

Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Strategy and Action Plan



2016 – 2036

Report produced on behalf of Chelmsford City Council by Leisure and the Environment in
association with Ethos Environmental Planning

ethos
Environmental Planning



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Glossary of Terms

Term		Meaning
ANOG		Assessment of Needs and Opportunities Guide
APP		Active People Power
APS		Active People Survey
FPM		Facility Planning Model
H&FS		Health & Fitness Suites
NCAAP		North Chelmsford Action Area Plan
SFC		Sports Facility Calculator

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 This is one six reports provided within the overall Chelmsford Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study. The six reports are:

- Chelmsford Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report (Local Needs Assessment);
- Chelmsford Open Space Study (comprising a main report and six area profiles);
- Chelmsford Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Needs Assessment (Part A, B and C);
- Chelmsford Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy and Action Plan - Part D of the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Needs Assessment);
- Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Sport Needs Assessment; and the
- Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Strategy and Action Plan (this report).

1.1.2 This document is based on a substantial needs assessment (The Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Sports Needs Assessment) and associated Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report undertaken for the City Council, and following recognised national guidance.

1.1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to set out policies to help enable communities to access high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation. These policies need to be based on a thorough understanding of local needs for such facilities and opportunities available for new provision. The Government's public health initiatives have seen local authorities assume more responsibility for improving levels of public health. Studies show that living a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of developing chronic disease, improves quality of life and increases life expectancy. The Council is one of several key stakeholders with responsibilities that influence mental and physical wellbeing. The Council is therefore now aiming to support its residents and encourage health improvements by implementing the new Public Health Strategy alongside the Council's other policies and strategies.

1.1.4 Other national policy and strategies also point to the critical role of local authorities in both providing and facilitating new and improved sports provision to provide not just sports but also wider recreation and health benefits.

1.2 Remit

1.2.1 The remit of this strategy covers: Indoor Swimming Pools; Sports Halls; Health & Fitness Suites; Indoor Bowls; Indoor Tennis; Athletics; Studios; Squash; Village and Community Halls. Specific sports are also dealt with where they require one or more of the above facilities.

1.3 Application, method and governance

1.3.1 The Strategy and Action Plan will be used to inform the preparation of statutory planning policy, and supplementary planning documents. It can be used in the applying the Community Infrastructure Levy and developing Section 106 agreements. The detailed information can also be used to inform other investment decisions on the part of both the Council, and its partners; and, developing bids for external funding.

1.3.2 The Strategy and Action Plan, as well as the underpinning Needs Assessment follows national guidance produced by Sport England, and consultation with the community and sports clubs and organisations has been integral to the project.

1.3.3 The report is made up of the following sections:

- A summary of the context for preparing this strategy;
- A summary of the main issues that have been identified as affecting each type of facility, now and in the coming years;
- The strategic vision, aims and recommendations to guide the actions and decisions of the City Council and its partners over the coming years (The Strategy);
- A facility specific schedule of recommendations (The Action Plan); and,
- How the Strategy should be kept up-to-date, and its implementation resourced.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 General

2.1.1 An understanding of the population, local strategic context and sports participation trends is essential in order to ensure that facility provision is tailored to the characteristics, profile and aspirations for the local area.

2.1.2 The information provided in sections 2.2 and 2.3 below has been taken from the context section (section 2) of the Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Sports Needs Assessment Chelmsford Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Needs Assessment, which should be referred to for more detail.

2.2 Population

2.2.1 As at 2015 Chelmsford City Council area was estimated to have a population of 172,370. This figure is based upon population projections commissioned by the City Council. The same projections calculate that by the year 2036 the population will have increased 195,880. This figure is itself only based upon previous trends, and does not necessarily take into account the impact of planned new residential growth yet to be determined. This growth will affect the local demography in different ways. The following diagram shows the impact it is likely to have on key age groups.

2.3 Issues

2.3.1 The new government strategy 'Sporting Future – A new strategy for an active nation', identifies the importance of addressing flat-lining levels of participation in sports, and it has redefined ways of measuring success for sport in respect of physical and mental health and well-being, individual development, social and community development, economic development. Public investment in sport will reach children as young as five years. Funding will also be targeted at groups who have low participation rates to encourage those who do not take part in sport and physical activity to get involved. This includes supporting women, disabled people, those in lower socio-economic groups and older people.

2.3.2 In response to the government's strategy, Sport England's new strategy vision is that that everyone in England, regardless of age, background or ability, feels able to take part in sport or activity. Sport England's new vision and its supporting aims will therefore contribute to achieving the government's strategy.

2.3.3 In terms of participation in sport and active recreation, the local authority has many things in its favour. The general affluence of the population facilitates relatively high levels of participation within the local population. The needs assessment also identified a higher than average healthy and affluent population with a high propensity for exercise. However, there are geographical pockets within the urban area that exhibit quite high levels of economic and social deprivation, and where levels of participation in sport and active recreation are

depressed as a consequence. Improving prospects for participating should be a priority for the local authority and its partners in these areas, with the consequent health and economic benefits.

2.3.4 The above should be major determinants in influencing local planning for sport and active recreation. In addition to the above, the following will influence demand into the foreseeable future:

- A growing population, which may be further accentuated by planned new residential growth that has not yet been allocated.
- The strong representation within the local population of adult age groups with characteristics that make them more likely to take part in sport and active recreation;
- High existing levels of regular participation compared with the national averages, which suggest that any further growth in participation levels will develop an already strong base.
- The character of the local authority's population continues to change and this has a profound effect on the types of sport, play and leisure activity appealing to local people
- The Council is working in a financially challenging environment- this brings problems, but it also presents a clear opportunity for reviewing and transforming the Council's leisure service and facilities it operates. Similarly, many agencies, groups and organisations have shared aspirations in respect of the 'health agenda' and great potential exists for collaboration between public and voluntary sectors, as well as social and commercial enterprises to realise these aspirations.
- The importance of the wider agenda on physical activity/ prevention/ health and wellbeing, and the need for the City Council and its partners to embrace this in respect to the actions in this strategy.

2.4 A remit that is based on meeting Community Needs, and providing Community Use

2.4.1 Fundamentally, this strategy seeks to create a facility base that meets community needs: facilities best placed to meet such needs have to provide certain conditions to allow community use to flourish. At its simplest 'community use' is a term that is used to describe the extent to which a given sport or recreation facility is available for use by members of the general community- either on a pay-as-you go informal basis, or as part of an organised club or group.

2.4.2 In practice, the above definition of community use will include a wide range of management regimes whose admission policies will span informal 'pay-as-you-go' access, by the general community; and, through to use by organised clubs and groups by booking or longer-term agreements etc. Whether individual facilities are considered to be available for significant community use depends of several factors, including:

- Type of facility (and whether its size and design might be of use to the community at large, or at least significant groups within the community);
- The cost of using facilities, and whether these might generally be considered to be affordable;
- The times and days of availability (times of most demand for the general community are likely to be in the evenings and at the weekends, as well as during mid-week lunchtime (a popular for people at work); and,
- The extent to which such use by the community is 'assured' over the longer-term.

2.4.3 In terms of utility for the general community facilities will differ because of their varying scale, location, and management/pricing policies.

3.0 KEY ISSUES

3.1 General

3.1.1 The following is a summary of the key issues taken from the technical report 'Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Sports Needs Assessment'. The report was prepared to inform the preparation of this strategy and action plan. There are both general and facility-specific issues in this respect.

3.1.2 There are some general points that impact upon all the facilities covered by this document, and the principal ones are:

- Potential rapid population change within the local authority, that will be fuelled largely by additional planned housing growth.
- The need to anticipate and meet the needs of this growing and changing population, which will greatly depend on providing and improving provision where geographically relevant to the locations of this planned new growth.
- The existing high levels of participation in many sports, relative to other parts of the country, and the challenge in continuing to sustain these levels, whilst also catering for new demands.
- Getting more children into sport, as well as those groups within society who traditionally have been less physically active than other sections of the population. This is the challenge now set by national policy.

3.2 Key issues and options for indoor swimming pools

3.2.1 Paragraph 12.3 and Table 15 of the Needs Assessment suggest a local standard for the provision of indoor swimming pools. If the quantitative component of the outline standard was applied to the projected population growth between now and 2036 it suggests that the additional demand generated would lead to a need for an extra **251 sq.m. of water space-around the equivalent of a 25m x 4 lane pool.**

3.2.2 The size and location of population growth up to 2036 is still not clearly known (other than the NCAAP up to 2026, for which sports infrastructure has already been committed). This lack of current certainty over the location of longer-term growth allocations impacts upon the extent to which the recommendations of this report can be geographically specific. It is important for the future coordination of population growth and facility infrastructure that the above scale of additional demand be recognized in the planning of improved indoor swimming pool provision. However, the way in which it might be reflected in new and/or improved provision could vary markedly.

3.2.3 For example:

- If, say, additional major new housing provision is likely to be allocated on the northern urban edge of Chelmsford, a new swimming pool in that location would not only serve the needs of new residents, but also expand the catchment coverage of pools in

secured community use, so that more of the rural part of the local authority is covered by this catchment.

- Alternatively, if residents generally living in the outlying parts of the local authority have a good level of access to pool space in neighbouring authorities, a strong case can be made for expanding/improving provision at an existing venue within or close to the Chelmsford urban area (such as the Riverside facility), as this would have the biggest impact to satisfy demand. This would also be consistent with the growing national trend to operate one major central pool facility in an area rather than have several satellite community pools.
- Alternatively, existing provision at education sites might be improved and, or expanded, and an appropriate level of assured community use be established.

3.2.4 In the longer term, the precise location of new development is not known. However, if there is an option for neighbouring local authorities to 'share' their growth allocations in developments that fringe local authority boundaries then there is the opportunity for local authorities to cooperate in the planning of new major sports facilities that are likely to serve the needs of residents in more than one local authority area.

3.2.5 The proposed new pool complex at Riverside is likely to incorporate a 25m x 10-lane pool (with a flexible movable floor), a learner pool and splash area. This will offer considerable benefits and will increase the capacity at Riverside. This is important given the unsecured community use of school pools and the likely future population growth to 2036.

3.2.6 With regard to the redesign of the existing Riverside main pool as part of the refurbishment, it will be important to take into account the resident swimming club's needs given that it has sections covering a wide variety of activities, including water polo and synchronised swimming. These are activities that can be accommodated relatively inexpensively in a modern pool of conventional dimensions. The Club do not have a diving section.

3.2.7 A separate diving club exists at Riverside (approx. 20 members) and the 1m, 3, and 5m boards are used for diving lessons (approx. 50 people) and for casual users at the pool (estimated at 12,800 visits per annum). Despite representations by the diving club (and support by the sub-aqua club) the Council has decided to not proceed with a replacement diving facility on the grounds of capital/revenue cost versus the relatively small number of diving users and given the proximity of existing strategic provision.

3.2.8 Other than the proposed overhaul of facilities at the Riverside complex, there is no evidence of other planned improvements to local sports provision that will include new and/or improved swimming facilities. Within the education sector there are plans for indoor sports facilities at certain education campuses, but these currently do not seem to include provision for new or improved swimming facilities. Additional population growth in Chelmsford may therefore lead to additional demand by schools to acquire time at local authority venues in order to fulfil their curriculum requirements.

3.2.9 There is a degree of drive-time access to several key venues in neighbouring local authorities. However, what is not clear is the extent to which these venues have the capacity to absorb such use. Sport England data suggest that there may be aggregated spare capacity at pools across the local authority. More effective targeting of unexploited space could help meet the need for extra water space generated by the forecast population change.

3.3 Key Issues and Options for Sports Halls

3.3.1 All the evidence suggests that there is no outright shortage of sports halls to meet the resident populations needs, but that the distribution of these facilities may leave some outlying parts of the local authority with less easy access to larger such facilities.

3.3.2 The collective benefit of the sports halls stock is somewhat dissipated because of separate ownership, management and access arrangements for community use across the sports hall sites. Better co-ordination of programming across venues could result in reducing the capacity used at peak times. There could therefore be a more coordinated approach to management, type of use and programming of the existing sports halls across all providers - so as to get more effective use out of the existing stock.

3.3.3 The evidence of the Needs Assessment shows that the use of sports halls can be very diverse and will change over time. This complicates decisions on what the supply and type of provision should be in the future. Decisions should be based on these changing trends and their longevity. Also how the provision and programming of sports halls can meet wider Council health-related objectives. Future provision could be for a flexible space that can accommodate a range of dance and fitness/exercise classes and not actual traditional sports halls.

3.3.4 In the absence of easy access to conventional sports halls, venues such as village and community halls can have great local value in hosting a range of local activities. The planning of future sports facilities should not therefore be in isolation from consideration of the location and utility of these smaller venues.

3.3.5 The following indicates future potential changes in the stock, which will be spread over different sectoral providers.

Table 1: Education sector – plans for indoor sports facilities

Location	Facility plans and aspirations
Anglia Ruskin University	Planning expansion of indoor facilities to include viewing area to sports hall, bigger gym (250sqm) and additional dance studio space. At early stages. The University would like to install outdoor space on or near the campus – 3G or multi-use space big enough for teams to train on.
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	Planning permission has been sought for a new sports complex. Funding is currently being raised to support the plans.
King Edwards VI Grammar School	The School is applying for grant for sports hall which then could be used for community use.
Greater Beaulieu Park School	A proposed 4 court sports hall is to be constructed within a new academy school to be opened around 2019 with secured community access to meet the demand from new housing development.

3.3.6 Paragraph 12.3 and Table 15 of the Needs Assessment suggest a local standard for the provision of sports halls. If the quantitative component of the outline standard is applied to the projected population growth between now and 2036 it suggests that the additional demand generated would lead to a **need for an extra 1.6 x 4-court sports halls (6.6 courts)**. It is noted that the NCAAP plan makes provision for a 'dry' sports centre, and this can be offset against the above figure.

3.3.7 The size and location of population growth up to 2036 is still not clearly known (other than the NCAAP up to 2026, for which sports infrastructure has already been committed). This lack of current certainty over the location of longer-term growth allocations impacts upon the extent to which the recommendations of this report can be geographically specific. It is important for the future coordination of population growth and facility infrastructure that the scale of potential additional demand be recognised. However, the way in which it might be reflected in new and/or improved provision could vary markedly.

3.3.8 For example:

- If, say, additional major new housing provision is likely to be allocated on the north urban edge of Chelmsford, a new sports hall provision (perhaps in conjunction with a school with assured and adequate community use) in that location would not only serve the needs of new residents, but also expand the catchment coverage of sports halls in secured community use, so that more of the rural part of the local authority is covered by this catchment.
- Alternatively, if residents living in the outlying parts of the local authority have a good level of access to sports halls in neighbouring authorities, a case might be made for expanding/improving provision at an existing venue within or close to the Chelmsford urban area, or else a school venue subject to appropriate assurances about secured community use of the venue. In the longer term, the precise location of new development is not known. However, if there is an option for neighbouring local

authorities to 'share' their growth allocations in developments that fringe local authority boundaries then there is the opportunity for local authorities to cooperate in the planning of new major sports facilities that are likely to serve the needs of residents in more than one local authority area.

3.3.9 In the above regard, there is clearly theoretically a degree of drive-time access to several key venues in neighbouring local authorities. However, what is not clear is the extent to which these venues have the capacity to absorb such use.

3.3.10 Quite apart from the modelling of additional strategic need for sports hall facilities, there is also the need to consider how certain sports depending on sports hall space could be better served. The Needs Assessment highlighted the general need for adequate storage space to be included in new or improved sports hall provision, to meet the needs of residents clubs to stow away their equipment. It has also shown that attention to simple design features can help in making a venue better, such as in the case of fixture points being installed for volleyball nets. In other cases, it might be impossible for new or improved provision to reconcile the ideal specifications for different sports. A case in point would be the desire for badminton clubs to have sprung wooden floors, which may not be so desirable for other sports. However, technology is providing surfaces that are accepted for many sports such as badminton, netball, and volleyball.

3.3.11 In terms of planned new provision or facility overhaul, there are potential sports-specific projects that might be embraced at the planning and design stage, especially:

- Building on the success of local volleyball clubs by providing a high quality local facility for the sport, and which would require spectator (retractable) spectator accommodation and flooring.
- The need of netball interests to have an assured local netball centre with both outdoor and indoor facilities.
- Indoor extreme sports provision, although the ideal would be to offer dedicated space for such activities.
- Given appropriate design, such facilities could be shared with several other sports.

3.4 Key Issues for Health and Fitness Suites (H&FS)

3.4.1 H&FS are clearly very popular facilities, given the local demographic profile; data that exists show that local participation rates in activities using these facilities is high. Furthermore, such facilities appeal strongly to both genders.

3.4.2 The sector is dominated by commercial/membership provision: although this is good from the standpoint of consumer choice and taking pressure off council resources and facilities, they can be expensive and therefore cost-prohibitive for some potential users. Given the attractiveness of such facilities local authority provision should ensure that its own facilities are designed and managed with options to make them available to those who would like to access, but experience barriers to such facilities. The local authority fitness facilities attract a wider spectrum of the population and their pay and play options are more inclusive.

Schemes such as the GP referral programme are available in three of the Council's facilities but not provided elsewhere.

3.4.3 It is estimated that predicted population change between 2015 and 2036 will increase the number of adults taking part in this activity by 3,600. Paragraph 12.3 and Table 15 suggest a local standard for the provision of health and fitness stations. The Council might consider providing for an additional **23 - 24 health and fitness stations spread over one or more of its centres.** It is noted that the NCAAP plan makes provision for health and fitness provision. If this is of an appropriate kind, it can be offset against the above figure. This will also be the case for any of the projects listed in 3.4.5 dependent on whether they are considered to qualify as community facilities.

3.4.4 Given the popularity of health and fitness suites and associated activities within the local authority, it will be important for sufficient provision to be made to accommodate an increase in demand from a growing population.

3.4.5 The following indicates future potential changes in the stock, which will be spread over different sectoral providers:

- Chelmsford Athletic Club, as part of their facility improvement plan, is proposing to upgrade its gym facilities within the clubhouse.
- Anglia Ruskin University, as part of proposals to expand its indoor sports provision, are looking to develop a bigger gym (250 sq.m).
- Improvements to health and fitness provision will be considered in the context of the refurbishment of the Riverside Centre, as well as other local authority centres requiring upgrading eventually (particularly the Dovedale Centre).

3.4.6 The commercial sector will also continue to upgrade its own facilities, although specific plans in this regard are unknown.

3.5 Key Issues for Indoor Bowls

3.5.1 There is one existing indoor bowls facility within the local authority, and the area's provision appears adequate to meet existing levels of demand, and no respondents to the consultation have indicated to the contrary.

3.5.2 Whilst the catchment of the existing and only indoor bowls facility within the local authority does not cover the full extent of the administrative area, those parts of the authority outside the catchment are relatively sparsely populated, and may not in themselves justify the provision of a new facility to meet any potential demand within this area.

3.5.3 It is estimated that predicted population change between 2015 and 2036 will increase the number of adults taking part in this activity by 232.

3.5.4 Planned and natural population change within the local authority will therefore increase the demand for access to indoor bowls facilities, although it may be possible to meet

these needs through expansion of an existing facility at an appropriate time (such as at the Falcon Bowls Club).

3.6 Key Issues for Indoor Tennis

3.6.1 The Chelmsford local authority is notable for the absence of any bespoke indoor tennis facilities, and it compares badly with neighbouring local authority areas in this regard.

3.6.2 The demographic profile of the population suggests that there could be a viable market.

3.6.3 Local evidence and views obtained from this study suggests that there is a potential demand for such a facility. It is likely that this demand will be increased by future natural and planned population growth.

3.6.4 The Lawn Tennis Association, Active Essex and responding local clubs confirm a view that there is a need for an indoor tennis facility within the local authority, to help the sport grow further.

3.6.5 It is estimated that predicted population change between 2015 and 2036 will increase the number of adults taking part in this activity by 167.

3.6.6 Unless sufficient space exists at an existing leisure centre, it is likely that any new provision for indoor tennis facility within the local authority will be 'new build' as opposed to an extension of an existing facility, unless existing courts are covered. Provision for a facility of at least three courts would be warranted.

3.7 Key issues for Athletics

3.7.1 The only plan currently known for the improvement of athletics provision in the local authority is that of the Chelmsford Athletics Club in respect of its changing and gym facilities.

3.7.2 The evidence provided in this section does not suggest a need for additional bespoke athletics tracks within the local authority. However, an increased population will accentuate demand for access to bespoke facilities, as well as safe off-track running opportunities.

3.7.3 It is estimated that predicted population change between 2015 and 2036 will increase the number of adults taking part in this activity by 783.

3.7.4 It is not appropriate to offer a standard for inclusion in the statutory development plan to guide athletics provision in future years. However, it is appropriate to suggest how improvements to provision can be made to help meet increased demand over the future years.

3.7.5 First of all, it will be important that the needs of the existing and successful Chelmsford Athletics Club can be met through the desired improvements to both changing and gym facilities at their base.

3.7.6 Secondly, the success of the club in attracting new members in conjunction with planned population change will increase pressures and wear and tear on the existing track. Measures should be put in place so that funding can be made available for the maintenance and eventual overhaul of the track and ancillary facilities.

3.7.7 Certainly, pressure could be taken off the track by providing alternative 'satellite' training venues at other locations, and most notably in conjunction with those schools that have already a close relationship with the Athletics Club. It might also be possible to develop a better relationship with New Hall School in respect of the School's 4-lane synthetic track.

3.7.8 This track is provided primarily for curricular use, but there may be scope outside the time of school use for the facility to be available for a certain amount of training by local clubs.

3.7.9 Off-track there are already 'Park Run' schemes running in Chelmsford for runners keen to improve their times, without being committed to a club, or necessarily competing. However, there may be scope for providing some way-marked routes based on the Run England 3-2-1 scheme.

3.8 Key issues and options for Studios

3.8.1 Activity studios are proving to be important facilities within larger complexes such as leisure centres and commercial health and fitness venues.

3.8.2 Such studios offer very flexible space, which means that the larger facilities, such as sports halls, can be released for other activities requiring extensive space. They should be integral to the design of new and improved leisure centre provision.

3.8.3 It is not considered appropriate to recommend a standard for the provision of additional studio spaces to be incorporated in development plan documents. However, future natural and planned population change within the local authority will increase demand for such venues.

3.8.4 It is estimated that predicted population change between 2015 and 2036 will increase the number of adults taking part in this activity by 3,600.

3.8.5 As part of the new Riverside development it is proposed to provide 3 dedicated studios. The current facilities are inadequate in size to meet demand for exercise classes (except spinning). At the new Greater Beaulieu Park School, to be opened around 2019, studio space with secured community access is proposed to meet the demand from new housing development.

3.8.6 The design of Studios as ‘flexible space’ is integral to their success. The health and fitness industry moves quickly into and out of activities according to changing demand and trends. Although the needs assessment report did not undertake an examination of activity patterns and scheduling within schedules it is very clear that uses are highly diverse, and the key to future design will be to ensure that an overall specification is obtained that can host changing demands and uses over time.

3.8.7 In the absence of easy access to conventional sports halls venues such as village and community halls can have great local value in hosting a range of local activities. The planning of future sports facilities should not therefore be in isolation from consideration of the location and utility of these smaller venues.

3.9 Key issues and options for Squash

3.9.1 The Essex Squash and Racketball Association suggests that the existing facilities are very well used, and that the impact of a new strategy for squash being developed in Essex may have the effect of increasing participation.

3.9.2 Natural and planned population change within the local authority may increase the demand for access to squash courts.

3.9.3 It is estimated that predicted population change between 2015 and 2036 will increase the number of adults taking part in this activity by 102. This perhaps is probably only sufficient to justify 1 additional court.

3.9.4 The nature of squash courts is such that no specific guidance needs to be included within the statutory development plan in terms of, for example, recommended standards of provision. However, it will be important to continue to review the level of provision.

3.9.5 New squash provision, if required, should be encouraged in association with existing improved complexes, and not as new standalone facilities. It is considered that this is consistent with national governing body views, given that it focuses on facilities that will have the expertise to club infrastructure to support them

3.10 Key issues and options for village and community halls

3.10.1 The local authority has a good range and spread of village and community halls. However, in some locations natural and planned population change within the local authority may increase the demand for access to such venues.

3.10.2 It will be important to continue to review the level of provision, especially in areas of rapid population change.

3.10.3 Village and community halls are important local venues for active recreation. They are important basic community facilities and need to be planned for, as with other facilities uncertainty about future growth requires flexibility, and therefore the need for standards.

3.10.4 Paragraph 12.3 and Table 15 of the Needs Assessment suggest a local standard for the provision of sports halls. If the quantitative component of the outline standard is applied to the planned population growth between now and 2036 it suggests that the additional demand generated would lead to a **need for an extra 4.5 small hall venues (or equivalent)**. It is noted that the NCAAP plan makes provision for a 'community centre' and this, as appropriate, can be offset against the above figure.

4.0 THE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

4.1 General

4.1.1 The Strategy provides the strategic vision, aims and recommendations to guide the actions and decisions of the City Council and its partners over the coming years (The Strategy). The Action Plan identifies strategic level priorities, and the City Council will take these forward through its Local Plan and future leisure strategies.

4.1.2 The new government strategy 'Sporting Future – A new strategy for an active nation', identifies the importance of addressing flat-lining levels of participation in sports, and it has redefined ways of measuring success for sport in respect of physical and mental health and well-being, individual development, social and community development, economic development. Public investment in sport will reach children as young as five years. Funding will also be targeted at groups who have low participation rates to encourage those who do not take part in sport and physical activity to get involved. This includes supporting women, disabled people, those in lower socio-economic groups and older people.

4.1.3 In response to the government's strategy, Sport England's new strategy vision is that that everyone in England, regardless of age, background or ability, feels able to take part in sport or activity. Sport England's new vision and its supporting aims will therefore contribute to achieving the government's strategy.

4.1.4 The 2012 Corporate plan for the City has aims that are consistent with the Government's new aims, and in particular:

- reduce health inequalities by promoting healthier behaviours, more physically active lifestyles and addressing the causes of poor health and well-being
- modernise, refurbish and maintain Council owned sports and leisure facilities to ensure that they continue to be of a high standard for users
- extend and improve the sports and recreation facilities at Melbourne Park, including its dedication as the Queen Elizabeth II Park, as part of the 'Fields in Trust' Diamond Jubilee programme
- tackle obesity levels throughout the city by enhancing exercise and fitness opportunities
- maximise the benefits of Leisure Plus to encourage greater participation in sport and the arts
- from the 2012 Olympics & Paralympics build a legacy amongst local people

4.2 Vision and aims

4.2.1 The **vision and key aims** for this strategy are therefore identified to be: *To create an environment for local sport and physical activity which helps in:*

- *Improving the overall physical and mental health and wellbeing of residents*

- *Encourages individual, social and community development*
- *Promotes participation amongst children, to help develop habits for life in respect of participation*
- *Promotes participation amongst those groups within the community that do not traditionally have good levels of participation*

4.2.2 Five strategic recommendations are proposed in the following section, in order to achieve the above vision and aims. Each strategic recommendation is stated, along with a justification. Together with the Vision and Aims, these strategic recommendations help to shape the tone and direction of the Action Plan.

4.3 Strategic recommendations

SR1: Conserve and improve the existing stock of indoor and built sports facilities of existing and potential value for sport

4.3.1 **Reasoning:** It is fundamental to the achievement of the vision and aims of the strategy, that the local authority's stock of built and indoor sports facilities is conserved and enhanced. This will mean the outright protection and improvement of many facilities sites, but it may also mean potentially the redeployment of some sites that currently host facilities. In terms of the latter, 'redemption' may mean simply making a decision not to invest in maintaining sports facilities, but also that the site is still suited to other recreation activity. In other far more limited circumstances it might be appropriate to release sites for alternative built development. The emphasis is therefore on overall conservation of the stock of local facilities, given the need for facilities to change to best meet current needs as reflected in the Vision and Aims.

4.3.2 **What to look for in the Action Plan:** Apart from the above it is an aspiration to improve the quality of the overall stock of facilities, to make them more attractive to use by more people. A typology of facilities has been identified to help achieve this and other strategic recommendation. Taking into account the findings of the Needs Assessment, it is clear that facilities can be classified generally into one of six groupings by type, depending on the role that they serve. No one group is considered to be more important than any other, as each group represents facilities with contrasting but nevertheless vital functions in terms of providing opportunities.

4.3.3 The groups are as follows:

- Major multi sports built and indoor facilities (such as wet *and* dry leisure centres);
- Large specialist venues (such as athletics tracks, indoor bowls and indoor tennis venues);
- Single sports hall and pool facilities (i.e. wet *or* dry leisure centres);
- Smaller single or multi-sport 'club-based' venues; and,
- Village and small community halls.
- Un(der)used facilities with strategic potential

4.3.4 The above groups are more fully described in Table 3 below.

4.3.5 There are facilities that are little used for community sports, and which have a primary function in meeting the needs of their client groups. The introduction of community use to these facilities may be an aspiration, and especially in seeking a more efficient, co-ordinated and cost effective use of the overall stock of facilities. A large number of sporting facilities are on education sites and making these available to sports clubs can offer significant benefits to both the school/college and the local clubs. The Council and other key partners must work with schools and colleges to develop an understanding of the issues that restrict or affect community access. Support should be provided, where appropriate, to address underlying problems.

4.3.6 Given that the location of planned new improvements will depend on the as yet unknown location of planned new population growth in the longer term, the Council feels that the provision of some interim 'standards' of provision for certain key facilities will help inform the development process¹. Finally, there are recommendations for including appropriate policies and other statements to be included in statutory and supplementary planning documents. (See Action Plan A).

SR2: Provide new and improved opportunities and facilities that stand the best chances of encouraging participation amongst those groups that don't traditionally take part in sport and active recreation in high numbers

4.3.7 **Reasoning:** Sport and active recreation has much to offer in improving an individual's health, as well as encouraging social and community development. However, it needs to embrace the changing nature of society and accept that the terms of engagement with potential participants are changing, and new forms of provision and facility management may be required to encourage the identified target groups into sport and active recreation.

4.3.8 **What to look for in the Action Plan:** There are some parts of the local authority that have comparatively low levels of participation in sport, and these tend to coincide with areas of relatively high levels of social and economic deprivation when measured by government indicators. Some existing and potential provision has been highlighted for this reason, and initiatives for these sites should be aimed at improving participation in the surrounding areas.

SR3: Provide new and improved opportunities for children with the aim of helping develop a 'habit for life' in sport and active recreation

4.3.9 **Reasoning:** A number of sports have seen the introduction of variations and initiatives that have enjoyed considerable success in encouraging children and young people into sport. Such opportunities and age-appropriate facilities should be the bedrock of any serious attempt to encourage even higher levels of participation amongst children and young people.

4.3.10 **What to look for in the Action Plan:** Facilities that are suited to hosting child-friendly versions of sports are encouraged at various locations. In particular, there are schools that do

¹ The standards have been developed and justified based of the reasoning provided in Section 12.3 of the needs assessment report. Where appropriate they have been 'sense-checked' against Sport England modelling tools such as the 'Facility Calculator' and are considered to be robust.

not appear to currently offer much community use, which are located in or close to areas of relatively high social and economic deprivation, and which might offer the potential for getting children from relatively deprived backgrounds into sport.

SR4: Provide new and improved opportunities that help retain and allow for progression of participants

4.3.11 Reasoning: Successfully encouraging new participants is just one challenge to be faced in growing participation in sport and active recreation: retaining new and long-standing participants is the other challenge. To achieve this will require the opportunities for those who wish to stay and progress in a given sport with the facilities and pathways to enable them so to do. Enthusiasm should not be thwarted by a lack of facilities of right type and appropriate quality.

4.3.12 What to look for in the Action Plan: This Strategy and Action Plan provides for facilities suited to the needs of the general community. However, specialist facilities like athletics tracks, indoor bowls and tennis centres can meet the needs of both entry level and higher standard participants, as can general facilities such as swimming pools and sports halls where they meet certain design specifications and management policies provide sufficient access time for serious training and competition activity. Such provision is therefore very important, and reflected in its priority ranking in the Action Plan.

SR5: Develop and maintain a range of facilities and opportunities essential to the achievement of SR4

4.3.13 Reasoning: Part of the solution required to address the requirements of SR4 is the development of a range of facilities, so that those that want to can move up (and down) the level of performance.

4.3.14 What to look for in the Action Plan: These Strategic recommendations have been linked to specific action points in the following Action Plan. The Plan identifies a range of site types.

4.4 The Action Plan

4.4.1 The Action Plan has two parts:

- Part A (**table 2**) - which provides general actions; and
- Part B (**table 5**) - which has facility -specific Actions.

4.4.2 The Strategy and Action Plan has been prepared and agreed by the City Council, in consultation with Sport England and relevant Governing Bodies of Sport. These and other key stakeholders must therefore cooperate in achieving the strategic and site specific actions proposed. The land-use planning system will be a principal vehicle for addressing many of the actions. *The facility-specific actions contained in Action Plan B have been graded as to their*

agreed priority and practical involvement and leadership in achieving the implementation of actions must be agreed between members of the on-going steering group.

4.4.3 Section 5 of this document explains how the Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. It is recommended however that the steering group should be vigilant to new issues and opportunities that may emerge over the course of time, and the Strategy and Action Plan is therefore not intended to be inflexibly prescriptive.

4.5 Action Plan A: General actions

Key: Time-frame (Short=0-2 years; Medium=2-4 years; Long=5 years +)

Table 2: Action Plan Part A (General Actions)

Strategic Recommendation	Action (actions are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	Time-frame
SR1	<p>1. Planning and other policies: Develop planning and related policies for conservation and improvement of the stock of indoor and built sports facilities as identified by SR1.</p> <p>Include policies and proposals in the Development Plan which are consistent with paragraphs 73 and 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework guidance and, in particular, include reference to the recommendations contained in this Strategy and Action Plan. Many of many of the potential projects identified in Action Plan B as being of High Priority can also be identified and addressed through the emerging Local Plan (and associated leisure strategies that may be produced by the Council).</p> <p>Include facility and location specific proposals that cover the relevant recommendations included in this Action Plan, and especially in Part B.</p> <p>In circumstances where proposals for development and use of a site are contrary to those contained in the recommendations of this Strategy and Action Plan, they should only be approved where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the existing facility or land to be surplus to requirements; or • the loss resulting from the proposed facility would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or • the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.' <p>Include statements in all relevant supplementary planning documents relating to the policy and actions in this Strategy.</p>	Short

Strategic Recommendation	Action (actions are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	Time-frame
	<p>2. SPD and CIL: Include reference to relevant recommendations contained in this Strategy and Action Plan in CIL Regulation 123 List, and any other supplementary planning documents of relevance, that are to be prepared by the Council.</p> <p>3. Site typology: Develop and maintain a typology of facilities to guide planning and investment in line with table 3 (below). A typology such as this will provide a better appreciation of the discrete roles that individual (types of facility) play in meeting local and wider needs. This typology is applied as appropriate in table 5 (Action Plan Part B).</p> <p>4. Interim standards of provision: Adopt a series of standards of provision to guide sports provision in respect of major new planned development, and in respect of other planning -related documents and contributions. See table 4 below. These interim standards are reproduced from the Indoor/Built Sports Facility Needs Assessment.</p>	
SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	<p>5. Implementation through steering group: Achieve implementation of the policies and recommendations in this strategy and action plan through the establishment of a steering group.</p> <p>Implementation is also covered in Section 5 of this document. An immediate priority of the steering group will be to establish a 'Year 1' series of projects to be pursued in accordance with the priority ratings and time-frames indicated in the Action Plan.</p> <p>Year 1 project initiatives may not only include active pursuit of the high priority projects, but also could include projects that are easy to implement and achieve in the short-term.</p>	Short
SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	6. Establish a steering group for monitoring and implementation of the strategy and action	Short

Strategic Recommendation	Action (actions are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	Time-frame
	plan. This is to be achieved in accordance with Section 5 of this strategy.	
SR1, SR2	<p>7. Maximise community use of indoor and built sports facilities where there is a need so to do. A working group, led by a partner from the education sector but supported by a range of other sectors including sport and leisure is established to implement the strategic direction in relation to the increased/better use of school facilities. Broadly speaking, its role should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To secure a better understanding of current community use; • To ensure any existing community use agreements are upheld; • To ensure that funding to improve the quality of the facilities is identified and secured, but subject to appropriate levels of community use being secured; • As part of any new or revised community use agreement secure a management arrangement, which does not rely on existing school staff structures; <p>Once this has been achieved provision could contribute to overcoming deficiencies in the area.</p>	On-going

Table 3: Typology of sites

Groups/Typologies
Major multi sports built and indoor facilities (such as wet <i>and</i> dry leisure centres): These will be the principal leisure centres within the local authority that include a range of provisions including a main sports hall and indoor swimming pool as a minimum.
Major specialist venues (such as athletics tracks, indoor bowls and indoor tennis venues): These are major built and indoor provisions, with a strategic importance for individual sports, but are by definition bespoke to those sports. Other examples might include indoor cricket centres and 'extreme sports venues.'
Supporting single sports hall and/or pool facilities: These types of facilities will usually be of the type that are often found on school campuses. Their design and management for

Groups/Typologies
community use may be rudimentary, but they can offer significant opportunities for local clubs and organisations.
Smaller single or multi-sport 'club-based' venues: These might be facilities such as squash clubs, health and fitness clubs, boxing gyms etc, which meet specific local club and sports' needs.
Village and small community halls: These are smaller multi-purpose venues embracing a flexible main space hall that can be used for a variety of social and recreational activities. In areas that do not have access to a bone fide leisure centre they can offer a valuable local space for indoor sports and recreation, and especially so if built or improved to certain specifications.
Un(der)used facilities with strategic potential: These are facilities that are currently unused or underused for community sport generally but have facilities offering potential to make a strategically significant contribution to the local stock of built and indoor sports provision. These facilities can include those on (disused) education campuses.

Table 4: Standards of provision (Note: The guidance is based on identified needs, and its application is not intended to cover commitments that have not yet been completed, although reference is made to the NCAAP proposals.)

Facility	Standard (if appropriate- see Section 12 of the Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Sports Needs Assessment for justification)	Calculation as applied to additional population increase by 2036 ²	Potential capital cost (based on sources indicated) ³
Indoor swimming pools	<p><u>10.66 sq.m water space/1000 persons.</u></p> <p>Ideally, no more than 15 minutes' drive or walk time (the latter in urban areas); and, a quality component (perhaps referring to an expectation on the extent and character of secured community use, and the design of new or improved facilities, such</p>	<p>If the quantitative component of the above outline standard was applied to the projected population growth between now and 2036 it suggests that the additional demand generated would lead to a need for an extra <u>251 sq.m. of water space- around the equivalent of a 25m x 4 lane pool.</u></p>	<p>c.3,740,000. n.b. a wet and dry leisure centre including 4-lane pool, 4-court hall, and 50-unit health and fitness plus studio would cost c. £7,165,000</p>

² The sources of demographic data used for this strategy and action plan are explained in The Built/Indoor Needs Assessment.

³ Sport England Facility Costs (2nd Quarter 2016). These were the most up-to-date figures available from Sport England at the time of the study. The current Sport England cost data should be used at all times, and is available from <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>

Facility	Standard (if appropriate- see Section 12 of the Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Sports Needs Assessment for justification)	Calculation as applied to additional population increase by 2036 ²	Potential capital cost (based on sources indicated) ³
	as shape, dimensions, depth variation etc.).		
Sports halls	<p>0.28 courts/1000 persons.</p> <p>Ideally, no more than 15 minutes' drive or walk time (the latter in urban areas); and, a quality component (perhaps referring to an expectation on the extent and character of secured community use, and the design of new or improved facilities, such as shape, dimensions, etc.).</p>	<p>If the quantitative component of the above outline standard was applied to the projected population growth between now and 2036 it suggests that the additional demand generated would lead to a <u>need for an extra 1.6 x 4-court sports halls (6.6 courts).</u></p> <p>It is noted that the NCAAP plan makes provision for a 'dry' sports centre, and this can be offset against the above figure.</p>	£3,987,000. (See also note under costings for indoor swimming pools)
Health & Fitness Suites	<p><u>1 health & fitness station/ 1000 person</u></p> <p>Ideally, no more than 10-15 minutes' drive or walk time (the latter in urban areas); and, a quality component (perhaps referring to an expectation on the extent and character of secured community use, and the design of new or improved facilities, such as shape, dimensions, etc.).</p>	<p>The Council might consider providing for an additional <u>23 - 24 health and fitness stations spread over one or more of it centres.</u> It would be sensible for this provision to be made in association with new or improved provision for sports halls, in line with the recommendations within the appropriate section of this report. It is noted that the NCAAP plan makes provision for health and fitness provision. If this is of an appropriate kind, it can be offset against the above figure.</p>	(see note under costings for indoor swimming pools)

Facility	Standard (if appropriate- see Section 12 of the Chelmsford Indoor/Built Sports Facility Sports Needs Assessment for justification)	Calculation as applied to additional population increase by 2036 ²	Potential capital cost (based on sources indicated) ³
Village hall/community buildings	<p><u>1 hall per 5,500 people.</u></p> <p>A quality component would be essential. To retain the diversity and character of facilities (in the tradition of village halls), provision should include facilities such as a main hall suited to a range of passive and active recreation activities, a supporting kitchen, ancillary space, and parking.</p> <p>In areas where new growth requires a large venue, single, scaled-up provision could be provided instead of more than one smaller venue.</p> <p>An accessibility standard could be based on a 10-minute drive/walk time, which is evidenced by the Leisure Plus Household survey</p>	<p>If the quantitative component of the above outline standard was applied to the projected population growth between now and 2036 it suggests that the additional demand generated would lead to a <u>need for an extra 4.5 small hall venues (or equivalent)</u></p> <p>It is noted that the NCAAP plan makes provision for a 'community centre' and this, as appropriate, can be offset against the above figure.</p>	<p>£3,750,000 (based on an assumed unit cost of £750,000)</p>

4.6 Action Plan B: Site and sports-specific actions

Key: Time-frame (Short=0-2 years; Medium=2-4 years; Long=5 years +)

Colour coding of sites

	No specific site yet determined
	Specific sports and facilities
	Sites largely controlled by local authorities (City Council or town/parish councils) available for community use.
	Other sites generally available for community use.
	Sites considered to have strategic potential.

Table 5: Action Plan Part B (Site and sports-specific actions)

Topic/Name	Ownership	Ward	Key facilities on site	Strategic Recommendations met through this Action (justification for action)	Action/comments (actions/comments are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	High Priority?	Time-frame
No specific sites	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	<p>8. Sports Halls and Indoor Swimming Provision: In accordance with projected population growth provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the equivalent of 1.6 x 4-court badminton courts. This can be discounted against the 4-court hall planned and committed to a new community school to be built at the Beaulieu Park allocation as part of the North Chelmsford Action Area Plan. This would leave the net requirement of about 2.4 courts to provide. This itself does not require a new full-size sports hall, and capacity might instead be realised by improving and or expanding provision at existing locations. The fixtures, fittings, floor markings and overall specifications within sports halls should aim be planned to potentially accommodate a wide range of activities, and sufficiently flexible to host future innovations in activity. Examples are futsal and extreme sports, albeit that these need to be part of a balanced overall programme of activity, with optimal appeal to the community. the equivalent of 251 square metres of indoor pool space. The proposed Riverside redevelopment will provide a significant proportion of this. Expansion and or making better use of existing provision and therefore new provision at an appropriate new location to be considered for the shortfall. An alternative would be to try and seek to exploit spare capacity at existing venues. The above estimates are based upon the projected increase in population to 2036 as opposed to the growth allocated in a future local plan up to that time horizon. 	Yes	Medium

Topic/Name	Ownership	Ward	Key facilities on site	Strategic Recommendations met through this Action (justification for action)	Action/comments (actions/comments are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	High Priority?	Time-frame
No specific site	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	9. Potential indoor extreme sport and indoor cricket venues: These are facilities that have been considered in the Needs Assessment. The provision of specific facilities for extreme sports cannot easily met within existing sports halls because of equipment needs and programming limitations. There are examples of bespoke facilities being developed for these activities in other parts of the country. However, the best fix in the shorter-term might be to identify and secure a warehouse type facility in an accessible location, which would allow for a dedicated space to be provided. There is also some potential to meet the indoor needs of cricket and futsal in this way.	Yes (for extreme sport)	Medium
Vicinity of Beaulieu Park development	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	10. All Sports: Ensure that the provisions of this strategy, and the information contained in the Needs Assessment are used in the detailed planning of this major new allocation in respect of sports provision.	Yes	Short
Athletics					11. Improve changing and gym facilities at Chelmsford Sports and Athletics Centre. 12. Maintain and eventual overhaul of existing track at Chelmsford Sports and Athletic Centre. 13. Consider options for a 'satellite' training venues at a location away from the Chelmsford Sports and Athletic Centre. 14. Consider introduction of 3-2-1 way-marked routes based on the Run England 3-2-1 scheme.	Yes	Medium/Long
Health & Fitness					15. Developer contributions in relation to health and fitness suites should be focussed on new or improved provision at local authority controlled facilities in community use which attract a wider spectrum of the population.		Medium/Long
Indoor Bowls					16. Developer contributions in respect of indoor bowls facilities should be focused on the improvement of the existing venues (i.e. the Falcon Club) with the local authority, rather than new provision.		Medium/Long
Indoor Tennis					17. Provide a new indoor tennis facility within the local authority- the most cost effective option in this regard would be to cover courts at an existing facility (such as at the Marconi Athletic and Sports Club), and a minimum a 3-court facility should be provided.		Medium/Long

Topic/Name	Ownership	Ward	Key facilities on site	Strategic Recommendations met through this Action (justification for action)	Action/comments (actions/comments are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	High Priority?	Time-frame
Netball					18. Identify an appropriate site for the creation of a central venue for netball (incorporating indoor and outdoor provision). The Council and Netball League are exploring suitable options for this.	Yes	Short/Medium
Studios					19. New provision of studio space associated with planned new development should be focussed on new or improved provision at local authority controlled facilities in community use which attract a wider spectrum of the population.		Medium/Long
Squash					20. If any squash provision is to be included with new or improved leisure centre venues it should be designed to be as multi-functional as possible to enable use by other activities when not in use for the sport.		Medium/Long
Village and Community Halls					21. New and improved village hall and community provision should, wherever appropriate embrace basic dimensions and specifications to enable a range of managed recreation activities to take place, such as short mat bowls, table tennis, martial arts, dance and aerobics etc. In areas where new planned growth requires a large venue, single, scaled-up provision could be provided instead of more than one smaller venue, in accordance with the standard advocated.		Medium/Long
Volleyball					22. Volleyball provision in respect of dimensions, fixture and fittings, and suitable flooring should be incorporated into at least one new or improved sports hall, within the greater Chelmsford urban area.		Medium/Long
Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre Major multi sports built and indoor facility. Major specialist venue	Chelmsford City Council	St. Andrews	400 metre synthetic athletics track; field event facilities; ancillary facilities; sports hall; health and fitness facilities	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	23. This is the primary centre for athletics in Chelmsford, and any facility improvements to track and field provision should focus primary on this site (see under athletics above). The facility lies close to areas of relative social and economic deprivation, and low participation. Activity and improvements at the venue should therefore have an objective of improving local participation within the immediate area.	Yes	Medium
Dovedale Sports Centre Supporting single sports	Chelmsford City Council/Chelmsford College	Moulsham and Central	5-court sports hall, squash courts, health and fitness	SR1, SR4, SR5	24. Although this venue is controlled by the Chelmsford College it has significant Community Use through a joint-use agreement with the local authority. The facility is well-maintained but ageing. The facility is well used for certain club-based activity and lends itself to this purpose. Its role could be to serve as a counterpoint to the redeveloped Riverside Centre and allowing	Yes	Medium

[illegible]

Topic/Name	Ownership	Ward	Key facilities on site	Strategic Recommendations met through this Action (justification for action)	Action/comments (actions/comments are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	High Priority?	Time-frame
Anglia Ruskin University Sports Centre (Rivermead Campus) Supporting single sports hall and/or pool facility	Education	Marconi	Sports Hall and Health and Fitness facilities	SR1, SR4, SR5	30. This venue is important for activities such as badminton, basketball, and volleyball. Its role for these sports is partly due to its sprung floor. The University has proposals for the expansion of its leisure centre facilities. The sprung floor should be safeguarded and maintained.		Medium/Long
Boswells School Supporting single sports hall and/or pool facility	Education	The Lawns	Swimming pool, sports hall	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	31. The venue is important for curriculum swimming, but has some club use. The sports hall is important for Volleyball and Gymnastics.		
Chelmer Valley High School Supporting single sports hall or pool facility	Education	Broomfield and The Walthams	Sports hall, health and fitness facilities.	SR1, SR2, SR4, SR5	32. This facility does not currently have a high profile for community use, although the sports hall is booked for indoor football		
Essex Police College	Essex Police	Trinity	Small hall, health and fitness facilities	SR1	33. The sports utility of this site is more in respect of its potential for outdoor sports use by the community		
Great Baddow High School Supporting single sports hall and/or pool facility	Education	Great Baddow West	Swimming pool, sports hall	SR1, SR3	34. There is community use of this venue, and it is noted for club basketball activity. The main facilities are relatively old.		
Hylands School Support single sports hall and/or pool facility	Education	Writtle	Sports Hall	SR1, SR3	35. There is community use of this venue. The main facilities are relatively old.		
Moulsham High School	Education	Moulsham Lodge	Swimming pool, sports hall. (There	SR1, SR3, SR4, SR5	36. The pool is used both for curriculum and club swimming. The hall is also used by clubs.		

Topic/Name	Ownership	Ward	Key facilities on site	Strategic Recommendations met through this Action (justification for action)	Action/comments (actions/comments are numbered sequentially throughout the Action Plans A and B)	High Priority?	Time-frame
Supporting single sports hall and/or pool facility			are also significant outdoor facilities)				
St John Payne Catholic School Supporting single sports hall and/or pool facility	Education	Patching Hall	Sports hall	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	37. The large main hall is very popular both for badminton and volleyball as club activities. The school also has coaching links with the Chelmsford Athletics Club. The facility lies close to areas of relative social and economic deprivation, and low participation. Activity and improvements at the venue should therefore have an objective of improving local participation within the immediate area.		
The Sandon School Supporting single sports hall and/or pool facility	Education	Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon	Sports hall. (There are also significant outdoor facilities)	SR1, SR3, SR4, SR5	38. This facility does not currently have a high profile for community use, although the sports hall is booked for indoor football		
St Peter's College Un(der)used facility with strategic potential	Education	St. Andrews	Sports hall (There is also a school playing field)	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5	39. The potential for community use should be recognised in local plan policy, and discussions should be initiated between the Steering Group and the Education Authority in this regard.	Yes	Short

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW AND RESOURCES

5.1 Delivery, Monitoring and Updating

5.1.1 This strategy seeks to provide guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across Chelmsford local authority. By addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report and using the strategic framework presented in this strategy, the current and future sporting and recreational needs of the local authority can be satisfied. The strategy and action plan identify where there is a deficiency in provision and identifies approaches on how to resolve these in the future.

5.1.2 It is important that this document is used in a practical manner, is engaged with partners and encourages partnerships to be developed, to ensure that built and indoor sports facilities are regarded as a vital aspect of community life and which contribute to the achievement of Council priorities.

5.1.3 The production of this strategy should be regarded as the beginning of the planning process. The success of the strategy and the benefits that are gained are dependent upon regular engagement between all partners involved and the adoption of a strategic approach.

5.1.4 A steering group should be formed to take the lead to ensure the strategy is used and applied appropriately within members' areas of work and influence. The Steering Group may comprise of the Local Authority Leisure and Planning, Local Sports Partnership, Sport England, National / Regional Governing Bodies and a wide range of additional community partners. The detailed composition of the steering group should be agreed as soon as possible after the strategy and action plan is adopted.

5.1.5 To help ensure the strategy is well used it should be regarded as the key document within the local authority for the conservation and improvement of the local stock of built and indoor sports facilities. It needs to be the document people regularly turn to for information on the how the current demand is met and what actions are required to improve the situation and meet future demand. In order for this to be achieved the steering group need to have a clear understanding of how the strategy can be applied and therefore delivered.

5.1.6 The process of developing and implementing the strategy will hopefully have already resulted in a number of benefits that will help with its application and delivery. These may include enhanced partnership working across different agendas and organisations, pooling of resources along with strengthening relationships and understanding between different stakeholders, and between members of the steering group and the sporting community.

5.1.7 An immediate priority of the steering group will be to establish a 'Year 1' series of projects to be pursued in accordance with the priority ratings and time-frames indicated in the Action Plan.

5.1.8 Year 1 project initiatives may not only include active pursuit of the high priority projects, but also could include projects that are easy to implement and achieve in the short-term.

5.1.9 Monitoring and review of this strategy should be undertaken as follows:

- Ongoing monitoring of changes to the accompanying facilities database. This is usually regarded as an onerous and tedious task. However, for most facility types included in the strategy Sport England does update its Active Places Power (APP) database regularly and this is available on line to the local authority. In effect therefore it is not about reviewing and updating data but much more about ensuring that an officer in the Council is: aware of the APP database, has access to it (which is organised through Sport England and set out in the APP section of their web site).
- Assessing the impact of demographic changes and new population estimates. The needs assessment and strategy is based on the 2015 population and its distribution across the local authority. It then looks forward to 2036 on the projected population growth. Should the population projections change significantly – a very unlikely occurrence - then the assumptions about demand changes from assumptions about the active population would need to be reviewed
- Reviewing participation/frequency of participation rates. The needs assessment is based on Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport participation and frequency of participation rates. The assumption in the strategy is that these participation/frequency rates do not change. It is possible to monitor participation trends for specific sports and for specific facility types for each local authority area through the Sport England Active People Survey. It is also possible to monitor changes by age and gender across all sports for 14 +, also at each local authority area level. So changes in participation can be reviewed and can be compared in trend terms to participation rates since October 2006. It is acknowledged and as reported in the strategy that participation data at the Chelmsford level is only available for certain activities. Overall it is possible to put annual change into a longer time perspective. The findings in the strategy on facility needs are valid within a certain percentage tolerance. It will still be important however to monitor the changes in the rates and frequencies of participation as there can be specific changes caused by the popularity of particular activities. This can create pressure for more access and facility time at venues. These changes can usually be absorbed by programming changes and not require additional provision of facilities
- Monitoring the delivery of the recommendations and identifying any changes that are required to the priority afforded to each action. This is the most important part of monitoring and, in effect, it is monitoring the delivery of the strategy. It is assumed that the City Council will take the responsibility for doing this. It should be an annual review, set against the generic and facility specific recommendations. The time horizon of the strategy is to 2036 and the projects reflect that timescale.

- Assessing and including any new opportunities that present themselves during the lifetime of the Strategy.

5.2 Funding and Finance

5.2.1 The delivery of the provision requirements will, to a large extent, be dependent on the ability to first secure capital funding, whilst acknowledging delivery is much wider than just about capital funding. The capital funding picture for public leisure facilities is always changing. Local authority finances are under even more pressure and previous major national funding programmes, which supported indoor sports facilities, are no longer available.

5.2.2 Leisure centres (including sports halls and swimming pools) are the biggest cost of the provision recommendations. The Council is a major but not the only provider of such facilities. All providers of such facilities must take into account not just the up-front capital costs of such provision, but also longer-term maintenance and running costs.

5.2.3 All parts of need, core business case and long term viability have to be achievable. The main funding sources for delivering the strategy are:

- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): The City Council has adopted a CIL levy which, other than specific exceptions, will be applied to all new development with a floorspace of 100m² or more. Regulation 123 of the CIL Regulations provides for a CIL charging authority (i.e. the City Council) to publish a list of infrastructure that will be, or may be, wholly or partly funded by CIL.
- Section 106 developer contributions: CIL largely replaces the current system of securing contributions from developers via Section 106 agreements. However, Section 106 agreements are likely to continue being used to secure local site-related infrastructure such as open space, access and habitat protection, and affordable housing. CIL will therefore operate in tandem with a scaled-back system of Section 106 agreements.
- Capital Grant funding from local and national agencies such as Sport England, including its major programmes of capital grant aid for provision and modernisation of sports facilities. The development of an evidence base, which is NPPF and Sport England ANOG compliant, certainly ensures there is a robust assessment in place to support grant aid investment. Experience has shown that an evidence base that is ANOG compliant and applies the Sport England strategic planning tools – along with extensive local consultation in the strategy - does secure capital investment. The Sport England capital funding programmes are reviewed regularly in terms of funding levels, criteria and possibly themed rounds/criteria for investment. Without a doubt investment from Sport England will require matched capital funding from other organisations and demonstrate a long term viable business case.

- Commercial sector funding in return for a long-term leisure management contract of existing and new facilities. This appears to be the most realistic and major way of financing the new sports facility requirements identified in the strategy. It is however subject to detailed feasibility to determine the core business case for long term capital investment and meeting the whole life costs at any new or re-provided project.
- Education and Further Education sector: while the previous sources of funding (including BSF and Primary Schools Programme) have changed and the scale of the education capital programmes have been reduced, the provision of sports facilities as new or improved projects on school sites is still a possible key funding stream. The Department of Education does have a Schools Improvement Programme. This funding programme is heavily subscribed to. Future funding rounds may be themed. Provision for science and languages have been past themes and it maybe that sports provision is a future theme. This could provide substantial capital funding.