,978	47,175	Impact of utilities costs
Supplies and Services	61,370	62,291	10,479	21,854	Equipment and Licences
Gross Expenditure	921,445	953,776	147,545	158,179	
Gross Income	(597,579)	(538,338)	(31,732)	(33,714)	
Net Controllable Expenditure	323,866	415,438	115,813	124,465	

- 7.2 At the end of the 2019 / 20 financial year, the last full operating year prior to the pandemic, the combined total net controllable cost of operating the Leisure Complex and Memorial Hall was £439,679. At the end of 2022 / 23, this cost had risen to £539,903, which was primarily a consequence of the cost of utilities, the pay award for staff in local government and the on-going, albeit reducing, impact on the leisure industry of the pandemic. In their consideration of this position, the Board's attention is drawn to the inextricable link between the two facilities, in that much of the activity undertaken within the Memorial Hall supports the membership base and income position at the Leisure Complex. Councillors are also reminded of the significance of the two facilities in their support of local health-related services, which include phlebotomy, physiotherapy, diabetic eye screening and blood donor services, as well as the Memory Café at the Memorial Hall.

- 7.3 Moving forward, despite the evidenced concern relating to the condition of both facilities, a better performance is expected at the Leisure Complex and Memorial Hall, as the process of operational recovery from the pandemic continues and opportunities are identified to enhance the service offer and operate more efficiently. This work will include an expansion of the swimming scheme (based upon advice received from Swim England) and a focus on the development of health and fitness services, with an anticipated growth in related membership numbers.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 Atherstone Leisure Complex is a strategically significant community facility. It is the largest publicly accessible leisure facility in North Warwickshire and incorporates the Borough's only "pay and play" swimming pool. Despite its age, visitor numbers are good and at certain peak times it operates at 100% capacity. The reliability of the mechanical and electrical plant, however, is a cause for concern and attempts to source the funding with which to provide a new centre have not been successful. Nevertheless, the Borough Council has recently reaffirmed its commitment to provide a new facility, in respect of which Senior Officers are developing an associated project plan. This plan will be reported to relevant Boards in due course.

9 Report Implications

9.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

- 9.1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly out of this report.

9.2 Safer Communities Implications

- 9.2.1 Leisure facilities contribute to community safety through the provision of well-managed indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation services that are safe by design and afford opportunities for positive activity.

9.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

- 9.3.1 There are no immediate legal, data protection or human rights implications arising directly out of this report.

9.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

- 9.4.1 The provision of a sustainable, fit-for-purpose portfolio of well managed leisure facilities has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities by providing opportunities for leisure and recreation activities and by contributing to an improved quality of life.

- 9.4.2 Atherstone leisure centre has the highest gas usage of the Council's buildings with significantly higher carbon emissions than other assets. For the Council to achieve the target of net-zero by 2030 this gas usage must be minimised. Replacement of gas boilers with efficient electrical systems at Atherstone could have the single greatest impact on the Council's entire emissions.

9.5 Human Resources Implications

9.5.1 There are no human resources implications arising out of this report.

9.6 Risk Management Implications

9.6.1 The corporate risk management process identifies and scores risks associated with the provision, management and maintenance of leisure facilities. This process helps to ensure that informed decisions can be made in respect of the most appropriate means by which to sustainably meet and manage the leisure-related needs of the local community.

9.7 Equality Implications

9.7.1 It is intended that the provision, management and operation of the Authority's Leisure Facilities service ensure continued equality of access to sustainable, good quality leisure opportunities.

9.8 Links to Council's Priorities

9.8.1 The provision of a leisure facilities service in Atherstone has direct and positive links to the corporate priorities in respect of:

- Safe, liveable and locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

9.8.2 It is also intended that the provision, management and operation of the Borough Council's Leisure Facilities service contribute directly to the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy, namely:

- Raising aspirations, educational attainment and skill levels
- Developing healthier communities
- Improving access to services

The Contact Officers for this report are Simon Powell (719352) and Russell Simkiss (719257)

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1			

Agenda Item No 8

Community and Environment Board

25 March 2024

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies - Progress Report

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the progress made in respect of delivery against the priorities set out in the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) and the recently revised and adopted Playing Pitch Strategy (2024 to 2031).

Recommendation to the Board

That Members note and comment upon the progress made in respect of the implementation of the priorities of the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) and the Playing Pitch Strategy (2024 to 2031).

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 As Members are aware, the Board formally adopted the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) at its meeting held in January 2020. The recently reviewed and revised Playing Pitch Strategy was adopted by the Board at its meeting held in January 2024. This report provides an update on progress in respect of delivery against the priorities identified in both documents.

4 Service Priorities

4.1 Improvement, Maintenance and Cleanliness

Atherstone Sports Club

- 4.1.1 Members are aware that, in November 2021, the Resources Board granted permission for Atherstone Sports Club to enter into a long-term (30 years) lease in respect of its management, development, maintenance and use of

part of Royal Meadow Drive Recreation Ground. Further to its production of a complementary Site Development Plan, the content of the lease has now been agreed with Atherstone Sports Club and the legal representatives of both parties. The timing of the formal signing of the lease is a matter that has the potential to affect future applications for external funding support, as a consequence of which the Sports Club and the Borough Council will jointly consider the most appropriate point at which to formalise the lease arrangement.

- 4.1.2 The Sports Club and its constituent member clubs have been working extremely hard on the production of the aforementioned Site Development Plan, as well as the business plans that will frame the growth of the proposed community sports hub. The Sports Club has undertaken a detailed assessment of its playing pitch requirements and surveyed the fitness for purpose of its ancillary accommodation. Additionally, it has been working on the planning application that will support the intended construction of a floodlit, fenced artificial grass pitch, soft landscaping and improved access and parking arrangements at the Recreation Ground. A flood risk assessment and topographical survey have been commissioned to support the planning process. An associated Funding Plan and a Marketing and Communication Strategy are also being developed.
- 4.1.3 The Football Foundation has initiated early site survey work at the Recreation Ground, which is an important stage in the development of a funding application to advance plans to develop a high quality multi-sports hub at Royal Meadow Drive.

Boot Hill Recreation Ground, Grendon

- 4.1.4 The Board is aware that the football pitch at Boot Hill Recreation Ground, Grendon, has been completely renovated. It is now one of the best pitches in the region. In furtherance of needs identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy, Grendon Football Club, with which the Borough Council has agreed to enter into a Tenancy at Will, has been very proactive in encouraging and managing appropriate use of the Recreation Ground, alongside the informal access that remains for the local community.
- 4.1.5 The Board has previously been informed that the only affordable means by which to address the need for ancillary accommodation on the site was to address the subsidence and repair the existing brick-built pavilion. This highly specialised work required a complicated “raft” solution, which was completed last autumn. Settlement was expected following the structural repairs, but the anticipated movement has been more than expected. The commissioned structural engineer has inspected the pavilion and the work undertaken to the building slab appears to have been successful. The evident cracking on the building does not appear to be a consequence of the “raft” work. A report and repair strategy is awaited, however, subsequent to which further remedial work will be undertaken. In the meantime, the Authority is continuing to work with the Football Club to reinstate the internal changing accommodation.

4.1.6 In view of the popularity of the site, there is a growing understanding that there may be a need to address car parking issues associated with use of the Recreation Ground. Section 106 receipts are held, however, that can only be used at the site, which provides a possible route through which to address this need without any impact on the Borough Council's capital or revenue budgets. This matter is considered within a separate report on the agenda.

Ansley Workshops, Ansley

4.1.7 Further to its receipt of a corresponding report at its meeting held in August 2023, the Board is aware of the Borough Council and Haunchwood Sports Junior Football Club's successful application for inclusion within the national Home Advantage Programme, through which the Football Association and the Football Foundation are supporting a small number of local football clubs to take on long-term leases on the sites at which they play. Through the Programme, 100% grants of up to £250,000 are potentially available to help clubs improve their "home" grounds.

4.1.8 Further to learning of the outcome of the application, Officers have been meeting regularly with representatives from all stakeholders and agreement has recently been reached on the content of a Project Plan that will support the development of the scheme at Ansley Workshops Sports Ground. The Project Plan includes the need to progress the development of a set of Heads of Terms, to establish and agree the associated project development costs and the need to agree the terms of the required 25 year lease before November 2024. The terms of the lease will obviously require the consideration of this Board and, in due course, formal approval by the Resources Board.

4.1.9 The Home Advantage Programme represents one of very few genuine opportunities through which a step change enhancement could be made to an Authority-owned sports pitch asset. Haunchwood Sports is a very progressive community sector sports organisation, which has been working hard to develop its capacity and sustainability, which will be necessary to ensure the successful local delivery of the Home Advantage undertaking. In this regard, the Board will be kept informed of related developments, which are consistent with the priorities of the recently adopted North Warwickshire Playing Pitch Strategy.

4.2 Safety and Security

4.2.1 Through the use of Safer Streets funding, and in order to address the issues associated with access by nuisance motorised bikes, K Barriers are being installed to improve security at the following sites:

- Church Lane, Kingsbury
- Brett's Hall Recreation Ground, Ansley Common
- Mancetter Recreation Ground

4.2.2 To support community safety-related partnership work, colleagues from Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and Warwickshire Police have committed to producing Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs) on twenty green spaces across the Borough. The sites have been chosen based on their priority in relation to “Levelling Up” and the data contained within the Community Safety and ASB Dashboards. The EVAs use the ten principles of crime prevention to give recommendations to reduce associated risks:

- Target hardening
- Target removal
- Reducing the means
- Reducing the payoff
- Access control
- Surveillance
- Environmental change
- Rule setting
- Increase the chances of being caught
- Deflecting offenders

4.2.3 The EVAs will be used to assist in the allocation of any future funding for target hardening and improvement work at the sites concerned.

4.3 **Tree Management**

4.3.1 Whilst the Green Space Officer (Trees) is responsible for the provision of a professional arboricultural service in respect of the Authority’s tree stock, Members are aware that this post has been vacant for over three years. As previously reported, inspections and the associated reactive works are currently being completed, very satisfactorily, by arboriculturists at Warwickshire County Council.

4.3.2 Since April 2023, work has been instructed on 43 different sites and to 142 trees, 22 of which have had to be felled. In all cases, the trees were classified as being “dead, dying or dangerous”. In these cases, the trees were deemed to be causing a structural issue with property and / or boundary walls or providing some other form of significant obstruction for the local community.

4.3.3 Members will be aware of the Borough Council’s successful joint application with WCC to the Coronation Living Heritage Fund, which supports the planting of community orchards in celebration of the King’s Coronation last year. To date, WCC has received three applications for planting at sites within North Warwickshire (Austrey, Warton and Water Orton). The site in Orchard Close, Austrey, has been approved for planting.

4.4 **Biodiversity and Climate Change**

4.4.1 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is an approach to development and / or land management, which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was before any development took place. Through the

Environment Act 2021, local authorities are required to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity and they will need to agree policies and plans that enable them to exercise this duty. It is anticipated that the new Green Space Strategy will support this process from a land ownership perspective.

4.4.2 From 12 February 2024, all major planning applications need to show a biodiversity net gain of 10%. Minor applications will need to show this level of benefit from April 2024.

4.4.3 The Forward Planning Team is currently consulting on a range of associated documents, as well as making a “call for sites”. In the past, a call for sites has focussed on development sites, but this year sites that could be used for nature are also being requested. The deadline for sites to be submitted is 09 May 2024.

4.4.4 The current Green Space Strategy sets out a number of priorities in respect of the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity through habitat creation and management, to which the Local Nature Reserves Project is making a significant contribution. The four local reserves are managed through an agreement with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. A report on related work is provide at Appendix A.

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4.5 **Children and Young People**

4.5.1 The Green Space Strategy recognises the vital role of open space in helping children and young people to develop skills through play and social interaction and it commits the Authority to supporting the development of a strategic network of play facilities across the Borough. The Play Area Development Programme has enabled the Authority to meet this commitment through the delivery of an associated action plan.

4.5.2 Members will be aware that, through the Play Area Development Programme, the following sites have been developed / refurbished since 2021:

- Holly Bank, Austrey
- Cole End Park, Coleshill
- Piccadilly
- Corley
- Hurley
- Abbey Green Park, Polesworth
- Wood End
- Kitwood Avenue, Dordon
- Brook Walk, Mancetter
- Brett’s Hall Pump Track, Ansley Common

4.5.3 The next sites to be developed through the Programme (in 2024) are those located at Royal Meadow Drive Recreation Ground, Atherstone, and Baxterley Recreation Ground

5 Area Priorities

Arley and Whitacre

- 5.1 For health and safety reasons, the skate provision at Old Arley Recreation Ground has been removed. Consultation with Ward Members and the local community has taken place and new equipment, which primarily provides opportunities for younger children, will be installed in the coming weeks.

Baddesley Ensor and Grendon

- 5.2 In addition to scheduled improvement works to the play area taking place this year, Rural England Prosperity Funding is being used to install a path to improve access from the entrance to the play equipment. The path will lead to a wheelchair-friendly picnic bench and a wheelchair accessible roundabout.

Coleshill

- 5.3 The improvements to the steps leading down to Cole End Park from the A446 / Stonebridge Road have now been completed. A replacement noticeboard has also been installed in the Park.
- 5.4 Funding has been allocated through the Rural England Prosperity Fund to support improvements to the path that runs from the play area through Cole End Park Local Nature Reserve. The work, which will commence in the near future, will reinstate the surface of the path, which has become covered with moss, and will also reinstate the edging, making it wide enough for wheelchair users.

Curdworth, Hurley and Wood End

- 5.5 A K Barrier has been installed at Hurley Recreation Ground, at the entrance from Lime Grove, as recommended within the AccessAble accessibility review.

Hartshill

- 5.6 A K Barrier has also been installed at Grange Road Recreation Ground, Hartshill. Following the installation, it has become apparent that the slope leading up to the K Barrier is quite steep. Additional work, therefore, is being undertaken to create a more gradual incline up to the new K Barrier, which will improve access for pushchairs, wheelchairs and other mobility aids.

Polesworth and Dordon

- 5.7 For health and safety reasons, the "half pipe" at Abbey Green Park, Polesworth, has been removed. Consultation has taken place with Ward Members and the local community and a new half pipe, with additional parkour provision, will be installed as soon as the wet ground conditions improve.

- 5.8 Following an external inspection, the zip line at Long Street, Dordon, has had to be removed, further to which a replacement zip line was installed in November 2023. A replacement basket swing and wheelchair roundabout have also been installed at the site. Also in Dordon, two K Barriers have been installed at Kitwood Avenue Recreation Ground, in order to improve site access, as recommended in the accessibility review.
- 5.9 Members will be aware that, at the meeting of Full Council held in February 2024, provision was made for the installation of a pump track and associated facilities in Dordon. Work to progress this undertaking will begin in the near future and will involve consultation with Ward Members and the local community.

6 Review of the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies

- 6.1 As the Board is aware, the audit and assessment work for the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies was undertaken in 2017 / 18. Formal Sport England Guidance requires the supply and demand data for adopted Playing Pitch Strategies to be updated every three years. Similarly, the Green Space Strategy requires review in order to be kept up-to-date to meet National Planning Policy Framework, Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Document requirements. There was, therefore, a previously reported requirement for both documents to be reviewed and updated. A single external contractor was appointed to undertake the review of both Strategies.
- 6.2 Further to progression through a formal four (now five) stage process, the Board considered and formally adopted a revised Playing Pitch Strategy at its meeting held in January 2024. The Strategy has also been formally endorsed by Sport England and the relevant Governing Bodies of Sport.
- 6.3 The Borough Council has also taken receipt of an Open (Green) Space Assessment Report. This very long document focuses on the findings of research, site assessments, data analysis and GIS mapping and it provides detail about what provision exists in the Borough, its condition, distribution and overall quality. Further to a review process, it had been hoped to present a revised draft of the Green Space Strategy to this meeting of the Board. Unfortunately, the consultant has confirmed that, due to unforeseen circumstances, it will not be in a position to furnish the Authority with a revised document until the end of March. This is disappointing and Officers are in communication with the consultant in order to ensure that it meets this revised timetable.

7 Report Implications

7.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

- 7.1.1 The financial implications arising directly out of this report are identified within the Green Space Strategy Action and Funding Plan and within the Playing Pitch Strategy. The corresponding actions will be financed through approved

budgets, through external funding support and / or through developer contributions.

7.2 Safer Communities Implications

7.2.1 Projects advanced through the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies contribute to community safety by providing well-managed open space and recreation areas that afford opportunities for positive activity.

7.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

7.3.1 There are no legal, data protection or human rights implications arising directly out of this report. The proposed lease with Atherstone Sports Club, in respect of its use and development of Royal Meadow Drive Recreation Ground, has previously been considered by both this and the Executive Board. Similarly, the proposed lease with Haunchwood Sports Junior Football Club will be considered by relevant Boards in due course.

7.3.2 Receipts from Section 106 agreements must be spent in accordance with the agreements themselves, unless specifically agreed with the other parties to the agreement.

7.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

7.4.1 Delivery of priorities identified in the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies contributes directly to environmental improvements, enhancement of biodiversity and mitigation of the effects of climate change. It also helps to build sustainable and vibrant communities. It is anticipated that the revised draft Green Space Strategy, to be considered at a future meeting of this Board, will reflect issues associated with climate change and biodiversity net gain.

7.5 Human Resources Implications

7.5.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly out of this report.

7.6 Risk Management Implications

7.6.1 There are no direct risks consequent upon the services identified within this report. The activity that is included within the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies, however, will be risk assessed and appropriate controls put in place, where appropriate.

7.7 Equalities Implications

7.7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. The Authority's green spaces and playing pitches are provided for the benefit of the whole community and no group or individual defined by the protected characteristics under the Equality Act will be excluded therefrom. The work being undertaken in conjunction with AccessAble will lead to further improvement in

the accessibility of public spaces, as well as the quality of information available to the community about the accessibility of those sites.

7.8 Links to Council's Priorities

7.8.1 The North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies have direct and positive links to the following corporate priorities:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

7.8.2 Additionally, implementation of the provisions of the Strategies contributes directly to the attainment of the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Raise aspirations, education attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719346).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No.	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	North Warwickshire Borough Council	North Warwickshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031)	January 2019
2	North Warwickshire Borough Council	North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033)	January 2020
3	Director of Leisure and Community Development	Play Area Development Programme	January 2021
4	Chief Executive	Natural Environment, Including Biodiversity Net Gain	June 2023

5	Director of Leisure and Community Development	North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies Progress Report	October 2023
6	Director of Leisure and Community Development	North Warwickshire Green Playing Pitch Strategy	January 2024



Report on Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Support for Local Nature Reserves Management in North Warwickshire April 2022 to March 2023



Introduction

The following comprises a summary of works delivered over the last 11 months by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (“WWT”) in connection with Abbey Green Park, Cole End Park, Daffern’s Wood and Kingsbury Meadow Local Nature Reserves (“LNR”s). There is a remaining month in March 2023 where further works on sites are planned.

The principle aim of management is to maintain and enhance these high value sites and their habitats for wildlife – these primarily being woodland, grassland, wetland habitats and ruderal/scrub. This is achieved through practical delivery of management often utilising local volunteers and the communities that use the sites and building diversity for nature. It’s important to ensure the habitats maintain a good condition as this perpetuates structural and age diversity of the habitats that benefits a wide range of species from birds, mammals and invertebrates. Water is part of all four sites, and this is an essential facet for the wildlife that calls the sites home and is important to sustain. Of note, the spring and summer being the most important months for breeding for a host of wildlife, practical tasks are limited to maintenance, meadow management and invasive species control as detailed in the

management schedules with woodland management and tree planting undertaken during the autumn and winter as a rule.

Headlines

Over the period of reporting, there has been **a total of 89 individual incidences of volunteering** occurring at the sessions **across 4 sites on 18 sessions**.

The work achieved has been varied and detailed below, but cumulatively the time committed by the **volunteers equates to 396 hours**. **This can be represented as 56.57 days of volunteering input**.

Based on the £14.00 rate for volunteering value this totals and in-kind cash value of £5,110.00 for the period being reported on.

Summary of Activity:

Cole End Park:

The summer works of Himalayan Balsam pulling and maintenance of the newly planted tree whips and plug plants were completed in the correct season at Cole End Park. The grassland management was completed at the end of autumn and across winter coppicing of the woodland blocks and some additional tree planting was completed.



Tree planting at Cole End Park to increase tree species diversity and age structure which benefits more wildlife and the resilience of the woodland.



Balsam pulling at Cole End Park to reduce the impact of the invasive species on our native wildlife and reduce the spread in the water catchment

Abbey Green:

Balsam was also pulled before seeding in early summer and summer grassland management saw the 'top meadow' cut and raked by Trust staff and volunteers. Later in the year reed pulling occurred in the river back channels to stop it choking the water course and a new volunteer leader was trained who has been supported to successfully lead some sessions for local volunteers. This is a positive example of local people taking action and the Trust is appreciative of the recruitment of the volunteer and the input into the site. We look forward to being able to support that further across 2023/2024.



Maintaining the back water channels to retain open water and the right balance of reeds and open vegetation to benefit birds and invertebrates

Kingsbury Meadow:

A third of the sedge bed was cut, a proportion of the invasive bramble was cut back (see photos) along with other scrub and the drier grassland areas were started. As a bonus, the walking path on the south side of the brook received a cut back whilst there were brushcutters on site. Further work over the winter included more grassland and bramble patch management.

Of note, the sedge bed has increased its total extent due to the repeated yearly management and this important habitat is important to wetland species of invertebrates. The Hurley Brook project for woody debris to alleviate the flow and increase wetland habitat through more variety in the channel has been delayed due to the permitting requirements of the Environment Agency. This will be pursued and completed across 2023/24. Finally, the willow arches received some repairs in the winter months to further stabilise and maintain the living structures.



Grassland management at Kingsbury Meadow to maintain a diversity of wildflowers for pollinators



Sedge bed cutting at Kingsbury Meadow to retain the extent and condition of this important wetland habitat



Bramble control at Kingsbury Meadow to promote new growth and benefit butterflies and pollinators



Willow arch repairs at Kingsbury Meadow

Daffern's Wood:

Tasks for 2022/23 woodland management has been postponed and the resource of time allocated to other LNR's due to the delay with the management plan sign off and TPO consenting processes. Some low-level bramble clearance has occurred but there is a need

to consult with the local community about the future woodland plan and get this in place for the next 5-year period.

The school in New Arley will be visiting the site with the Trusts education team in March 2023 and will be taking wildlife inspiration back to improve their school grounds for wildlife on from the visit and supported by the Trust staff.

‘Woodland Wellbeing’ work parties led by colleagues have added value to our work and engaged local people at the Cole End Park and Daffern’s Wood. They have undertaken low key tasks on site such as path cut back and cleaning interpretation boards. Finally, a woodland wellbeing taster course was run in Daffern’s wood under our Team Project and further one was delivered in October 2022.



Bramble control at Daffern’s Wood to promote ground flora for a wider array of spring flowers and assist in natural regeneration of tree saplings

Volunteer Input

Below is a breakdown of the volunteer sessions and hours committed for the 11 months of this report to date (a complete report for the year will be submitted in April 2023).

Activity Name	Role/Site	Start Date	Vols	Sum of Hours	Sum of £ value	Comments
VOL Local Reserves Groups	LRG Abbey Green	29/01/2023	2	6	£84.00	Clearing reed mace
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Abbey Green	21/10/2022	5	25	£350.00	Reed pulling / grasslands / litter pick
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Abbey Green	24/10/2022	5	25	£350.00	Reed pulling/ Grasslands/ Litter Pick

VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Abbey Green	27/07/2022	7	35	£490.00	Grass raking
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Daffern's Wood	13/02/2023	6	30	£420.00	Bramble + Coppicing
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Daffern's Wood	21/11/2022	8	32	£448.00	Grassland Scrub Management
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Kingsbury Meadow	26/09/2022	3	15	£210.00	Sedge bed cutting / bramble cut
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Kingsbury Meadow	20/02/2023	3	15	£210.00	Wetland Scrub Management
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Kingsbury Meadow	23/01/2023	4	20	£280.00	Willow Arches/ Scrub/ Russian Vine
VOL PV TVW	Tame force - Kingsbury Meadow	15/11/2022	4	22	£308.00	Grassland Management
VOL PV TVW	Tame force - Cole End Park	12/04/2022	9	45	£630.00	Tree planting
VOL PV TVW	Tame force - Cole End Park	03/05/2022	9	45	£630.00	Install 2 x interpretation boards, balsam
VOL PV Wilder Wellbeing	WWB Cole End Park	27/04/2022	3	9	£42.00	Bird survey & invasive species management
VOL PV Wilder Wellbeing	WWB Cole End Park	23/06/2022	4	8	£28.00	Balsam management
VOL PV Wilder Wellbeing	WWB Cole End Park	03/08/2022	3	6	£28.00	Litter pick
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Cole End Park	12/08/2022	2	10	£140.00	Balsam / Trees weeding
VOL Nature Force / Friday Force	NF Cole End Park	07/11/2022	6	30	£420.00	Grassland management
VOL PV Wilder Wellbeing	WWB Cole End Park	21/09/2022	6	18	£42.00	Scrub management
		Total	89	396	£5,110.00	Match funding at £14 p/h

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Photo credits: WWT 2023

Agenda Item No 9

Community and Environment Board

25 March 2024

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Leisure-related Section 106 Receipts

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report asks the Board to consider and determine the use of a number of leisure-related Section 106 receipts held by the Borough Council.

Recommendation to the Board

- a) That the Board approves, or otherwise varies, the use of Section 106 receipts, as identified in section 4.1 of the Director of Leisure and Community Development's report.

Recommendation to the Executive Board

- b) That the Executive Board approves a supplementary estimate for up to £233,877 to be included within the capital programme for the proposed undertakings detailed in section 5.1.2 of the report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development, this will have no financial impact as the expenditure is matched by income from the Section 106.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 At its meeting held in October 2023, the Board was informed that the Borough Council is holding a number of Section 106 receipts for, amongst other things, open space-related undertakings. At that time, Members were reminded that the formal Agreements associated with these receipts are frequently very specific about where, upon what and by when the money can be used.
- 3.2 The following table detailed those receipts upon which the views of Members were sought in respect of their proposed use. The subsequent determinations of the Board are highlighted in the fourth column:

Parish	Sum (£)	Use by Date	Board Approved Use	Priority
Atherstone	152,582	September 2025	Agreed: £75,000 to support the development of play provision at RMD. Use of residual sum to be discussed with Ward Members*	Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies
Coleshill	13,260	April 2029	Tree planting and accessibility work in Cole End Park. Detail to be discussed with Ward Members**	Green Space Strategy
Grendon	20,000 + approx. 74,245	March 2026	Improvements at Boot Hill Recreation Ground and play area. Detail to be discussed with Ward Members***	Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies
Polesworth	44,963	November 2032	Agreed: Receipt to be used to enhance play provision in Abbey Green Park****	Green Space Strategy
Ridge Lane	17,412	None	Agreed: Improvements to the play area in Ridge Lane *****	Green Space Strategy

Notes:

* The use of the residual sum to be discussed with Ward Councillors

** Use determined by S106 Agreement

*** S106 receipt can only be used at Boot Hill Recreation Ground and play area

**** Use determined by S106 Agreement

***** Use determined by S106 Agreement. Spend to be undertaken in 2025 / 26, in line with the Play Area Development Program

4 Section 106 Receipts

4.1 At its meeting held last October, the Board instructed Officers to meet with relevant Ward Members in order to ascertain their priorities for the use of any leisure-related receipts held by the Authority. Accordingly, the following table details the outcomes of the meetings held with Ward Councillors, which were held during December 2023 and January 2024:

Parish	Sum (£)	Use by Date	Ward Member Priorities	Strategic Priority
Grendon	20,000 + 50,746*	March 2026	Boot Hill Pavilion Boot Hill Car Parking Boot Hill Play Area	Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies
Coleshill	6,695**	April 2029	Access Improvements in Cole End Park	Green Space Strategy
Polesworth	376,305 + 53,690 + 123,410	January 2027 January 2030 May 2031	Three sums to be held for possible use towards a new leisure / community facility in Polesworth	Leisure Facilities, Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies
Warton	41,442	February 2029	Upgrade Warton Recreation Ground	
Newton Regis	27,494	March 2030	Tennis Club Lighting and Facility Upgrade Children's Playground Equipment Outdoor Exercise Equipment Picnic Benches and Seating	
Atherstone	77,500	September 2025	Re-surface AGP at QE Academy (subject to clarification of Academy intentions) Green Pathways project	Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies

Notes:

* S106 receipt can only be used at Boot Hill Recreation Ground and play area

** Use determined by S106 Agreement

- 4.2 The Board is asked to consider and approve, or otherwise vary, the use of the listed Section 106 receipts in the manner proposed by Ward Members. Within this process, Councillors attention is drawn to the dates by which the receipts must be used. Further, the activity proposed to be undertaken in Warton and Newton Regis will require the involvement of the relevant parish councils and, in Atherstone, potentially The Queen Elizabeth Academy.

5 Report Implications

5.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

- 5.1.1 The proposed uses of the identified Section 106 receipts represent a cost effective way for the Borough Council to enhance and / or maintain service provision in accordance with the needs generated by residential development in North Warwickshire. They are also consistent with the Borough Council's adopted Sport, Recreation and Open Space Supplementary Planning Document.

- 5.1.2 The proposed works required in Grendon, Coleshill, Warton, Newton Regis and possibly Atherstone will need a supplementary estimate in the sum of up to £223,877 to be added into the Authority's capital programme, this will have no financial impact as the expenditure is matched by income from the Section 106 receipts.

5.2 Safer Communities Implications

- 5.2.1 Projects advanced through the use of Section 106 receipts contribute to community safety by providing well-managed recreation facilities and open spaces that afford opportunities for positive activity.

5.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3.1 Section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act (as amended) allows Local Planning Authorities to require developers to enter into Legal Agreements to provide measures to mitigate the impact of their development. These Agreements are known as Section 106 Agreements. The measures contained within them either require the developer to deliver on-site mitigation (for example provide a proportion of affordable housing, or connect to a district heating network), or to make a financial contribution to enable the Council to provide appropriate mitigating measures (for example an improved bus stop, or off-site tree planting).

5.3.2 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area. It came into force on 6 April 2010 through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. Use of receipts from s106 agreements is governed by Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).

5.3.3 Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) requires local authorities to publish an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) which must set out how much CIL revenue and S106 contributions has been collected, how much has been spent and what it has been spent on.

5.3.4 Receipts from Section 106 agreements must be spent in accordance with the agreements themselves, unless specifically agreed with the other parties to the agreement.

5.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

5.4.1 Delivery of priorities identified in the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies contributes directly to environmental improvements, enhancement of biodiversity and mitigation of the effects of climate change. Along with implementation of the recommendations of the Leisure Facilities Strategy, it also helps to build sustainable, healthy and vibrant communities.

5.5 Human Resources Implications

5.5.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly out of this report.

5.6 Risk Management Implications

5.6.1 Additional to those previously reported to the Board, there are no direct risks consequent upon the proposed projects and undertakings identified within this report.

5.7 Equalities Implications

5.7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. The identified services and projects are provided for the benefit of the whole community and no group or individual defined by the protected characteristics under the Equality Act will be excluded therefrom.

5.8 Links to Council's Priorities

5.8.1 The projects and services proposed to be developed through the use of the listed Section 106 receipts have direct and positive links to the following corporate priorities:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy

- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

5.8.2 Additionally, implementation of the identified projects will contribute directly to the attainment of the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Raise aspirations, education attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services

The Contact Officers for this report are Simon Powell (719352) and Becky Evans (719346).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No.	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	Director of Leisure and Community Development	North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies Progress Report	October 2023

Agenda Item No 10

Community and Environment Board

25 March 2024

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Financial Assistance to Outside Organisations

1 Summary

- 1.1 Borough Council support for outside organisations is provided in many ways, including through its Annual Grants scheme and through wider partnership agreements. This report considers the allocation of the Annual Grants funding for 2024 / 25.

Recommendation to the Board

- a That Members note the work undertaken by North Warwickshire Citizens' Advice in 2023 / 24; and**
- b That Members determine the recipient(s) and level of funding, if any, to be awarded through the Borough Council's Annual Grants scheme in 2024 / 25.**

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 Through its provision of financial assistance to voluntary and outside organisations, the Borough Council seeks to ensure cost effective support for a broad range of services for the community of North Warwickshire. In pursuance of this objective, this report considers applications for assistance through its Annual Grants to Outside Organisations scheme.
- 3.2 In 2023 / 24, North Warwickshire Citizens' Advice was the sole recipient of an award, which was made in the sum of £31,600. The total Annual Grants sum available for disbursement in 2024 / 25 is £32,550. A single application for support has been received, again from North Warwickshire Citizens' Advice (NW CA).

4 North Warwickshire Citizens' Advice (NW CA)

4.1 Members will be familiar with the nature of the request from NW CA and the need to link any annual grant award to the negotiation of an approved annual Service Level Agreement (SLA). Through the Agreement, the Borough Council seeks to ensure the delivery of mutually compatible outcomes in return for its investment. Wherever possible, these outcomes are linked to the objectives and priorities of the Borough Council and of the North Warwickshire Sustainable Community Strategy (2009 to 2026), which sets out three key priorities for improving local quality of life (raising aspirations, developing healthier communities and improving access to services).

4.2 NW CA is monitored through the production of a report that details the support work that has been provided to the residents of North Warwickshire. The report covering the period from 01 April 2023 to 31 December 2023 is attached at Appendix A. In brief, the report outlines that, in this period, NW CA dealt with over 1,300 separate cases, with clients presenting with an average of over 9 issues per case (an increase on the previous year). The most common issues related to benefits, utilities and communications, and financial services and capability.

4.3 During this period, the key reported outcomes are:

- 202 benefit increases, reinstatements or new awards with a total annualised value of £654,575
- £31,006 procured for clients through charitable grants and emergency fuel or food referrals
- £73,329 per year saved through energy, financial capability and budgeting advice
- 880 clients reporting improved health and improved capacity to manage their personal circumstances

4.4 In 2023 / 24, the Board awarded NW CA an annual grant of £31,600 towards its core functions. This sum was paid in two half-yearly instalments, with the second payment being made further to a review and satisfactory completion of work in the first six months and with the prior agreement of the Chair and Vice-chair of the Board. If Members determine to make an award to NW CA in 2024 / 25, it is recommended that payment is made through a similar process and that the Chair and Vice-chair additionally approve the content of the SLA before any award is made.

5 Funding for 2024 / 25

5.1 As identified, the level of funding available for Annual Grant disbursement in 2024 / 25 is £32,550. The Board may wish to consider maintaining its support for NW CA, subject to it being satisfied that the organisation has made appropriate use of the financial assistance received from the Borough Council in 2023 / 24.

6 Report Implications

6.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

6.1.1 The financial implications associated with the 2024 / 25 Annual Grants scheme are addressed in the main body of the report.

6.1.2 Supporting community and voluntary sector work is a cost-effective way for the Borough Council to ensure the provision of valued local services for the residents of North Warwickshire.

6.2 Safer Communities Implications

6.2.1 There is no direct safer communities implication arising directly from this report, although NW CA's work, particularly with regard to the provision of financial advice, can help to prevent people from resorting to criminal activity to resolve their personal problems.

6.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

6.3.1 There are no immediate legal, data protection or human rights implications arising directly out of this report.

6.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

6.4.1 Providing financial assistance to community and voluntary sector organisations is a cost-effective way of increasing local service provision and helping to enhance individual and collective quality of life.

6.4.2 NW CA supports groups and individuals in a wide variety of ways that enhance personal and community wellbeing, including in respect of people's physical and mental health.

6.5 Human Resources Implications

6.5.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly out of this report.

6.6 Risk Management Implications

6.6.1 There is no change to the risk management implications previously reported to the Board consequent upon the content of this report.

6.7 Equalities Implications

6.7.1 An Equality Impact and Needs Assessment has previously been undertaken, which did not highlight any negative impacts consequent upon the proposed financial award. The advice offered by NW CA helps to provide equality of opportunity and address inequality within the local community.

6.8 Links to Council's Priorities

6.8.1 The provision of financial assistance to community and voluntary sector organisations has positive and direct links to the corporate priorities in respect of:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

6.8.2 Additionally, the Borough Council's Annual Grants scheme contributes directly to the attainment of the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Raise aspirations, education attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719346).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No.	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	Director of Leisure and Community Development	Report to Community and Environment Board (Financial Assistance to Outside Organisations)	March 2023



North Warwickshire Citizens Advice

Report to North Warwickshire
Borough Council
1st April 2023 – 31st December 2023



Figures from NWCA

April 1st 2023 – December 31st 2023.

a) Opening hours

- Monday: 9.00am – 4.30pm
- Tuesday: 9.00am – 4.30pm
- Wednesday: 9.00am – 4.30pm
- Thursday: 9.00am – 4.30pm
- Friday: 9.00am – 4.00pm

Face to face advice

In-person advice is available through our drop-in service.

Face to face appointments are also available throughout the week after an initial assessment by phone or email.

Telephone advice

Monday to Friday: 10:00 – 2:00

The out of hours telephone service we had been trialling from June 2022 to help people unable to access our service during normal working hours ran alongside our normal service throughout the year until January 2024. This service was provided from 5:00pm – 9:00pm on Monday evenings.

Email advice

We aim to respond to email enquiries within 5 days.

b) Number of enquiries

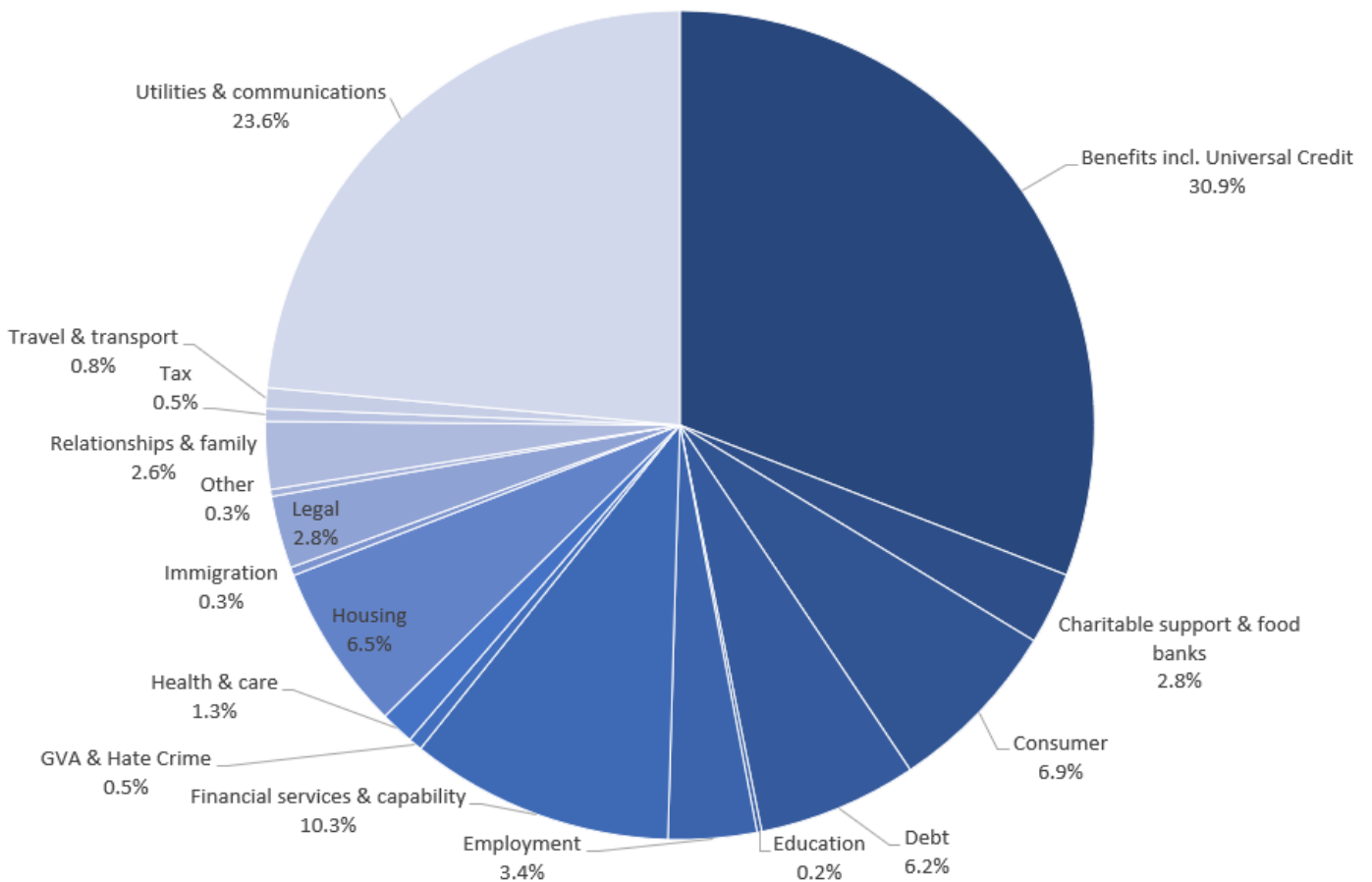
NWCA dealt with **1317** enquiries in this period.

c) Enquiries categorised by complexity:

Our clients during this period presented **12,593** issues, representing an average of **9.6** issues per case.

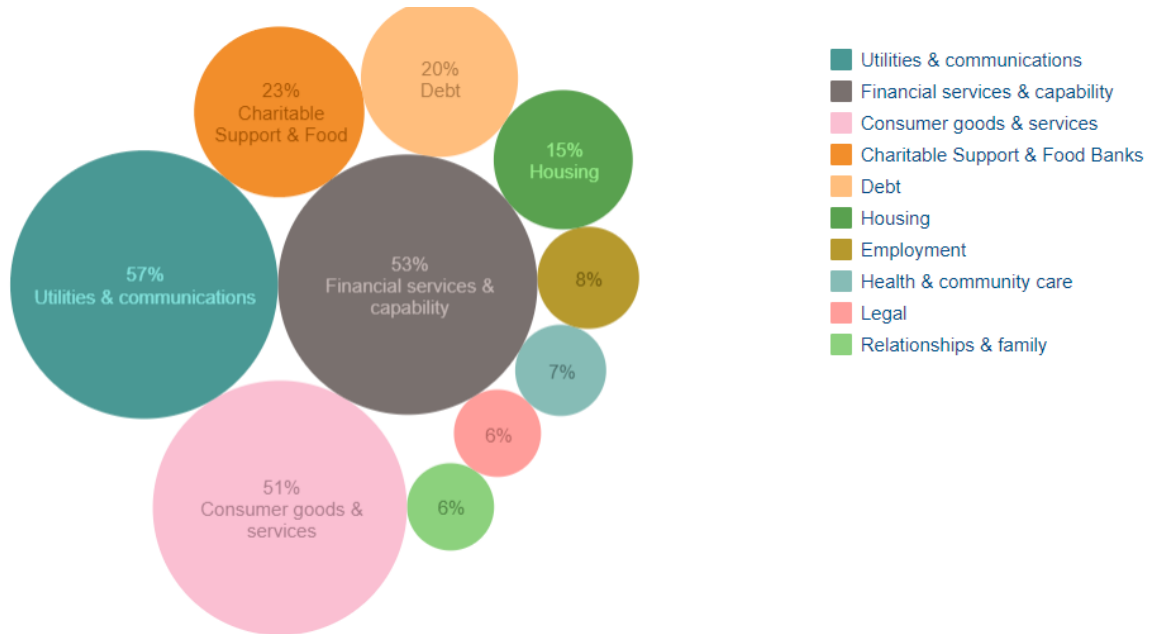
The three most common issues were:

- 1. Benefits** – 30.9%
- 2. Utilities & communications** – 23.6%
- 3. Financial services & capability** – 10.3%

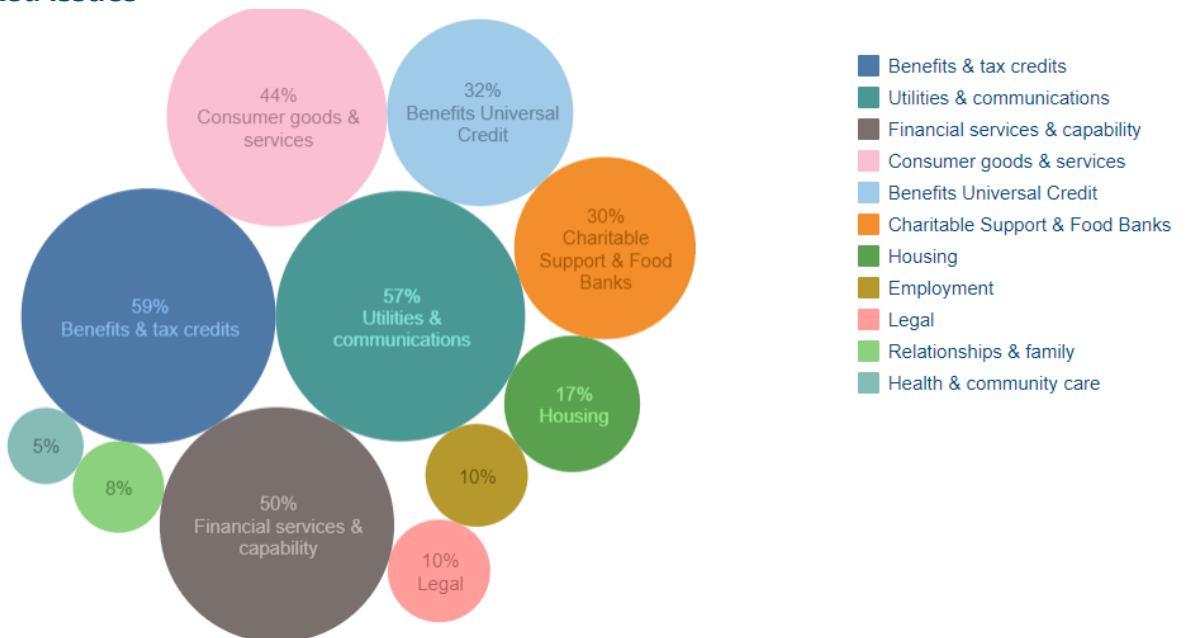


Most people we helped were experiencing multiple issues. The cluster diagrams below show some of the most common linked issues.

Benefits linked issues



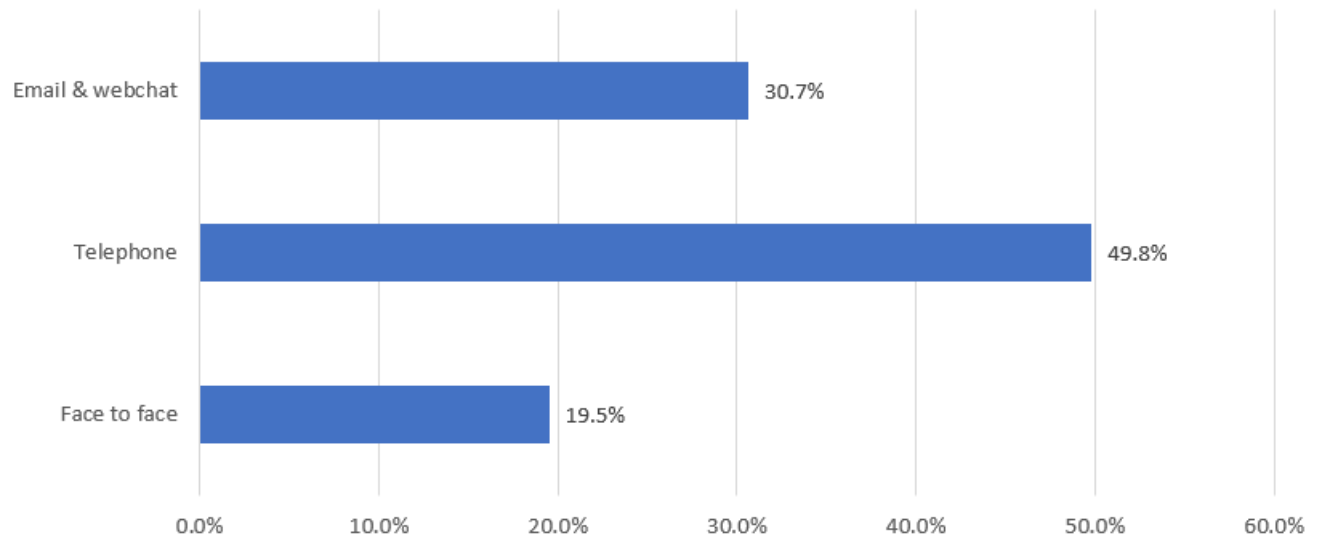
Debt linked issues



Highlights:

- 20% of the people we helped with benefits issues also had debt issues, indicative of how vulnerable people claiming state benefits are to falling into debt due to the cost of living.
- Over half of the people we helped with debt issues also needed help with a benefits issues. A third needed help with Universal Credit.
- 30% of the people we helped with debt issues also needed crisis support with foodbanks or charitable grants, an increase from the same period the previous year.

d) How people have contacted us:



e) Paid staff

North Warwickshire Citizens Advice currently employs 12 staff, FTE 8.

f) Volunteers

There are currently 22 volunteers working with North Warwickshire Citizens Advice. These include administration and trustee roles, but consist predominantly of Advisers who typically give either one or two days of their time, each lasting 5-6 hours, for advice sessions via face to face, telephone and email.

g) Training sessions undertaken by staff:

The bureau delivers a monthly training session, usually on the Third Wednesday of each month. Attendance is mandatory for all volunteers and paid staff. During this period, the following training was delivered:

Training Plan April 2023 – December 2023

April 2023	<p><u>Mediation- Lesa Clarke – First Mediation</u> Training from a professional independent mediator about the uses of mediation, how to access it, and what the processes entails.</p> <p><u>Outcomes – Lorraine Verrall & Bridgette Chandler (NWCA)</u> An internal workshop delivered by NWCA's leadership team to help frontline advisers recognise and record the value of their advice and support work.</p>
May 2023	<p><u>GAMCARE – Sarah Franklin & Georgia Hunt-Vodel</u> Training from a national gambling dependency helpline service on identifying and supporting clients affected by gambling.</p>
June 2023	<p><u>Action on Gambling Harm – Megan Rome – Citizens Advice</u> An overview of Citizens Advice's national project on recognising gambling dependency with guidance for advisers on discussing the issue with affected clients and contributing to the national campaign.</p>
July 2023	<p><u>Connect Telephone Training & Warwickshire Telephony Project – Nicola Homes & Fiona Palmer - BRANCAB</u> A workshop from service managers from our local office to provide training on use of the new telephony software and discuss feedback and the platform and project.</p> <p><u>Change Grow Live (CGL) – Kully Ghatora</u> Training on information and resources to help clients affected by dependencies on drugs and alcohol access support locally, and to help advisers understand the impacts of addiction.</p> <p><u>Research & Campaigns – Ed Hodson</u> An internal workshop from Warwickshire's Research & Campaigns Officer on using evidence forms to collate trends and stories for use in advocating for change.</p>
September 2023	<p><u>Debt & Social Policy – Nigel Ashfield & Ed Hodson - BRANCAB</u> An update from a Citizens Advice debt specialist on interest rate rises and the impact on mortgages for clients facing debt, repossession and financial hardship.</p> <p><u>Veterans Contact Point – Tom Murphy</u></p>

	An awareness session regarding the support available for clients who have served in any of our armed forces, and how Citizens Advice can refer clients to help them access this support.
October 2023	<u>NWCA Staff & Volunteer Away Day</u> An internal workshop celebrating the successes of our staff and volunteers while inviting them to discuss improvements to national and local services.
November 2023	<u>Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – EQUIP</u> Training on EDI including relevant legislation and practice for identifying discrimination, and support clients with assessing their options or finding support. <u>Safeguarding – Jolene Morrow – NWCA</u> Internal training to enhance staff and volunteers’ awareness of safeguarding issues, and their understanding of our safeguarding procedures.

Note that the training plan is suspended during August and December for Summer & Christmas holidays respectively.

h) Number of formal complaints about the bureau

No formal complaints were received during this period.

i) Key indicators

Comparison Apr 2022 – Dec 2022 with Apr 2023 – Sep 2023

+1.7
Average issues per case

+64.5%
Issues with fuel debts

+21.1%
Individuals helped with food banks and crisis grants

+86.8%
Total income gained through benefit claims or energy and budgeting advice

j) Key outcomes



202 benefit increases, reinstatements or new awards for a total annualised value of **£654,575.**



£31,006 procured for our clients through charitable grants and emergency fuel or food referrals.



£73,329 per year saved through energy, financial capability and budgeting advice



880 clients reporting improved health and improved capacity to manage their circumstances.

Commentary

North Warwickshire Citizens Advice has had a very busy year. The number of face-to-face clients attending our offices through 'drop in' and booked appointments has increased and we continue to offer a number of other channels so that more people can access our services. We are widening our reach to cover as many community venues and warm hubs as possible and are attending pre-arranged sessions such as the Warwickshire Kind Communities event at the Memorial Hall in Mancetter where resources allow.

From our data, we recognise that the clients we are seeing are presenting with a number of issues which are often complex and take our advisers some time to deal with. For example we have seen a rise in Personal Independence Payments applications. Due to a client's circumstances, these appointments can often be labour intensive. In our previous report, we stated that clients presented, with on average, four issues. For the same reporting period this year (April 2023 to December 2023), we can report that on average clients are bringing nine issues 'to the table'. This effectively means that one appointment is often not enough to deal with every issue. This can lead to a referral to our specialist debt adviser once the other areas of advice have been dealt with.

We have seen an increase in council tax issues and fuel debts for this period. Furthermore our top three categories for this period are benefits including universal credit, utilities and communications and financial services and capability.

We started a new project in October 2023, which predominantly provides energy advice but offers a number of additional services within the project. The project is intended to provide one to one energy advice and support to clients who are struggling to pay their bills. They do not have to be in/or at risk of fuel poverty to access the programme but many of the clients will be.

As part of this project, for those who are gas customers, they will be provided with information on the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning and offered a free monitor where applicable. We aim to offer a 'seamless' service, guiding the client through their issues with the same adviser, apart from specialist debt advice which will be given by our in-house debt specialist. For example areas covered would be benefit checks, liaising with an energy provider, fuel vouchers, eligibility for the Priority Service Register, charitable grants, food banks, disability benefits etc. It is noted that we have seen an increase in fuel debt and applications for fuel vouchers. Access to this project is by self-referral (e.g. drop in/email/telephone) or referral by an outside agency such as NWBC, FISOs, Family Information Service, via email to energyadvice@nwcab.org.uk

In 2023, we started to make significant changes to our building. Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), we were successful in making two separate bids, receiving funding to assist NWCA in undertaking a number of alterations. The works included opening up windows at the back of our building, converting smaller rooms into a multifunctional large space, facilitating a disabled toilet and providing an accessible room for those clients with additional needs. Work is currently in place to provide a disabled parking space and pathway. These changes have and will make a considerable difference to our clients and provide an improved environment for our advisers and volunteers.

We are very pleased to report that we have provided our clients with a total of £875,853 of benefit gains which is a £407,000 increase from the previous year.

A number of challenges are ahead. The migration of tax credit recipients to universal credit is active in our area and we have had a number of enquiries. The 'cost of living' continues to place a substantial number of our clients in a negative budget. It is increasingly difficult to assist some of these clients to enable them to navigate their way through this. However we are able to continue to assist the residents of North Warwickshire with the help of our funders including North Warwickshire Borough Council.

Free, confidential advice.

Whoever you are.

We help people overcome their problems and campaign on big issues when their voices need to be heard.

We value diversity, champion equality, and challenge discrimination and harassment.

We're here for everyone.

nwcab.org.uk



@NorthWarksCAB

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Agenda Item No 11

Community and Environment Board

25 March 2024

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Local Visitor Economy Partnership

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report updates Members on the work being undertaken at a sub-regional level to create a Local Visitor Economy Partnership for Coventry and Warwickshire.

Recommendation to the Board

That Members note the work being undertaken to create a Local Visitor Economy Partnership for Coventry and Warwickshire and endorse the involvement of Officers in the process to represent the interests of North Warwickshire and its tourism businesses.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 In March 2021, the Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Tourism Minister commissioned an independent review of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs). A DMO is an organisation that exists to represent the interests of a tourism destination, through promotional and development activity, and to bring together all of the different parties that make up the visitor economy in that area.
- 3.2 The review, led by Nick De Bois, examined and assessed the role, structure, and performance of all of the different DMOs operating across England.
- 3.3 Whilst the report recognised the need for DMOs, acknowledging them as a crucial part of the tourism ecosystem, it also identified an inconsistent and complicated patchwork of organisations that were managed in different ways. It additionally identified funding as being a “big problem”, with a withdrawal of public sector funding and a huge drop in commercial revenues following the pandemic.

4 **A New National Structure**

- 4.1 The De Bois review concluded that the current landscape was not economically efficient, effective or sustainable, and that its current configuration would not allow the Government to successfully deliver its priorities, as set out in the Tourism Recovery Plan. A fundamental change, therefore, was needed in order to “level up” DMOs.
- 4.2 The review recommendations included the introduction of a tiered accreditation system to create a national portfolio of high performing DMOs:
- Top tier ‘Destination Development Partnerships’ will form the “hubs” and will be made up of large geographic areas, such as city regions.
 - Second tier ‘Local Visitor Economy Partnership’ (LVEPs) will be members of the Destination Development Partnerships and will act as the “spokes”. The LVEPs will provide leadership and management across the destination, ensuring that the visitor economy is an active and valued contributor to Levelling Up and the wider economy.
- 4.3 The review also recommended that Government should provide core funding to each Destination Development Partnership, with a degree of that funding being passed down to the accredited LVEPs to allow them to deliver a shared vision.

5 **Coventry and Warwickshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP)**

- 5.1 Within Coventry and Warwickshire, there are currently two DMOs in existence:
- Shakespeare’s England is a not-for-profit membership organisation and a public-private sector partnership, which covers South Warwickshire (Stratford-on-Avon, Warwick, Kenilworth, Leamington Spa and the surrounding area). It receives funding from Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council and its membership organisations.
 - Destination Coventry is a two-year proof-of-concept collaboration between Coventry City Council and the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce and it has a range of membership packages for businesses operating within the visitor economy.
- 5.2 In July 2023, Shakespeare’s England and Destination Coventry applied for, and were successful in gaining, LVEP accreditation from Visit England.
- 5.3 A key feature of the Coventry and Warwickshire LVEP will be the production and subsequent submission of a Growth Plan to Visit England. This is a requirement of the LVEP and will focus on a range of areas related to supporting, enhancing and building resilience in the sub-region’s visitor economy, that includes:

- Promoting Tourism – the aim to attract visitors through marketing campaigns, events and promotional activities
- Supporting Local Businesses – to provide support and resources to local businesses in the tourism and hospitality sectors to help them thrive and grow
- Enhancing Infrastructure and Service – to improve infrastructure such as transportation, accommodation and recreational facilities that will enhance the visitor experience
- Sustainable Development – to focus on sustainable tourism practice to minimise environmental impact and support the long-term viability of the local visitor economy

5.4 A proposed structure setting out the governance to oversee this work has been developed. This will be led through the establishment of a LVEP Board with links to three stakeholder groups.

5.5 Under this proposal, membership of the Board will comprise four Board members - one representative from Shakespeare's England, one from Destination Coventry and two from the local authorities, as well as a representative from Visit England. It is envisaged that the two local authority places will be held by Warwickshire County Council, representing the interests of the five districts, and Coventry City Council. There will also be a number of non-voting members, who will be able to attend to observe and advise.

5.6 One of the stakeholder group's will be set up with representation from the County Council and the five district and borough councils. This group will have a direct link to the LVEP Board via the Warwickshire County Council Board member, thereby ensuring a clear line of communication with all partners. The other two stakeholder groups will focus on issues relating to Shakespeare's England and Destination Coventry.

5.7 It is anticipated that both Shakespeare's England and Destination Coventry will be represented by private-sector businesses.

6 **A Way Forward for North Warwickshire**

6.1 Although it is anticipated that the detail (including possible funding arrangements) will become clearer over the next year, it is important to consider how the interests of North Warwickshire and its tourism businesses will best be represented in the wider sub-regional context, especially in light of the anticipated closure of Northern Warwickshire Tourism (NWT).

6.2 Established in 2004, Northern Warwickshire Tourism is a volunteer-led membership organisation that represents the interests of tourism businesses and promotes North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth to visitors. NWT members have worked extremely hard to support each other and to put Northern Warwickshire on the tourism map.

- 6.3 Over recent years, however, it has become increasingly difficult for the organisation to recruit new committee members, and with a number of existing members set to retire, it took the difficult decision to close the organisation.
- 6.4 As an interim measure, it has been agreed that North Warwickshire Borough Council, together with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council, will temporarily assume the branding and promotional activity of NWT, as a means of retaining and protecting its marketing assets (specifically the Facebook page and website), whilst decisions are being made in respect of the Local Visitor Economy Partnership. It is hoped that by retaining this “Northern Warwickshire” brand, the interests of the north of the county will be better represented, and that it will be in a position to show its value to the wider Coventry and Warwickshire tourism product.

7 Next Steps

- 7.1 Clearly, there are many challenges associated with developing a Local Visitor Economy Partnership, not least the need to bring together a range of stakeholders with different functions and priorities, which have until now worked relatively independently of each other. Historically, there have also been differing levels of funding and resources that have been invested into each area.
- 7.2 The Coventry and Warwickshire Local Authority group (which was established to give a combined local authority perspective on the progression of the LVEP) has determined that any structural change needs to go beyond a simple partnership arrangement, and further exploration is needed around the merits of creating a single combined, sustainable and inclusive tourism body.
- 7.3 Whilst North Warwickshire’s tourism product is less well developed than those in the south of the county, it still has a considerable amount to offer tourists and it is still providing a living for many businesses that are reliant on visitors.
- 7.4 It is, therefore, important to actively participate in the discussions being held about the proposed LVEP, to represent the interests of those businesses and to advocate on behalf of the Borough. Without this engagement, there is a danger that North Warwickshire may be over-looked and that the Partnership will instead be dominated by Coventry and South Warwickshire.
- 7.5 The Board, therefore, is asked to endorse Officer involvement in these discussions, in order to ensure that the most appropriate outcome for the Borough is achieved.

8 Report Implications

8.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

- 8.1.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report, except in terms of the Officer time needed to be involved in stakeholder discussions. It

is, however, anticipated that, at some point in the future, all of the local authorities in Coventry and Warwickshire will be asked to contribute towards the delivery and operation of the LVEP. If and when a request for funding is made, a report will be presented to Members outlining the proposed amount and the anticipated return on investment.

8.2 Safer Communities Implications

8.2.1 There are no direct safer community implications arising from this report. As with all regeneration activity, however, it is hoped that by increasing visitor numbers, and by making the area more buoyant, it will help to make the Borough feel safer.

8.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

8.3.1 There are no legal, data protection or human rights implications arising directly from this report.

8.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

8.4.1 The creation of the LVEP is intended to support the development of a more sustainable tourism product for Coventry and Warwickshire. In addition to promotional activity, it is also intended that the LVEP will have a wider agenda around accessibility and inclusivity, sustainability and reducing harmful environmental impacts.

8.5 Human Resources Implications

8.5.1 Whilst there are no direct human resource implications arising from this report, it is expected that Officer time will be needed to participate in discussions and to work through the development of the Partnership.

8.6 Risk Management Implications

8.6.1 The only real risk associated with this activity is that, despite the best efforts of Officers, the interests of North Warwickshire may not be fully recognised within the Partnership and that the LVEP will instead be focused on Coventry and the south of Warwickshire.

8.7 Equalities Implications

8.7.1 Effective delivery of this regeneration activity will not adversely affect any groups or individuals defined by the protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

8.8 Links to Council's Priorities

8.8.1 This project supports, and has direct and positive links to, the following corporate priorities:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

8.8.2 Additionally, it positively impacts upon the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Raise aspirations, education attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services

The Contact Officer for this report is Rachel Stephens (719301).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No.	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date

Health and Wellbeing Working Party Minutes

26 February 2024

Present: Cllr. Smith (Chairperson), Cllr. Stuart, Cllr. Whapples, Cllr. Bates, Cllr. Dirveiks, Becky Evans, Russell Simkiss, Milen Woldeab (all NWBC), David Simkins (WCAVA), Jane Coates (WCC).

Apologies for Absence: Cllr. Hobley (substitute Cllr. Dirveiks), Sally Roberts, Mike Slemensek.

Item	Notes	Action
2	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting (13 December 2023) and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2023 were agreed as an accurate record of the proceedings.</p>	
3	<p>SPOTLIGHT – Environmental Health</p> <p>A presentation was given to the Working Party, a copy of which will be circulated with the minutes.</p>	
4	<p>Blue Sky Centre, Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)</p> <p>Item deferred.</p>	
5	<p>WCAVA</p> <p>WCAVA continues to meet with organisations across North Warwickshire regarding funding opportunities.</p> <p>The Social Fabric Fund is still open. Although priority is given to the 22 pilot Levelling Up areas, applications are accepted from across North Warwickshire. https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/warwickshire-county-council-social-fabric-fund/</p>	
6	<p>Partners Updates</p> <p>Public Health:</p> <p>JC gave an overview of the work of the North Place Partnership Board and the Executive Board.</p> <p>A Together for Warwickshire North Event takes place on 7 March at the Newtown Centre in Nuneaton. Discussions will include how partners can work together around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking and vaping • Fuel poverty and health • Self-harm and suicide • Healthy weight • Housing and asthma <p>Cllr. Whapples identified that Cohort4 is looking for funding. DS to contact the group to discuss further.</p>	DS

Item	Notes	Action
	<p>Leisure:</p> <p>February Holiday Activities ran across Atherstone and Coleshill facilities in February, with HAF funded programmes, crash courses, soft play and swim sessions operating from Atherstone, and a very successful bouncy castle session combined with a “decorate a pancake” event.</p> <p>Following the introduction of the advanced health scales, the leisure facilities will introduce blood glucose and cholesterol testing services from April 2024. Staff training is taking place and procedures will be refined with staff through March. Promotion to the public will then follow, using national awareness campaigns, including Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Week in May and Cholesterol Awareness Month in October, as platforms to promote the service and support prevention and early intervention for health in the Borough.</p> <p>The new leisure website has been launched and initial feedback has been positive. Feedback and comments are welcomed: North Warwickshire Leisure – Leisure (northwarks.gov.uk)</p> <p>Leisure has been benchmarking customer experience performance throughout the year using surveys and the Net Promoter Score. The final survey, which is looking at the quality of leisure provision in general, is due to go live in March. Results will provide the service with its final Net promoter Score and its annual score, which currently sits above the national average for leisure facilities.</p> <p>The New Year promotion has performed well again, through a combined January and February promotion. The service achieved above target sales in both months, selling over 325 memberships across the sites. This was an increase on the like-for-like sales achieved in 2023. Memberships have increased over 10% during 2023 / 24.</p>	
8	<p>Budget</p> <p>The Working Party has a budget that can be used to support health and wellbeing initiatives. Proposals should be submitted before each meeting.</p> <p>Environmental Health is requesting £1,600 to fund commando sockets required for the air quality monitors.</p> <p>Councillors are requested to confirm their support or otherwise by Friday 15 March.</p>	All Cllrs.
9	<p>Feedback from Relevant Partnership Meetings</p> <p>None recorded.</p>	
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None recorded.</p>	
	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>22 April 18:00pm 23 September 18:00pm 02 December 18:00pm 24 February 2025 18:00pm</p>	

Item	Notes	Action
	28 April 18:00pm (Hybrid meetings to be held in the Council House Chamber)	

To: **Members of the Climate Change Member Group**

Councillors Fowler, Barnett, Gosling, Ririe, Singh and Walston

CLIMATE CHANGE MEMBER GROUP Minutes

17 JANUARY 2024

AGENDA

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1 **Evacuation Procedure.**
- 2 **Apologies for Absence / Members away on official Council business.**
- 3 **Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
- 4 **Minutes of the Climate Change Member Group held on 06-09-2023.**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 6th of September 2023 were agreed.
- 5 **Feedback from Warwickshire County Council Climate group – PF**
The chair provided information of the key points raised at Warwickshire County Council Climate group.
- 6 **NWBC Net-zero progress.**
Robert Snape presented an overview and data related to a number of ongoing streams of work to reduce emissions.
- 6a **Swimming Pool Support Fund Bid**
Council staff including the Leisure, assets and climate team developed a capital bid for phase 2 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund. If successful the interventions will seek to improve the energy efficiency of Atherstone leisure centre, reducing the energy consumption and subsequent CO2 emissions. The interventions do not include a replacement of the gas boilers, hence further work shall be needed prior to 2030 to ensure the building is net-zero in operation. Feedback from the bid is expected by the end of January. The outcome of the bid shall be fed back at the following meeting in March.

6b **Coronation Living Heritage Fund**

North Warwickshire Borough Council participated in a consortium bid with Warwickshire County Council and other Boroughs for the Coronation Living Heritage Fund (CLHF). The fund offers up to £50k for the planting of trees in celebration of the coronation. The trees planted are split into two pots. Micro-forests – that see trees planted at very high densities and community orchards that will see trees planted and managed by communities. From discussion with WCC’s tree officers it was agreed that a bid for community orchards would be better suited. Town and parish councils were contacted to identify the number of potential sites for planted, based on the size, ownership and group who would manage the site. In North Warwickshire many sites were identified so it was agreed North Warwickshire should bid for the maximum amount within the consortium. The bid was successful, and officers are now in the process of more detail site assessments in preparation for tree planting. A form to nominate a site is available of North Warwickshire’s website.

The online form can be found at

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BqqwiCdZu0uok4nMJxOsghcQ_I1eQXNMpcyUGfxUqSBUQ1hCN0ZOREIxRDBFMjMwMlo5NFJTSjVHOC4u

The funding is available for 2 planting seasons. It is intended that a small number of sites are planted in the current planting season, and these will be used to generate more communication material to promote the scheme and identify more sites for the 2024/205 planting season.

Cllrs Fowler, Barnett, and Singh each enquired about how we can further share the webforms to promote the scheme further. It was noted that the links to the forms would be shared with the minutes, as seen above, and the comms team would be contacted to produce further messaging councillors may utilise.

6c **HVO Pilot**

A pilot put forward by Warwickshire County Council intends to utilise Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel in a number of diesel vehicles as a means to temporarily reduce emissions. It is proposed that NWBC be involved in this pilot with the borough councils most polluting vehicle utilising HVO fuel instead of diesel.

HVO is a fuel derived from plant material, in Europe it is often derived from unutilised material from crop plants however, a great proportion of HVO globally is derived from palm oil waste product. Palm oil is responsible for vast amounts of deforestation globally, so it has been specified that HVO fuel would require it be derived from sustainable sources, such as sustainably managed palm oil plantation.

HVO is being considered due to the nature of the fuel. It is a drop in fuel, that will require no changes to the vehicles, that offers a 90% tank to wheel (TTW) emissions reduction. Due to the life span and costs of

electrification of vehicles HVO may be a short-term solution to reduce emissions prior to future electrification. If the entire fleet was converted to HVO annual emissions would fall from 683 tonnes CO₂ to 136 tonnes CO₂. A 34% reduction of the council's total carbon emissions.

HVO currently costs and estimated 20% more than diesel fuel, and supply chains are still in the early stages, so fuel availability and potential price volatility is still an issue. However, the council must review all potential options to decarbonise the fleet by 2030.

Cllr Turley raised concerns regarding the WTW emissions and wider environmental impact of HVO fuel due to the catalysts utilised in the hydrocracking process during fuel refining. It was stated that a thorough investigation would be completed into the current data regarding WTW emission of HVO and data provided to councillors prior to any pilot commencing. Additionally, it was noted that the council is committed to reaching the goal of net-zero by 2030 and the fleet will require significant investment and action to reduce emissions inline with this 2030 goal.

7 **Climate Action Plan theme update –
Forward planning and development management**

Dorothy Barrett presented to the group the many areas and documents relevant to the council's climate response. in which planning is working to respond to climate change.

Dorothy highlighted numerous objectives within the local plan that have relevance to the council's climate responses.

Objectives

- 2 To provide for the housing needs of the Borough.
- 6 To deliver high quality developments based on sustainable and inclusive designs.
- 8 To establish and maintain a network of accessible good quality Green Infrastructure, open spaces, sports, and recreational facilities.

Viability of schemes was highlighted as a major obstacle to ensuring new developments meet net-zero requirements, however, was noted that in some cases if the impact on climate change is so adverse refusal of planning permission may be considered, but substantial evidence would be required.

Cllr Fowler enquired how will members be made aware of the sustainability or climate impact of the proposal. Dorothy responded that implications including sustainability implications can be found at the end of most reports.

**8 Climate Action Plan theme update –
Travel & Transport**

Robert Snape updated on a number of areas relating to transport and travel.

With regards to electric vehicle (EV) chargers, a tender exercise has now been completed to identify a successful bidder for the installation and operation of EV chargers across a number of council owned car parks. There will be a period of negotiation with the bidders whilst plans are finalised to ensure benefit to the council and the community, and further updates will be provided once these negotiation has progressed.

Cllr Barnett raised the point about proposals for EV chargers within certain car parks due to the limited charging in the areas currently. It was stated that any plans are currently proposals, and the final details will become clearer throughout the negotiations with the successful bidder.

Cllr Gosling requested that a public consultation be held to ensure that public views are heard on the location and EV chargers in the region. It was noted that NWBC have been in discussions with WCC regarding EV provisions and WCC have created a page for residents to request the location of EV chargers in their areas, this map of requests will be useful in future installations.

The form can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/electric-vehicles/request-new-electric-charging-point>

Regarding the fleet emissions, an update of the data has been completed showing the change from April 2022-December 2023. It is noted that over this period the emissions have not fallen, and instead risen slightly during the period. It was advised that a route optimisation project is underway that is intended to reduce mileage, costs, and emissions; however, this alone will not get the council fleet to net-zero. More significant action will be required such as cleaner fuels. An update to the Climate Action plan is under development that will see each team consulted on their proposals to reach net-zero. Once this work is underway it is expected a more detailed plan on how the council's fleet will reach net-zero by 2030 will become clear.

9 AOB

The previously drafted terms of reference for the group cannot be found in records. Cllr Gosling intends to go through earlier documents with the hopes of locating the previous terms of reference for the group.

10 Close

The chair thanks those for their input and closed the meeting.

To: **Members of the Climate Change Member Group**

Councillors Fowler, Barnett, Gosling, Ririe, Singh and Watson

For general enquiries please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01827 719221 via e-mail – democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk

For enquiries about specific reports please contact the officer named in the reports.

The agenda and reports are available in large print and electronic accessible formats if requested.

CLIMATE CHANGE MEMBER GROUP AGENDA

5th MARCH 2024

The Climate Change Member Group will meet on Tuesday, 5 March 2024 at 3pm in the Chamber at The Council House, South Street, Atherstone, Warwickshire.

AGENDA

- 1 **Evacuation Procedure.**
- 2 **Apologies for Absence / Members away on official Council business.**
Apologies sent by Cllr Singh, Cllr Barrett,
- 3 **Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
- 4 **Minutes of the Climate Change Member Group held on 17-01-2024**
The minutes were approved by the board.
- 5 **Last meeting updates**
- 5a **Coronation Living Heritage Fund – Project planning update**
Following the successful bid by North Warwickshire to the Coronation living Heritage Fund 8x expressions of interest were received for community orchards. From these 3x applications were received with 1x application and site being suitable for planting this season. Following the

planting of this community orchard this site shall serve as an example shared by the council to further promote the scheme to maximise uptake for the following planting season. It is believed that the application deadline will be Summer 2024 so there will be a need to promote the scheme in the coming months.

Cllr Gosling informed the board of an orchard site previously planted 3 years ago that can be used as an example of what to expect from orchards in the near future.

The chair and others were keen to get the detail of the groups who have previously submitted expressions of interest so that they may be contacted and put together full applications. The Climate manager will get clarification from the County Council Forestry team regarding the submission details and clarification on sharing of contact information before feeding back to board members.

5b Swimming Pool Support Fund Bid – Bid Outcome

The outcome of the Council's bid to the Swimming Pool Support fund has yet to be released. This agenda item has been postponed to the following meeting.

6 NWBC Net-zero progress

6a Public Electric Vehicle Charging

Robert Snape presented the Public Electric vehicle charging report to the board. A copy of the report was shared with board members to provide comments.

The report will go on to the parking sub-group followed by the C&E board for approval to begin contract negotiations with the proposed Electric vehicle charger installer.

Board members were asked to provide comments to Robert Snape by 5pm 08-03-2024, so that comments may be added to the report prior to going to the parking subgroup.

Cllr Gosling raised the desire to run a public consultation relating to the installation of publicly available EV chargers and the locations of chargers. This will be explored, and board members will be contacted prior to the following meeting.

6b Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund

Robert Snape highlighted the challenges and opportunities for decarbonising some of the Council's largest assets. It was explained that through the net-zero hub 3x surveys of buildings could be completed to identify net-zero pathways and costings. This could then be used for a public sector decarbonisation fund bid.

The main challenges highlighted include the lifespan and any uncertainty regarding council assets. As a bid would likely be unsuccessful if a building only had a usable lifespan of around 10 years, hence further clarity is needed on the long-term viability of some assets before a bid is submitted.

Cllr Gosling queried if the buildings identified as too small for a bid, such as community warm rooms could be combined into a single item for a bid. This will be explored with the net-zero hub and reported back to the board at the next meeting.

7 Climate Action Plan theme update – Supporting Communities

A project officer from the community development team attended the group. Information relating to the upcoming Big Day Out was provided with a focus on sustainability and net-zero occurring in Summer 2024. The event will offer residents information on how to reduce energy use and costs whilst also serving as a fun day out for families.

Board members were offered the opportunity to attend the Big Day Out or have a stand at the event if they should wish to.

8 AOB

The timing of meeting was raised as an issue to enable board members with other responsibilities to attend. Other options will be explored, and members contacted prior to the following meeting.

9 Close

The Chair thanked all those for attending and closed the meeting.

Agenda Item No 15

**Community and Environment
Board**

25 March 2024

**Report of the
Chief Executive**

Exclusion of the Public and Press

Recommendation to the Board

To consider, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, whether it is in the public interest that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

Agenda Item No 15

EV Charger Installation – Report of the Interim Corporate Director - Streetscape

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

In relation to the item listed above members should only exclude the public if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, giving their reasons as to why that is the case.

The Contact Officer for this report is Marina Wallace (719226)