

**Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management, and Operational Assets - Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling**

**Leisure, Culture & Communities**

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**Trowbridge Leisure Provision**

**Purpose of Report**

1. Following a comprehensive review of current provision, analysis of future requirements and a site options appraisal, this report sets out to:
  - i. agree to progress the project based on the facility mix, identified in the SOPM.
  - ii. agree that the project should progress on the basis that the new facility will be located on the East Wing site, subject to the site and facility mix remaining viable at each stage of the process.
  - iii. agree that the project is progressed up to the award of the construction contract. The award of the construction contract will be subject to a separate decision.

**Relevance to the Council's Business Plan**

2. Leisure provision in Trowbridge will meet the Council's priority to ensure 'Wiltshire is a place where we stay active', as detailed in Wiltshire Council's 2022 – 2032 Business Plan.
3. The modernisation and relocation of leisure provision to the East Wing site in Trowbridge will contribute to other Council priorities detailed within the Business Plan. This includes:
  - **Thriving Economy:** We have vibrant, well-connected communities. East Wing provides a central location due to its proximity to the town centre.
  - **Resilient Society:** We live well together. East Wing provides a location well placed to serve as broad a range of Trowbridge communities as possible
  - **Sustainable Environment:** We are on the path to carbon neutral. A modern leisure building will be more energy efficient than existing provision and the central location of East Wing will provide better opportunities for active travel and use of public transport.
  - **Empowered People:** We get the best start in life. A modern, vibrant leisure offer in Trowbridge will serve future generations of residents.
4. The project and the demographics of Trowbridge also mean that any new leisure provision within the town has the potential to meet three of the council's guiding themes; 'Prevention and Early Intervention', 'Improving Social Mobility and Tackling Inequalities', and 'Understanding Communities.'

## Background

5. Leisure Services currently operate two leisure facilities in Trowbridge. Castle Place Leisure Centre is leased by the Council, and Trowbridge Sports Centre is owned by the Council and acts as a dual use facility with Clarendon School.
6. Both facilities require modernisation and a significant amount of investment to meet existing and future needs of the community.
7. For many years there have been discussions about repurposing/re-providing leisure provision in Trowbridge, firstly as part of the campus programme and then more recently as part of a wider regeneration workstream.
8. Funding has been allocated into the Council's Capital Programme to deliver new leisure provision in Trowbridge.
9. In summer 2022, the Council appointed Max Associates to support the identification of the type of provision required (facility mix) and where this would be best located. Sport England's Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) was used to support this process. This ensures that future provision is evidence-led, is based on an agreed set of outcomes, and robust data analysis and includes extensive engagement with key stakeholders and the community.
10. The SOPM comprises four stages:

### Stage 1: Outcomes

This stage identifies how sport and physical activity can be used to deliver local outcomes, assesses national and local strategy and engages key stakeholders to determine the required outcomes for the locality.

A series of stakeholder workshops were held with senior officers at Wiltshire Council, Cabinet, Area Board members and key local community stakeholders. This identified five outcomes for future leisure provision:

- Public Health Impact
- Economic Impact
- Environmental Impact
- Community Impact
- Financial Sustainability

### Stage 2: Insight

This stage assesses local, regional and national data including health indicators, identifies current activity levels and includes community consultation to determine current usage, barriers to participation and opportunities to engage more people in physical activity.

An on-line public consultation survey was issued through numerous local sources receiving nearly 1,000 responses. A similar on-line young people's survey received circa 550 responses. A series of face-to-face focus groups were also held with key sectors of the community including those supporting/representing older people and young people.

### Stage 3: Interventions

This stage identifies the type of facility/service required to meet the key outcomes and needs of the community to enable as many people as possible to access provision. Once the facility mix is identified, potential sites are identified and analysed to determine their suitability and indicative capital costs and revenue business plans prepared. (See para's 11 - 15 for further details regarding facility mix and site suitability).

### Stage 4: Commitment

This stage brings together the previous three stages, providing the robust evidence to present the overall business case for future provision.

11. Based on the findings from the first two stages of the assessment process, Stage 3 Interventions identified the indicative facility mix:

- 6 lane x 25 - Swimming Pool
- 7m x 13m – Learner Pool
- Gym – 120 Stations
- 2 Studios
- Spin Studio
- Community Meeting Room
- Café
- Active Play provision for young people
- Low impact physical activity space

12. The facility mix enables potential sites to be identified and assessed. An initial list of 11 sites were identified and assessed across three stages:

**Stage 1:** Size of site – ability to provide the facility and associated parking

**Stage 2:** Catchment area, location to town, areas of deprivation, public and sustainable transport

**Stage 3:** Ownership, known planning constraints, impact to green space and construction access issues

13. Following the initial assessment, five sites were identified for a more detailed analysis to determine the preferred site to take forwards to the next stages of development. Each site was analysed using the following criteria:

- i. Accessibility/deprivation
- ii. Site ownership
- iii. Building/demolition considerations
- iv. Planning constraints/issues
- v. Revenue position
- vi. Capital costs
- vii. Timescales
- viii. Project deliverability

14. The detailed options analysis identified East Wing as the site that presents the best opportunity to re-provide leisure provision in Trowbridge in terms of overall deliverability against the above criteria and when compared to the other sites included in the analysis.

15. The Site Analysis report was discussed by the Trowbridge Leisure Provision Project Board on 31 March 2023. The Project Board recommended that the East Wing site should be progressed to the next stages of development so that further assessment and development work can be undertaken.
16. The allocation of the site has been raised at Asset Gateway & Capital Programme Board on 12 May 2023, where it was noted that the Trowbridge Leisure Project is the priority project for development on the East Wing site.

### Main Considerations for the Council

17. The reasons for the facility mix selection are set-out below:

Proposed Facility	Rationale
Main Pool – 6 lane x 25m Learner Pool – 7m x 13m	Current income per m2 very high, additional water space to ensure there are no capacity issues in the future. Activity for all ages to participate in. Swimming highlighted as the activity that most people wanted to do more of Swimming is the activity participated in most at the leisure centre
Gym – 120 stations	To ensure capacity for projected total membership demand Second most popular activity within the leisure centres Commercial element of the business and is important for future financial sustainability
1 x studio – 30 person capacity 1 x Studio – 25 person capacity Spin Studio	Sufficient capacity and space to deliver a robust group exercise timetable, whilst also giving flexibility for the spaces to be used for other activities, such as parties, meetings, wellbeing classes etc. Flexible studio space to enable multiple activities to be delivered including those for key groups and increasing accessibility
1 x Community/Multi-purpose rooms	Increase flexibility of space, support local businesses due to central location. Stakeholders highlighted the benefits of having flexible space available for different community groups, charities, health providers to utilise Having a bespoke community room will not impact on the studio programme, which, commercially is important for the financial sustainability of the centre.
Cafe	Linked to reception and to serve the pool and adventure play. Pre-prepared food and hot and cold drinks – similar to a high street café offer. Supports the attraction of a destination venue and commercial viability of the offer Creates social element to the leisure offer that can be utilised as part of the programmes and initiatives - supporting outcomes linked to social isolation
Active Play provision for young people	Play-based physical activity opportunity for all young people, including those that may not have an interest in traditional sports. Creates a commercial element and delivers against the financial sustainability outcome. Creates more of a destination venue supporting the local economy.
Low impact physical activity space	Older people are currently under-represented in the leisure centres

Proposed Facility	Rationale
	Provides a facility that support health and wellbeing agenda that can be used by leisure centre members but also health services and partners Utilised for prevention and rehabilitation Supports the public health outcomes Provides a good introduction into leisure centres for those lacking in confidence (16% stated this as being a barrier to participation)

18. The East Wing offers significant benefits as the preferred location of a leisure offer for Trowbridge:

- The site is owned by Wiltshire Council and so the Council can better control delivery timescales
- A leisure building comprising the identified facility mix and parking requirements can be accommodated on the site (likely a two storey building), while parking will fit across whole site
- The site has a prominent central location, adjacent to the main road and opposite County Hall and provides the opportunity for a high quality, public facing civic building
- The site has good access routes for public transport and Active Travel
- Walking (21,226 within a 20 min walk time) and drive time (185,017 within a 20 min drive time) catchments are good
- East Wing is one of the sites most accessible to people living in areas of higher deprivation
- As a new build, there is a good opportunity for planning in adaptability and resilience to climate change (low embodied carbon targets/net zero carbon)
- East Wing provides opportunities for multi-purpose trips, economic synergies and enhanced active travel links.

19. Whilst the East Wing site presents the least risk to the Council and has been identified as the preferred site in terms of overall deliverability, a more detailed understanding of the site can only be ascertained by progressing it to the next stages of development.

20. Each stage of this development will determine whether the site continues to be viable and deliverable and will only pass to the next stage once the Project Board has reviewed and approved the relevant end stage report.

21. Should a stage determine that the East Wing site is no longer viable, the Project Board will assess options, including the suitability of the remaining four sites and determine whether one of those sites should be subject to further analysis. Should an alternative site need to be progressed a further Cabinet level decision may be required at the appropriate time.

22. The indicative facility mix does not include a sports hall, squash courts or gymnasium. We intend to retain these facilities and dry changing rooms at Trowbridge Sports Centre.

23. Dialogue has and will continue to take place with the Acorn Education Trust in relation to the future operating model for these facilities.

24. The re-provided leisure offer does not include a dive facility which is available as part of the existing leisure offer at Trowbridge Sports Centre. Including a dive facility as part of any future leisure offer would not be cost-effective, with the SOPM indicating that there is insufficient need to provide a diving facility in Trowbridge.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Engagement**

25. There has been no engagement with Overview and Scrutiny to date.

### **Safeguarding Implications**

26. There are no safeguarding implications at this stage. This report only considers progression of the preferred site to the next stages of development.

### **Public Health Implications**

27. The primary focus for Public Health is to improve population health and wellbeing, preventing ill health and enabling communities to live their best life.

28. Ensuring all Wiltshire residents across the life course have opportunities to become and stay active is a key part of this and forms part of Wiltshire Council's mission as detailed in the council's 2022 – 2032 business plan 'Wiltshire is a place where we stay active'. The provision of fit for purpose leisure facilities has a significant role to play in achieving this priority.

29. Providing spaces where people can be physically active will have a significant impact on health and well-being. Physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour are associated with all-cause and cardiovascular mortality, as well as cancer risk and survivorship. Being physically active can lead to better health outcomes for Wiltshire residents and can address local health inequalities by improving emotional wellbeing, reducing obesity rates, and reducing preventable ill health and mortality across the whole of the life course.

30. Increased levels of physical activity also contribute to reducing the inequality gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, therefore reducing the burden and financial costs on health and social care.

31. All residents in the Trowbridge community are likely to be affected by the proposal to re-provide leisure facilities at East Wing as the building will be designed to be accessible and will be available for any resident to access. East Wing benefits from its proximity to the three lower super output areas where there are high levels of deprivation. A leisure offer on East Wing will be used to increase engagement with those communities and other audiences who have traditionally been less physically active.

### **Procurement Implications**

32. All procurement associated with the project will take place within the Council's procurement and commercial strategy and in conjunction with the Council's procurement team.

## **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

33. The East Wing site has been assessed against accessibility criteria based on local public transport routes, accessibility to the town centre and its proximity to the three main areas lower super output areas in Trowbridge, scoring favourably against each of these.
34. The intention with the new facility provision is to reduce barriers to participation and engage more people in physical activity either directly at the new facility or within the vicinity through the delivery of Leisure's 'hub and spoke' model of provision.
35. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be developed for the project and maintained throughout its lifespan.

## **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

36. The next stages of development will include appropriate studies and surveys to address ecology, conservation, bio-diversity net gain, sustainable construction methods, utility consumption and building systems.
37. A sustainability review will be completed at the next immediate stage to determine the potential carbon reduction that can be achieved. A range of technologies and approaches will be considered including full life-cycle costs. The selected site provides strong opportunities to deliver a low carbon/carbon neutral operation. New builds can be planned with low embodied carbon targets.
38. The size of the site provides good opportunities for planning in adaptability and resilience to the impacts of climate change.
39. The Council will have full regard to all relevant environmental and climate change legislation and requirements in the Local Plan process as the project progresses. The project is cognisant that local planning policy may have requirements on how any development takes place and will, where required, comply with these.
40. When selecting the site the project has been cognisant of the active travel opportunities. East Wing is within reasonable walking and cycling distances from residential areas. The site has good public transport links. The site also presents the opportunity for multi-purpose trips.

## **Workforce Implications**

41. There are no immediate workforce implications, as a result of the decisions contained in this report. However, should the facility end up being built on East Wing, then staff will be subject to a change of location of work. Full and formal consultation will take place with the recognised trade unions and all relevant staff at the appropriate time.
42. The East Wing site is currently a designated staff car park for Wiltshire Council staff based at County Hall. Consideration will need to be given to this as any new facility will have its own parking requirements. There is potential for access to staff parking to be considered an implied term and condition of employment with Wiltshire Council and therefore consultation with the unions will need to commence at an early stage.

### **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken**

43. Without progressing the project to the next stages of development, it will not be possible to determine if the site continues to be deliverable and viable.
44. If the project does not progress, there will potentially be a point in the future that Trowbridge does not have any leisure facility provision.

### **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks**

45. Taking the proposed decision could result in determining that the site is unviable. The Council would need to consider other sites in its shortlist potentially creating an additional cost to the overall programme.
46. Progressing with East Wing may result in lack of access to the dry side facilities at Trowbridge Sports Centre. The Council will have ongoing dialogue with Acorn Education Trust to facilitate continued community access.
47. The community, and existing leisure members may not agree with the facility mix, or location. This decision has been made on robust, evidence-led analysis that delivers the key outcomes that support both the Council's business plan objectives and community needs.

### **Financial Implications**

48. Progressing the project to the next stages accords with the Council's budget and financial policy framework.
49. Indicative revenue forecasts have been made based on the facility mix and location of the facility to assess the viability of the project. These forecasts demonstrate that the facility can achieve financial sustainability.

### **Legal Implications**

50. The Council owns the proposed development site and therefore there are no land purchase implications.
51. Legal will be engaged alongside Procurement in supporting the development of any contractual arrangements as a result of procurement activity.
52. The One Public Estate (OPE) programme is an established national programme delivered in partnership by the LGA and the Office of Government Property (OGP) within the Cabinet Office. Wiltshire Council have received an OPE grant in respect of East Wing and guidance will need to be sought to understand if the grant spent (£369k), in addition to the underspend of circa £164k, will need to be returned considering the decisions in this paper and the proposed future plans for East Wing.

### **Options Considered**

53. Retaining the current facility mix. Evidence gathered by the SOPM has demonstrated that this is not the optimal facility mix to meet the project outcomes, including the delivery of a financially sustainable facility.



54. Multiple sites. Multiple sites were considered ahead of making this decision. The consultancy team, which included architects and construction partners, completed a site options analysis of these sites, narrowing them down to a shortlist that was further assessed. Consideration has been given to progressing more than one site to the next development stage. This approach would significantly increase the costs of the project and lead to abortive works. Based on the available evidence, the Council is satisfied that the proposed site provides the best opportunity to meet the identified outcomes, is the most deliverable site and provides the least risk to the council.

### **Conclusions/Proposal**

55. Following a comprehensive review of current provision, analysis of future requirements and a site options appraisal, this report sets out the proposals to be agreed including the indicative facility mix required in a new leisure facility for Trowbridge, East Wing as the preferred location for that new facility and the progression of the project to the next stages of development.

56. This approach ensures that a robust process is implemented that ensures the project progresses and delivers a new facility that is both deliverable and viable.

### **David Redfern, Director – Leisure, Culture, and Communities**

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### **Appendices**

None

### **Background Papers**

Not applicable