1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the draft Sport & Leisure Strategy for Southend-on-Sea to members for agreement and to gain members’ approval to issue the document for public consultation, as required.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet adopts the draft document as its Sport & Leisure Strategy and approve its issue for public consultation.

3. Background

3.1 Sport and leisure is an integral part of the Council’s cultural offer and plays an important role in the Borough from the provision of physical activities, relaxation, stimulation of the mind and making the borough attractive to our community.

This strategy, along with Southend Children’s Partnership’s Children and Young People’s plan, sets out the vision for sport and leisure within the Borough over the next eight years and supports the newly refreshed Cultural Strategy, “Culture-on-Sea”, which identifies that working in partnership we can deliver a Southend that is attractive, active, and alive with sport and culture; reaffirming the Council’s vision:

“To be recognised as the cultural and leisure capital of the East of England”.

3.2 The diagram below illustrates how this strategy sits alongside a suite of related plans and documents which will be delivered by the Council as part of its cultural offer for the Borough in order to achieve its key strategic objectives:
3.4 The vision for sport and leisure in Southend-on-Sea, which has emerged from the strategy development process, will contribute to the Council’s goal of creating a better Southend through sport and physical activity.

A better Southend through sport and physical activity is one which is active and alive with sport and leisure, where opportunities exist for the local community to participate in a wide range of activities which enhance their lives and where local talent is grown and nurtured.

3.5 The Council recognises that achieving this vision in the current economic climate of financial uncertainty will necessitate a more structured approach to sports and leisure provision. The core aim of the strategy is therefore the development of a clear framework and direction for sport and leisure provision within the Borough.

3.6 The strategy aims to provide a framework for sports and leisure provision, which is sufficiently robust to support funding applications for capital and revenue funding projects across the service, in order to meet our main aims:

- Work with partners to promote the health and social inclusion benefits of sport and leisure to encourage lifelong participation.
- Provide talents assistance scheme for regional and national athletes living in the borough via the FANS and STARS scheme (these are schemes that offer free access to leisure centres for national and county athletes both in Southend and Essex)
- Increase participation in sport and leisure; specifically:
  - to have a year-on-year increase in the proportion of people undertaking at least one 30 minute session of moderate intensity sport each week and a similar reduction in those who are inactive
  - to work with partners to develop opportunities for those aged 14-25 years old, in order to create a sporting habit for life
  - to continue to work with specific national governing bodies to deliver increased participation from grassroots level through to the elite; e.g. Amateur Swimming Association (Diving), the Lawn Tennis Association & British Rowing etc.
- Maximise the benefits from London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic
games, whilst building on this to provide a lasting legacy of sport and leisure within the Borough.

- Maintain Quest accreditation at all four leisure centre sites (QUEST accreditation is the UK quality scheme for the sports and leisure industry and measures the delivery of a quality service).

3.7 Sport and physical activity are acknowledged to help people learn, develop team and leadership skills and help supports self esteem and that early involvement in sport and physical activity provides the basis for a healthy lifestyle that has long term benefits for the individual.

3.8 Sport also brings wider personal, social, economic and health benefits when developed and delivered in appropriate settings and in the right way. This Strategy endeavours to co-ordinate the range of sport and physical activity within the Borough and sits in line with the Councils Corporate Priorities.

4 Public Health

4.1 The Government has an ambitious programme to improve public health through strengthening local action, supporting self-esteem and behavioural changes, promoting healthy choices and changing the environment to support healthier lives.

4.2 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 states that these statutory changes will take place from 1 April 2013 giving Southend-on-Sea Borough Council a new duty to promote the health of the local population. Through our health and wellbeing board we will lead the development of joint strategic needs assessments and joint health and wellbeing strategies, which will provide the means of integrating local commissioning strategies and ensuring a community-wide approach to promoting and protecting the public’s health and wellbeing.

4.3 The Council is well placed to support this agenda and deliver positive outcomes for the people of Southend-on-Sea through sport and leisure. Sport and leisure makes us healthy and happy, it encourages people to be active and do the things they enjoy. This increases personal, physical and mental wellbeing and helps build healthy communities. Sport and leisure activities support healthy lifestyles by promoting good physical and mental health and well being. Research shows that people who do not participate in sport say they have lower levels of health.

5 Sport & Leisure Participation

5.1 Southend-on-Sea has a good range of sport and leisure facilities on offer. Whilst our current participation rates are just below the national average, analysis of participation rates available through Sport England’s Active People Survey and use of their market segmentation modeling tool has given us powerful information which we will use with our leisure operator and key partners to help increase participation in sport and leisure.

5.2 Using the market segmentation information we know that Southend-on-Sea has a significant proportion of the population in the older age groups, in particular the segment classified as “Elsie & Arnold – Retirement Home Singles”. This group is the least active and also less likely to want to do more mainstream sport / physical activity. Programmes, such as Active+ have been developed locally and will
continue to be delivered to encourage greater participation amongst this client group.

5.3 Sport England is currently consulting on proposed changes to the Active People survey. Amongst these include proposals to collect data on participation levels from the age of 14 (the current Active People Survey provides information on those aged 16+ years). This new information will allow us to measure future participation rates for those aged 14 – 25 years and assess how effective our future interventions for this target group have been.

5.4 Key facts:
- 2.18m visits were made to Council owned leisure centres during 2011/12
- 19.9% of adults regularly participate in sport / active recreation (compared with 21.8% nationally)
- 49.3% of adults are inactive
- 52.1% of the local adult population would like to do more sport / physical activity
- Adult males are more physically active than adult females
- People from older age groups are less likely to participate in sport / physical activity on a regular basis
- 24.8% of adults are classed as obese
- The most popular sports in the borough are swimming, football, cycling, gym and athletics

5.5 Our local sport and leisure provision has been significantly improved and opportunities for participation in local sport and physical activities are plentiful. This strategy aims to highlight those achievements and set a clear direction for further improvement and development during the forthcoming years, ensuring that the momentum from the London 2012 games is harnessed, leaving a lasting sporting and cultural legacy for the people of Southend-on-Sea.

6 Reasons for the recommendations

6.1 This document represents a refresh of our previous sport and leisure strategy. Much has moved on since the previous strategy was produced; this new sport and leisure strategy provides a longer term manifestation of our ambitions for sport and leisure within the Borough and takes into account recent changes in national policy.

7 Corporate Implications

7.1 Contribution to Council’s Vision & Corporate Priorities
- Support Southend to be active and alive with sport and culture
- Ensure a well-maintained and attractive street scene, parks and open spaces
- Encourage the prosperity of Southend and its residents
- Continue to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour
- Where possible minimise our impact on the natural environment
- Reduce inequalities and increase the life chances of people living in Southend
- Deliver targeted services that meet the identified needs of our community
7.2 Financial Implications

Where possible, targets from the action plan will be met using existing budgets. Where the requirement for funding is identified, applications for both future capital and revenue funding will be submitted in line with the council’s medium term financial strategy.

External funding opportunities will be applied for where appropriate.

7.3 Legal Implications
None

7.4 People Implications
None

7.5 Property Implications
None

7.6 Consultation

The draft Sport & Leisure Strategy was presented to Community Services and Culture Scrutiny Committee on 10th July for their consideration. The draft strategy was endorsed following a request that comparator sports participation figures for other seaside unitary authorities were included in the document. This amendment has been inserted into the draft strategy as section 6.2 “How do we compare to other areas?”

Following agreement of this draft strategy we will enter into a 12 week period of consultation with both residents and key partners.

7.7 Equality and Diversity Implications

A full Equality Analysis will be undertaken alongside the further consultation, prior to Cabinet submission of the final strategy.

7.8 Risk Assessment
None

7.9 Value for Money

The format for the culture strategy has been reviewed to ensure that the bureaucratic burden is reduced to achieve value for money.

Targets from the action plan will generally be met within existing budgets. Were appropriate we will comply with the council’s contract procedure rules in order to ensure on-going value for money.

7.10 Community Safety Implications
None
7.11 Environmental Impact
None

8 Background Papers

8.1 ‘Creating a sporting habit for life – a new youth sport strategy’, DCMS Jan 2012
8.3 Southend-on-Sea Mini Local Sport Profile, Sport England

9 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Sport & Leisure Strategy for Southend-on-Sea 2012-2020