

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
REPORT NO:	COEEI/24/19
DATE:	12 November 2019
LEAD MEMBERS:	Councillor Mark Pritchard (Organisation – Finance, Performance, Health & Safety and Governance) Councillor David A Bithell (Place – Environment and Transport)
CONTACT OFFICER:	Jonathan Miller, Health and Well-being Manager (Tel: 01978 268164)
SUBJECT:	Football at the Heart of Wrexham
WARD:	All

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Members on the wide range of football related projects in development with key partners building on Wrexham as the spiritual home of Welsh football.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Wrexham has played a significant role in the history of football in Wales, which enables it to be recognised as the spiritual home of football in Wales.
- 2.2 There are currently a large number of projects that are associated with football being developed in Wrexham and these include the development of the National Training Centre at Colliers Park, the proposed Wrexham Gateway that includes the regeneration of the Racecourse Stadium, the development of the National Football Museum for Wales and the development of community hubs.
- 2.3 The visionary document 'Football at the Heart of Wrexham' (Appendix 1) outlines these and other associated projects, demonstrating how they are interlinked and working to develop the community of Wrexham.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Executive Board recommends approval of the visionary document ‘Football at the Heart of Wrexham’ and to support the ongoing partnership work across a number of football related projects to develop Wrexham as the spiritual home of Welsh football.**

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) To acknowledge and support the Council’s involvement with key partners across a number of football related projects and to support the Council to continue this work and progress the vision as the spiritual home of Welsh football.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 Wrexham’s place in the history of Welsh football can be traced right back to when it all began. We can be sure that the first football match in Wales took place in Wrexham. In 1864 Wrexham Football Club were founded, just one year after the Football Association first met and the Laws of the Game were first written, which makes Wrexham FC the third oldest professional football club in the world and the oldest in Wales.
- 4.2 There are more than double the number of football participants in Wrexham than any other Local Authority in North Wales including over 3,300 adults and over 4,500 young people playing in over 50 senior and junior football clubs
- 4.3 The opportunity to build on this passion for football and to maximise football to develop all aspects of Wrexham as a community has brought a range of partners together to develop a number of projects. It is intended that these projects will not only develop football but will also contribute to developing peoples’ skills and education, the town centre and its economy as well as support more people in playing more football in better facilities which will only improve their own health + wellbeing.
- 4.4 The visionary document summarises the key projects currently being progressed and provides an outline of which partners are involved and what they intend to achieve. All work areas have specific plans with a number being interlinked to achieve multiple benefits and develop the community of Wrexham to its fullest potential, by partnering with organisations, to support the transformation of the local football landscape, building on Wrexham as the spiritual home of football in Wales.
- 4.5 The document sets out how the projects will deliver against achieving the above vision by delivering against four key objects.

The objectives are:

- a. Develop outstanding facilities to serve all elements of the game.
- b. Develop stronger football clubs enabling junior and adult teams to thrive and women and girls to become active participants.

- c. Provide learning, employment and work experience opportunities to develop a workforce that supports all aspects of the game.
- d. Improve the visitor experience and perception of Wrexham County Borough as a competitive destination and build Wrexham's capacity to deliver well-managed and sustainable high-profile events of national significance.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy Framework** – The visionary document supports the Council's in year priorities of Improving secondary education, Developing the Economy and Promoting good health and wellbeing.
- 5.2 **Budget** – There are no direct budget implications arising out of this report, although as some of the projects outlined within it progress these may require funding.
- 5.3 **Legal** – There are no legal implications arising from this report although as some of the projects outlined within it progress these may require legal support.
- 5.4 **Staffing** – There are no staffing implications arising from this report although as some of the projects outlined within it progress these may require staffing support.
- 5.5 **Equality/Human Rights** – Members are advised of their duty to consider the full Equality Impact Assessment which is available at <http://vmwinsqld/equalityisalive/Menu.aspx> report number [E&EI/EIA00068/2019]. Members of the public can request a copy of the full Equality Impact Assessment from the Contact Officer named in the header box of this report. A summary of the Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 2.
- 5.6 **Risks** – There are no risks arising from this report although as some of the projects outlined within it progress risks may be identified.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The report has been shared and approved by the FAW Trust, Wrexham AFC and Wrexham Glyndwr University.