

Name of meeting **Cabinet**

Date **3rd December 2019**

Title of report: **Dewsbury Sport Centre -
Family Attraction**

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet approval to invest up to a maximum of £320,000 in Dewsbury Sports Centre to enable Kirklees Active Leisure to create a new Family Attraction at the facility.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes
Key Decision	Yes
The Decision - Is it eligible for "call in" by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by Strategic Director & name	Karl Battersby - 25.11.2019
Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Finance	Eamonn Croston - 21.10.2019
Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft - 17.10.2019
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Peter McBride - 14.10.2019

Electoral wards affected: Dewsbury East

Ward councillors consulted: Dewsbury East, Dewsbury West, Dewsbury South

Public or private: Public

GDPR - no personal or sensitive data; or other information covered by GDPR is included in this report.

1 Summary

Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to invest up to a maximum of £320,000 to create a new family attraction at Dewsbury Sports Centre. This will create more activity in the town centre, increasing footfall and supporting businesses in the centre of town. It is proposed these funds come from the 'Strategic Regeneration of Town Centres - Dewsbury' part of the approved Capital Plan.

2 Information required to take a decision

Background

The Dewsbury Strategic Development Framework 2018 (SDF)

- 2.1 The Dewsbury SDF 2018 was approved by Cabinet on the 22nd January 2019 and includes the following vision: -

“To be a thriving market town, that is a great place to live, which taps into the potential capacity of its people and maximises the benefits of its role as a key transport and economic location.”

- 2.2 The Dewsbury SDF 2018 vision looks 15 years ahead and has three key aims and each has more detailed objectives as generally described below: -

1. Increasing activity in the town

There is a need for more activity into the town centre. This will be addressed, in part, by introducing new uses into the centre, such as the new College facilities and consolidating and improving the existing Market

2. Making the town centre more attractive

The town needs to be a place that looks good and is pleasant to spend time in. People need to feel safe and welcome in the town. Attention will be focussed on making most of the town's heritage assets and ensuring the public realm is in good condition and improved/extended where possible e.g. the Town Park. Working alongside these actions there is a need to ensure that the place feels safe and welcoming for all and that Dewsbury people and potential visitors feel more positive about the town centre.

3. Improving Accessibility

Adopt an integrated approach to sustainable transport in the town centre ensuring, in particular, that it is easy for sustainable modes to get in and around the town centre and that the town is 'open for business. A key will be to ensure car parking provision is fit for purpose, while balancing this against broader objectives.

- 2.3 The SDF and the related Development Programme identify several key projects and actions to deliver higher levels of activity. There are a number of

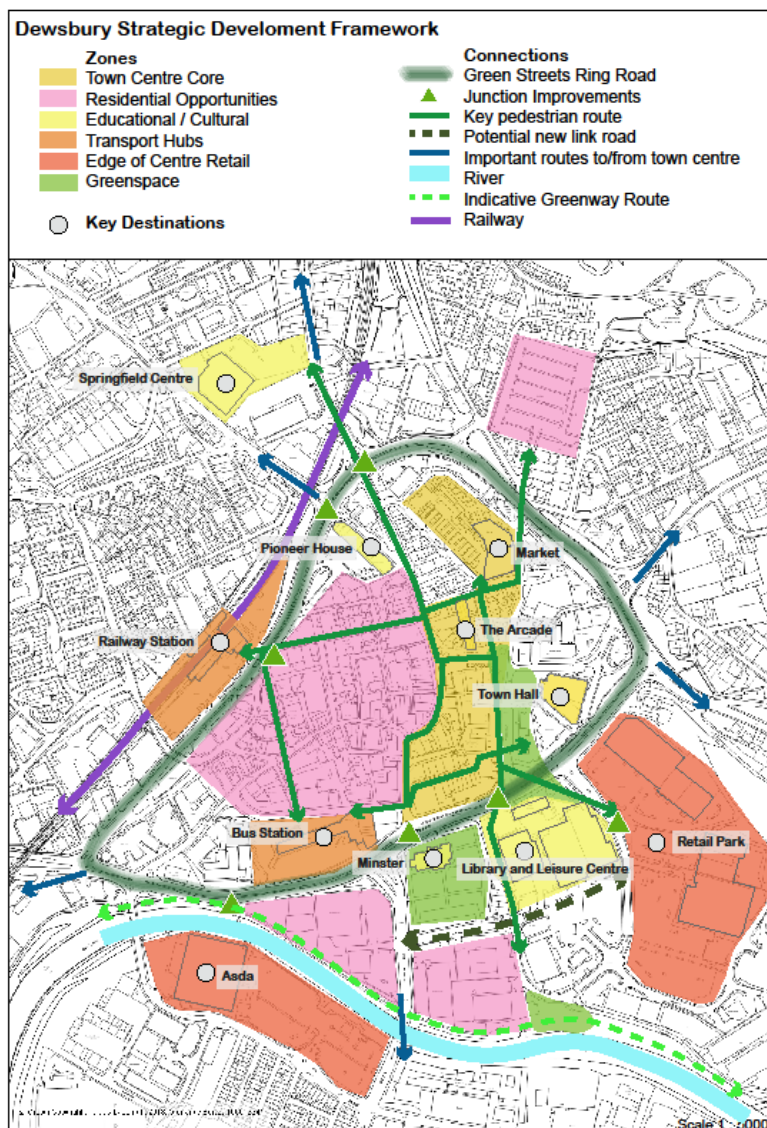
'attractions' in the town centre that currently play an important role in bringing people into the town and creating activity and footfall e.g.:-

- The Market - is a key driver of footfall and as part of the Framework (SDF) it is proposed to significantly improve the current offer and its physical appearance. The report will be coming to Cabinet in 2020 on the proposals.
- Dewsbury Town Hall - this is going through a programme of internal improvements and the plan is to increase the number and range of activities being held there.
- Dewsbury Sports Centre - attracts large numbers of people into the centre of Dewsbury. It is located just to the south of the ring road close to the Library (see Plan One). There is scope to increase numbers of visitors.

In addition, as part of the plans there will be a new attractor: -

- Pioneer building - the Council has worked closely with Kirklees College on the Pioneer project and Phase 2 of the 'Learning Quarter' is due to open in September 2010.

Plan One: Dewsbury Town Centre Strategic Development Framework



2.4 One of the objectives supporting the aim of increasing activity is to develop the evening and leisure economy. Several projects are underway, including supporting new leisure facilities through the THI scheme e.g. Black Bull and work to increase the number and range of events held at Dewsbury Town Hall. Officers have also been working with Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL) to develop a proposal to increase the number of visitors into the Sports Centre and therefore contribute to the wider aims of getting more people to come into town. This report outlines the results of that work and requests Council support for the project by investing in the project.

Dewsbury Sports Centre – Proposal for New Family Attraction

2.5 KAL has successfully developed the YEAH Days Out group of Family Attraction products across Kirklees district, with 6 current products available:

- Splash Park at Huddersfield Leisure Centre;
- Dare-2-Air inflatable theme park at Huddersfield Leisure Centre;
- TAG X at Batley Sports & Tennis Centre;
- Stompers soft play at Batley Sports & Tennis Centre;
- Footgolf at Bradley Park Golf Course; and
- WOW Wipeout, a large pool inflatable system, at Dewsbury Sports Centre.

2.6 These have proved very popular and attractive to both residents of Kirklees and further afield. KAL would like to develop a Family Attraction product at Dewsbury Sports Centre to enhance the current overall Kirklees offer and to enhance the leisure offer that the Dewsbury facility provides. This would encourage more people into Dewsbury town centre and help to raise the positive profile of the town.

2.7 The project will include:

- A new Family Attraction product, potentially to be based upon the successful and very popular Dare-2-Air inflatable theme park at Huddersfield Leisure Centre. This product will be able to be used by a wide demographic, from pre-school through to older people, with a particular focus being for families to take part together and with specific sessions likely to be programmed for older children.
- Enhanced sound, lighting, heating and ventilation to ensure the customer experience in using this product is a positive one;
- A refurbished sports hall flooring, to help retain and increase the sports hall customers.

2.8 The creation of the new attraction is dependent on the provision of improved lift access to the sports hall. The Council is the landlord for the Sports Centre and has already made financial provision of £200,000 in the 'Corporate Landlord' part of the approved capital plan to fund this. The provision of the new lift is an essential part of the project and Council officers are currently in discussion with KAL, as to how best to ensure a suitable lift is installed in time to meet the preferred opening time of the family attraction in summer 2020. In parallel to these discussions more detailed feasibility work is currently

underway. Upon completion of all the necessary investment, KAL will have full operational responsibility for running the Family Attraction.

2.9 The proposal to create a new Family Attraction helps to make the most of one of the town's key assets and addresses a number of weaknesses in the town centre. Benefits of the proposal are summarised below: -

- Increased visitors, c37,500 p.a. to the Sports Centre with potential for more linked trips to the rest of the town centre.
- An additional 2.5 FTE employed on site.
- Improved perception of the town centre as a place to go visit or leisure activity.
- More people involved in active pursuits, giving wider health benefits.
- Increased income to KAL and improved financial performance.

More details are contained in Appendix 1.

2.10 As part of the proposal KAL also propose to rename Dewsbury Sports Centre, Dewsbury Leisure Centre, to much better reflect the wide range of sport/fitness/ activity opportunities available at the site.

2.11 Unfortunately, the anticipated revenue returns from running the new attraction do not justify the estimated establishment costs and risks in delivering the project. KAL will therefore need financial support from the Council. More information is contained in the financial section of this report.

Timescales - Progress to date

2.12 Subject to Cabinet approval and provision of the new lift then ideally KAL would like to be able to launch the new facility for summer 2020. If the lift installation takes place after summer then the opening will occur as soon as possible once the lift is operational. Once the feasibility work on the lift has been completed, then a more detailed programme will be produced to establish the probable opening date.

Evaluation & Monitoring

2.13 As part of any investment the Council will work closely with KAL in the delivery of the new facilities and equipment. Once operational there will be a requirement to provide regular updates on the performance of the new attraction.

Sustainability

2.14 The increased usage of the Sports Centre will contribute to sustainability by making greater use of an existing asset located within a highly accessible location.

3 Implications for the Council

Working with People

- 3.1 The Council will be supporting KAL to provide the new attraction. KAL will be the organisation who will be directly working with people to encourage participation and use of the new attraction.

Working with Partners

- 3.2 KAL are a key partner in managing the sports and leisure facilities in Kirklees and the Council's support of the new attraction will be another example of this.

Place Based Working

- 3.3 The SDF builds upon the substantial community engagement work undertaken in 2010 which shaped the plans proposed at that time. Support for the new family attraction will contribute to delivering this place-based working.

Improving Outcomes for Children

- 3.4 The proposal will provide additional opportunities for the children to participate in a greater range of physical activities; encouraging a wider cross-section of young people to make use of the Sports Centre.

Other Implications

Financial

- 3.5 The capital finances of the proposal are summarised in Table One below.

Equipment (including Inflatable)	109,000
Audio Visual Equipment	45,000
Mechanical & Electrical	50,000
Flooring	24,000
Other works	82,000
Contingency	10,000
SUB TOTAL	£320,000
New Lift (Landlord Works already committed)	£200,000
TOTAL KIRKLEES COUNCIL INVESTMENT	£520,000

- 3.6 The Council has already agreed to install the new lift as part of its landlord obligations and is therefore shown separately in the table above. Cabinet's approval is required for the £320,000 investment. It is proposed that the Council would pay for the £320,000 of investment and KAL would need to find any additional funds if costs should rise above this figure.

- 3.7 Due to the age and condition of Dewsbury Sports Centre the capital costs of creating a new attraction are higher than at a newer facility, as some of the fabric and services need to be upgraded to accommodate the new facility. The rapidly changing nature of consumer leisure habits means that there is a degree of uncertainty about future demand, and therefore income, over the medium term.
- 3.8 The Council financially supports KAL in the provision of leisure facilities across the district. KAL have considered approaching Sport England for support but recent changes to Sport England's priorities and tighter funding criteria mean that this is no longer worth pursuing. If the project is to go ahead then the Council will need to provide the necessary financial support.
- 3.9 The Council and KAL anticipate the attraction will generate increased footfall and therefore some additional revenue streams to KAL as footfall builds up and the expected revenue streams would support the organisation's continued overall financial sustainability going forward.
- 3.10 It is proposed that the £320,000 investment be funded from the capital plan allocation for 'Strategic Regeneration of Town Centres - Dewsbury'. This would leave £10.567 million available to fund other projects that do not yet have a specific capital allocation e.g. Market, Town Park. Further reports detailing these individual projects and the resources required, will be brought to Cabinet in due course.

4 Consultees and their opinions

- 4.1 **Finance** - The Chief Finance Officer's comments are reflected in the financial section above.
- 4.2 **Legal**
- 4.3 Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL) was established on 1 April 2002 to maximise the operational and financial opportunities available from having a separate organisation running leisure assets; rather than the Council directly operating them as occurred up to that time. KAL receives revenue grant support from the Council to operate leisure facilities across Kirklees.
- 4.4 KAL lease Dewsbury Sports Centre from Kirklees Council. The Council own outright the area around the swimming pool but in respect of the Sports Hall it has a long lease from a third party and the freeholder permission will be sought for the proposed works. This permission cannot be unreasonably withheld.

5 Next steps

- 5.1 If Cabinet approve the recommendations, then officers will work closely with KAL to undertake detailed design of the lift and the other works necessary to deliver the new attraction. As part of this work a more detailed programme will be produced. In parallel to the above more detailed work will be undertaken into the best mix of Family Attraction elements that can be provided, with a final decision on this to be made early in 2020.

- 5.2 The SDF Delivery Programme has a 3–5 year timescale. It is proposed to progress the projects outlined in the Delivery programme and undertake feasibility and development of other projects that will help deliver the SDF aims and objectives.

6 Officer recommendations and reasons

- 6.1 That Cabinet: -

Approve an investment of up to a maximum of £320,000 for the creation of a new visitor attraction at Dewsbury Sports Centre, as described in this report.

Reason: To create a new attraction in Dewsbury Town Centre that will contribute to achieving the objectives of the Strategic Development Framework.

- 6.2 Approve that the £320,000 is funded from the approved Capital Plan allocation for 'Strategic Regeneration of Town Centres - Dewsbury.

Reason: Effective financial management.

7 Cabinet portfolio holder recommendation

- 7.1 The Economy Portfolio Holder, Cllr Peter McBride supports these proposals.

8. Contact officer

Peter Thompson
Economic Resilience Project Manager
01484 221000
peterr.thompson@kirklees.co.uk

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Dewsbury Strategic Development Framework (2018)
<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/regeneration-and-development/dewsbury-renaissance.aspx>

10. Service Director responsible

Naz Parkar - Service Director Housing & Growth
(01484) 221000
naz.parkar@kirklees.gov.uk

APPENDIX ONE: BENEFITS OF THE DEWSBURY SPORTS CENTRE FAMILY ATTRACTION.

The project will –

- Contribute to the North Kirklees Growth Zone objective: “*Dewsbury as the primary economic and service centre, with a town centre that is fully utilised through increased housing and leisure provision...*”, with the project both providing a new leisure product and making the town centre a more attractive place to both visit and live;
- Address a number of the Weaknesses/Opportunities identified within the 2018 Dewsbury Town Centre - Strategic Development Framework (SDF):
 - Weaknesses:
 - Poor image: the positive development of a new, high quality, accessible leisure activity within the town centre and the subsequent proactive and cross-promotion of this as part of the YEAH Days Out family of products;
 - Not enough to keep people in town: the new product will both bring people into the town centre and encourage them to stay as a key part of an overall enhanced town centre offer
 - Fear of crime/ anti-social behaviour: the new product will encourage managed use by local young people, allowing them to take part in positive exercise opportunities;
 - Perceived lack of positive promotion of Dewsbury: the new product, its promotion and developing positive reputation will significantly contribute to an improved image of the town;
 - Generally low income levels in immediate catchment: as per KAL’s fitness membership offer in Dewsbury (£17.50/month for gym membership), the new Family Attraction product will be priced to ensure accessibility for the local population, with reduced rates for Kirklees Passport holders and the ability to target specific groups through the use of promo codes.
 - Opportunities:
 - Development of leisure offer: the new product will considerably enhance the leisure offer within the town centre.
- Complement the development of more residential use in the town centre, helping to make Dewsbury town centre a more attractive place to live by providing an enhanced leisure offer, complementing the other good quality facilities already available within the Sports Centre (e.g. fitness suite; fitness classes; sports hall activities; swimming pool).
- In particular, the proposal will contribute towards the 2018 SDF aim of “**Increasing activity**”, where it will enhance 2 particular objectives and 1 of the identified “Key projects”:
 - Get more people living in the town centre: by providing good quality, local, accessible leisure activity opportunities;
 - Development of the creative/ cultural offer: there are no leisure products such as that being proposed currently within the

Dewsbury / North Kirklees area, with the proposed development helping to positively raise Dewsbury's profile.

- Key project: "Events & Leisure" – with the proposed project providing a new, exciting local leisure activity.

- The proposal should also, however, contribute towards the 2 further SDF Aims:
 - **Making the town centre more attractive:** The proposed Family Attraction Development will contribute towards the objective of "Improving perceptions" and the key project of "Marketing/ improving perceptions".
 - **Improving accessibility:** whereby increasing the positive leisure offer in the Sports Centre further it should help to form a key link between the major car parks to the south of the Sports Centre and the traditional town centre to the north.

- **Finally, the proposal will positively contribute towards the following SDF outputs and outcomes:**
 - **People using the town centre** – higher footfall: KAL will look to actively promote the new product, including with its existing YEAH Days Out customers and fitness members. The increased number of customers to the Sports Centre will also be encouraged to make use of the town centre's other assets;
 - **Employment levels** – it is expected that the new Family Attraction product will employ some 2.5 FTE's, who are likely to be both local and u25;
 - **Perceptions of the town centre** – this will be significantly enhanced with a new leisure product available and also by the positive promotion of the facility via KAL's YEAH Days Out brand.