
Joint Meeting of Cabinet Members (Business, Enterprise and Employment) and (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks)

23rd July 2014

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Business, Enterprise and Employment) – Councillor K Maton

Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports, Parks and Events) – Councillor A Khan

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director, Place

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Petition - Gymnastics Campaign for the Children of Coventry

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

An e-petition regarding a campaign to help develop competitive gymnastics sports in Coventry was submitted to the Council on 1 June 2014. The petition, containing 29 signatures, stated the following:

“I call upon our City Council, as the 11th biggest City in the UK with a population of more than 300,000 to help develop Competitive Gymnastics Sports within our City. As a City we have been left behind, and forgotten, unknown in the world of Competitive Gymnastics Sports. This cannot be allowed to continue.

As a City do not take the Sport of Competitive Gymnastics seriously enough to invest in facilities, coaches, or a network, all of which is needed for coaching of Competitive Gymnastics.

Let US as a City develop Competitive Gymnastics, with a long term plan in place to make it successful.”

Approval will be sought at Cabinet in August 2014 for the approval of a city-wide, partnership sports strategy – the ‘Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024’.

The proposed Strategy’s stated mission is ‘to develop a more active, inclusive and vibrant Coventry through positive experiences in sport’.

The Strategy is structured around eight Vision Aims and 37 Strategic Objectives, which have been refined through an extensive period of stakeholder engagement and public consultation. Included within these are objectives concerned with increasing and widening participation in sport; increasing the number of people receiving sports coaching; increasing the number of people volunteering in sport; establishing and embedding a Coventry Institute of Sport that provides early specialist support services for talented athletes; developing city centre sports facilities that are accessible, high quality, sustainable; attracting high profile sporting events to the city; establishing a Coventry Sports Network; and harnessing the power of sport to promote community cohesion and address public health inequalities in the city.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Members (Business, Enterprise and Employment) and (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks) are recommended:

1. To acknowledge the petition and to ensure officers consider gymnastics development as part of the wider Coventry Sports Strategy and the associated Indoor Facilities Strategy.
2. To review the information contained within the Indoor Facilities Assessment report regarding gymnastics provision and review provisions within the Indoor Facilities Strategy to ensure the future facility needs for gymnastics in the city are adequately and appropriately addressed based on proven demand.
3. To request the Executive Director, Place to approach British Gymnastics the National Governing Body (NGB) with a view to developing a city wide implementation plan for the sport across the city in partnership with the gymnastics clubs and other stakeholders.
4. To agree that where facility programming impacts on gymnastic club facility usage, the Executive Director, Place works with the gymnastics club(s) to secure alternative sports hall provision.

List of Appendices included:

None

Background papers:

None

Other Useful Documents:

The following useful papers were available during the consultation for Coventry Sports Strategy 2014 -2014 and are available upon request.

- Coventry Sports and Leisure Survey 2012 – Survey Template (Coventry City Council, June 2012)
- Coventry Sports and Leisure Report (Coventry City Council, November 2012)
- Coventry Sports Strategy Consultation Report (Coventry City Council, April 2014)
- Draft Coventry Sports Strategy (2014 – 2024)
- Draft Coventry Facilities Strategy (2014 – 2024)

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Gymnastics Campaign for the Children of Coventry

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 On 1 June 2014, an e-petition was submitted to the Council concerning a campaign to help develop competitive gymnastics sports in Coventry. The petition contained 29 signatures.
- 1.2 The city has a wide range of specialist indoor sports facilities befitting its size, including some specialist gymnastics provision.
- 1.3 Currently within Coventry there is gymnastic provision at Woodlands School, which has a specialist gymnastics facility as part of its sports hall and accommodates two key gymnastics clubs. The gymnastic facilities at Woodlands School were opened in May 2006. The sports hall including the gymnastics equipment received the highest rating of 'very good' in Coventry's Indoor Facilities Assessment report.
- 1.4 Gymnastics provision is also provided at the following facilities - Ernesford Grange School, Moat House Leisure and Neighbourhood Centre and Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre.
- 1.5 There are currently five gymnastics clubs based in the city, of which three are gym mark accredited clubs. The clubs deliver a variety of gymnastic disciplines to all age ranges from pre-school to adults.
- 1.6 Coventry Dynamite cheerleaders are based Woodlands School and compete at a world standard. At the 2013 Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Awards the club were voted team of the year.
- 1.7 In May 2014 the Ricoh Arena hosted the British Gymnastics Trampoline and Tumbling Spring Event Series.
- 1.8 The draft Coventry Indoor Facilities Strategy has considered gymnastics facilities provision and acknowledges that Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre historically had a comprehensive and vibrant gymnastics programme, but that it has declined in usage over recent years. Consultation suggests that this usage has not transferred to other providers in the city. Therefore, compared to other similar sized cities there is the potential that latent demand for gymnastics is not being satisfied.
- 1.9 There is a potential need for a stand-alone gymnastics facility, but further work around resources and proven demand, as well as ensuring club infrastructures are ready to support this, would be required.
- 1.10 The draft Coventry Sport Strategy 2014 – 2024 has the following eight vision aims:
 1. To inspire more people within the city to take up and regularly take part in sport;
 2. To provide a wide range of high quality and exciting sporting opportunities and experiences;
 3. To inspire more people to volunteer, coach and be supporters of sport;
 4. To identify and support talented athletes to reach their sporting potential;
 5. To provide a range of modern, accessible and high quality sports facilities in the City;

6. To attract high profile sporting events to the city and to celebrate sporting achievement;
7. To grow and promote sport in the city through effective partnerships;
8. For sport to make Coventry a better place to work, live and visit.

Through these vision aims and the development of the Coventry Sport Network (CSN), it is proposed that support for gymnastics clubs, coaches and volunteers would be enhanced. As part of the Coventry Sports Strategy development, officers from the City Council and Sport England have written to over ten National Governing Bodies (NGB's) to invite them to discuss a city wide plan to develop their sport. British Gymnastics is one of the NGB's that has been approached by the City Council, and we anticipate a meeting to take place with officers to highlight British Gymnastics as either a priority or development sport for Coventry.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

Option A) The Council to commission a feasibility report on the potential for purpose built specialist gymnastics facility in Coventry (Not Recommended)

- 2.1 There is a potential need for a stand-alone gymnastics facility in Coventry based on unproved latent demand.
- 2.2 In implementing a Sports Strategy and Facilities Strategy for the City, the role of a specialist gymnastic facility must be considered. Provision of a gymnastic facility would require new capital investment, but would add further diversity to the sport and public leisure offer.
- 2.3 However, Option A is not the recommended option for the following reasons:
 - 2.3.1 Coventry already has a specialist gymnastics facility located at Woodlands School that is not operating at capacity, with additional provision provided at a number of other locations. Any future investment into gymnastic facility provision would need to be based on evidenced proven demand.
 - 2.3.2 At this present time the gymnastic club infrastructure could not support management of such a facility without further development.

(Option B) To consider gymnastics development as part of the wider Coventry Sports Strategy and the associated Facilities Strategy (Recommended)

- 2.4 Option B concerns the review of the information contained within the draft Indoor Facilities Strategy regarding gymnastics provision and to consider future needs based on proven demand, as part of a facilities action plan for the sport.
- 2.5 Option B further involves working in partnership with British Gymnastics to assess the likely demand for gymnastics in the city and how local clubs can be supported to best meet this level of demand.
- 2.6 Subject to approval by Cabinet in August 2014, it is proposed to support gymnastics clubs, volunteers and coaches through the implementation of the Vision Aims within the Coventry Sports Strategy and through the support of the resulting Coventry Sports Network.
- 2.7 It is further proposed to create an implementation plan, in partnership with the National Governing Body, that holistically develops all elements of gymnastics that support the achievement of the eight Vision Aims for Sport in Coventry.

- 2.8 In reviewing gymnastics provision in the city, it is proposed officers will further consider any anticipated or known displacement of gymnastics clubs and assist in re-provisioning to existing alternate facilities where required.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Public consultation via the Coventry Sport and Leisure Survey was undertaken between 25th June 2012 and 26th August 2012 and 1,532 responses were received. In survey responses, there was no specific reference to a need for improved gymnastics provision.
- 3.2 Public consultation regarding the draft Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 elicited well over 3,000 individual comments. The key findings of this consultation will be fully reported in the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 Cabinet Report scheduled for Cabinet on 5 August 2014. However, only four of the 3,000 comments were in relation to the need for improved gymnastics provision in the City.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The draft Coventry Sports Strategy 2014 - 2024 is scheduled for consideration by Cabinet in August 2014. It is recommended that the review and planning of future gymnastics development and the relevant facility needs are managed through this process.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

Other than officer time, there are no direct financial implications of the recommendations in this report. Should the review determine that facilities are inadequate; any proposal would need to be considered further for cost implications.

5.2 Legal implications

The Council will use its power under section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (the Act) as power to implement the delivery of the Coventry Sport and Playing Pitch Strategies. This section provides that local authorities have the discretion to provide, inside or outside their area, such recreational facilities as they think fit. The implementation of the strategies will also assist the Council in discharging its duty under section 507B Education Act 1996 whereby the Council is under a duty to secure positive leisure time activities for the improvement of the well- being of young people in its area and to secure facilities for such activities.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

It is anticipated that the proposed Coventry Sports Strategy and the anticipated consequential support for gymnastics clubs, volunteers and coaches would contribute to the Council's core aims as follows:

- Citizens living longer, healthier, independent lives. Through encouraging and supporting engagement in sport and leisure activities, public leisure provision contributes to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the residents of Coventry. The recommendations of this report support due consideration being given to the merits of supporting gymnastics provision in Coventry, as part of future sport and public leisure provision.

- *Making Coventry an attractive and enjoyable place to be.* Key Vision Statement 5 of the Vision for Sport in Coventry references the need “to provide a range of modern, accessible and high quality sports facilities in the City”. Through the Coventry Sport and Leisure Survey 2012, residents of the city and users of public leisure facilities identified the need for affordable, friendly, enjoyable activities within a clean safe environment. Gymnastics facilities are a key part of this leisure offer.
- *Ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive contribution.* The provision of high-quality sporting and leisure (including gymnastic) facilities and structured programmes of sports development and centre-based activities provide a wealth of opportunities to celebrate the achievement of young people. Gymnastics has a key role to play in meeting this objective, as a recognised sport with a community infrastructure.
- *Developing a more equal city with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods.* Sporting experiences, events and facilities are widely recognised to positively bring communities together and to contribute to developing and defining a sense of place. It is anticipated that gymnastics (including through the sport’s contribution to the proposed Coventry Sports Strategy) will contribute to supporting the provision of such opportunities in the future.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

A detailed risk register has been produced and will be maintained and reviewed throughout the process of developing the Sports Vision and Strategy for Sport in Coventry.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The Coventry Sports Strategy will be considered by Cabinet on 5th August 2014. If approved, implementation will be led through staff within the Place Directorate, in consultation with Coventry Sports Network and key stakeholders. There is no wider impact on the organisation through the implementation of the Strategy.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

Public consultation regarding the draft Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 elicited well over 3,000 individual comments. The key findings of this consultation will be fully reported in the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 Cabinet Report scheduled for Cabinet on 5th August 2014. The key considerations that were raised during the period of consultation will be considered in the ‘Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024: Report on the stakeholder and public consultation’ and the Sports Strategy Equality and Consultation Analysis. These reports will be included as appendices to the Cabinet Reports.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The Coventry Sports Strategy and Indoor Facilities Strategy for the City will be considered by Cabinet on 5th August 2014. If approved, implementation will engage key strategic partners in the review and planning of gymnastics development and future facility needs of the City. This will require input from public leisure operators, community sports clubs, Sport England and relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport.

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Councillor K Maton	Cabinet Member (Business, Enterprise and Employment)	-	14 July 2014	15 July 2014
Councillor A Khan	Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports, Parks and Events)	-	14 July 2014	15 July 2014

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