Stage 4

Secure commitment to a strategic approach and delivery of outcomes

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Stage 4
Secure commitment to strategic approach and delivery of outcomes

In light of Covid-19, many local authorities and their partners are revisiting their approach to leisure services and facility provision and in many cases will be prompted by the crisis to fundamentally realign services to protect priority local provision.

This may necessitate facility rationalisation and investment.

Some local authorities are exploring transforming traditional leisure provision towards community wellbeing hubs and more targeted interventions. This is often combined with a more collaborative partnership-based approach linked to a mixed economy of provision.

This final stage provides a holistic and comprehensive view of the local authority’s strategic approach and the associated financial and resource implications.

It brings together all the key outputs from previous stages into a business case. This stage will provide clarity and confidence that implementation of the proposed mix of provision, facilities (and any investment), neighbourhood outreach and service interventions is affordable, achievable and sustainable.

Linked to this is identifying how any strategic approach will be overseen and supported through a fit for purpose governance structure. This will include the monitoring and evaluation of facility operational performance, support for and effectiveness of partnerships, neighbourhood outreach and service interventions.

The Leisure Services Delivery Guidance will provide support in establishing an approach to oversight and governance.

A key step in this stage is the identification of resources to support implementation. This could relate to governance arrangements, role of client/commissioner, external or additional internal support for project managing facility developments, commissioning services, service redesign/ transformation and specialist support to support any change of management model.

This approach will enable the local authority, leisure trust or Active Partnership to confidently move towards implementation of its strategic approach having secured stakeholder commitment and ‘buy in’ from its elected members.
Step 4A
Agree a sustainable and effective business case

Why is this step important?

Developing a comprehensive business case, which brings together previous stages, will provide robust evidence for final review and agreement to implement the strategic vision and approach. The business case needs to satisfy a case for change and optimise value for money in terms of economic, social and environmental benefits. It needs to be financially viable and achievable.

What are the key elements that could be considered for this step?

i) Business Case

The business case will be informed and supported by the elements completed in Stages 1–3:

- a clear evidence base
- cross sector engagement and commitment
- local insight
- approach to partnership working
- optimal range of facility and service interventions (possibly proposed facility investments/rationalisation decisions)
- clarity on management option
- client/commissioner role for implementation and monitoring.

There should now be no new elements to consider at this point prior to implementation.
Key elements of the business case need to be tailored and can include:

1. **Introduction and background**
2. **Strategic approach**
   Outlines overarching strategic context including:
   - summary of local insight
   - summary of local strategic plans / of key partners
   - key drivers for the organisation
   - vision
   - local strategic outcomes
   - local strategic objectives
   - Action Plan and KPIs.

3. **Economic impact assessment**
   Demonstrates that the proposed interventions will provide value for money in terms of:
   - direct impacts e.g. number of jobs created
   - indirect impacts e.g. number of jobs created in the supply chain
   - induced impacts e.g. spending by the people employed on the project.

   Our Economic Value of Sport Indicator provides useful guidance and information.
4. **Commercial case for Investment in facilities (if relevant)**
   Sets out an affordability picture based on:
   - state aid issues
   - risk assessment and mitigation
   - capital projects – whole life costs
   - management options appraisal*
   - management model proposed*
   - procurement strategy (if applicable)*
   - capital funding and borrowing calculations
   - revenue business plan(s) including projected costs of a leisure management contract (if applicable)*.

5. **Commercial case for Investment in revenue based service interventions (if relevant)**
   Sets out an affordability picture based on:
   - budgetary considerations
   - risk assessment and mitigation
   - management model proposed
   - procurement strategy (if applicable)*
   - revenue business plan(s).

6. **Delivery plan**
   Highlights the practical steps required to achieve the agreed approach, including:
   - programme management/project management arrangements and resources*
   - procurement process (capital projects and management models if applicable)*
   - timetable and key milestones*
   - programme of workstreams*.

7. **Summary and recommendations**
   Detailed items such as a needs analysis, physical activity, sport and wellbeing strategy, financial modelling, cost plans, designs etc. can be included as an appendix.

   These sections with an asterisk (*) are covered in detail in our Leisure Services Delivery Guidance.
What are the key enablers to support this step of the process?

- High quality data and analysis from Stages 1, 2 and 3
- Direct involvement from local authority finance team to ensure compliance with financial regulations and standing orders
- Securing time and resources from the steering group, using external consultant support if required

What are the key outputs from this step of the process?

- Full Business Case
Step 4B
Identify resource requirements to support implementation

Why is this step important?

Looking ahead to implementation of any service or facility interventions the local authority and partner(s) may require additional internal and external specialist support, depending on the future workstreams that are being considered. Additional support needs to be carefully explored and costed and built into the business case.

This step is covered in detail in the Leisure Services Delivery Guidance.

What are the key elements that could be considered for this step?

i) Resources and support

Additional support may be identified for:

- project management of facility developments (if applicable)
- procurement support for outsourcing services (if applicable)
- planning service redesign of transformation (if applicable)
- commissioning services (if applicable)
- developing partnership arrangements
- developing new service specifications and related performance management frameworks.
What are the key enablers that could be considered for this step?

- Direct involvement of budget holders
- Specialist support to scope workstreams and cost external support

What are the key outputs from this step of the process?

- Committee Reports (or equivalent) for review and agreement by the local authority
Secure commitment to a strategic approach and delivery of outcomes

Why is this step important?
Securing formal sign-off of the business case and proposed implementation programme will enable the local authority to progress with the full support of its cabinet/members. It will provide clarity for all partners on the scope and objectives moving forward. It will also confirm what is out of scope.

What are the key elements that could be considered for this step?

(i) Understanding the scrutiny, overview and approval process

Early engagement with the Council’s democratic services team (or equivalent) to understand the approval process and respective timescales to support the project is strongly encouraged. These additional elements will need to be built into the overall business case programme, making allowance for steps such as Scrutiny and Overview, call in or formal ratification by Full Council.
i) Committee Report

A full report should be presented to cabinet/members for approval that summarises the key elements of the business case. It is important to ensure that cross sector partner support has been secured in advance and senior officers have been briefed ahead of any meetings.

At this stage members should have been thoroughly briefed, this exercise should be procedural and there should be ‘no surprises’.

What are the key enablers that could be considered for this step?

- Steering group and member approval
- Securing committed funds/budget for investment
- Agreed contributions to medium term financial strategy, subject to further affordability analysis in the implementation stage

What are the key outputs from this step of the process?

- Approval from cabinet/members to progress to implementation

Further guidance, materials and case studies

Stage 4 Case Studies

1. North East Derbyshire Council
2. Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
3. Salford City Council
4. Great Yarmouth Borough Council
North East Derbyshire District Council

Sharley Park Active Community Hub

Description of SOPG-related work

- Using the Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG) to develop the evidence base for a community activity hub. This comprised of co-located formal sports facilities, outreach health services, a library provision, Citizens Advice, Council Contact Centre, a café, shared meeting room facilities, complementary local business and social space linked into the active environment of Sharley Park, including a new floodlit 3G, Disc Golf and off road cycling provision.

- The Active Community Hub will include a 6-lane x 25m pool, a learner pool and moveable floor, 4 badminton court sports hall, a 120 station fitness suite, and two studios, soft play and a children’s gym, and outdoor play area.

- All of the above is located within Sharley Park – a 10 hectare public park, located on the edge of the town centre, including 2 cricket pitches, 2 football pitches, a children’s play area, bowling greens and a community centre.

Relevant stages/steps

- Stages 1- 4: Building on insight development of the SOPG approach.

Activities and outputs

- The SOPG has shaped and supported the development of the Active Community Hub.

- NEDDC has re-focused its whole approach to physical activity provision in Clay Cross through this process, moving from a leisure centre refurbishment to a co-located Active Community Hub.

- This is further supported by a new Physical Activity and Lifestyles (PALs) initiative to work in the community and engage people who are furthest away from physical activity and work with them one-to-one to remove some of those known barriers to physical activity.

- The SOPG output is a clear direction of travel for physical activity provision in Clay Cross, embedded at the core of the Town’s Fund vision for change.
Outcome

- The proposed Active Community Hub is supported by NEDDC and has been adopted as part of the commitment to the Town’s Fund change programme for Clay Cross.
- The proposed co-located Community Activity Hub has formal commitment from all partners who will comprise the Hub and is aligned to health and wellbeing priorities for the area, district and county.
- The insight developed for Clay Cross clearly illustrates that a traditional leisure centre is not a priority for the local community; they need a social environment which makes them feel welcome and involves and engages them with physical activity inside and outdoors.
- Developing a response to these findings has been shaped through the SOPG approach.
- The project addresses the significant challenges around promoting healthy lifestyles in Clay Cross which are impacting on community health, aspirations, and productivity. The delivery of a new active community hub is a key priority arising from consultation (850 users and non-users responded to engagement in support of a new active community hub).
- Complementary development and improvements in Sharley Park will add to the physical activity offer further promoting active lifestyles and an increase in visitors to the town.
- Translating need into the appropriate and sustainable places and spaces has created a wide strategic partnership at local level, driven by the fact that all organisations are working to reduce health inequalities in Clay Cross. This sense of shared purpose provides the rational for such a complex co-location.
- Development of the Community Activity Hub will also enable activation of the park where the Hub will be located, in partnership with NGBs, local clubs and other Town Fund projects.
Although the project is yet to commence on site, the partnership approach and acknowledgement from all partners that we are all dealing with the same ‘customers’ has driven the project brief/outcomes to become a genuine hub which will improve the health and well-being of the community.

The barriers to physical activity are wide and varied but common with other lifestyle improvements such as securing employment or further education. Working together on common barriers produces improved outcomes for both residents of Clay Cross and the partner organisations.

The PALs project, along with the development of the facility, is already changing people’s lives and getting them closer to physical activity. The SOPG approach has provided the structure and process to focus on the common goals which will improve the health and wellbeing of Clay Cross for the long-term.”

Matthew Broughton, Joint Head of Service – Transformation & Organisation

Stage 3 Key learning

A formal commitment to developing Sharley Park Active Community Hub from all its strategic partners has been achieved through following the SOPG stages:

- The business case developed had the vision, evidence and insight to support the development of a proposal that has secured financial commitment to delivery.

- The facility development is a direct outcome of a process that has built consensus, confidence, and commitment to realising a shared vision. This has enabled a transformational investment from traditional leisure facility to a Community Activity Hub.
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council – Boroughwide Investment in Physical Activity

Description of SOPG-related work

- Using the Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG) to develop the evidence for three new physical activity hubs to contribute to the corporate priority of reducing health inequalities across the borough.

Relevant stages/steps

A. **Stage 2 and 3**: Building on development of a Built Facility Strategy (BFS) and feasibility studies

B. **Stage 1 to 4**: Development of Stages 1–4 of the SOPG approach.

Activities and outputs

- SOPG has shaped a strategic borough-wide vision for physical activity based around two physical activity hubs in destination parks replacing ageing leisure stock, and one new physical activity hub in the north of the borough, co-located with a new Free Academy and a GP surgery.
- The vision is inextricably linked to the Towns fund which will facilitate development of a boroughwide active environment, re-developing an old riverbed to provide active travel routes, safe routes to school, and opportunities to be more active every day.
- Using the SOPG shared outcomes were established and extensive insight developed underpinning the need and case for investment.
- The BFS identified the need for additional physical activity provision given the 14,000 new homes to be built in the Borough by 2034. The FPM was used to verify the BFS and concluded that the scale and location of proposed physical activity hubs would address current and future need. Options for new provision were tested through feasibility studies, capital, and revenue modelling.
- Cross partner strategic support for the proposed interventions was established through stakeholder engagement, and development of new partnerships bringing planning, education, health, S106 and relevant policies together.
- The physical activity hubs will link to existing outdoor facilities through a new boroughwide network of walking and cycling routes.

Outcome

- The SOPG has been adopted by the Council; it is now informing development of the first physical activity hub and new cycling facilities.
- The SOPG process has helped to forge new partnerships and a very strong political commitment to invest in physical activity, enabling implementation of this inspirational Vision over the next 5 years.
Testimonial

“The local authority had a leisure strategy in place, however following the SOPG stages challenged our existing approach. The need to consider the wider impact of leisure and the active environment, not just built facilities but also long-term sustainability and needs of our residents was key to our approach. Evidence gathered as part of the work has enabled the authority to link with many partners in a joined-up approach, to support improving health and well-being across the Borough.

The SOPG has been an influential document in reporting to Members, Partners and external agencies in the authority’s Vision and direction of travel. It supports its Local Plan and contributions from local Housing Development towards a range of additional facilities to meet the growing needs of the Borough.

Support provided by a range of external consultants and ongoing advice from Sport England has enabled Nuneaton and Bedworth to be in a very strong position in delivering its future Borough-wide leisure strategy for the next 40 years.”

Kevin Hollis, Director – Leisure, Recreation & Health

Stage 4 Key learning

- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council used the SOPG to shape a strategic borough-wide Vision for physical activity which is now resulting in a visible and long-term commitment to an active environment, leisure investment and strategic interventions.

- This is now translating into commitment to a number of strategic investments to deliver maximum impact for the community to support longer term local strategic outcomes.
Salford City Council (SCC)

Pendleton Community Activity and Health Hub (PCAHH)

Description of SOPG-related work

- Using the Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG) to develop the evidence base for a new physical activity offer, replacing an existing ageing facility in the most deprived area of Salford.

Relevant stages/steps

- Building on a Built Facility Strategy (BFS) which recommended replacement of three facilities, development of stages 1–4 of the SOPG approach.

A. Stage 1 and 2: Development of shared outcomes; development of insight through extensive stakeholder engagement; exploration of co-location opportunity; role and development of PCAHH concept.

B. Stage 3: Development of the PCAHH concept, indicative programming, pricing, and access policies.

C. Stage 4: Development of RIBA Stage 2 report; indicative capital costs, revenue modelling, confirmation of strategic support; SCC formal commitment to supporting the required PCAHH subsidy.

Activities and Outputs

- The BFS identified the need to replace Clarendon Leisure Centre but did not link this to addressing local needs and priorities. Starting from the initial investment commitment, SCC and partners have developed an understanding of shared local outcomes, and developed comprehensive insight driven by the local community.

- The insight highlighted the need for some free access to facilities for families and young people, and a flexible pricing system as many local people will not be able to afford memberships. This included the delivery of a range of opportunities for young people.

- The strategic Vision to improve the lives of Pendleton residents has forged partnerships and brought together organisations to develop a relevant physical activity and health offer in the heart of the community. This forms a part of the overall masterplan which will see new housing, re-activated parks and open spaces and a network of walking and cycling routes better connecting Pendleton to Salford and the wider area.

- SCC worked with architects to develop the hub concept and translate it into places and spaces where people can be active, source a range of community and health services and socialise. This includes multi-purpose spaces providing a base for youth organisations and family activity, as well as a café, Active Play and meeting places.
• Following the SOPG process, the context for capital intervention has been demonstrated, and the PCAHH developed to specifically address local needs so it will contribute to a reduction in inequalities.

Outcome

• The SOPG provided the opportunity to pull together a significant amount of data and evidence to develop the case for intervention in Langworthy ward.
• The SOPG has confirmed the shared outcomes for the City in terms of transformational change and investment to improve the life chances of the community. Physical activity is at the heart of this.

• Critically, the SOPG supported extensive community engagement to build the insight informing need, local priorities, barriers to participation, and the concept for the new Pendleton Community Activity and Health Hub (PCAHH).
• This concept was then translated into costed places and spaces, and a detailed revenue model developed to underpin the sustainability of the intervention.
• PCAHH health hub provides a clear way forward for physical activity and health in Pendleton; the hub facility mix reflects community Insight; programming and pricing policies address identified barriers to participation. The SOPG has provided SCC the confidence to go forward with the delivery and ongoing revenue subsidy of the PCAHH to ensure it has the intended impact at local level.
Testimonial

"Utilising the SOPG process has provided the basis from which SCC is able to take forward the PCAHH with an assurance that the activities found within it have been evidenced by need, are focused to result in tangible relevant outcomes, all in the context of a sustainable business case.

The SOPG has been central to realising a great facility for the people of Pendleton."

Jackie Ashley, Project Manager

Stage 4 Key learning

- Using the staged approach advocated by the Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance gave the Council the confidence to move the project forward.

- The insight and evidence gained confirmed the shared outcomes which translated into a facility mix and a sustainable business case which provided a clear way forward for the project and allowed key partners to commit to the project.
Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Description of SOPG-related work

- Strategic Planning Outcomes report completed on behalf of Great Yarmouth Borough Council as part of a successful Strategic Facilities Fund application. The work was undertaken as the development of a new leisure facility was progressing through RIBA-3 and RIBA-4 stages of design.

Relevant stages/steps

A. The SOPG process was completed in tandem with the development of designs for the new Great Yarmouth Leisure Centre.

B. The SOPG diagnostic exercise was used to identify the additional work the Council needed to undertake, building on their work to date. The iterative diagnostic exercise was repeated as the project progressed, tracking in progress and completed works.

C. Extensive needs analysis works had already been completed prior to the commencement of the SOPG process. These included sports and leisure strategies, needs analysis, feasibility studies and business planning exercises.

D. After reviewing work undertaken to date, the following additional work was identified and completed:

i. Development of key strategic outcomes and KPIs for management of the leisure portfolio

ii. Consultation with key stakeholders and establishment of a working group

iii. Development of a detailed business plan in consultation with the operator, Council, and project managers

iv. Management options appraisal.

Activities and outputs

- The initial SOPG work was initiated as part of a wider commission to submit a Strategic Facilities Fund application. The project was one of the first SOPG processes, so guidance was updated as the project progressed. Sport England supported the Council in this process.

- The consultants had been working with Great Yarmouth Borough Council for a number of years through the development of the new Great Yarmouth Leisure Centre. The consultants had compiled an initial needs analysis for a new centre, feasibility studies from RIBA 0 through to RIBA 2 and completed several business planning exercises and therefore well informed about the strategic background and able to complete the SOPG diagnostic exercise. The consultants subsequently identified the additional work required to complete the SOPG process and worked with the Council to undertake this.

- Consultation exercise and members’ workshop to establish key strategic priorities for the Council’s leisure portfolio.

- Development of practical KPIs and ways of specific ways to deliver against the agreed outcomes. Close cooperation
with the local Active Partnership (Active Norfolk) and the Council’s operator was important in ensuring that the SOPG outcomes were useful in the short, medium and long term.

- Development of a detailed business business plan, working closely with the Council’s operator.
- Management options appraisal to ensure best value.
- The SOPG process was completed in tandem with the development of designs for the new Great Yarmouth Leisure Centre. This allowed the outcomes of the process to be incorporated in detailed designs and inform management decisions.

**Outcomes**

- The Council have now set up an ‘Active Great Yarmouth’ function to better deliver against the strategic priorities of their leisure portfolio. The Strategic Planning Outcomes report allowed the Council to better understand the strategic priorities for the new Great Yarmouth Leisure Centre development.
- Working with the Council, operator and local Active Partnership ensured that the Council came out of the process with a clear matrix mapping the strategic priorities to specific activities and programmes to be delivered within the new centre.
- The SOPG was submitted as part of a successful Strategic Facilities Fund application.

“The development of the Strategic Planning Outcomes for the Great Yarmouth Leisure Centre was a vital piece of work to help the Council build its understanding of how to plan effectively and maximise the engagement of the local community in their new Centre. Great Yarmouth is a borough with real challenges in terms of health outcomes and deprivation and so to gain buy in from all stakeholders and to be able to develop clear shared outcomes will be vital to the success of the centre post opening.”

Lindsay Barker, Strategic Director

**Stage 4 Key learning**

- Great Yarmouth Borough Council has used the SOPG to develop a detailed business case for the Great Yarmouth Leisure Centre to optimise the potential for this investment to achieve their local strategic outcomes.
- The impact of this investment will be maximised as a result of the systematic approach to planning and the commissioning of leisure services moving forwards.