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HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 26 February 2025

Attendance:

Councillors
Cramoysan (Chairperson)

Brophy
Aron
Bolton

Latham
Lee
Power

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Bennett

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Becker (Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement) and Learney (Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency).

[Full Video Recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received as set out above.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made at this meeting.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements made at this meeting.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 December 2024 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Andy Eymond (Chair of Sport Winchester) addressed the committee regarding item 6 (Sports Facilities Assessment and Playing Pitch Strategy 2025) and their comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

6. **SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY 2025 (PRESENTATION)**

Andy Eymond (on behalf of Sport Winchester) addressed the Committee on this item, speaking in support of the strategy.

In summary, Andy Eymond made reference to the following points which were responded to accordingly by the Cabinet Member and relevant officers:

- Sport Winchester were a registered charity representing sports clubs and organisations primarily in the Winchester City area.
- Sport Winchester aims to deliver the best possible sporting facilities for the present and future.
- The representative welcomed the resources the council was investing in the strategy, noting that not every council undertakes such an effort.
- They emphasised the importance of improving the assessment of sports needs across the city and believed more evidence would lead to better outcomes.
- The goal was to make the report as strong as possible by contributing data, references, and feedback, and by involving sports clubs.
- Two areas where participation was rapidly increasing are women and girls' sports and accessibility for people with disabilities or mental health challenges, but current facilities did not adequately meet these needs.
- They offered support to make the report as strong as possible.
- They believed the summary reports presented had room for improvement.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement introduced the item and emphasised that this was not a completed strategy but an update on the work carried out by Continuum Sport and Leisure to date and discuss the next stages. The views of the committee were sought in response to specific questions as follows:

- (a) Do the emerging themes match members' perception of the key issues relating to sports provision across the district?
- (b) Are there any significant issues or concerns that have been overlooked?
- (c) Do members know of specific (significant) demand that is not reflected in this?

The Chairperson welcomed Caroline McRoyall and Jack McGee of Continuum Sport and Leisure to the meeting whom, together with the Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing and the Contract Manager, provided a presentation and answered questions thereon. In summary, the presentation highlighted the following points:

- (i) An assessment of the need for playing pitches, sports, and recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provisions.

- (ii) It sought to comply with statutory policies and guidance, audit existing provisions, identify current and projected local needs, assess deficits and surpluses, protect and enhance facilities, and inform decision-making processes.
- (iii) Progress to date included completion of Stage B and near completion of Stage C.
- (iv) Stage B involved 66 site visits, consultations with facility providers, town/parish councils, sports clubs, and National Governing Bodies (NGBs), as well as a review of club affiliation and booking data.
- (v) Stage C assessed the need for playing pitch sports, calculated likely future demand, and identified key priorities.
- (vi) Emerging themes and priorities include maintenance (pitch improvements), capital (new facilities/refurbishments), lease/security (secured facility use), and community use (enabling wider use of sites).
- (vii) The council's role was to oversee the strategy and support project delivery, while NGBs and Sport England will agree on key priority projects to enable external funding.
- (viii) The presentation also outlined specific findings and priorities for various sports, including football, cricket, rugby, hockey, racquet sports, bowls, sports halls, swimming, and boxing.

Timelines:

- (ix) Stage C (Assessment of Needs) - signed off January 2025.
- (x) Stage D (Strategy Development) - February/March 2025.
- (xi) Stage E (Annual Update by Winchester City Council).

The committee proceeded to give their views to the questions set out in (a) to (c) above, ask questions and comment on the following matters, which were responded to as summarised below by the Cabinet Member, Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing, Contract Manager and Continuum representatives.

- (i) What is the biggest shortcoming you see given your wide portfolio of management and engagement?
- (ii) How do you balance the needs of those engaged in sports versus needs that may exist beyond those processes? Reliance on Active Lives and Active Partnership data through Sports England to gain awareness of needs. Feedback via local authorities and parishes etc to capture data on specific needs within the community. Evidenced actual demand and demonstrated need.
- (iii) What is the connection between the output of this and how that might enable funding that the council or relevant bodies can access? Local (ie Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)) as well as national regional funding. An action plan including key priority projects for the area will be included within the strategy.
- (iv) What is going to be the way forward to strengthen and advise sometimes small clubs in appropriate care and management, regarding the issue of plastic pitches? Clear guidance was provided to applicants around the management and maintenance programme for 3G artificial pitches to ensure longevity. The Football Foundation were also very aware of the environmental impact of these facilities and were working to mitigate environmental risk as much as possible. A balance between

environmental and health and wellbeing challenges would continue to be monitored. Grass pitches would remain for the majority of the provision.

- (v) Did you look at the needs in terms of facilities and sports for people with disabilities? Yes, where clubs had this provision in place already or had identified a need for growth in the future and where national governing bodies were aware of the activity. The accessibility of pavilions were also checked.
- (vi) What were the criteria in terms of who you consulted with among parish councils, and to be sure that you're not only speaking to the ones that already have a facility? Every parish council received communication with surveys and offers to meet and discuss facilities. Where sites were owned, parishes were invited to attend site visits.
- (vii) Could I just check that we have a good geographical spread of the ones that did answer the survey? The survey was issued to every club contact to encourage completion. Where incomplete a call would be made. Club owned sites were also invited on site visits. Officers would provide geographical spread data in due course. Are you looking into the barriers to booking facilities and will it form a part of your report? Where clubs had raised issues, these would be recorded as part of the strategy.
- (viii) When it says future demand, is that future demand based on the parish council response or is it from the club? Future demand that is aspirational by the clubs was tracked. The numbers given within the presentation was based purely off of objective data from Sports England playing pitch calculator.
- (ix) Given the demand for football pitches and quality of pitches and year-round availability, are we keeping in mind those times when those pitches are not available because of flooding? The quality of grass pitches were assessed to establish how many games a grassed pitch can sustain to match this with demand, using the guidance of national governing bodies.
It was reported that facilities for different tiers (ground grading requirements) of sport in some areas needed to be assessed as although there was provision, play could not always take place.
- (x) Community use provision at Sir John Moore Barracks.
- (xi) In terms of artificial pitches, with a shortfall of pitches, do we have an understanding of where the need is in terms of geographic location? In relation to artificial pitches the need was evenly spread throughout the district. The shortfall of artificial pitches was highlighted by the committee.
- (xii) It was noted that there was a cricket ground at Wield, at the top of the Alresford and Itchen Valley patch (adjacent to the Yew Tree Pub), that may meet the need. This site would be explored by officers.
- (xiii) For junior activities, does the demand outstrip availability? It was recognised that the larger clubs were at capacity/overused. It was the aim to identify if a non-turf pitch could be added to improve provision for junior players as an additional improvement that would be made.
- (xiv) The creation of sporting hubs versus the sense of belonging/local distinctiveness for residents with dispersed, local facilities.

- (xv) Is there a national sports body that assesses the demands of these sports compared to the population that we then apply to the kind of local stated demand? Sport England.
- (xvi) If land came up and we were looking to put it to sports pitch use, how do we manage state-controlled distribution of sports? It was recognised that each sport operated differently in terms of their need and a preferred 'sport model'. For example, rugby was a club-based sport seeking a 'home ground' requiring a higher degree of infrastructure which larger clubs would need to support, compared with football or tag rugby which could operate locally. Community groups and parish councils were asked to make contact with the team for further guidance and advice from the National Governing Bodies.
- (xvii) Guidance on catchment areas for different sports. The national governing bodies would indicate where there was a demand for more sport and clubs in their area and Sports England provided guidance on a '20-minute catchment model'. Typically for sports such as rugby and hockey, players would usually travel out to their local sport venue.
- (xviii) The assessment of full facilities at venues as another added value factor to attract a cross section of users.
- (xix) The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) provided knowledge of the demand for court availability and who books and utilises court facilities across the district. Where available, facilities at club-based models could be opened for drop-in sessions. The priority focus of the LTA was the need for additional padel courts in the area as an emerging sport, whilst being mindful of the placement and sound proofing of these courts when provision takes place. The sites listed within the presentation were those where there was an emerging priority project; all court provision would be listed within the main strategy
- (xx) Managing the unmet demand of an ageing population to enhance their health and wellbeing needs. The Sports England facilities planning model would be looked at with the local demographic, specifically in respect of swimming and bowls. The National Governing Bodies would provide data to outline the number of members that can be accommodated per club for future capacity and demand.
- (xxi) Lease management guidance and support.
- (xxii) There were currently no dedicated or non-dedicated gymnastics facilities – this was in relation to registered facilities affiliated to England Gymnastics. There were existing gymnastic programmes in place at other venues which were ran by the operator e.g. primary gymnastics at WSLP.
- (xxiii) With Meadowside Leisure Centre close to full peak capacity, there will be some recommendations to look at existing hours of use with options to extend this and investigate where the nearest sports halls are to them with the possibility to open school sites up for community use in the area.
- (xxiv) The adequacy of swimming lessons – there was existing capacity within the swimming lesson programme.
- (xxv) New premises for the Winchester Boxing Club. This need was emphasised within the strategy and the response of the National Governing Body, with suitable premises options to be explored.

At the conclusion of debate, the committee thanked the Cabinet Member, Caroline McRoyall and Jack McGee of Continuum Sport and Leisure and officers for their attendance. The committee would continue to encourage local community groups and Parish Councils to make contact with the team to address questions and raise points to feed into the strategy and welcomed the positive health and wellbeing benefits of sports delivered by local clubs, hubs and multi sports facilities for all residents.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received, and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted

7. WASTE UPDATE (VERBAL UPDATE)

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and the Corporate Head of Service: Place provided a verbal update on waste and recycling outlining the current position and next steps to be taken.

The committee noted that £50.5 million investment in new recycling infrastructure was approved by Hampshire County Council. This would enable the collection of pots, tubs, trays, and cartons going forward, with this project expected to take around 2 ½ years to build, and a potential completion around October 2027. Hampshire had informed DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) that they are likely to be delayed in meeting the Government's April 2026 deadline for collecting pots, tubs, trays, and cartons on this basis. In addition, the Government was still planning to implement a deposit return scheme by October 2027. In total these new recycling options could improve recycling levels by approximately 10%.

It was reported that food waste recycling was planned to be phased in at every household property by March 2026. Nine food waste vehicles had been ordered, with collections aimed to start on a round-by-round basis during October 2025. It was anticipated this would generate a further 10% improvement to the recycling rate. The committee noted that the council had one fully electric vehicle that was currently being tested and trialled within the local area. The Corporate Head of Service: Place advised that an update on food waste progress would be reported back to the committee at its meeting in September 2025.

Winchester had received an indicative figure from the Government that it expected a net figure of £830,000 in the year 2025/2026 from extended producer responsibility.

Councillor Learney discussed Project Integra, a partnership created to manage waste and recycling across Hampshire and reminded the committee that in early 2022, the council had agreed to a twin stream waste collection system. At its recent meeting, Project Integra had discussed costs but failed to reach an agreement, with some districts hesitant to switch to twin stream collections based on initial costs. Hampshire County Council had agreed to hold one-to-one meetings with districts in this regard. The council supported a move to the

materials recycling facility (MRF) project and encouraged other authorities to adopt twin stream collections.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and the Corporate Head of Service: Place.

- (i) Residual waste that currently goes to incineration would not be affected by twin streaming. It was recognised that there was significant work to be carried out on waste reduction to establish how much more could be taken from residual bins.
- (ii) Food waste processing through an anaerobic digestion facility and biogas: It was noted that disposal was a Hampshire County Council responsibility.
- (iii) Food waste vehicles: These would be fuelled using HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) due to insufficient capacity at the depot for a fully electric fleet.
- (iv) With twin stream, all containers including glass would go into the recycling bin, with the glass collection replaced by a paper and card collection bin.
- (v) Hampshire County Council still had decisions to make regarding the level of automation for the new MRF. They were looking for a decision by the end of March in order to meet a number of deadlines to move the project forward.
- (vi) If certain levels of efficiency and effectiveness were not met, the government may reduce extended producer responsibility funding.
- (vii) Recurring costs, such as renewing fleets or replacing bottle bins, if the current collection regime continued.
- (viii) With the addition of a paper and card bin, the physical space needed for bins will be a challenge for some properties. It was anticipated that storage may be a problem for some, depending on the size of the property (such as blocks of flats using communal bins etc). Following the introduction of food waste collections which would take place on a weekly basis, there would be analysis carried out to establish the frequency of other collections.
- (ix) Would people be able to take their items to a retailer and get a 20p deposit? As a consumer, for extended producer responsibility they would not get any money back. However, in respect of the deposit return scheme for plastic bottled drinks and cans, there would be a nominal price increase to the consumer upon purchase, but when the empty product was returned by the consumer to a hosted collection location, this cost would be reimbursed. The deposit return scheme did not include glass bottles and was only applicable to plastic drink bottles and cans.

During debate, the committee noted that:

- the final decision on co-mingling versus twin stream had not been formally made, but that the likely direction would be twin stream collections.
- the initial extra costs of twin stream were, £72 million less over 10 years comparing a twin stream rather than co-mingled collections.

- supported the council's approach to move the MRF project forward and encourage all other authorities to adopt twin stream collections.

At the conclusion of debate, the committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative update.

RESOLVED:

That the update be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

8. **TO NOTE THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2024/25**

Councillor Power raised a proposal that a working party be established (to operate similarly to historic Informal Scrutiny Groups), with terms of reference, to investigate the following matter:

- (i) How the council could better facilitate the generation of phosphate credits in order to, not only improve water quality in the Upper Itchen, but allow the delivery of housing numbers.

In response, the Strategic Director reminded the committee of its own terms of the reference to have a strategic overview of the Council Plan and advised that councillors would need to ensure that additional matters for the committee were not already being covered in other formats or could not be addressed within existing performance or business reports.

The Strategic Director suggested that Councillor Power provide a document to define the scope and terms of reference for a working group in the first instance and clarified that with limited resources available, seeking expert external advisors to attend as had been suggested during discussion, would be a matter for members to facilitate.

The Chairperson suggested that members form a task and finish group to define outputs, scope and terms of reference for a working party so this could be further considered. Councillors Power, Bolton and Lee expressed their interest in forming a member group to progress this matter.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme for 2024/25 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.30 pm

Chairperson