



Signed off by	Head of Leisure and Intervention
Author	Catherine Rose, Head of Corporate Policy, Projects and Performance Luke Harvey, Project & Performance Team Leader
Telephone	Tel: 01737 276519
Email	Luke.Harvey@reigate-banstead.gov.uk
To	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Executive
Date	Thursday 16 March 2023 Thursday 23 March 2023
Executive Member	Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture

Key Decision Required	Y
Wards Affected	(All Wards);

Subject	Leisure and Culture Strategy
----------------	------------------------------

Recommendations
<p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>(i) That the Committee notes the report and the Leisure & Culture Strategy and provides any observations for consideration by the Executive</p> <p>Executive:</p> <p>(i) That the Executive approves the Leisure & Culture Strategy</p>
Reasons for Recommendations
<p>Having an approved Leisure & Culture Strategy will ensure that the Council is setting a clear statement of its intentions with regard to its Leisure and Culture services and will inform the development of detailed delivery / action plans to achieve identified priorities and outcomes.</p>

Executive Summary

The Council's Corporate Plan includes an objective for the Council to provide leisure, cultural and wellbeing services that are accessible to - and meet the needs of - communities and visitors. To achieve this, it explains that the Council will review and develop its leisure and cultural services over the life of the plan.

The Leisure & Culture Strategy (at Annex 1) has been prepared to help ensure that the Council's leisure and cultural services remain fit for the future and reflect the changing landscape within which we operate (impacted as it is by new technologies, the pandemic and current economic challenges).

It sets out an overall vision for leisure and cultural services in the borough and defines objectives which capture activity across a range of Council and externally provided services, including relating to participation, service provision and accessibility, working in partnership and funding council services. It also articulates the outcomes associated with each objective.

The Strategy will be supported by the development of more detailed delivery / action plans, which will explain in more detail how the outcomes will be achieved and how key decisions (such as around future arrangements for managing the Council leisure centres) will be taken. Progress against Strategy outcomes will be reviewed and reported annually.

Executive has authority to approve the above recommendations

Statutory Powers

1. There are no statutory requirements for Councils to provide leisure (sports) or cultural services, however a great many Councils do so because of the direct benefit of these services to resident wellbeing. The provision of such services therefore aligns with the duties set out in the Local Government Act 2000 to promote the social (as well as economic and environmental) wellbeing of the Council area.
2. It should be noted that there is a statutory duty on Councils to provide allotments where the Council believes there is a demand for these¹. The proposed Strategy identifies that the allotments the Council provides make a contribution to its leisure offer for residents.

Background

Reigate & Banstead 2025

3. The Council's Corporate Plan, Reigate & Banstead 2025, includes an objective in relation to Leisure and Wellbeing, specifically, to:
Provide leisure, cultural and wellbeing services that are accessible to, and meet the needs of, communities and visitors.
4. To achieve this objective, it explains that we will 'review and develop our leisure services offer in the borough', and 'review the cultural opportunities that we provide for residents and visitors, including at the Harlequin Theatre'.

¹ Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908

5. As noted above, with the exception of allotments, there is no statutory duty on local authorities to provide leisure & cultural services. However, the benefits of doing so are widely recognised as including:
- Supporting residents' physical health (and thereby having the potential to reduce impact on national / public health services)
 - Supporting residents' mental health (linked to physical activity, exposure to nature and engagement in cultural services)
 - Contributing to stronger community cohesion (be that geographically defined communities or communities defined by shared backgrounds, interests or values); and
 - Economic benefits associated with spending (of residents and / or visitors), employment and investment in the local area.

The services we currently provide

6. The Council currently provides a range of services that provide leisure and cultural opportunities for residents in, and visitors to, the borough. This includes:
- Three leisure centres (Horley, Tadworth and Donyngs (Redhill)), that we own and that are operated for us on behalf of Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) trading as 'Better'
 - The Harlequin Theatre and Cinema in Redhill
 - Three Community Centres (Banstead, Woodhatch and Horley) which offer a wide range of free or low cost leisure and cultural activities
 - Numerous parks and greenspaces, which provide a range of informal and formal sports provision, play areas, skate parks etc and also host other cultural and leisure events.
 - Allotments
 - Leisure activities targeting young people, including holiday activities, Surrey Youth Games and Star for the Night
7. In addition to these, we work collaboratively in partnerships with other organisations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to ensure that other leisure and cultural opportunities are available for our residents.

Key Information

Strategy scope and definitions

8. There is no one single definition of 'leisure' or of 'culture'. For the purposes of the Strategy, and drawing on definitions used by external bodies, 'leisure' is defined as activities that provide enjoyment - what people chose to do with their free time, with a particular focus on those activities that are done with the main purpose of enjoyment and personal enrichment. 'Culture' is defined as a particular type of leisure activity, that encompasses activities that express the cultural aspects of life, including art and historical collections and exhibitions, music, dance, literature, and theatre.
9. These definitions cut across a range of Council service areas. As such, the Strategy is not limited to the work of the Leisure & Intervention Service and Leisure & Culture

Executive Portfolio. It includes objectives that include the work of other service areas, including (but not limited to) the Greenspaces Team and Community Centres Team.

10. The Council is not the only provider of leisure and cultural services within the borough. As well as information about how the Council will provide services in the future, the Strategy therefore also explains how we will work in partnership to expand the overall offer for the benefit of borough residents and visitors.

Evidence base

11. A range of evidence has informed the development of the Strategy, and, in particular, the identification of objectives and outcomes. This has included:
 - Contextual data from external third party sources about the demographic and activity characteristics of our populations
 - Information about usage of the services the Council currently provides
 - External feedback on Council services, primarily via the LGA
 - Planning policy research including the draft playing pitch and sports facility studies commissioned to inform the forthcoming local plan review
12. The Strategy recognises an opportunity to further develop the Council's evidence base and therefore includes as an outcome a greater understanding of the needs of our residents and visitors, and how these are likely to change. This information will help inform future service planning.

Document structure

13. The proposed Leisure & Culture Strategy is included at Annex 1, and for conciseness its content will not be replicated in this covering report. However, in summary, key aspects of the document to note are as follows:
 - The overarching vision for leisure & cultural provision across the borough, which extends beyond the direct remit of the Council to encompass how resident and visitor needs are met 'in the round'.
 - Four objectives, covering participation, service provision and accessibility, working in partnership and funding council services
 - A range of outcomes for each objective, which will inform the development of service delivery / action plans. Strategy success will be measured against these outcomes.

Future service delivery models

14. Members will be aware that the Council currently outsources the running of our Leisure Centres to GLL, and runs the Harlequin Theatre 'in house'. The Strategy is not prescriptive about future service delivery models as these will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis and require options assessments and business cases; but care has been taken to ensure that the Strategy objectives and outcomes will be able to help inform the Council's assessment of the most appropriate delivery mechanisms for all our leisure and cultural services in the future.

Strategy implementation

15. As it is a high level strategy, Annex 1 does not include detailed operational or financial information, rather it is intended to guide the development of detailed implementation plans that together will deliver on the identified outcomes.
16. As the Strategy touches on the activity of various service areas, these plans may take different forms. They may be stand-alone, or may form part of by wider service delivery or business plans. Developed in consultation with relevant Executive member, implementation plans will identify actions, roles and responsibilities, delivery partners and funding mechanisms as appropriate as well as – where relevant – specific performance indicators. Examples of activities currently being scoped include:
 - Communications, marketing and signposting activities
 - Support packages for target groups such as care-leavers
 - Mapping of third party provision and relationship building with external providers
 - Increasing the use of council assets (including the Harlequin and our Greenspaces) for cultural and/or commercial activities
 - Reviewing built assets to ensure they remain fit for purpose
 - Determining the most appropriate future delivery model for our leisure centres
 - Arts development and partnerships with health providers
 - Promoting the borough as an attractive place for film/TV production
17. Progress with strategy implementation will be reviewed and reported annually, including via Portfolio Holder updates to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Options

18. The options available to the Executive are as follows:
 - Option 1: Approve the Leisure & Culture Strategy at Annex 1. This option is recommended. Having an up-to-date strategy in place will ensure clarity and transparency about what the Council is seeking to achieve through its leisure and culture activity and provide a clear framework for the development of service delivery / action plans.
 - Option 2: Request amendments to the Leisure & Culture Strategy at Annex 1 before it is approved. This option is not recommended. The strategy as presented has been subject to internal consultation with Executive members and service heads and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee; further delay may constrain or limit the ability of the Council to progress its activity in this area for the benefit of residents and visitors.
 - Option 3: Do not approve the Leisure & Culture Strategy. This option is not recommended. The Corporate Plan commits the Council to reviewing how it provides these services, and the strategy sets a clear framework for future activity. Further delay may constrain or limit the ability of the Council to progress its activity in this area for the benefit of residents and visitors.

Legal Implications

19. No legal implications have been identified as arising directly from the production or approval of this Strategy.
20. Legal and procurement advice will be sought in relation to the re-tendering of existing delivery contracts as appropriate.

Financial Implications

21. The 2023/24 revenue budget for Harlequin Theatre operating costs is set out in the table below.

	£000
Employee Costs	681.7
Supplies & Services	476.9
Income	(777.8)
Net Operating Cost	380.8

The approved budget for 2023/24 is based on the Theatre generating an additional £0.100 million net income.

22. The 2023/24 revenue budget for Leisure Services is set out in the table below.

	£000
Employee Costs	166.4
Supplies & Services	53.9
Income	(286.7)
Net Operating Cost	(66.5)

The approved budget for 2023/24 is based on the service delivering £0.083 million net savings and additional income.

23. No financial implications have been identified as arising directly from the production or approval of this Strategy.
24. The Strategy includes an objective specifically in relation to securing the financial sustainability of the Council's leisure and cultural services. This includes an increased focus on income generation to cover the costs of the services we provide. The Strategy also recognises that the Council will need to prioritise its resources to areas of most need and on initiatives and services that have the greatest impact and may wish to explore the introduction of new or innovative delivery models. The opportunity has also been identified for the increased use of external funding to benefit providers in the borough (including but not limited to the Council).
25. Progress on delivery against income targets will be reported in the usual way via the Council's quarterly financial reporting procedures.

26. The financial implications of individual projects and activities arising from more detailed delivery / action plans will also be assessed in the usual way, via options appraisals, the production of business cases and (as necessary) funding bids either 'in year' or as part of the annual service and financial planning process. This will include any future delivery partner procurement activity.

Equalities Implications

27. Under the Equality Act 2010 decision-makers have a duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This duty applies to all decisions made in the course of exercising the Council's public functions.
28. The proposed Leisure & Culture Strategy has, as its central vision, leisure and cultural services that are accessible to all. This includes those with protected characteristics and other vulnerabilities. The Strategy includes (under the second objective) a commitment to review and design services to , ensure they are delivered to increase accessibility, participation and inclusivity, with a view to achieving a leisure and cultural landscape in the borough that promotes and celebrates equality, the borough's diversity of people and cultures and their rich history.
29. As such, overall, the Strategy will have a positive impact on advancing equality of opportunity and good community relations. Individual projects and activities identified to secure the delivery of strategy outcomes will need to take into account the Council's equality duties: in the event that potential negative equality impacts are identified, controls and mitigation will be put in place to avoid or reduce these.

Communication Implications

30. The Strategy highlights the role of the Council in promoting its own services but also helping increase levels of participation in leisure and cultural activity amongst residents and visitors more generally.
31. Communications activity via a range of channels will be an important element of this and will build on the work that is already undertaken by relevant services in consultation with the Council's communications team. The Harlequin Theatre retains its own marketing resource. The Council's communications team will be consulted as part of the process of developing detailed delivery / action plans and budgets.

Environmental Sustainability Implications

32. The proposed Leisure & Culture Strategy identifies that the Council's leisure and cultural assets and services have a key role to play in achieving the Council's environmental sustainability objectives, and explains that environmental considerations will be at the forefront of decision making as the strategy is delivered. This will include the environmental sustainability of relevant built assets and products procured, but could (for example) also include the role of leisure & cultural activity in raising awareness about the environment and climate change.
33. Environmental considerations associated with individual actions arising from detailed delivery / action plans will be considered as part of the project

management, procurement and decision making processes in the usual way and in consultation with the Council's Sustainability Team.

Risk Management Considerations

34. No risk management implications have been identified. Service level risks will continue to be assessed and as necessary escalated via the usual quarterly review and reporting processes and procedures as set out in the corporate Risk Management Strategy and Methodology.

Other Implications

35. No other implications directly arising from the agreement of the Leisure & Cultural Strategy have been identified. Specific implications arising from the more detailed service delivery / action plans will be dealt with in accordance with established policies and procedures, including (as necessary) the Council's adopted project management framework and established service & financial planning processes.

Consultation

36. In developing the Strategy consultation has been carried out within the relevant service areas, with Heads of Service across the Council and with Executive members. This paper and the accompanying Annex will be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee prior to being brought forward to the Executive.
37. Proposals for service budgets and income targets for 2023/24 were prepared and consulted on in the usual way.
38. The Strategy itself includes outcomes in relation to securing a greater understanding of resident and visitor needs, understanding resident and customer satisfaction, the removal of barriers to participation and close partnership working, all of which will be secured via a combination of customer insight, joint working, consultation and engagement with a range of different stakeholders.

Policy Framework

39. The production of a Leisure & Culture Strategy is consistent with the Council's corporate plan for the period 2020 to 2025. Delivery of the Strategy will be a key consideration in the development of relevant delivery / action plans to ensure that residents and visitors continue to be able to access high quality leisure and culture services.

Background Powers

1. Corporate Plan 2025 - <https://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/rbbc2025>