

Community Wellbeing & Housing Committee



7 January 2025

Title	Leisure and Culture Strategy
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Kamal Mehmood – Strategic Lead for Leisure & Community Development Mary Holdaway – Leisure Development Manager Charlotte Skinner – Arts and Cultural Development Manager
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Community Resilience Environment Services
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve and adopt the Spelthorne Leisure & Culture Strategy, 2025-2035 • Agree delegated authority to the Group Head, Community Wellbeing and Housing in consultation with Chair and Vice Chair of Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee to make necessary changes to the Spelthorne Leisure and Culture Strategy, 2025 - 2035
Reason for Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the importance of leisure and culture is recognised by the council as a means of improving the health and wellbeing of the community and to ensure Spelthorne remains a great place to live, work, study and invest; • To inform the council's practices and decision making.

1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council does not have a current Leisure and Culture Strategy • The Leisure & Culture Strategy is informed by national and regional strategies for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a robust strategy will focus our service delivery over the next 10 years and will also provide the evidence base to draw in external funding

<p>Sport and Culture, the Corporate Plan and Health & Wellbeing Strategy. It sets out the Council's aspirations and direction of travel mindful of the social and economic challenges that have emerged following the Pandemic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is also an essential criterion for the grant funding award which has been secured earlier this year from Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund that a current Leisure Strategy is in place
<p>This is what we want to do about it</p>	<p>These are the next steps</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the strategy • Implement the strategy • Develop a Delivery Plan

1.1 This report seeks to provide an overview of the Leisure and Culture Strategy 2025-2035.

2. Key issues

2.1 The previous Leisure Strategy covered the period between 2017 to 2021. The new strategy sets out our vision and aspirations moving forward mindful of social and economic challenges that we currently face. It is vitally important to highlight the positive impact that leisure and culture have on our residents and identify the current priorities for the next ten years.

2.2 It will be complemented by delivery plans that will be refreshed on a three-year basis following an initial year of development.

2.3 The Strategy aligns to the Corporate Plan, particularly supporting the priorities of Community, Resilience, Environment and Services.

2.4 The strategy aligns with the same key themes as the Health & Wellbeing Strategy, People, Place, Community, ensuring consistency, and introduces a further priority, Environment, in recognition of the climate emergency declared by the Council in 2019 and also in recognition of the work that has been done to date, Spelthorne being the home of the World's first Passivhaus leisure centre. It also recognises the social and economic benefits of investing in leisure and culture.

2.5 The Strategy aims to:

- encourage individuals to prioritise time for leisure and culture to benefit their wellbeing (People),
- foster a positive environment where leisure and culture is celebrated and activities can be delivered (Place),
- offer services to ensure all residents feel connected and boost social cohesion (Community),
- and take positive steps to reduce our impact on climate change (Environment).

2.6 There are numerous strategies, policies and organisations at a national, county and local level which play an active role in influencing the Leisure Strategy. As a local Borough Council, we have a smaller area of control,

however we are also are well positioned, as a leader of place, to have a wide sphere of influence. The Leisure Strategy focuses on our area of control which covers community development and engagement with sport & physical activity, arts & heritage, and their accessibility within our premises, parks & open spaces.

3. Options analysis and proposal

Option 1: Adopt the Spelthorne Leisure and Culture Strategy, 2025 – 2035

Advantages:

- An instrument to encourage positive social change helping to make Spelthorne a more attractive place to live work and do business
- Supports people to be active, reducing isolation and loneliness, improving health outcomes and increasing sense of community leading to pride and individual resilience.
- Embeds the importance of Leisure and Culture for Spelthorne Borough Council to achieve its corporate objectives
- Enhances the wider arts and leisure offer
- Provides an evidence base to draw in external funding
- Meets the requirement of the Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund award (nearly £1million funding) to undertake decarbonisation work at Sunbury Leisure Centre
- It will help to inform funding applications including the Sport England Priority Place initiative partners are seeking funding for in Stanwell.

Disadvantages

- It is not a statutory requirement for SBC to have a Leisure Strategy

Option 2: Do nothing

Advantages:

- There are no advantages

Disadvantages:

- Negates the importance of Leisure as a priority for both the Council and for individuals
- Risk securing the final payment for the Sport England swimming pool support fund for improvements at Sunbury Leisure Centre

Option 3: Amend the strategy

Advantages:

- More information could be included

Disadvantages

- A robust process to draft the strategy has taken place

- Further work and research to ensure an evidence base would be required to make changes
- 4. Financial management comments**
 - 4.1 The implementation of the Leisure & Culture Strategy will be covered by existing budgets. A corporate Leisure and Culture Strategy can be used to attract external funding. The Strategy will also help to focus and prioritise suitable spending of the current budget to deliver the key priorities.
 - 5. Risk management comments**
 - 5.1 The strategy risks raising public expectations. Whilst aspirational, a measured approach will be taken to manage expectations and qualify what can be achieved within existing budgets; by collaborating with partners and drawing in funding against a challenging financial backdrop.
 - 6. Procurement comments**
 - 6.1 Not applicable
 - 7. Legal comments**
 - 7.1 There are no legal issues arising from this report.
 - 8. Other considerations**
 - 8.1 The Leisure Strategy aligns to the Corporate Plan and Health & Wellbeing Strategy. It also dovetails numerous other strategies including the Climate Change Strategy, Local Plan, Playing Pitch Strategy, Economic Development.
 - 9. Equality and Diversity**
 - 9.1 Equality and diversity are recognised within the Strategy and an equality impact assessment will be carried where necessary for relevant actions in the delivery plan.
 - 10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**
 - 10.1 This underpins all areas of the strategy. For example, active travel will be encouraged to support people's physical health but also positively contribute to improving air quality. The Council will lead by example to encourage residents to make positive steps towards reducing the carbon footprint. The Council will advocate the new Passivhaus Leisure Centre and focus on decarbonisation of Sunbury Leisure Centre.
 - 11. Timetable for implementation**
 - 11.1 If approved, the Strategy will be adopted and a delivery plan will be developed in consultation with partners and the public. Progress on the delivery plan will be reported annually and reviewed every three years.
 - 12. Contact**
 - 12.1 Mary Holdaway – m.holdaway@spelthorne.gov.uk
Kamal Mehmood – k.mehmood@spelthorne.gov.uk

**Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.**

Background papers: *(These are unpublished papers upon which you have relied in preparing this report). If none state, There are none.*

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Leisure and Culture Strategy

Appendix B – Case Studies

Appendix C – Organisational Glossary

Appendix D – Evidence Base