

Report to Leader of Gedling Borough Council

Subject: Leisure Transformation Consultation

Date: 27th May 2025

Author: Leisure and Wellbeing Programme Transformation Manager

Purpose

To seek approval from the Leader of the Council to commence a public and stakeholder consultation programme for the development of a new Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing and Community Centre.

Recommendation(s)

The Leader is recommended to:

Approve the commencement of a consultation programme for the development of a new Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing and Community, Centre as detailed within the report.

1 Background

- 1.1 Gedling Borough Council is undertaking a significant transformation of its leisure portfolio to deliver a more modern, sustainable, and community-driven service. The planned redevelopment of the Carlton Forum and Richard Herrod sites - consolidating services into a new Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing and community centre facility at Richard Herrod Centre - is a central strand of this programme and progression of this programme was agreed by Cabinet in July 2024.

- 1.2 Over the last year work has been undertaken to establish a programme team and develop a project plan for the future development of the Carlton leisure, Wellbeing and Community Centre. As part of this programme of work it is proposed that the Council launch a borough-wide consultation commencing on 27th May 2025 to shape the design of the new Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing and Community Centre. This consultation will engage residents, staff, service users, and strategic partners through surveys, focus groups, and public forums, in partnership with our consultants TA6 and Alliance Leisure.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 Gedling Borough Council proposes to deliver a consultation programme to support its Leisure Transformation Programme. The consultation will inform the development of the new Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing and Community Centre.

This consultation is being delivered to ensure that all affected residents, service users, staff, and stakeholders have an opportunity to shape the future of leisure provision in the Borough. It will be used to gather feedback on current service use, barriers to participation, desired facilities, needs and the impact of any proposed changes.

Consultation Objectives

The consultation will:

- Understand community needs and priorities for new and existing leisure facilities.
- Inform the design, facility mix, and service model for the new Carlton Leisure Centre.
- Ensure inclusive, representative participation and mitigate risks of exclusion or misinformation.

Consultation Delivery

The consultation will be delivered by a partnership between:

- **TA6** – Lead delivery partner for public survey, focus groups, marketing, and communications.
- **Max Associates** – Lead strategic stakeholder engagement and consultation analysis.

- **Gedling Borough Council Transformation Team** – Officers will be engaging in strategic focus groups with key networks, including Gedling Indoor Bowls Club, the voluntary and community sector, and other local community groups, to ensure stakeholder voices are reflected in the consultation outcomes.

Communications Plan:

A communications plan has been developed to support the consultation which includes:

- Integrated digital and print campaign with Council Communications Team.
- Promotional assets including social media graphics, flyers, pop-up banners, newsletters, and community Sounding Boards.
- Microsite to act as a hub for updates, FAQs, and consultation materials.

Evaluation and Reporting:

Following consultation:

- TA6 and Max Associates will compile survey data, focus group notes, and stakeholder feedback into a formal report.
- Findings will inform RIBA Stage 2 designs for the Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing and Community Centre.

This approach ensures the Council delivers a lawful, inclusive, and transparent consultation aligned with the principles of good governance and community-led service design.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 The council could progress to a design stage without engaging in wider public consultation, however, consultation is considered necessary at this stage to ensure development of a site that as far as possible meets the needs and requirements of the community.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 A £500,000 Leisure Transformation feasibility budget allocation was approved by Cabinet in July 2024. The costs of the consultation will be included in the approved Leisure Transformation budget.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Whilst there is no specific statutory duty to consult, a full and meaningful consultation is considered necessary to support the Council's public sector equality duty and is best practice as evidenced through case law. Following consultation regard must be had to responses when reaching any future decisions on development of the site.

The consultation is being undertaken at a formative stage to ensure all views can be considered when progressing with design and business case for the site.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 The consultation plan includes specific engagement with underrepresented groups and protected characteristics, ensuring consultation methods are inclusive and accessible and in order to ensure facility mix going forward meets as far as possible the needs of all users. An Equality Impact Assessment in relation to the consultation is shown at Appendix 2.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 The consultation process will actively engage stakeholders on themes related to sustainability, environmental impact, and active travel. Key questions in the public survey and focus groups are designed to gather feedback on:

- Support for low-carbon transport options such as cycling, walking routes, and public transport accessibility

This will ensure that the community's environmental values are reflected in the final facility design.

Insights gathered will support the Council's wider net-zero targets and inform how new or repurposed facilities contribute to Gedling's climate resilience agenda.

8 Appendices

Appendix A- Consultation Activities

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

9 Background Papers

- 9.1 Cabinet Report July 2024 item 110 [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday 17 July 2024, 2.00 pm - Gedling Borough Council](#)

10 Reasons for Recommendations

- 10.1 The recommendations are necessary to ensure Gedling Borough Council can move forward with a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process that will directly inform the future of the Carlton, Leisure, Wellbeing and Community Centre.

The consultation will:

- Enable evidence-based decisions about the design, facility mix, and accessibility of the new Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing & Community Centre.
- Ensure community and stakeholder voices are captured early in the process, in line with best practice for public engagement.
- Support transparency, trust and co-ownership by providing residents, staff, and partners with meaningful opportunities to shape local services.
- Strengthen the business case and design brief for the Carlton Leisure, Wellbeing & Community Centre by aligning it with local demand, financial sustainability, and wellbeing outcomes.
- Mitigate risks associated with change by proactively identifying concerns and providing clear channels for feedback and communication.
- Endorsing and commencing the consultation now will ensure that the programme remains on track to deliver key RIBA Stage 2 outputs, investment decisions, and service transition planning within the current strategic and financial timeline.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by: Tina Adams

Date: 22/05/25

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by: Francesca Whyley

Date: 22/05/25

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer

APPENDIX A

The consultation will run from 27th May to 15th July 2025 and will include:

1. Borough-Wide Public Survey

- Digital and printed formats, live for 4 weeks (27th May–24th June).
- Available via Leisure Transformation Microsite, Council website, social media, posters with QR codes at all leisure sites, libraries, GP surgeries, and community centres.

2. Strategic Stakeholder Engagement

- Targeted meetings and workshops with key partners: Redhill Academy Trust, Nottinghamshire County Council, Sport England, Swim England, ICS, Public Health, and others.
- Engagement will include infrastructure partners (e.g., Severn Trent) and elected representatives.

3. Focus Groups

- 20 + Focus Group sessions including:
 - Leisure users and non-users
 - Workforce
 - Equalities and protected characteristic groups
 - Youth and Senior Councils
 - Local sports clubs (e.g. Bowls, martial arts, swimming, football)
 - Community groups and faith groups
 - Health and wellbeing sector.
 - Members
 - Council Officers