

Scrutiny Proposal Form

(This form should be completed by sponsoring Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

Note: The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the Borough Council's remit.

Proposer's name and designation	Councillor Jane Potter	Date of referral	07/04/15
Proposed topic title	Leisure Trust Short, Sharp Review		
Link to national, regional and local priorities and targets	Redditch Borough Council strategic purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help me live my life independently (including health and activity). 		
Background to the issue	<p>The Abbey Stadium Task Group investigated various options for the future management of the stadium. At the end of the review, which was completed in June 2014, Members proposed that the Council should explore the option for the Abbey Stadium to be managed by a leisure trust. The Executive Committee considered the report on 24th June 2014 and resolved that "<i>the Council should explore the options for a leisure trust to manage some or all of its facilities, including the Abbey Stadium.</i>"</p> <p>Almost a year has passed since that review was completed but unfortunately there has been limited information provided to Members about progress with the investigation into the potential for a leisure trust to manage the Council's leisure facilities. An item has been added to the Executive Committee's Work Programme for the <i>Review of the Operation of Leisure Services</i>, though no date has been recorded for the Committee's consideration of this item.</p> <p>The limited information available about the options that are being considered for the future operation of leisure services is concerning. It does not help Members to determine whether the options that are being considered are financially viable or to identify whether alternative options would be preferable. Members have been informed that external consultants were commissioned to produce a report on this subject, though this has not been shared with Members to date. This is something which I feel needs to be addressed as I believe that Members will only be able to make a constructive decision on this issue once the matter has been investigated in detail.</p>		

	<p>Given the scale of the decision involved I think this subject should be considered as part of a pre-scrutiny short, sharp review exercise. I understand that the Executive Committee has previously recognised the value of pre-scrutiny in this case as they also resolved on 24th June 2014 that <i>“the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise any final business case relating to the future operation of some or all of the Council’s leisure facilities, including the Abbey Stadium, prior to its submission to the Executive Committee”</i>. I therefore hope that there will be support for this proposed review and recognition of the potential for scrutiny to add value in this matter as a critical friend.</p> <p>In order to pre-scrutinise this subject effectively Members will need time to investigate the matter in detail. Unfortunately, the standard approach the Council has tended to adopt to pre-scrutiny, whereby the Overview and Scrutiny Committee simply debates issues at a single meeting prior to the Executive Committee making a decision on the subject, does not provide sufficient time for scrutiny Members to consider a subject in much detail. Indeed, Members often receive only 24 hour notice of the proposals in a report as scrutiny members are not entitled to final reports. The proposed pre-scrutiny short, sharp review, whilst not providing scrutiny Members with the right to view the Officers’ final report any earlier, would enable Members to investigate the subject in detail and to then make constructive and considered recommendations to the Executive Committee based on a sound understanding of the subject as well as appropriate evidence.</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny process has a valuable role to play in assessing whether any future options will be right for the people of Redditch. This scrutiny is needed to ensure that any outcomes are realistic and that the Council achieves value for money.</p>
<p>Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To review the findings of the Abbey Stadium Task Group. 2) To investigate key aspects of a future leisure trust management arrangement for the Council’s leisure facilities. This should include clarifying: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The leisure assets that would be managed by a trust; b) The mix of leisure services that would be delivered by a trust; c) The leisure trust options available; d) The financial investment required, including any capital investment. 3) Understand the financial costs involved in managing leisure services in the last three years. 4) To review the findings of the consultants’ report. (Preferably this should involve considering the content of that report if at all possible).

	<p>5) To assess the procurement process that will need to be followed by the Council if the Executive committee decides that some leisure services should be managed by a leisure trust.</p> <p>6) To investigate the potential for leisure services to be provided by a leisure trust as part of a shared service.</p> <p>I would aim to interview the following as part of this exercise (this should not be regarded as an exhaustive list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Deputy Chief Executive • The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism. • A representative of the external consultants. • The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services. • A representative of a leisure trust.
<p>How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)</p>	<p>This review needs to be completed in a timely fashion in order to contribute to any decision made by the Executive Committee on this subject in 2015/16. Whilst no date is listed on the Executive Committee's Work Programme for the consideration of the <i>Review of the Operation of Leisure Services</i> it is now highly unlikely that a decision will be made until the new municipal year (2015/16). I would therefore suggest that Members aim to complete the review by the end of June 2015 in time to report to the 7th July meeting.</p>

Please return this form to: Jess Bayley or Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officers, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Email: jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk / Amanda.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk