

## **SWIMMING PROVISION IN SHREWSBURY FAQs – 02 September 2015**

### **1. Why do we need improved swimming provision in Shrewsbury?**

The Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre in Shrewsbury is a well-used pool that has been in operation for over 100 years. As a result of its longevity and heavy use, the facility is costly to keep repairing, is not energy efficient or cost effective to run, the site layout/location is restrictive, and the quality of customer provision is not as good as it would be for a more modern facility.

The facility is very well used. In 2014 there were over 300,000 uses of the swimming and fitness facilities; this is made up casual, school, learn to swim and club use with a wide range of clubs using the facility.

In September 2014 Shropshire Council appointed construction experts to undertake a condition survey of the building. The survey focussed on the main plant items (heating, pool filtrations 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 (failed lighting, inefficient filtration system, aged boilers)
- redecoration and sanitary services

### **2. What is the vision and requirements for any improved pool provision in Shrewsbury?**

As part of Shropshire Council's strategy to deliver a network of modern, efficient and sustainable sports facilities our vision is for a new 25 metre x 8 lane pool, a 20 x 10 m learner pool and facilities that increase people's, particularly children's, confidence in water e.g. fountains and shallow entry. The pool will be complimented by fitness facilities, consisting of at least 50 fitness stations.

The pool will primarily support recreational swimming, learn to swim programmes, school use, club use and competition use. The pool will be the "county pool" attracting usage and competition from across the region. In addition a range of other aquatic uses will also be encouraged, e.g. triathlons, sub aqua diving, canoeing, water polo, synchronised swimming, etc.

The facility should support increased participation in swimming and physical activity, and in doing so:

- Improve personal physical and mental well-being and contribute to 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

The new swimming pool will complement other leisure, recreational and community provision within the County town and will ideally be co-located with some of this provision to enable cross promotion and usage and to improve efficiencies both in terms of management / maintenance and also infrastructure (e.g. public transport). The pool should be accessible by foot, bike, public transport and car and will ideally provide ample parking.

Programmes and usage should be fun, attracting both existing and new users and should provide a high quality customer experience that will encourage continued use. The pool will be accessible to people with disabilities and with special requirements and no one will be excluded. Major competitions in the facility will also support secondary spend in the local economy.

Linking aquatic provision to other leisure provision to create a multi-sport domain alongside the development of a Sports Development programme provides the opportunity to attract new audiences, embed the facility within the community, and to diversify the offer and reduce running costs. Beyond this there is the opportunity to create a wider “community complex” that also includes, for example, learning and health opportunities.

The pool will be designed and built to recognised industry standards. Our aim is to provide build value for money and an operation that is efficient providing the best chance of long term sustainability. Meeting modern build and energy conservation standards will be important.

### **3. What options is the Council considering?**

In broad terms we are considering four different options for future swimming provision in Shrewsbury:

1. A simple refurbishment of the existing Quarry facility, mainly consisting of cosmetic improvements but not altering the layout or functionality of the building. It would retain the existing 4 pools.
2. A major refurbishment and upgrade of the existing facility- including improvements to access, changing facilities and reception. Again this would retain the existing 4 pools.
3. Rebuild on the existing site against the new vision (2 pools) – If this was undertaken there would be unlikely to be any public swimming provision in Shrewsbury for the duration of the build (possibly up to 2 years).
4. New build on another site against the new vision (2 pools), either stand alone or alongside an existing leisure and / or community facility

Mini “business cases” have been developed by an independent leisure specialist for each of the different options. These plans include indicative capital and revenue costs, programming of activity, impact on the town’s economy, accessibility,

sustainability and impact on community well-being. Each of the options has been evaluated against the vision and requirements outlined in 2 above.

#### **4. What will the capital build cost of a new pool be and why is there variation in the costs?**

Each of the options considered have different estimated costs. These have been calculated by leisure industry experts in liaison with construction colleagues, Sport England and the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA).

The capital (construction) costs of each option are estimated to be:

Quarry Refurbishment	£2,317,656
Quarry Upgrade	£12,808,323
New build on Quarry Site	£10,989,859
New build on another site	£9,007,843 - £10,941,971

Each site is different and poses different challenges that have an impact on the construction costs. These include:

- Site clearance & demolition
- Site constraints- e.g. access, terrain and services (water, electricity etc.)
- Opportunities to share aspects of facilities with other buildings - e.g. reception and changing

#### **5. Why is the quarry upgrade option so expensive?**

The upgrade option is comparatively expensive as it requires the improvements to the building to be undertaken within the existing structure which is more challenging than building from scratch. This option also requires a large contingency sum to allow for unforeseen challenges that may arise when modernising the existing building.

#### **6. What are the costs of running the different options, why are there differences in the figures and what changes have been made during the consultation period?**

The experts who have undertaken the business plans have estimated the running costs for each option based on a range of factors including usage, staffing, heating costs, maintenance etc.

The running costs for each option have been updated in response to:

- Clarifications sought by a number of respondents
- Newly available up to date revenue information for 2014/15
- The removal of fit out, life cycle and sink fund costs within the comparisons to facilitate the comparison of like with like
- The correction of the operating budget for the existing Quarry Swimming Pool, brought to the attention to the Council during this period of consultation.

The resultant impact on the running costs is:

<b>Option</b>	<b>UPDATED Forecast Operational Revenue: (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>PREVIOUSLY REPORTED Forecast Operational Revenue: (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>UPDATED Revenue impact (annual gross average over 10 year period)</b>	<b>PREVIOUSLY REPORTED Revenue impact (annual gross average over 10 year period)</b>
Option 1A Refurbishment of the Quarry Pool	£195,811	£89,374	<b>Costs as per current operating deficit</b>	Costs as per current subsidy
Option 1B Renovation of the Quarry Pool	£195,811	£89,374	<b>Costs as per current operating deficit</b>	Costs as per current subsidy
Option 2 New build on the Quarry Site	£29,996	£79,996	<b>£165,815 saving on existing costs per annum</b>	£9,378 saving on existing costs per annum
Option 3C New build on land at Clayton Way	£27,539	£77,539	<b>£168,272 saving on existing costs per annum</b>	£11,835 saving on existing costs per annum
Option 3D New build on land at Ellesmere Road	£27,539	£77,539	<b>£168,272 saving on existing costs per annum</b>	£11,835 saving on existing costs per annum
Option 3E New build on land at Shrewsbury Sports Village	(£250,295)	(£194,994)	<b>£446,106 saving on existing costs per annum</b>	£289,669 saving on existing costs per annum (this figure reflects total income across all facilities, and the operating costs, including staffing across all the facilities on site, and the operational subsidy)
Option 3F New build on land at the Shrewsbury College	<b>Assumption would be that this would be a figure between a full new build and the Sports Village site option</b>	Assumption would be that this would be a figure between a full new build and the Sports Village site option	<b>Saving of between £168,272 and £446,106</b>	Saving of between £9,378 and £289,669 per annum (not estimated). Assumption would be that this would be a figure between a full new build and the sports

				village site option)
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The new build on the quarry site is limited by site constraints and as such is unable to deliver the significant improvements in functionality and participation levels that would lead to an improved revenue position.

The new build options each have different revenue implications. This variation is based on several factors including access, proximity to other facilities etc. The most economic option is a result of the pool being a shared facility with associated savings for staffing and running costs and increased participation from shared use

**7. Why do the refurbishment and upgrade of the Quarry options not lead to an increase in participation and only have a minimal impact on the running costs of the building?**

Our independent leisure expert consultants explain that the reason for this is that these options do not change the actual swimming or fitness facilities, and therefore there is no increase in flexibility or capacity. The current operating costs would therefore stay the same, as would the income generation. Whilst addressing the current non-compliance of the Quarry with the requirements of DDA, improving health and safety and the overall environment, neither option actually improves any aspect of the existing sports facilities, and therefore the existing capacity of the pools and the fitness suite remains unchanged.

However, the council does recognise that investment in new modern boilers and filtration systems, etc. would be expected to reduce energy and water consumption with a related improvement in the revenue position. This would be unlikely to result in as much operational efficiency as in a new build, given that the improved boilers would still be heating an ageing building, designed over three levels, without other energy efficient technology that is now included in new buildings. Until improvements are completed, it would be difficult to accurately assess their impact.

Following the public consultation, and before any financial decision is taken by council Members we will independently assess the impact on energy consumption that building improvements may bring in order to try and get a better understanding of the revenue impact on these options.

**8. How can a new pool at the Sports Village which has existing dryside leisure facilities be compared with the existing swimming pool at the Quarry which is a standalone facility?**

The report explains the basis for the revenue modeling at the Sports Village and that the final figure represents a combined wet side / dry side operation (e.g. sections 5.104 and 5.108).

The modelled revenue position for the new swimming pool build at the Sports Village when compared against the existing combined Quarry and Sports Village operational deficits shows a £466,722 improvement rather than the £446,106

improvement when compared only against the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre.

**9. What are the usage figures for the options and how have these been estimated?**

Option	Predicted Usage level
Refurbishment of Quarry Swimming & Fitness Centre	292,861
Upgrade of Quarry Swimming & Fitness Centre	292,861
New build on the site of the existing Quarry & Fitness Centre	398,246
New build on land off Clayton Way, Shelton	398,246
New build on land at Ellesmere Road	398,246
New build on land at Shrewsbury Sports Village, Sundorne	486,846
New build on land at Shrewsbury College, London Road	Not estimated- assumption would be that this would be between the full new builds (398,246) and the new build on the Sports Village (486,846).

These have been based on a range of factors including estimated population growth, existing visitor usage, and a range of other data. In addition our consultants have a wealth of experience in the industry and have used existing participation figures and then calculated potential use of each of the options based on experience from elsewhere.

Usage increases specifically at Shrewsbury Sports Village (and London Road) as a result of the benefits of the pool being on an existing multi-sports site which has high usage. Combined with the nearby Sundorne Health Village, the inclusion of a new pool will help further develop this multi-facility community hub.

The addition of a pool will encourage existing users of the Sports Village to swim alongside the existing users of the Sports Village. The facility will also facilitate use by people who would prefer to drive to the existing Quarry facility but have difficulties parking.

**10. Why have you only done detailed work on a limited number of site options?**

The options selected for detailed work were shortlisted through a desktop exercise using set criteria to rank different sites in terms of the realistic viability of them being able to accommodate the vision for swimming in Shrewsbury.

The consultation allows for people to put forward alternative ideas for sites that are not included within these options and all suggestions will be considered following the consultation.

**11. Will you consult with users and interested parties on these options?**

Yes, we are currently undertaking public consultation and detailed stakeholder engagement that started on May 28<sup>th</sup> and will close on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

We will also continue to work closely with key bodies such as Energize the County Sports Partnership, Sport England and the Amateur Swimming Association.

**12. What would be the future of the Quarry site if the decision was taken to move to a different site following consultation?**

This has not formed part of this work. Clearly the existing site is in a very sensitive location that is of great significance to the community.

**13. The building condition survey has identified some improvements/works to the Quarry- will these be undertaken regardless of the consultation outcome?**

The works have been identified as being required over the next three years with approximately two thirds being needed to be undertaken in the next 12-18 months. Whilst continuing to plan to undertake these works at the Quarry, during the consultation period and when options are being considered, a reactive approach will be adopted to reduce any significant expenditure in the period of decision making.

**14. What happens next?**

The public consultation will close on 30th October 2015. The findings of this consultation and the mini business plan will form the basis of a report to Shropshire Council's Cabinet who will decide on the best approach to take swimming provision in Shrewsbury forwards.

## **15. How can I be kept informed of swimming pool developments in Shrewsbury?**

You will be able to keep up to date via the following means:

- Shropshire Council's website - [www.shropshire.gov.uk/swim](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/swim)
- Shropshire Council's newsroom - <http://shropshire.gov.uk/news/>
- Shropshire Council's customer service centre - 0345 678 9077
- Twitter – @shropcouncil