

## **Appendix 1**

### **Portsmouth City Council Sports Facility Strategy 2017-2027**

#### **Executive Summary**

##### **Background**

This Sports Facility Strategy is one of three being developed for the city of Portsmouth, providing an evidence base for the Portsmouth Plan in respect of indoor and outdoor sports facilities and open space.

Portsmouth is a largely flat, compact city benefiting from the South's moderate climate, which makes it ideal for activities such as running and cycling, as well as major events such as the city's triathlon. Portsmouth has a range of great sporting facilities, and a diverse range of sports festivals and events, including cycling and sailing. There are already many sporting events that add to the identity of Portsmouth as a Great Waterfront City, such as the Great South Run. In 2015 and 2016, these were augmented by America's Cup World Series events, world class sailing regattas that promoted Portsmouth's international profile.

Facilitating opportunities for sports participation is crucial to supporting active lifestyles. The city is ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> most deprived out of 326 local authorities in England (IMD, 2015) although there are specific wards in the city where deprivation is much higher. In Charles Dickens ward, for example, more than 35% of the population is considered to be income deprived. We also know that in general, the health of people in Portsmouth is worse than the rest of England, and there are significant health inequalities in the city. The provision of high quality, accessible sports facilities and opportunities to be physically active have a role to play in addressing local health inequalities.

The purpose in developing the Sports Facility Strategy is to inform, provide evidence for and make recommendations in relation to:

- Planning policies
- Allocation of money collected through financial contributions from developers towards provision of open space and facilities
- Applications for external funding for improvements to existing facilities and new projects; and
- A strategy and prioritised action plan, including a vision, objectives and recommendations on future provision, funding and management of sports and recreation facilities in the city.

The key local drivers are:

- The need for an evidence base to aid planning and decision-making, in the light of future projected population growth
- The changing role of the local authority in relation to the Public Health agenda
- The need to be more competitive and commercial as the leisure industry changes and given PCC's revenue position
- To ensure value for money in provision of city council leisure services

- Describing a vision for the future of aging facilities, such as the Pyramids and Eastney swimming facilities
- The need to grow opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity in inner city areas, taking account of low income levels
- Identifying the future role of education sites in providing sport and leisure facilities .

It is clear that the council must manage on much less funding from Government than in previous years. Increased financial pressures are likely to result from changes to welfare benefits, greater demand for social care and the duty to improve the public's health. The strategy must contribute to addressing health inequalities by promoting participation in sport and physical activity, but also take into account the constraints on local authority budgets and future needs, so that any action plan is deliverable and sustainable.

### **Methodology and scope**

The Strategy has been developed using the Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG), published in 2014. The scope of the work has included analysis of provision in the city for:

- Sports Halls
- Swimming Pools
- Health and Fitness
- Indoor Tennis
- Squash
- Table Tennis
- Gymnastics
- Indoor Bowls

In addition to purpose built facilities, consideration is given to the role in meeting local need of community assets (including community halls) and education facilities. The Strategy covers the administrative area of Portsmouth, but references areas outside the city boundaries as appropriate. The development of the strategy has been informed and influenced by a number of other key national and local strategies and policies, including:

- National planning policy framework
- Sport England Strategy 2016 "Towards an Active Nation"
- A new strategy for sport - Department of Culture, Media and Sport
- The Portsmouth Plan
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (and associated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)
- Children's Trust Plan
- Local Transport Plan
- Population profiles and projections

Taken together, these policies identify that:

- Portsmouth is a densely populated city
- There is a higher proportion of young people in the city than the national average (as a consequence of the university) and a growing number of older people (aged 65 and above).

- There are significant health inequalities by area and gender; with particular need concentrated in the north-west and centre of the city.
- Sport participation rates in the city - including in clubs, tuition and coaching - are below national averages amongst adults, and female participation has declined.
- Satisfaction with local sports provision has declines, and is consistently below regional and national averages.

### **Existing facility provision**

The current level and nature of facility provision in Portsmouth has been assessed, and compared with information held in other sources, including the Active Places database, the Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) and the local sports profile data provided by Sport England. This includes consideration of:

- Quantity - how many of each type of facility are there?
- Quality - the age and condition of facilities
- Accessibility - who owns and operates the facilities, facility location and catchment areas
- Availability - whether the facilities are available to all residents, and whether there is pay and play access.

Quality audits, comprising an independent visual assessment of the quality and condition of facilities were undertaken in accordance with a methodology developed by Sport England.

Consultation was undertaken with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to identify their views on the need for sports hall provision in Portsmouth, and sports clubs active in the city. Supply and demand analysis (including projected future demand) has been undertaken, using methodologies appropriate to the nature of facility in question.

The key conclusions arising from this work are:

#### Sports Halls

There are 39 sport and activity halls in the city, over 26 sites. 23 of these are "strategic sized" halls (i.e. 3 courts or more). However, only 13 of these provide for pay and play access; and areas in the north and north east of the city are outside a 20 minute drive time of a pay and play, community accessible facility.

Geographically, strategic size sports halls are distributed across the city, with the majority on education sites with limited daytime access. There is one formal dual-use arrangement in place. There are 16 activity halls, of which 7 offer pay and play access; 9 offer community access, but tend to be used by clubs and organisations. There are also a number of community centres in the city which are used for a wide range of cultural, leisure and social uses.

The FPM identifies a very slight undersupply of badminton courts in the city (-0.38), but when factors such as community access are taken into account this undersupply increases to -9.64 courts for the current population.

In relation to sports halls, the main issues that need to be addressed are accessibility (both in terms of location and times of availability ) and facility quality.

## Swimming Pools

There are 20 pools in the city, over 14 sites (main pools, learner pools, leisure pools and lidos). 7 of these are strategic sized (6 lane x 20m+). The majority of the city's residents have pay and play access to these sites within a 20 minute drive-time, with the exception of residents in the extreme north and north east. Of the 20 pools, a number of these are operated by BH Live on behalf of Portsmouth City Council.

Two of these facilities - Eastney Swimming Pool and the Pyramids - are ageing. Eastney was built in 1904 - at 112 years old, this will need extensive refurbishment or replacement in the short to medium term. The Pyramids is now 28 years old and needs consideration given its age and condition. Pools on education sites are also ageing, although there is potential to further improve the recently refurbished St Edmund's site.

The FPM identifies an over-supply of water space in the city, of around +232.27 sq m (equivalent to just over one 25m pool with four lanes). However, if the water space available only for sports clubs/community associations use, and that provided commercially (eg. membership only pools) is excluded, then the amount of community accessible water space reduces significantly to below what the current population demands, and what will be demanded in the future (by around three 25m pools with 4 lanes). This is significant given the profile of the local community, where many residents may find it difficult to sustain a membership of a private organisation.

NGBs and local clubs raise a number of operational issues - mainly that despite existing levels of water space in the city, clubs want more time and need more time if they are to increase their membership. This is identified as a key issue for water polo, swimming clubs and synchronised swimming. However, there is limited potential to increase capacity at existing pools, given the existing levels of usage. This might be helped by some investment in changing rooms on some sites to improve community facilities, and consideration of programming at existing sites.

## Health and fitness

There are 441 pay and play community accessible fitness stations in Portsmouth, which represents an undersupply for the current population of -166 stations. However, given the increased level of relatively low-cost pay and play commercial provision in the city, the current undersupply is likely to be less than this figure; although without ensuring there are more affordable pay and play community accessible fitness stations in the city, the under-supply will increase as the population grows.

There are 33 studios in the city, the majority of which are provided as part of a health and fitness offer within other facilities. 33% of these are provided by commercial operators also operating commercial fitness suites, and a number are on non-community accessible education sites.

NGB feedback demonstrated that there is a need to continue to grow and develop existing boxing clubs in the city, given their potential to address inactivity in some of the more deprived areas of Portsmouth; and also a need to ensure that martial arts clubs have access to good quality studios/small hall facilities, appropriate for the sport and its future development in the city.

## Other provision

There are 25 squash courts over 9 sites in the Portsmouth. The quality of existing courts is generally of a reasonable to good standard, although all courts are now ageing. There are no squash clubs with their own facilities in the city, and the only pay and play community accessible glass-back courts are at the Mountbatten Centre and Spinnaker Sports Centre (although these are likely to be replaced as part of the redevelopment of new sports facilities for the University). The NGB would like to see an increase in provision, as they believe there is significant potential to grow the sport in the city. The NGB would like to have a stronger partnership with the authority to achieve this.

Portsmouth is very well-served by indoor tennis facilities, which are in good condition. The facilities are available for pay and play bookings, as well as lessons, coaching, league and club use. Demand for usage is high, but the Lawn Tennis Association has not identified the need for any additional courts.

There is one main and dedicated indoor bowling facility at the Victory Indoor Bowling Centre, which has six indoor rinks. The facilities are well-used by a local club which has the potential to grow and develop further. However, the facility is ageing, and needs investment to improve the quality and address some issues with plant. It is an important sport to encourage, given the potential to reach older people in the population, both as physical activity and to counter social isolation. The NGB identifies that as long as current levels of provision are maintained, this should meet current and future demand.

There is one main athletics track in the city - adjacent to the Mountbatten centre. It is an ageing facility, and although there is sufficient provision to meet demand, the quality of the track is becoming an issue.

Gymnastics is a very active sport in the city, with several clubs, some of which also incorporate trampolining. The Portsmouth Gymnastics Centre is an excellent facility providing for club use, coaching, and lessons, as well as competitions. Other non-purpose built facilities are used across the city, given the high demand for the sport. There is a specific demand for additional trampolining facilities in the city.

There are no dedicated table tennis facilities in Portsmouth, but the sport is played competitively at a number of venues across the city. Table Tennis England has not identified a need for additional facilities in the city, but does identify the need to retain existing facilities, given the significant local participation in the sport (which is notably growing at junior level).

### **Principles for future provision**

In terms of developing a strategy for future provision, there are two overarching principles that should guide this:

- Ensure all residents in all areas of Portsmouth have pay and play access to good quality local accessible and affordable provision
- Ensure that public money is invested strategically to ensure economic viability and sustainability of provision.

This will be achieved through:

- Ensuring that existing, and any new, sports facilities on education sites provide a balance of opportunities for community access - both pay and play and club use
- Replacing and refurbishing ageing facilities where updated provision is required - and all new and refurbished provision should be designed and developed based on Sport England and NGB guidance and be fully inclusive.
- Considering opportunities to rationalise provision where new, fit for purpose facilities can replace or improve existing buildings (but maintain at least current levels of provision in areas of undersupply).
- Making better use of existing facilities
- Investing strategically in existing provision to improve quality
- Where possible, making facilities available closer to where people live, with a focus on improving access to multi-purpose halls.

These principles have guided the formulation of recommendations to respond to the findings of site audits, consultation and policy analysis.

### **Recommendations**

The work undertaken has resulted in recommendations for a 10-point strategy for Indoor Facilities in Portsmouth:

1. PCC and partners to prioritise provision and access to sports halls to address identified need for provision - this should include extending pay and play access to existing sports halls on education sites
2. PCC and partners work to develop and implement Community Use Agreements (including with local authority maintained schools and other education providers) to ensure a better balance of pay and play use and club use.
3. PCC and partners address the projected undersupply of swimming pool provision in the city through a package of measures including considering options for replacement of older facilities; extension of community use agreements; widening pay and play access to commercial sites; and considering programming of current capacity to ensure it is used most effectively and with regard to needs of clubs.
4. PCC and partners to facilitate increased access to pay and play fitness and studio facilities/space where studio activities can take place e.g. community halls
5. Ensure current levels of squash courts are retained and ageing provision is invested in.
6. Work with gymnastics clubs and NGB over future provision of dedicated gymnastics and trampolining facilities, with a focus on additional sports hall time and space for trampolining.
7. Work with NGB and Victory Indoor Bowling Club to further develop the Club and facilitate investment in indoor bowling facilities.
8. Work with boxing clubs to develop appropriate leasing arrangements for facilities
9. Work with martial arts clubs to develop improved access to available hall space.
10. Work to retain and improve watersports centre provision in the city.

This strategy will be supported by additional strategies in relation to sport and physical activity in the city, including the Playing Pitch Strategy due for completion later in 2017. A detailed action plan is in place setting out how the recommendations can be implemented. The implementation of the

strategy will be monitored on a regular basis, and the strategy will be reviewed and refreshed at five-yearly intervals.