

**TITLE OF REPORT:**           **Review of Leisure Services**

**REPORT OF:**               **Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health**

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### **SUMMARY**

The report is to review delivery of Leisure Services to understand the reasoning behind the closure of some facilities and to identify lessons learned to ensure that the procurement process and any Community Asset Transfers benefit by learning from the Council's experience.

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### **Background**

The delivery of Leisure Services has been the topic of many reports to Cabinet over the years, more recently exploring ways in which to reduce the Council's funding, and this resulted Cabinet deciding on 20th June 2023 to close of 2 facilities, Gateshead Leisure Centre and Birtley Swimming Centre. Cabinet had previously agreed to the procuring of a partner for the leisure facilities that remain open.

### **Scope of the Review**

The review will focus on actions taken by the Council in an attempt to continue to provide an excellent Leisure Provision but at reduced cost to the Council and to explore what worked well and what worked less well.

### **The Process**

It is proposed that there will be a number of evidence gathering sessions with the review concluding in January 2024. The details of the evidence gathering sessions are set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

### **Who will be involved?**

Current and previous senior officers involved in managing Leisure Services will be involved in providing evidence to the OSC.

### **Recommendation**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to agree:

- The scope, process and timescale as set out in this report

### Progress of the Review

This appendix sets out the standard framework for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to agree and conduct policy reviews and includes proposals specific for the review of Leisure Services.

#### Stage 1

This stage will consider the scope of the report and propose how it will be undertaken detailing the evidence gathering topics and presenters.

##### Proposal

- 4 September 2023 - Scoping report to Scrutiny Committee presented by A Tickner.

#### Stage 2

Leisure Evidence may be gathered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee making visits as necessary or inviting persons and organisations to give evidence before it. Relevant Group or Strategic Directors and the Chief Executive will assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as necessary. The evidence gathered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be written up by officers.

##### Proposal

- 16 October 2023 - To have 3 evidence gathering session as set out below:
  - Evidence of the previous Leisure Services Strategy and it's implementation from 2015 to 2023 presented by Lindsay Murray and Michael Lamb.
  - Deep dive into the Leisure Service Financial Performance presented by John Shiel/Jill Bradley
  - Market context, benchmarking and impacts of COVID presented by Andrea Tickner and Michael Lamb.

#### Stage 3

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will then meet (as many times as is necessary) to analyse the information gathered and prepare its conclusions.

##### Proposal

- 27 November 2023 –Interim Report presented by A Tickner

#### Stage 4

Officers will then prepare a report on the issue based on the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Officers will submit this report to the next practicable meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to secure agreement that the report is a fair, accurate and complete reflection of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's conclusions.

##### Proposal

- 22 January 2024 - Final report to be considered by the Committee.

#### Stage 5

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will then present this report to the Cabinet. The Cabinet may take note of the report, approve all or some of the report's recommendations or refer the report to full Council or to an Advisory Group for further consultation.

**Proposal**

- Presented to Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024 by the Chair of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.