



Tuesday, 3 February 2026

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes  
Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet  
Member for Leisure and Culture

## Leisure investment across the District

### Report Author

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### Purpose of Report

To provide Members of the Committee with an update of the work being undertaken as part of the leisure investment programme at each of the leisure centres, as well as details of the support the Council has provided to community organisations to improve the overall leisure offering in the district.

### Recommendations

**Members of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the contents of the report.**

### Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Connecting Communities  
Effective council

Which wards are impacted? All Wards

## 1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 A Leisure Investment Reserve was established as part of the 2024/25 financial year closedown and £500k was set aside to provide investment into the leisure facilities. Members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee have endorsed the allocation criteria at a meeting at their meeting held on 18 November 2025. This has identified improvements to the changing room areas of the three leisure facilities and the Stadium as a priority. Work is now underway to finalise the scope and specification of works with a view to the tender opportunity going live in February 2026.
- 1.2 Following a request from Deeping Sports and Social Club, Members of the Cabinet approved a £200k contribution towards the development of a 3G pitch facility in the Deepings, funded from both the Leisure and Community reserve and the Local Priorities Reserve.

*Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.3 There are no legal and governance implications arising from this report.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2024-27 sets out the key priorities for the Council and its leisure service. Providing and investing in high-quality leisure facilities helps to support the Council's corporate ambitions and provides opportunities for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities.
- 2.2 At a meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 December 2025, Members of the Committee agreed for a report be brought to a future meeting outlining the work being undertaken to improve not only the Council's leisure facilities, but also to improve the overall leisure offering within the district.

2.3. Therefore, this report will be split into two subsets for ease of reading as follows:

- A. An overview of the £500k Leisure Investment Works
- B. An overview of the Support to Community Organisations

**(A) £500k Leisure Investment Programme**

2.4. Members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously received a report on 18 November 2025 and approved the allocation criteria of the £500k leisure investment reserve. It was agreed that the priority would be to improve the changing room facilities across all three leisure centres and the South Kesteven Sports Stadium (the Stadium) (see **Background Papers**).

2.5. The following indicative costings were identified to undertake the identified necessary improvement works, although the final costs would be subject to procurement:

- Bourne Leisure Centre £100k
- Stamford Leisure Pool £100k
- Grantham Meres Leisure Centre £200k
- South Kesteven Sports Stadium £100k

2.6. Future reports regarding progress with the works identified and the associated spend will continue to be reported to the Council's Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required and in accordance with the Committee's terms of reference. The information contained in this report is being presented to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee for noting purposes only.

2.7. Since November 2025 Officers from the Council's Leisure Team have been exploring the procurement options available with the Council's Procurement Lead, ensuring compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

2.8. Whilst there are several routes to market, it has been decided the works will be procured as a single package through an Open Tender process. This opens the opportunity up to local suppliers and avoids incurring framework commission fees, thus demonstrating value for money.

2.9. Welland Procurement has been instructed to support the project, and it is envisaged that from the point of publishing the tender it will take up to eight weeks to get to contract start, this is subject to Cabinet approval in April 2026. The draft timeline can be found in **Table One** below:

**Table One: Draft timeline for Leisure Improvement Works to refurbish changing facilities at each leisure centre**

Task	Start Date	Completion Date
Develop specification and pricing schedule for tender	12/01/2026	06/02/2026
Tender live	09/02/2026	06/03/2026
Notify preferred supplier of intention of award subject to internal approval	17/03/2026	24/03/2026
Cabinet meeting for contract award	07/04/2026	07/04/2026
Contract commencement	27/04/2026	TBC

- 2.10. The external consultants who initially supported the Council with identifying and prioritising the agreed works have since been further commissioned to prepare and produce a schedule of works for each centre and to prepare pre-construction information documents. This will ensure that project is progressed swiftly and the works undertaken across each Centre will be delivered to a high standard.
- 2.11. As part of the budget proposals presented to Cabinet on 15 January 2026 (see **Background Papers**), a proposed general fund reserve movement of £500k to the Leisure Investment Reserve for financial year 2026/27 has been included which will enable further improvement works to be undertaken. This is due to be considered by Full Council on 26 February 2026.

#### **(B) Support to Community Organisations**

- 2.12. At a meeting of the Cabinet on 2 December 2025, Members considered a request from the Deepings Sports and Social Club for a £200k contribution to support a bid to the Football Foundation to provide a 3G pitch in the Deepings (see **Background Papers**).
- 2.13. Currently there is no all-weather training provision in the Deepings. Previously an all-weather pitch was located on the Linchfield Road Playing Fields and was well used by local teams. However, this facility was closed in January 2020 due to the age and deterioration of the pitch, and the resulting health and safety concerns. The lack of facilities was exacerbated in July 2021 with the closure of Deepings Leisure Centre.
- 2.14. The Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) for South Kesteven, developed by the Football Foundation with support from partners including the County Football Association and Sport England, was refreshed during the summer of 2025. This identified the Deepings as the top priority area for investment into a 3G pitch facility.
- 2.15. Members of the Cabinet therefore approved the request which would be funded equally from both the Leisure and Community Reserve, and the Local Priorities Reserve, subject to three associated conditions having been met. An application

has since been submitted and is due for consideration by the Football Foundation panel in March 2026.

- 2.16. The Council have previously supported Harrowby United Football Club through the provision of a new 25-year lease for the pitches at Harrowby Lane Playing Fields which commenced in June 2023, and the Pavillion which commenced in January 2025. In addition, the Club have been awarded funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which has facilitated improvements to the car parking and the changing pavilion.
- 2.17. Council Officers are also aware of aspirations by other community organisations in the district to develop football facilities in their localities which include Stamford Welland Academy and Harrowby United Football Club.
- 2.18. Members of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously requested information around the level of support provided by the Council to different sporting organisations across the district through leasehold arrangements.
- 2.19. The Council currently has leasehold arrangements with the following sporting organisations across the district:
  - Grantham Amateur Boxing Club
  - Vaculug Bowls Club
  - Grantham Lawn Tennis Club
  - Grantham Tennis Club
  - Harrowby United Football Club
  - Grantham Angling Association
  - Grantham Town Football Club
  - Stamford Bridge Club
  - Stamford Indoor Bowls
  - Wyndham Park Bowls Club

The details of each of these arrangements vary in line with the terms and conditions agreed at the time. Due to commercial sensitivities and the complex nature of each of the arrangements, it is not possible to include details in relation to these leases within this report.

- 2.20. A concern was raised around the impact that Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) may have on each of the lease arrangements the Council has with sporting organisations. Should the Council cease to exist in the future each lease would novate across to the new authority and remain in place.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. This report provides Members with an update on both the leisure investment works across planned across the leisure assets along with wider updates on support being provided to community organisations within the district. It offers Members the opportunity to ask any questions in relation to either of these.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 The option to 'do nothing' has been discounted as the Leisure Investment Reserve was established with the primary objective to improve the customer facing areas of each of the leisure centres.

### **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 5.1. This report is for noting and to provide Members with an oversight of leisure investment works taking place across the district.

### **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1. *Leisure Investment Reserve – Allocation Criteria* – Report to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 10 November 2025, available online at:  
<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s48572/Leisure%20Investment%20Reserve%20Proposals.pdf>
- 6.2. *3G Pitch Funding – Matched Funding Contribution* – Report to Cabinet, published 25 November 2025, available online at:  
<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s48874/3G%20Pitch%20Funding%20Contribution.pdf>
- 6.3. *Budget Proposals for 2026/27 and Indicative Budgets for 2027/28 and 2028/29 – General Fund* – Report to Cabinet, published 7 January 2026, available online at:  
<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s49272/Budget%20Report%20for%2020262027%20including%20Indicative%20Budgets%20for%2020272028%20and%2020282029%20-%20General%20Fund.pdf>