


<p><b>Health and Wellbeing Board</b> Tuesday 21 February 2017</p>	
<p><b>Report of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets</b></p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Engagement Paper: emerging Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017 - 2027</b></p>	

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Debbie Jones, Corporate Director – Children’s
<b>Contact Officers</b>	Judith St John – Acting Divisional Director Sport, Leisure, Culture & Youth Thorsten Dreyer - Service Manager – Strategy, Performance & Resources
<b>Executive Key Decision?</b>	No

## Summary

The emerging Tower Hamlets Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017 – 2027 is being developed in alignment with the Council’s vision to make the borough a great place to live with healthy and supportive communities. The provision of high quality, accessible indoor sports facilities will contribute to the achievement of this vision, by supporting Tower Hamlets residents to live healthier lives in more cohesive and integrated communities.

The strategy is consistent with best practice guidance issued by the Mayor of London, Department of Communities and Local Government and Sport England and sets out the strategic direction in terms of how we might manage the impact of population growth on the provision of open spaces, contribute to sustainable development and address competing demands on parks and open spaces.

This engagement paper sets out the key findings informing the emerging strategy and seeks input from Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure the final strategy aligns full with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

## **Recommendations:**

The Health & Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

1. Note the key findings informing the emerging strategy as set out in section 3
2. Consider and comment on how the Health and Wellbeing Board can contribute to meeting the key challenges presented by the key findings, especially in identifying creative and innovative solutions to:
  - Increase, and address gaps in, provision of facilities both now and in the future.
  - Manage demand in the context of an increasing population
  - Make indoor sports facilities more accessible to local people, taking into account cultural, religious and physical inclusion needs as well as locations.

## **1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is not to seek a specific decision. The report seeks to engage the Health and Wellbeing Board in the development of the emerging strategy.

## **2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 No alternative options were considered as input from the Health and Wellbeing Board will ensure the strategy aligns more effectively.

## **3. DETAILS OF REPORT**

- 3.1 In the coming decade the borough is projected to see some of the most intense and sustained population growth in London, which will present challenges in how we meet the forecast need for additional social and community infrastructure, including publicly accessible indoor sports facilities.
- 3.2 The emerging Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017 - 2027 is informed by the findings of an assessment of the borough's current and projected needs, a condition and suitability survey of the council-owned network of indoor sports facilities, specifically commissioned market research, and feedback from community consultation.
- 3.3 The strategy takes into account all facilities in the borough, regardless of ownership, and also recognises facilities within a buffer zone (15 minute walk) from the borough boundary. Indoor sports facilities include sports halls, swimming pools and health and fitness gyms.
- 3.4 The strategy will provide an overall decision making framework for optimising facilities in the borough and has identified three draft strategic objectives which enable the council to explore options to work towards an ideal indoor sports facilities network:
- Objective One: Increase overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets
  - Objective Two: Provide indoor sports facilities that are consistent with best practice design guidance
  - Objective Three: Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities in Tower Hamlets
- 3.1 Broadly speaking, an ideal indoor sports facilities network for Tower Hamlets should:
- a. use available capital to reconfigure and consolidate facilities with a view to revenue saving without loss of capacity

- b. address gaps in provision now and in the future, in particular for swimming pools and sports halls
- c. have facilities located in locations where people will use them most and where they will support the ambitions set out in the Local Plan
- d. provide dry (gym/sports hall) facilities alongside all swimming pools in order to reduce the subsidy requirement
- e. focus additional sports hall capacity on school sites to maximise value for money, providing this is supported by the analysis and adequate community access can be secured through the development control process
- f. offer state of the art indoor sports facilities that are fully accessible to all residents, taking into account cultural, religious and physical inclusion needs
- g. ensure indoor sports facilities are designed to be operationally efficient (including energy efficiency and therefore carbon reducing)

3.5 The emerging strategy sits alongside the emerging Open Space Strategy with both of these strategies focusing on physical assets.

3.6 A forthcoming Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, which concentrates on the outcomes we want to improve on, including participation and sports development, will be brought to the Board for input.

3.7 National, regional and local policy and strategy has shaped and informed the emerging strategy, especially national and regional planning policies and guidance, and the evidence arising from the strategy will inform relevant sections of the emerging Local Plan.

3.8 The emerging strategy establishes evidence and guidance for future decisions and may lead to feasibility studies. However, it does not make recommendations about the management of council-owned facilities under the leisure management contract and pricing issues are also outside of the scope of the strategy.

3.9 Current ambitions for physical activity and sport at the national, regional and local level are:

- More people take up regular physical activity as a habit;
- Sporting clubs and institutions have the right supply and mix of facilities to further develop their respective disciplines;
- Resources allocated to indoor sports facilities provision are used in a more targeted, efficient and effective way;
- Communities have facilities that enable their members to come together in a more inclusive way;
- Access to facilities is improved for groups with historically low participation.

- 3.10 The strategy is intended to align with and support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, particularly the priority 'Creating a Healthier Place' which highlights the impact that the environment, local infrastructure and access to open spaces have on health and wellbeing and the links with planning and development in the borough.

Residents in the borough have access to a range of indoor sports facilities operated by a number of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. In some cases indoor sports facilities are offered as part of a wider service offer to residents, for example, within a community centre or school.

- 3.11 The demographic make-up of the local population and their sport and physical activity participation patterns have an impact on the nature of future indoor sports facilities provision. The borough underpinning the strategy highlights some key findings, including:

- Slightly higher rate of severe disability in the working age population in the borough (4.1%) compared to the average in London (3.4%) and England (3.6%), underlining the importance of accessibility in optimising and planning of facilities.
- Challenges around participation rates are noted, especially for women, ethnic minority groups and older people and the relationship between household income and levels of physical activity, highlighting the need to ensure that indoor sports facilities are accessible and suitable to increase participation.
- There are some pockets of significant social and economic deprivation within the borough which overlap with areas of low participation in sport and physical activity identified by Sport England.
- 25.3% of 10-11 year olds in the borough are obese (9<sup>th</sup> highest in the country) although levels have plateaued over the past three years.

- 3.12 The strategy provides the necessary evidence and guidance on current supply and condition of publicly accessible indoor sports facilities, how future demand might be addressed and suggests a process to prioritise potential investment.

#### **4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications emanating from this report. Input is sought from the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure both strategies are aligned. As the emerging strategy is developed the financial implications of the areas identified both as individual proposals and in aggregate will need to be assessed and included as part of the Council's capital strategy to determine how the priorities for facilities improvements sits alongside the Council's other capital aspirations together with an associated financing strategy that considers the overall affordability of the Council's capital needs.

## **5. LEGAL COMMENTS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications emanating from this report as it seeks to engage with the Health and Wellbeing Board in the development of the emerging Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017 - 2027.

## **6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The main purpose of the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy is to ensure continued access to high quality indoor sports facilities to all sections of the community in the context of a rapidly growing population and subsequent increased demand on existing indoor sports facilities. As such it is consistent with the Council's duties to promote equality in all protected characteristics.
- 6.2 Indoor sports facilities provide one of the main ways Tower Hamlets' residents can engage with healthier lifestyles and the impact of this service infrastructure on tackling health inequalities and community integration issues cannot be under estimated. Recognising the need to provide facilities in the most accessible locations for all residents, the Strategy focuses recommends on the provision of potential facilities in town centre locations and close to transport hubs.
- 6.3 The emerging strategy aims to address geographical deficiencies in the distribution of indoor sports facilities and recognises that gaps in the network correlate to some extent with areas of lower levels of participation in physical activity. It identifies such areas as key locations for potential facilities in order to positively impact on participation levels.

## **7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy will contain an important investment prioritisation framework to help make the Council's network of indoor sports facilities more operationally efficient while continuing to meet the needs of residents. The strategy guides future decisions on indoor sports facilities to improve economic efficiency. This is directly supportive of the Council's best value responsibilities

## **8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

- 8.1 Many indoor sports facilities by their very nature have high energy demands. The emerging Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy identifies the need to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council's indoor sports facilities where possible. Energy surveys are regularly undertaken to underpin the strategic objective to make Tower Hamlet's indoor sports facilities more operationally efficient and therefore carbon reducing.

## **9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The emerging strategy will propose high level options to address the draft objectives. Risk assessments will need to be carried out at the point of progressing these options.

## **10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Indoor sports facilities and other community infrastructure are recognised to have a positive effect in improving rates of crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly among youth. Sport England notes that when sporting participation is increased among targeted populations; youth offending can fall.

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### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

#### **Linked Report**

- None

#### **Appendices**

- None

#### **Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)**

#### **List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

- None

#### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Thorsten Dreyer,  
Service Manager for Strategy, Performance & Resources, LBTH  
[Thorsten.Dreyer@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Thorsten.Dreyer@towerhamlets.gov.uk)