

## IMPROVING THE BOROUGH'S LEISURE OFFER

- A White Paper

## **FOREWORD**

Leisure is a key part of the basket of services which the Borough Council secures for the people of Rossendale and is important in helping the council and its partners achieve many of the outcomes related to health and well being set out in the Borough's Community Strategy.

To achieve the outcomes we all want to see the Council needs to deliver a range of changes to the pattern of services which we secure for the community. Following a detailed examination of the nature and quality of the Borough's current leisure facilities and the nature of their markets and usage this White Paper sets out the preferred option for further development..

Change is never easy but we believe the changes that we propose in this document will allow us to change leisure provision in the Borough for the better in a way that will deliver improved services at a price we can all afford.



Cllr Darryl Smith  
Portfolio Holder for Community and Partnerships

## INTRODUCTION

This document is Rossendale Borough Council's first "White Paper", a document which sets out an analysis of policy options and a preferred option for adoption. It sets out a recommended response to the options identified in a fundamental review of leisure provision carried out by PMP, the Council's advisers for the council during 2006. The PMP report which involved significant consultation and research is summarised in this document and has been published in full on the Council's website, [www.rossendale.gov.uk/leisureoptions](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/leisureoptions) .

This White Paper is being published alongside the Council budget for 2007/8 , to allow one proposal to which the Council has already committed itself in principle to be confirmed.

The Council's leisure facilities represent an important resource for the people of Rossendale. They provide access to activities which provide us all with important life skills such as swimming and can make an impact on the health issues faced by so many in our communities.

The Council secures the provision of a significant number of leisure facilities

- Bacup Leisure Hall providing a hall with capacity for 500 people which can also be used for badminton and bowls together with a squash court
- Haslingden Sports Centre which provides a six court sports hall, two squash courts, a fitness suite and outdoor fitness and tennis facilities
- Haslingden Swimming Pool which provides a traditional 25 yard pool
- The Marl Pitts Complex in Rawtenstall which provides a traditional 25m swimming pool, a 400m running track, facilities for field event and rugby and football pitches.
- Ski Rossendale in Rawtenstall which provides an open air dry ski slope with facilities for skiing and snow boarding.
- Whitworth Civic Hall which provides a large capacity multi purpose hall, but which can also accommodate a range of classes such as aerobics and pilates.
- Whitworth Swimming Pool which provides a traditional 25m pool.
- Across the Borough including at some of the above sites the Council provides 21 football pitches, 2 rugby pitches, 13 tennis courts, 1 cricket pitch and 8 bowling greens.
- The Council also provides funding for the Sports and Arts Development Teams and Healthy Lifestyles work.

These facilities are managed by:

- Rossendale Leisure Trust – the indoor facilities and Ski Rossendale with the exception of facilities in Whitworth, together with Sports and Arts Development and Healthy Lifestyles. The Trust also manages community facilities at Alder Grange and Whitworth High Schools.
- The Community Leisure Association of Whitworth (CLAW) – the two indoor facilities in Whitworth

- The Borough Council's Street Scene & Liveability Service Manages the various outdoor facilities.

The Council has identified a need to create a strategic framework for all these facilities in order to ensure that they are contributing to the delivery of the visions for leisure in the Borough set out in the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy.

The need to do this does not mean that the facilities are not currently performing properly. In particular both Rossendale Leisure Trust and CLAW have been very successful in improving the offer within the facilities which they manage and in increasing usage. They have, however, been doing this in the absence of strategic direction from the Council in terms of future plans for the facilities which it owns.

The first part of creating this strategic framework was the review by PMP who are established consultants in the leisure field which set out to :-

- Establish the context of current supply and demand for facilities
- Identify options for future delivery of services
- Make an assessment of Rossendale Leisure Trust. This part of the report is beyond the scope of this White Paper.

Council officers and the portfolio holder for Community and Partnerships who's brief includes leisure, have analysed the options set out by PMP with regard to the Council's various facilities. Their preferred course of action and the reasons for choosing it are set out in this White Paper.

The Council has already committed itself in principle to support one proposal set out in this White Paper and confirmation of this will be recommended to the Council at its budget meeting.

This White Paper will form the basis for a consultation process which will run for 12 weeks to mid May 2007.



# 1. THE CONTEXT FOR ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL'S WORK

## 1.1 Introduction

The development of a strategic plan for the future of leisure facilities in the Borough is part of a wider overall planning framework which sets out to deliver a range of national and local objectives aimed at: -

- Encouraging more people to take up physical activity with the attendant health benefits
- Linking opportunities to participate in physical activity with the wider “wellness agenda”, and in particular Local Area Agreement targets aimed at increasing participation in physical activity by young people and older and disabled people.
- Contributing to making Rossendale a cracking to live

To achieve this a range of developments are taking place nationally in terms of patterns of provision, including: -

- Joint service provision between sport, and non traditional partners
- Co-location of leisure with health and/or education
- Partnership working with the voluntary sector
- Focus on new activities – home based, work place, adventure sports and outdoor passive recreation.

Some of these developments are already evident in what is happening in Rossendale, for example in the growing effectiveness of the Sports Alliance, the availability of adventure sports provision through Ski Rossendale and the work that the Leisure Trust already undertakes in partnership with the NHS.

## 1.2 Activity Levels

The Rossendale Profile (available on the Council's website) shows that the Borough is relatively deprived and exhibits significant health inequalities which mean that on average men die 2 years earlier and women 1 year earlier than the national average. Sport and leisure provision can make a difference to these sorts of inequality, but the starting point in Rossendale is low relative to other comparable areas. This is illustrated in the table below which looks at participation levels in various forms of sport: -

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Results from area</b>	<b>Results as % of area</b>	<b>Results as % of GB</b>	<b>Index (ave.=100)</b>	<b>Index difference</b>
<b>Cycling</b>	<b>5128</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>14.6 %</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>-27</b>
<b>Fitness/Health</b>	<b>8251</b>	<b>17.2 %</b>	<b>19.7 %</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>-13</b>
<b>Football</b>	<b>10167</b>	<b>21.2 %</b>	<b>19.7 %</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Golf</b>	<b>3978</b>	<b>8.3 %</b>	<b>12.0 %</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>-31</b>
<b>Running/Jogging</b>	<b>3006</b>	<b>6.3 %</b>	<b>4.9 %</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Skiing</b>	<b>1149</b>	<b>2.4 %</b>	<b>3.2 %</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>-25</b>
<b>Swimming</b>	<b>8605</b>	<b>18.0 %</b>	<b>23.0 %</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>-22</b>
<b>No Sport</b>	<b>19833</b>	<b>41.4 %</b>	<b>35.4 %</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>17</b>

Participation was also measured through Sport England's Active People Survey 2005/06. This looks at both direct participation and sports volunteering levels across England. The table below illustrates the results which show Rossendale clearly in the third quartile (where first is best).

	<b>Rossendale</b>	<b>District Average (England)</b>	<b>Lancashire County Comparator</b>
Participation Rates	<b>18.7%</b>	20.1%	21%
Volunteering Rate	<b>4.4%</b>	5.0%	4.8%

### 1.3 Facilities in Rossendale

What is also clear is that provision in the Borough does not compare well. The tables below illustrates comparison with data available for a number of Rossendale's nearest statistical neighbours, looking at access to facilities with quality accreditation and user satisfaction.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Chosen Area</b>	<b>Value %</b>	<b>National Quartile</b>
% of the population that are within 20 minutes travel time (urban – walking; rural – driving) of a range of 3 different sports facility types, at least one of which has achieved a quality mark	2005	<b>Rossendale</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>3</b>
		Wyre Forest	42.1	1
		West Lancashire	8.5	3
		Carlisle City	38	1
		Hyndburn	1.7	4
		Chorley	41.3	1

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Chosen Area</b>	<b>Value %</b>	<b>National Quartile</b>
% of residents satisfied with local authority sports and leisure facilities	2003/04	<b>Rossendale</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>3</b>
		Wyre Forest	52	3
		West Lancashire	48	4
		Carlisle City	66	1
		Hyndburn	63	1
		Chorley	65	1

Given the lower than average levels of participation the mixed user satisfaction scores available from the council's survey work it is clear that the Council has a significant challenge ahead if it is to make the best of the resources at its disposal to impact on the policy agenda in this area.

#### 1.4 The Pattern Of Supply Demand And Performance

There has been a perception that the Rossendale Borough Council supports too many leisure facilities, at too high a cost. In particular this perception flows from the Corporate Governance Inspection of 2002, which stated:

*“Areas where resource allocation should be challenged include, for example:*

- *Public halls*
- *Swimming pools*
- *Rossendale Ski Slope”*

*(Corporate Governance Inspection – Audit Commission September 2002)*

Following this the Council took action as part of a process of freeing up resources for improvement and, during 2002/03 it took decisions to,

- Close 2 facilities – The Astoria in Rawtenstall  
– Haslingden Public Hall
- Procure alternative lower cost management by community groups of
  - The AB and D Centre Bacup
  - Whitworth Swimming Pool

In addition the management of the remaining indoor facilities was transferred to Rossendale Leisure Trust in 2004, while CLAW took on the management of the replacement Whitworth Civic Hall from October 2006. The Rossendale Leisure Trust Business Plan, “Raising Our Game -2005 -2008”, which was agreed at the point of transfer sets out a number of specific objectives relating to the establishment of the new business, but particularly in terms of facility provision committed to upgrade three facility areas by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. The projects identified were

- A Health and Fitness Suite at Haslingden Leisure Centre
- An Artificial Turf Pitch at Haslingden Leisure Centre
- Refurbishment of the main slope at Ski Rossendale

At present none of these schemes has been delivered, although the Council has committed in principle to support the first scheme and some improvement works have been carried out at Ski Rossendale.

As part of the process of continuous improvement the Council agreed to carry out a review of its facilities during 2006. Following a procurement process the Council commissioned PMP to undertake this review to a set brief, which has been published alongside PMP's report on the council's website at [www.rossendale.gov.uk/leisureoptions](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/leisureoptions)

The brief and the review address issues such as the balance of supply and demand for facilities using objective external benchmarks, and the analysis set out in section 2 of this White Paper is based upon the Sport England facility calculator and examines quantity and accessibility for

- Sports Halls
- Swimming Pools

- Health and Fitness provision

The analysis is provided on both a borough wide and area forum basis.

In terms of accessibility the analysis looks at a 3km buffer around the borough boundary, to reflect the true potential catchment of each facility and at a 15 minute drive time, rather than the more commonly used 20 minutes to take account of Rossendale's unusual topography.



## 2. ANALYSIS OF FACILITIES

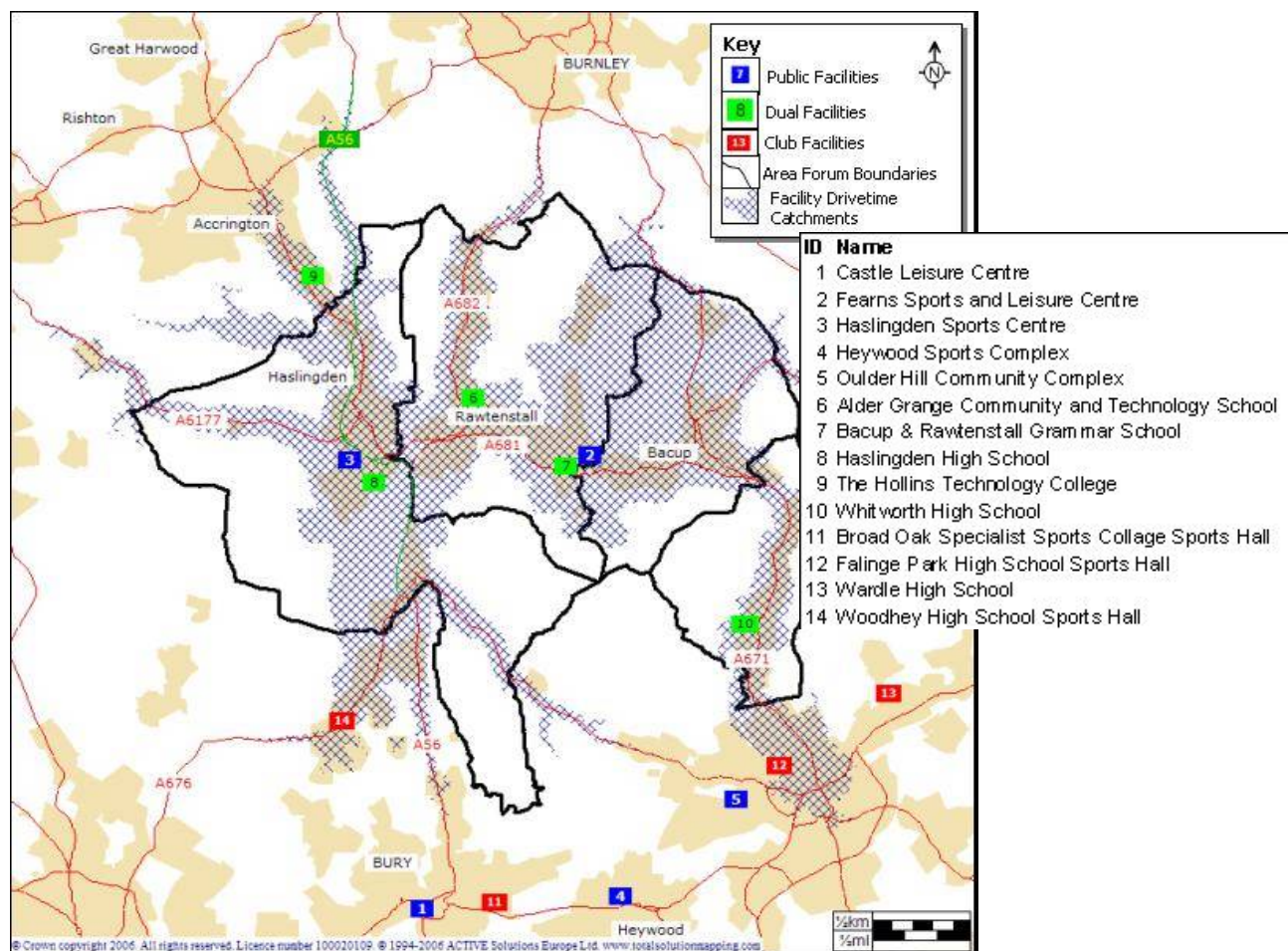
### 2.1 Sports Halls

When looking at Sports Halls it is important to factor in school provision as part of the leisure economy. This gives the following analysis.

Analysis area	Supply	Demand	Comment
Rossendale	22 courts	18.69 courts	Slight over supply
Bacup	0	4	Under supply but accessibility covered
Whitworth*	3	2	Slight over supply
Rawtenstall	10	7	Slight over supply
Haslingden	9	6	Slight over supply although Haslingden High School has limited use.

- Note dual use courts at Whitworth High School factored down to 3.

The accessibility of facilities is shown in the map below;



This shows that all built up areas in the Borough have 15 minute access to sports halls. However, within this it is critical to note the importance of maximising community access to school facilities.

While overall supply and demand for sports halls are on balance there is a gap in the spread of provision in Bacup, although it is covered in terms of accessibility, in

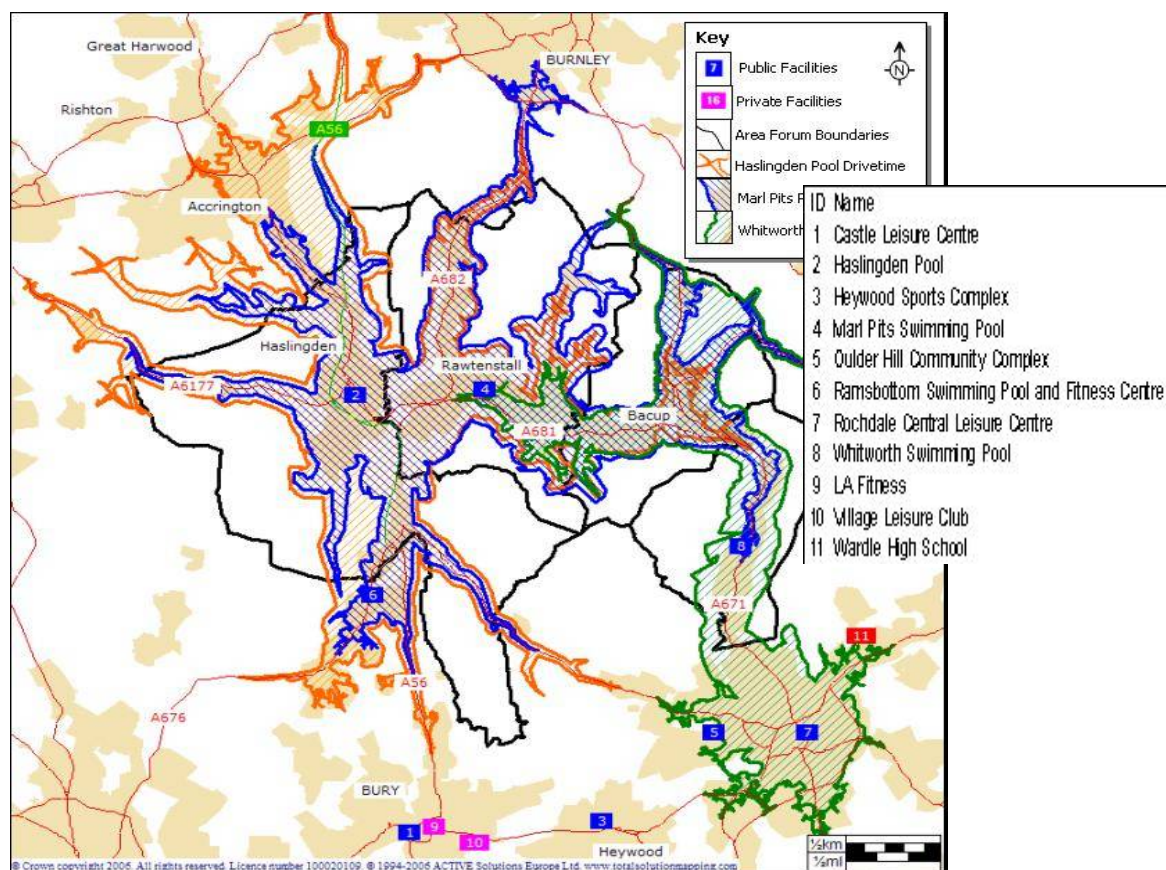
particular from Fearn High School. In addition opportunities for informal activity are available at Bacup Leisure Hall.

## 2.2 Swimming Pools

The Borough currently has 3 pools with a further 8 pools within 3 km of the Borough. The level of provision as against demand is summarised below.

Analysis area	Supply	Demand	Comment
Rossendale	750m <sup>2</sup>	683m <sup>2</sup>	In-balance one pool unit = 212m <sup>2</sup>
Bacup	0	145m <sup>2</sup>	Under supply but within access to Marl Pits and Whitworth
Whitworth	250m <sup>2</sup>	71m <sup>2</sup>	Over supply – viewed alongside Bacup, supply and demand in balance.
Rawtenstall	270m <sup>2</sup>	244m <sup>2</sup>	In balance
Haslingden	230m <sup>2</sup>	210m <sup>2</sup>	In balance

Again an under supply in Bacup is covered through the accessibility of other pools in the Borough as illustrated below;





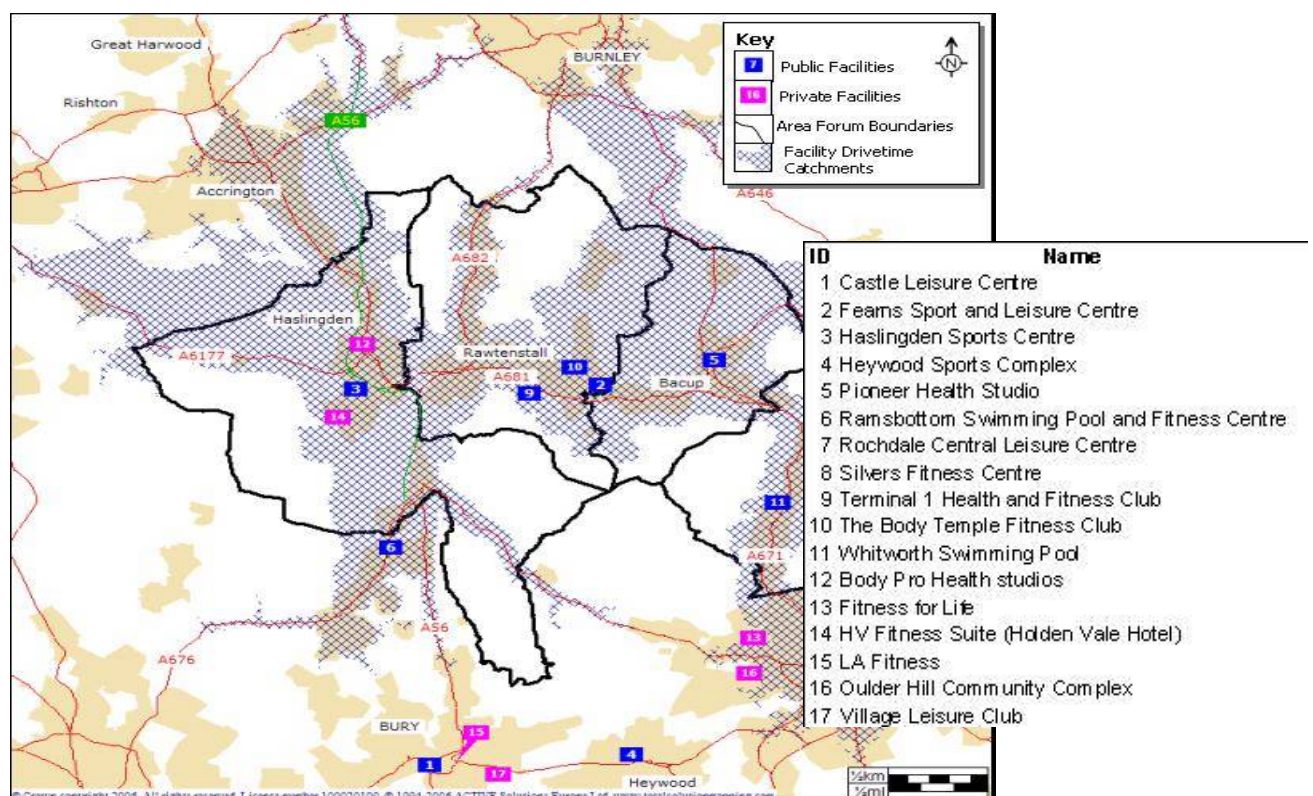
Swimming pools are a particularly expensive form of provision in part due to the cost of heating the water and the age and condition of the pool at Haslingden mean that options for future provision need to be considered. While in terms of access two well located pools could provide for the whole Borough this level of provision may not deliver sufficient water space to meet demand. Usage analysis also indicates distinct catchments for each of the three current pools which tends to emphasise the fact that rationalisation to two pools would be likely to result in insufficient space to meet demand.

### 2.3 Health and Fitness Facilities

This is a highly commercial marketplace where public sector providers compete directly with the private sector and therefore need to be able to demonstrate some specific difference to gain and maintain market share. As shown below there is significant unmet demand in this area, particularly in the buffer area.

Analysis area	Supply	Demand	Comment
Rossendale and buffer	457.75	755	Significant unmet demand of 297
Bacup	36	45	Small unmet demand
Whitworth	25	33	Small unmet demand
Rawtenstall	116	63	Oversupply equivalent to 63
Haslingden	37	65	Undersupply of 28 stations

However, as illustrated below current provision is accessible



PMP's analysis is that, taking into account the 3km buffer zone, the greatest opportunity for development to enhance the current levels of provision is in Haslingden and the North West of the Borough.

## 2.4 The Condition of Facilities

The Council provides 7 indoor leisure facilities across the Borough including the recently opened Whitworth Civic Hall. As this is an entirely new facility which was under construction at the time PMP carried out their analysis it has been ignored in the analysis that follows.

During 2006 the Council commissioned conditions surveys for each of the six operational sites. This identified the following requirements for work.

### Summary of condition survey findings

FACILITY	ESTIMATED COSTS OF REMEDIAL WORK (£Ks)					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Haslingden Sports Centre	30	62	39	7	37	175
Haslingden Swimming Pool	3	14	6	14	3	40
Marl Pits Swimming Pool	5	6	8	20	1	40
Bacup Leisure Hall	2	9	14	52	7	84
Ski Rossendale	4	58	35	8	0	105
Whitworth Swimming Pool	39	6	13	0	22	80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>524</b>

This breaks down over type of works as follows

### Prioritisation of condition survey works

FACILITY	PRIORITISATION OF REMEDIAL WORKS (£Ks)							Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Haslingden Sports Centre	22	13	44	49	42	5	0	175
Haslingden Swimming	3	0	24	0	11	1	1	40
Marl Pits Swimming Pool	4	0	22	0	10	2	2	40
Bacup Leisure Hall	9	0	24	0	50	1	0	84
Ski Rossendale	6	0	12	0	86	1	0	105
Whitworth Swimming Pool	7	27	33	0	11	2	0	80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>524</b>

A = health and safety, B = total or partial loss of service, C = internal improvements, D = security implications, E = consequential damage risk, F = further investigation, G = health and safety improvements

In addition to this there are significant investment requirements relating to

- The replacement of the ski slope matting at Ski Rossendale (at a rate of at least £40k per year)
- The replacement of the track surface at Marl Pitts (which was estimated at c.£400k in the 2004 Condition Surveys)

In addition to condition works the Council have already carried out or commissioned the highest priority work related to disabled access, at a cost of £130k. However, this leaves a range of desirable improvements (the priority 3 and 4 items in the table below) :

FACILITY	Category of Work				
	Total				
Haslingden Sports Centre	1	2	3	4	<b>81</b>
Haslingden Swimming Pool	15	29	2	35	<b>28</b>
Marl Pits Swimming Pool	1	11	16	0	<b>29</b>
Bacup Leisure Hall	9	20	0	0	<b>31</b>
Ski Rossendale	6	9	2	14	<b>52</b>
Whitworth Swimming Pool	29	13	8	2	<b>221</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>221</b>

Note: DDA work at Whitworth Swimming Pool is a direct responsibility of CLAW, under the terms of the management agreement for the pool and has not been separately assessed

The Every Child Matters agenda creates a range of risk management issues for the Council which mean that consideration needs to be given to a range of factors such as the layout of changing and toilet areas. While it may be possible to build these in alongside other work it is possible that they will generate a further investment requirement. As yet it is not possible to assess the costs which this requirement might generate.

The key conclusions from this are:

- There is a minimum Investment requirement of about £500k relatively evenly spread over five years to maintain facilities in use. This is addressed in the Council's proposed capital programme.
- Only a relatively small proportion of the identified requirement relates to issues which result in a risk of a loss of service.
- Haslingden Swimming Pool is beyond the end of its design life and can only have a limited long term future in its current form.

In addition mystery shopping visits undertaken as part of PMP's work indicate that relatively good standards of cleanliness and general repair are being maintained.

### 3. FINANCIAL COMPARISONS

Part of the perception relating to the levels of leisure provision is that as a result of providing more facilities spending by Rossendale BC is higher than for the average District Council. The following comparisons indicate this is not the case.

	England	Lancashire	Rossendale
Expenditure Per Head of population on indoor leisure	£7.37	£6.99	£5.40
Expenditure per head of population on sport development	£1.83	£1.42	£1.26

Source CIPFA statistics 2003/04

This information is not available for 2004/05 onwards. However, the higher level statistics published in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy illustrate spending in 2006/07 is 28% below the average for the nearest statistical neighbours and 13.5% below the average for all shire districts. The latter figure equates to a cash sum of £105,000.

Performance against the APSE (Association of Police Sector Excellence) benchmark for comparable facilities is in the top two quartiles for the majority of indicators.

The level of income per user is a good proxy for the intensity of use of facilities and the table below indicates that facilities in Rossendale perform well on measures of this sort.

	Rossendale Actual	Benchmark	Nature of Benchmark
Income per visit Haslingden Pool	£1.86	£1.57	Sport England comparable sites media
Swim income per sq m Marl Pitts	£808	£566	PMP database
Fitness Income per station	£6,700	£5,400	PMP database

The broad conclusions which can be drawn from this are therefore that:

- a) Spending by the Council on supporting leisure facilities is below average.
- b) Income generated from the facilities supported by the Council is above average.

What is not clear from analysis of the headline figures is whether this position is sustainable in the longer term.

The particular area of risk identified is Ski Rossendale which represents roughly 40% of the turnover of the Leisure Trust facilities, and is the only facility budgeted to make a return after overheads of about £40k. The opening during the next 12 months of a "real" snow facility at Trafford Park clearly represents a competitive threat to Ski Rossendale which needs to be taken into account in both the Leisure Trust and the Council's planning.



#### **4. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ANALYSIS**

The following conclusion can be drawn from the analysis that has been undertaken of the facilities provided by the Council:

- The current level of provision in the Borough is in line with need assessed using objective external benchmarks, and the current facilities are located in the right places to ensure they are accessible to most people in the Borough.
- Spending is below average and against external benchmarks financial performance compares well. However, there are risks that this performance is not sustainable and may be vulnerable to competition
- There are significant challenges in terms of the quality of the current facilities.

There is now a need to consider the future of leisure from Rossendale Borough Council's facilities in order to establish a clear way forward. This vision needs to be established through joint working with our main partners in delivering leisure activities in the Borough, Rossendale Leisure Trust and CLAW.

## **5. A STRATEGY FOR ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL'S LEISURE FACILITIES**

### **5.1 Strategic Framework**

The previous sections of this document have diagnosed the issues the Council faces in terms of leisure provision.

- Participation rates are lower than the national average
- Satisfaction with facilities is below average and improvement work is needed at all facilities.
- While there are some opportunities to provide an improved offer from existing facilities this will, given preference in terms of participation, only marginally impact on participation and health inequalities.
- Usage of facilities is continuing to increase, however, each facility seems to cater to a quite distinct catchment with no significant overlap

What we can conclude from this is that:

- Given that the majority of people appear to prefer more informal types of leisure activity it is unlikely that significant expansion of the number and type of facilities provided will lead to an increase in participation in leisure activities which is the central policy objective, aimed at improving health and well being.
- Conversely the analysis undertaken by PMP indicates that the current facilities each serve distinct catchment areas. Therefore it is probable that if facilities were closed overall participation would reduce due to an unwillingness to move into another catchment. Also for some types of facility such as swimming pools the remaining stock could not absorb the loss of activity from a closure.

Therefore the Council needs a future strategy for leisure facilities which allows the balance of the current provision to be maintained while creating headroom to allow resources to be directed towards development type activity and the more active promotion of outdoor leisure opportunities and informal activities such as walking, which are more likely to have an impact on the core policy objective.

The core objectives of the strategy are therefore;

1. The maintenance of the current facility offer in terms of volume and geographical distribution.
2. The identification and exploitation of new or expanded income streams from existing facilities, where there is a business case for this.
3. The ring fencing of net additional income equally to support additional development activity and reduce the dependence of the whole leisure economy on the contribution from Ski Rossendale.
4. The development of mutually beneficial integrated, programming, marketing and sales activity across the leisure economy including facilities managed by Rossendale Leisure Trust, CLAW, schools and the Borough Council's outdoor facilities.

5. The development of an active management approach to the Borough Council's outdoor leisure assets as part of a whole system approach to leisure provision.

Our aim is to deliver

- Easy and relatively equitable access to facilities across the Borough.
- Investment in activity which will increase both formal and informal participation.
- A process to mitigate the risks posed by the competitive pressure on Ski Rossendale.

In Rossendale facility provision remains key to the delivery of any strategy as physical facilities represent the hubs around which development activity can revolve. Some of the sites also represent opportunities to integrate leisure provision with, for instance, healthcare, providing the means to directly target action at particular aspects of health inequality.

If facilities are to fulfil the role required of them within a reshaped leisure offer then some investment will be required in addition to the approximately £0.5m needed to maintain the status quo. Issues to be considered include:

1. Swimming provision in Haslingden.
2. The role of Bacup Leisure Hall within the leisure offer
3. The potential of the Marl Pitts site

In answering all these questions there are a number of constraints.

1. The Borough Council's recurrent revenue support for CLAW and Rossendale Leisure Trust can only increase annually by inflation.
2. Annual capital spending on leisure facilities by the Borough Council is constrained by VAT rules. Breaching these rules would in effect increase the whole of the Council's running costs by 17 ½%.
3. In general terms the level of the Borough Council's capital investment is constrained by its ability to dispose of surplus assets or for long term borrowing to be paid for from new income streams, or efficiency savings within the leisure offer, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy

## 5.2 Options and Proposals for Development

PMP considered a number of options for physical facilities. Following analysis by council officers and the portfolio holder the following have been ruled out.

- Closure of all the current facilities and reinvestment in alternative provision. This would have very high transitional costs in terms of restructuring operations and given the scale of reduction in capacity would be likely to result in a reduction in participation.
- Closure and non replacement of Haslingden Swimming Pool. The loss of the space and time from this could not be fully compensated in the remaining facilities and the likelihood is that this would be counter productive in terms of achieving increased participation.
- The suggestion of the relocation of all current Haslingden facilities to the Rossendale Hospital site, if it were to become available as part of the work on the Health Campus proposals. This is unaffordable in terms of the capital investment required. It relocates a new facility too close to an existing alternative and it is doubtful that such a development would be acceptable in land use planning terms.

Taking each area in turn the preferred options and issues are outlined below:

### **Bacup**

The Leisure Hall is well located and the site allows space for development together with the opportunity to bring a range of publicly provided facilities together on a single site.

The options include:

- A community facility with a health focus, although this depends, in part, upon the results of the PCT's current work on health provision.
- A community facility with a cultural focus but maintaining space for current physical activities and perhaps some space for gym facilities to deliver exercise on prescription.

The Council has already reserved £250k of capital resources from the Stock Transfer in 2008/09 for investment in this site and depending on which partners can be involved in a project here further capital resources may become available.

At this stage further community consultation is required to develop a business case that gives the Leisure Hall a role and an offer distinct from other community buildings in the town.

### **Haslingden**

Haslingden represents both the biggest challenge and the biggest opportunity in this review, and it is here that action is most urgently required because:

- While agreeing in principle to support investment at Haslingden Sports Centre the Council delayed implementation in order to carry out this more detailed work.
- The need to resolve the future of Haslingden Pool increases in urgency as time moves on.

As stated elsewhere swimming pools are expensive assets and with rare exceptions are not cash generators. The current pool in Haslingden is on a cramped site and the physical structure of the building makes it difficult to adapt. Also as a free standing small pool there are some diseconomies of scale in terms of management and operation

Four options have been identified in Haslingden:

- The Status Quo – This would mean that the potential income stream from the Health and Fitness facility and its benefit in terms of health outcomes will not be realised. In addition there would be no resolution to the issue of the future of swimming provision in the Town.
- Develop the Health and Fitness Suite on its own - Once fully operational it is estimated that this would generate net additional income of on average £70k per annum after financing costs with one off transitional revenue costs of £10k. These figures assume financing through a Mini PFI in line with the original proposal made to the Council. Again, this would not address the issue of the future of swimming provision in the town.
- Develop the Health and Fitness Suite and a Pool simultaneously on the Haslingden Sports Centre site – once fully operation it is estimated that this would generate net additional income after financing costs of on average £78k after transitional revenue costs of £120k, and restructuring costs of £50k. These figures assume a combined development largely financed through a mini PFI in the same way as the original Health and Fitness Suite proposal. This addresses all the issues immediately but is a higher risk scenario given the scale of transitional costs and the pressure that they would place both on the Leisure Trust as the operator and the Council as the ultimate guarantor of the scheme.
- Develop both the Health and Fitness Suite and a Pool on the Haslingden Sports Centre site, but phase the development. Once fully operational it is estimated that this would generate net additional income of on average £128k after financing costs with one off transitional revenue costs of £10k and restructuring costs of £50k. This assumes financing through a Mini PFI for the Health and Fitness Suite and traditional means combining prudential borrowing and capital receipts for the pool. In terms of capital expenditure this will be a more expensive option. However, it reduces the degree of risk exposure around the transitional costs and allows the new business generated through the Health and Fitness Suite to stabilise before adding further complexity to the operation.

The table below illustrates the financial effect of the various options compared with the current position:

	2007/08 £	2008/09 £	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £
Status Quo	210,683	217,003	223,514	230,219	237,126	244,239
Option 1 - Health and Fitness Suite	210,683	226,795	180,713	160,563	166,782	173,885
Option 2 - Health and Fitness Suite and Pool Simultaneously	210,683	337,124	208,727	185,260	150,010	142,220
Option 3 - Health and Fitness Suite and Pool Built Separately	210,683	226,795	180,713	112,969	123,530	90,860

*Notes*

- 1 .The figures illustrate the different levels of contract payment required from the Council in the development options given.
- 2 Both options 2 and 3 require an additional £50k in transitional restructuring costs in order to bring the two current facilities together
- 3 The model assumes that costs increase 3% year on year
- 4 All models assume that the first new facility opens at the beginning of 2008/09

(Source Rossendale Leisure Trust Business Case)

The course of action which seems to best meet the Council's objectives is one which ultimately delivers both the Health and Fitness Suite and a replacement 6 lane 25m pool on the Haslingden Sports Centre site. A combined wet and dry side facility will generate some economies of scale as well as creating a significant marketing advantage for the gym facility that does not currently exist.

The total investment requirement here is between £2.6m and £2.85m depending upon the option chosen. The figures above are taken from Rossendale Leisure Trust's detailed business case and illustrate the effect on the contract payments the Council would need to make after allowing for all financing costs, which derive from a combination.

- A "mini" PFI arrangement between the Leisure Trust and a private partner, where the Council would act as guarantor.
- Prudential borrowing by the Council, financed either directly or, as illustrated above, through the additional net income generated. .
- The Capital receipt from the disposal of the site of the current pool.

It is also possible that work with voluntary sector partners can secure additional grant support, which could either be used to reduce financing costs, or improve the final facility.

Given the analysis set out above which is supported by a due diligence exercise on the overall business case the preferred option which the portfolio holder will be recommending to the Cabinet is option 3, as this is ultimately the most beneficial in terms of the generation of net additional income within the facility offer which can be redeployed to support new activity designed to increase overall participation, and to reduce rest elsewhere.

The cabinet has already backed the principle of investment in the Health and Fitness Suite, and it is proposed to seek the Council's confirmation of this initial stage in the development of the Haslingden facilities at the February meeting of the Full Council.



Given the time since the original decision was taken it is important that the Leisure Trust be given certainty on this investment.

### **Rawtenstall**

The Marl Pitts complex has the potential to bring together many types of activity on a single site, while the existence of the track is a significant distinguishing feature.

The options identified are:

- No change, which would mean the continuation of the separate management of the swimming, athletics and playing field facilities.
- A “leisure village” based around the integrated management of the existing provision to which it would be possible to add some form of integrated health facility if this is identified in the PCT’s current work.

Further work is required to develop a business case for change and to determine the full investment requirements for change and how they might be met. Given the number of stakeholders involved in this site it will be important for the Council to involve all of them in the process of developing this business case.

### **Ski Rossendale**

Ski Rossendale as a municipally owned ski slope is virtually unique. However, as indicated elsewhere, the facility’s trading position is exposed to significant risk from new entrants to the market, although there is some difference in their target market segments, in particular given Ski Rossendale’s emphasis on teaching programmes. At this stage the impact of these new competitors is unknown and cannot be quantified.

Ski Rossendale is central to the development of the Adrenaline Gateway proposals and its future development needs to be as part of that network of facilities.

While Ski Rossendale is an important facility it does not really target the sorts of outcomes which are key to delivering the health and well being agenda the Council would like to see. For this reason and because it is a more commercial facility than the remainder of the portfolio the Council would wish to see any significant investment in the development of the facility delivered through external resources secured for the Adrenaline Gateway.

### **Whitworth**

The completion of the new Civic Hall and the enhanced facilities at Whitworth High School mean that investment needs in relation to indoor facilities in the medium term will be of the nature of repairs and renewals.

The Council’s facilities in Whitworth provide a key element of the Borough’s facility supply, particularly for people in Bacup. CLAW have been very successful in the running and development of the Council facilities in the town. However, this has been a success in isolation both from the rest of the Borough’s leisure offer and from the broader targets that the Council needs to achieve through ensuring the provision of facilities.

The challenge for the Council now is to integrate provision in Whitworth into the wider leisure offer without losing the strength that has come from the local community’s “ownership” of them.

The options identified in relation to Whitworth are:

- Maintenance of the status quo where there is no effective Service Level Agreement with targets in line with the outcomes in terms of participation and health improvement which the Council wishes to see.
- The introduction of a new Service Level Agreement targeted at achieving desirable policy outcomes, and integrating these facilities into the overall leisure offer.

### **Outdoor Leisure**

The Council is currently consulting on strategies for play and open spaces. These will ultimately shape the number of facilities such as football pitches and bowling greens that are provided and the draft capital programme includes provision to upgrade pitches to deal with key issues such as drainage.

At present these facilities are not viewed as part of the Borough's Leisure offer, they are not actively marketed and the opportunities for working with the clubs to secure external funding from the likes of the Football Foundation are not maximised.

The Council owns the bulk of the assets which make up the continuum of leisure provision, although a significant proportion are operated by partners. At present this continuum is not managed as a whole system focussed on delivering policy objectives. Fundamentally the Council needs to change its view of its outdoor leisure provision from something we maintain to something that is a facility for delivering policy objectives.

The options identified are

- To continue as now, although with some investment in facility improvement.
- As well as investing in basic facility improvement to integrate the management and marketing of outdoor facilities with that for indoor facilities so as to maximise use and focus on increasing participation.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This White Paper sets the framework for developing a Strategy for Leisure Facilities in Rossendale. It builds on a review carried out in terms of supply and demand across the Borough, benchmarked against the national position.

The attached action plan contains the key activities for taking the White Paper forward.

We want to hear the views of the community on the proposals set out in this White Paper in particular

- a. Is increasing participation in leisure activities the right target for the Council to pursue?
- b. Will implementing the proposal in this White Paper help achieve increased participation in leisure activities?
- c. Will implementing the proposals in this White Paper deliver the right range of facilities for the Borough?

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Rossendale Borough Council Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partners Involved</b>
1. Business case for development of Bacup Leisure Hall based on detailed community consultation	June 2009	Head of Community and Partnerships	RLT, LCC, Greenvale Homes
2. Deliver Health and Fitness suite at Haslingden Sport Centre	Sept 2008	Head of Community and Partnerships	RLT, Alliance Leisure
3. Deliver replacement for Haslingden Swimming Pool on the Haslingden Sports Centre site	Sept 2010	Head of Community and Partnerships, and Property Services Manager	RLT
4. Arrangement to manage Marl Pitts as a single site implemented	Dec 2008	Deputy Chief Executive	RLT Rossendale Harriers Rossendale RFC
5. Business case for Marl Pitts Sport Village signed off	Sept 2009	Head of Community and Partnership	RLT
6. Revised SLA with CLAW targeting agreed policy outcomes	March 2008	Head of Community and Partnership	CLAW
7. Review management of Council outdoor facilities to allow them to be integrated into the leisure offer	Sept 2007	Chief Executive	
8. Review arrangements for leisure strategy and management of the leisure offer	Sept 2007	Chief Executive	