



## REPORT TO THE MEETING OF CABINET – 19 JUNE 2024

### PORTFOLIO: SPECIAL PROJECTS & ASSETS – CLLR T GIBSON

### REPORT FROM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR RECREATION

### RECREATION SERVICE FUNDING ACHIEVEMENTS

#### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To highlight the Council's recent success in securing external funding to deliver health and wellbeing projects for the benefit of the local community.

#### 2 LINKS TO COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 These projects directly link with the Council's Environment and People and Place objectives and outcomes. The external funding will be used to deliver recreational programmes that promote health and wellbeing. Further external funding has also been secured to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's leisure centres in order to make them more environmentally sustainable.

#### 3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet **RESOLVES**

To note the contents of the report setting out details of the external funding that has been secured and the benefits to the local community that it will deliver.

#### 4 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 The Council has proactively sought and submitted targeted funding applications to support its recreational services, communities and wider place-based partnerships. These applications align with the Council's corporate priorities and have secured strategic investments for the benefit of residents and the wider community.

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4.2 The specific initiatives are set out below.

## 5 RECREATIONAL FUNDING

### Public Health Accelerator Bid (PHAB)

- 5.1 The Council secured £227,000 in May 2024 to be delivered over two years from Essex County Council's (PHAB) programme to launch the 'Find Your Active Referral Campaign'. This project will further the county-wide "Find Your Active" initiative led by Active Essex within Castle Point, complementing the Active Essex Fit for the Future Strategy and Sport England's "Uniting the Movement" strategy. To align with these the Council will evolve the Council's recreational facilities, including leisure centres, community halls and open spaces into Active Wellbeing hubs that aim to better address the specific health and wellbeing needs of our diverse communities.
- 5.2 The project will prioritise outreach to those with the greatest health needs and those currently disengaged from the Council's existing recreational offering. Two new Wellbeing Ambassador positions will be created to drive community engagement who will reach out into our communities to build relationships and to support those who need our services the most. They'll connect with residents in their communities to understand their unique needs and guide them towards tailored resources within our recreational facilities and open spaces that can make a difference.
- 5.3 The project will focus on understanding community needs, addressing health inequalities and providing tailored activities co-designed with our communities in mind with dedicated resources to improve the mental and physical health of our communities. With a target of engaging 2,500 residents over two years, the initiative aims to make better use of all community assets and promotes preventative health measures.

### Football Association (FA)

- 5.4 The Council has invested £444,000 to renovate the 3G football pitch at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre, with completion expected by July 2024.
- 5.5 To assist with the renovation of the 3G football pitch, the Council has secured an FA small grant of £4,800 to contribute to the purchase of new football goals.

### Sport England Swimming Pool Support fund

- 5.6 The Council has successfully secured £98,800 in match funding from Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund. This nationwide initiative, with £60 million in total, was created in response to rising energy costs and supports 325 pools across the UK.
- 5.7 This funding will contribute towards the £197,600 investment required to install solar panels on the swimming pool roof at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre. This project is estimated to reduce energy consumption by 143,000

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kWh per year at the site, resulting in an estimated £30,000 in annual utility savings.

- 5.8 The Council has appointed Concertus to manage the installation, with an anticipated completion date in late 2024.

### **Sport England Place Expansion (SEPE) Development Award Submission**

- 5.9 The Sport England Place Expansion (SEPE) submitted a development grant award totalling £251,850 following the selection of Canvey Island as one of the locations to receive a share of £190 million in funding to improve physical activity in England. This exciting initiative will focus on areas of greatest need to make a real difference in the community.

This initial funding will be used to:

- Increase understanding of the community's specific needs;
- Develop strong evaluation and learning methods;
- Provide leadership development opportunities;
- Develop capacity with key partners to develop the project;
- Support early test projects; and
- Fund small-scale programs for youth and older adults.

- 5.10 The Sport England Place Partnership submitted the development award application in April 2024, with a decision expected in June 2024. During the development phase a larger funding application of £1m - £1.6m will be developed and submitted to deliver the place expansion over the next 3 to 4 years.

- 5.11 Place expansion aims to transform local systems by partnering with communities to create programs and facilities that truly meet their needs. With Sport England's support, this project will significantly enhance opportunities in the Borough, particularly in Canvey Island, which includes some of England's most deprived areas. We will apply lessons learned from this project to drive Place Expansion initiatives across the entire Borough, maximising benefits for all our communities.

## **6 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There is a risk of not successfully recruiting the two proposed Wellbeing Ambassadors required to deliver the PHAB project. Furthermore, the funding received may not be sufficient to cover the costs associated with the positions after job evaluation.

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- 6.2 The installation of solar panels may not be completed within the timeframe required to receive funding by March 2025. Additionally, the actual installation costs and return on investment may deviate from initial estimates. Disruptions to pool users at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre are also possible during installation.
- 6.3 Sport England may not approve the initial development grant submission. This would necessitate the preparation of a new submission, leading to delays in Place Expansion efforts.
- 6.4 These risks have been assessed and mitigation risk strategies are in place to minimise any potential disruptions to the projects.

## **7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Installing solar panels at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre will reduce the Council's carbon footprint by circa 28,500 kg per year and cut energy consumption by circa 148,000 kWh annually, helping the Council decarbonise its operations.

## **8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 8.2 Where it is possible to do so under the terms of any funding received, the Council will seek to recover the maximum allowable contribution towards its overheads, whilst recovery of the direct costs of implementation will also be sought where possible.
- 8.3 Using the delegations within the Council's Financial Regulations, the Section 151 Officer will ensure that the Council's budgets properly reflect the funding being received.
- 8.4 The match funding required for the solar panels at Waterside will be funded from the Council's Carbon Reduction reserve and provision for this was made as part of the budget setting process.

## **9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The PHAB funding bid will enable the Council to recruit two new wellbeing ambassadors within the Council's Recreational Services. This report does not identify any further human resource implications.

## **11 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 An equality impact assessment has not been completed as there is no decision to be made.

Mr Shane Williams  
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**Background Papers:-**

None.

For further information please contact Mr Shane Williams on:-

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