

Shrewsbury Swimming Pool update

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1. Summary

This report provides an update on work carried out, following Cabinet's confirmation on 30th July 2014, by officers to work up detailed options for swimming provision in Shrewsbury. This includes on-going liaison with Energize the County Sports Partnership, the Amateur Swimming Association, Sport England, Quarry Swimming & Fitness Forum; undertaking a building and mechanical & electrical condition survey of the Quarry; the short-listing of potential sites for swimming provision; a contract variation with Shropshire Community Leisure Trust; a further run of the Sport England Facilities Planning Model; and the completion of a detailed independently completed site options appraisal report.

The detailed sites options – refurbishment of existing Quarry Pool; renovation of existing Quarry Pool; new build on site of existing Quarry Pool; new build at Clayton Way; new build on land at Ellesmere Road; new build on land at the Shrewsbury Sports Village; and new build on land at Shrewsbury College - currently being consulted on are described and summarised within the report.

Further details of the consultation and supporting information can be found at www.shropshire.gov.uk/swim

2. Recommendations

Members of Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

1. Comment on the work done to date and to offer further suggestions, to ensure as many people as possible comment on the options being proposed.
2. To consider a further update on the work in the autumn after the consultation has ended and before a final report is presented to Cabinet.

REPORT

1. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

Future swimming provision continues to create huge public interest, particularly with respect to its potential future location. Shropshire Council will therefore continue to work closely with Energize, Sport England, the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and the Quarry Swimming Pool and Fitness Forum. The development of a preferred future swimming pool option will be supported by a four month public consultation and detailed public and stakeholder engagement.

A range of specialist work has been completed, and made available, in support of the public consultation

Whichever option is chosen this is a significant project with the risk of potential overspend and project creep. The project is being developed by a Project Board chaired by the Director of Commissioning and including relevant internal officers and external representation from Energize, Sport England and the Amateur Swimming Association. The Board has developed and keeps under review a detailed project plan, risk management framework and Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA).

2. Financial implications

Capital funding will be required for the construction of a new pool. A number of options are available to the authority including:

- Council Capital Programme Funding
- Prudential Borrowing
- Sport England – Lottery Funding

Initial discussions have taken place with Sport England and there is a potential fit with the Strategic Facilities Fund which makes awards of between £500,000 and £2 million for major capital projects that are strategically important and are focused on the rationalisation and replacement of ageing facility stock. Bids to the fund are solicited and follow joint work on project development and a strong business case which demonstrates compliance with current good practice (e.g. on design, costs, procurement and management) and the delivery of agreed outcomes.

A new pool is estimated to cost between £9,007,843 and £10,989,859, compared with the renovation / refurbishment of the existing Quarry between £2,317,656 and £12,808,323 respectively.

A new pool could also potentially make year on year revenue savings, again depending on the option chosen.

In order to support the development of detailed proposals it will be necessary to incur on-going revenue expenditure on specialist advice, public consultation, etc. and this will continue to be found within existing budgets.

3. Background Information

Demand for swimming in Shrewsbury is significant with over a quarter of a million swims in the Quarry in 2014/15.

	Quarry swimming centre attendance	Quarry fitness suite attendance	Total combined attendance
2010/11	231,486	52,765	284,251
2011/12	223,856	57,694	281,550
2012/13	213,947	58,918	272,865
2013/14	222,929	69,932	292,861
2014/15	226,921	74,720	301,641

The Local Sports Profile for Shropshire shows that swimming is the most popular sport and is above the regional and national averages. It is also the sport that adults most want to do.

Swimming provision is well positioned to make a significant contribution to several key national and local agendas including supporting a healthy society, better outcomes for children and young people and contributing to the local economy.

Alongside this the population of Shrewsbury is changing - it's generally getting older and less active. There will be significant population growth over the next few decades with a large amount of new housing being built. From September 2015 there will be a university in the town, and although student numbers will initially be small, there will be a growing population of students with specific leisure requirements.

While the existing Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre offers a range of facilities – 4 pools providing 898 sq m of water, 37 station fitness suite, health suite, café, training room, etc. - it is generally accepted that the condition of the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre and the user experience it offers has declined in recent years.

Finally there are huge on-going strains on the public purse and the running costs of the current facility will become a growing challenge.

Cabinet confirmed a number of recommendations on July 30th 2014:

- That officers work with partners to progress the “replacement” of existing swimming provision at the Quarry with new swimming provision within Shrewsbury to the feasibility stage and that a further report will be provided to Cabinet once the different options are appraised
- That a three month public consultation is undertaken to support the development of detailed costed proposals for future swimming provision and that different options are assessed against a shared vision and list of future pool requirements

- That delegated authority is given to the Director of Commissioning in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Libraries to enter into discussion with Shropshire Community Leisure Trust, the current operator of the Quarry Pool, and their managing agent Serco Leisure Ltd and to agree a Contract Variation which will enable the Council to appoint Shropshire Community Leisure Trust to operate any new pool provision.

4. Summary of the vision for swimming pool provision within Shrewsbury

A detailed vision for swimming provision in Shrewsbury was confirmed within the 30th July cabinet report and also accompanies the current online public consultation. In summary the vision says that the Shrewsbury swimming facility should:

- increase participation in swimming and physical activity, and in so doing improve the wider health and wellbeing of the community
- provide a long-term swimming facility that's affordable to run both now and in the future
- be complementary to other leisure and recreational provision in the town

To take this vision forward, and based on a range of evidence, recommendations for the minimum facilities to be provided by a new swimming facility have been developed:

- a 25m x 20m eight lane main pool, 500 sq m
- a 20m x 10m four-lane learner pool with full moveable floor, 200 sq m
- facilities to introduce people to water (to aid water confidence), 60 – 100 sq m
- fitness facilities, at least 50 stations
- spectator seating for 250 people

This would provide a total of 700 sq m of water compared with the current 898 sq m within the Quarry.

5. Work carried out to inform public consultation on swimming pool options

a. On-going liaison

This has been maintained with Energize the County Sports Partnership, Amateur Swimming Association, Sport England, Quarry Swimming & Fitness Forum (a group set up to bring clubs and users of the Quarry together to work towards improvements to the centre), etc. to inform the development of new options for swimming provision within Shrewsbury.

b. Building and mechanical & electrical condition survey

In September 2014 Shropshire Council undertook a condition survey of the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre. The survey included the main plant items (heating, pool filtration systems etc.) and connected distribution systems, and comprised an internal and external visual

inspection of the entire property, together with all associated external areas.

Various works were identified, including work to ceilings, roof, walls and cladding, furniture and fittings, floors and stairs, mechanical services, and redecoration and sanitary services.

c. Short-listing of potential sites for swimming provision

An initial trawl of sites potentially suitable for the development of a new swimming and leisure facility within or on the fringe of Shrewsbury (and including the current Quarry Pool site) was undertaken in June 2014 by the Council's Strategic Asset Management Team, and 22 sites were identified for consideration. The listings included land within the Council's ownership and also land owned privately or by other bodies. The sites were evaluated as a desktop exercise (with the use of acid tests and qualitative tests) to rank different sites. A final list of sites in and around the town were then taken forward for further consideration by Strategic Leisure.

d. Contract variation with Shropshire Community Leisure Trust

From summer 2012 the pool has been managed by the Shropshire Community Leisure Trust through their managing agents, Serco Leisure Ltd, under a contract with Shropshire Council. The completion of a recent contract variation will enable the Council to appoint the current contractor to operate any new swimming provision within Shrewsbury, following public consultation, if it wishes to do so.

e. Sport England Facilities Planning Model May 2015

The Facilities Planning model helps to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities. In its simplest form the model seeks to assess whether the capacity of existing swimming facilities for a particular sport are capable of meeting local demand taking into account how far people are prepared to travel to a facility. In order to estimate the level of swimming facility provision in Shrewsbury the model compares the number of facilities (supply), by the demand for that facility (demand) that the local population will produce.

The two main findings from this analysis are that:

- There is scope to significantly reduce the current amount of water space provided in any new facility
- There is no significant difference between a town centre location and edge of town location in meeting the demand for swimming in Shrewsbury

f. Site Options appraisal report, May 2015

Independent leisure experts, Strategic Leisure, working alongside quantity surveyors and architects, were commissioned to identify the optimum long-term option for the provision of public swimming and fitness facilities in Shrewsbury. The study considered a minimum facility mix for future swimming pool development, and a number of site

options related to this. The study also considered the potential inclusion of diving facilities, a fun water area, and other pool configuration options.

In addition, the study considered the opportunity for an impact of developing a 50m pool; its strategic need, capital cost, revenue and participation impact, in relation to the sites on which such a large scale facility could be accommodated.

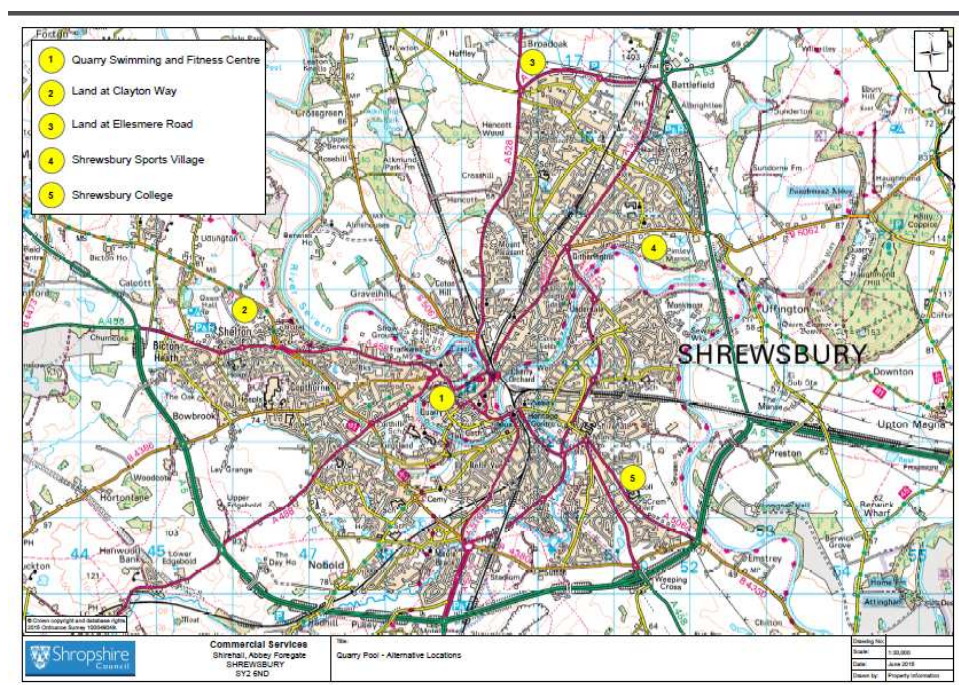
The summary of Strategic Leisure's full report to the Council is included within **Appendix 1**.

6. Different swimming pool options

From the work completed by Strategic Leisure the following options for swimming provision are currently being consulted on:

- 1A. Refurbishment of existing Quarry Pool
- 1B. Renovation of existing Quarry Pool
- 2. New build on site of existing Quarry Pool
- 3A. New build at Clayton Way
- 3B. New build on land at Ellesmere Road
- 3C. New build on land at the Shrewsbury Sports Village
- 3D. New build on land at Shrewsbury College

The location of each option is shown within the map below:



A summary of anticipated usage, capital costs and revenue impact is shown for each option below;

	Usage level per annum by year 5	Capital costs	Shropshire Council Revenue Impact
1A. Refurbishment of existing Quarry Pool	292,861	£2,317,656	Costs as per current subsidy
1B. Renovation of existing Quarry Pool	292,861	£12,808,323	Costs as per current subsidy
2. New build on site of existing Quarry Pool	398,246	£10,989, 859	£9,378 saving on existing costs per annum
3A. New build at Clayton Way	398,246	£10,624,822	£11,835 saving on existing costs per annum
3B. New build on land at Ellesmere Road	398,246	£10,941,971	£11,835 saving on existing costs per annum
3C. New build on land at the Shrewsbury Sports Village	486,846 (reflecting current usage of SSV)	£9,007,843	£289,669 saving on existing costs per annum
3D. New build on land at Shrewsbury College	Estimate 398,246 – 486,846	Estimate £9,007,843 - £10,941,971	Saving of between £9,378 and £289,669 per annum on existing costs

7. Public consultation on swimming pool options

A four month public consultation, ending on the 25th September, has recently been launched on the options described above and can be viewed at:.

www.shropshire.gov.uk/swim



The consultation includes for each option:

- a brief description
- a simple analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to help readers to quickly understand the pros and cons
- financial information on the cost to build and the cost to run

Alongside this are FAQs and a range of useful supporting information.

The consultation is asking the public to read and carefully consider the information for each option, and then to provide feedback on it.

In addition to the online consultation officers will meet with interested parties / groups and attend a range of public events.

Feedback to date

At the time of writing this report (5th June) there had been over 350 responses to the consultation with 15% from non users.

The three top reasons why people don't use the Quarry are "there are better facilities elsewhere", "building and facilities aren't accessible enough" and "there are facilities nearer to my home that are easier to get to". The consultation suggests that the quarry pool is popular with family recreational swimmers with over 40% of swimmers visiting with their child / children.

Preferred options for future swimming provision reflect the recent Shropshire Star poll, namely Shrewsbury Sports Village, new build on existing Quarry site and upgrade of the existing Quarry. This question has generated a huge number of diverse comments which will require careful consideration.

A number of alternative pool locations are suggested including Roman Road, Copthorne, next to the football ground, next to the Battlefield Energy Recovery Facility and the Flaxmill.

Diving boards, flumes, learn to swim facilities, a swimming timetable that caters for different swimmer types, onsite parking, proximity to public transport links and proximity to town centre are all considered to be important in any swimming provision.

7. Next steps

Following the end of the public consultation it is anticipated that a recommendation will be made to Cabinet on a preferred swimming pool option for approval. Key points for consideration in the development of a preferred option are likely to include:

- Population and changing patterns of usage
- Impact on participation
- Impact on local economy
- Availability and costs of site
- Site & planning constraints
- Capital costs of improved / new pool provision

- Decommissioning & demolition implications
- Continuity of swimming provision implications
- Revenue impact
- Town Centre site versus edge of town site; access
- Single facility or multi facility “hub”

The confirmation of the preferred approach is then likely to lead to a capital appraisal and the development of detailed feasibility work.

It is likely that some further public consultation will take place during the feasibility stage to inform detailed design work, etc.

Once a detailed costed scheme of works has been developed and a full funding package confirmed the project will move to the appointment of a building contractor.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2009 - 2019 and Playing Pitch Strategy 2010 – 2020, Cabinet, 29 June 2011

New pool for Shrewsbury, Cabinet, 30 July 2015

Shrewsbury Swimming and Fitness Options report, Strategic Leisure, June 2015

Further details of the public consultation, FAQs and supporting reports can be found at www.shropshire.gov.uk/swim

Cabinet Member:

Cllr Steve Charmley, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Libraries and Culture

Local Members:

Cllr Andrew Bannerman, Cllr Peter Adams, Cllrs, Vernon Bushell, Cllr Ted Clarke, Cllr Anne Chebsey, Cllr Hannah Fraser, Cllr Miles Kenny, Cllr Jane Mackenzie, Cllr Peter Nutting, Cllr Alan Mosley, Cllr Pam Moseley, Cllr Mike Owen, Cllr Kevin Pardy, Cllr Mal Price, Cllr Keith Roberts, Cllr John Tandy, Cllr Mansel Williams & Cllr Dean Carroll

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Summary of options for the provision of public swimming (and fitness) facilities in Shrewsbury