



Cabinet

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Item

Public

New Swimming Pool for Shrewsbury

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1. Summary

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 the pool's age and condition, the facility is costly to keep repairing, is not energy efficient and cost effective to run, the site layout is restrictive, and the quality of customer provision and experience is not as good as it would be for a more modern facility.

All needs assessments that have been carried out have confirmed that reducing the current water area would meet demand until at least 2029.

A number of site options were consulted on in 2015 – refurbishment of existing Quarry Pool; renovation of existing Quarry Pool; new build on site of the 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.

Over 1,900 people took part in the public online survey and detailed comments were also received from, for example, Shrewsbury Town Council, the Quarry Swimming & Fitness Forum, the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District, the Shropshire Disability Network and others. There was overwhelming public support to retain the pool on the existing site, although no consensus on which of the refurbishment, renovation or new build options was preferred.

In determining which location option best meets the Council's vision and requirements for future swimming provision a detailed evaluation of the responses to the consultation has been carried out by Shropshire Council based on three questions:

1. Which options are deliverable and are the most affordable and sustainable?
2. Which options best meet the Council's vision and strategy for swimming provision?
3. What are the social, environmental and economic impact and implications of the different options?

The report presents a range of detailed information in support of the evaluation of the different options and concludes that the location option that would best meet the Council's requirements would be to provide new swimming provision at the Shrewsbury Sports Village.

The report recommends that, prior to a final recommendation to progress to feasibility being made, other parties including the Shrewsbury BID, Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum and Shrewsbury Town Council are given an opportunity for up to 12 months to develop alternative proposals to retain swimming provision on the existing site. Any alternatives will need to meet the Council's key objectives referenced within the evaluation criteria described within this report including for the pool to be affordable and to support participation in the future. Recommendation B takes into account the views expressed in response to the consultation and in addition, the interest shown by the parties identified above and in section 8 of the Report in the development of alternative business models that would support on-going swimming provision from the existing Quarry site. The additional period of up to 12 months will enable these (and any other parties) to demonstrate whether or not they are able to put forward alternative proposals which will meet the Council's key objectives as identified in the report.

Subject to a future cabinet report confirming the council's preferred approach, feasibility and detailed design work will be undertaken, with a final decision subject to a cabinet recommendation considering the viability in light of funding opportunities and the council's financial strategy.

2. Recommendations

- A. That Cabinet confirms and approves in principle that the preferred location for the replacement of existing swimming provision (with new swimming provision) is the Shrewsbury Sports Village based upon the options appraisal evidenced within this report.
- B. That all other parties who wish to do so, including the Shrewsbury BID, Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum and Shrewsbury Town Council are given an opportunity for up to 12 months to develop alternative proposals to retain swimming provision on the existing site. Any alternatives will need to meet the Council's key objectives referenced within the evaluation criteria described within this report, including for the pool to be affordable and to support participation in the future.
- C. That a further report is brought back to Cabinet on the proposed next steps and the detail including the timetable, process and terms of reference in relation to Recommendation B.

REPORT

Note: Relevant supporting material and reports referenced within this report have been gathered together on Shropshire Council's web site and can be viewed at: <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

1.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

A detailed risk framework has been prepared and is kept under regular review by the Project Board. A number of issues to the successful implementation of the project have been identified.

- Future swimming provision within Shrewsbury continues to create huge public interest including:
 - A petition with over 3,000 signatures was received by the Council in April 2014.
 - Over 1,900 responded to a five month public consultation; a strong preference has been made for a town centre location.
 - Strong engagement from a range of stakeholders including the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum (QSFF), Shrewsbury Town Council, the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District (BID) and the Shropshire Disability Forum. A strong preference has been made for a town centre location.
 - The Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre (QSFC) was registered as an Asset of Community Value on the 19th August 2014; this creates a requirement for the Council, should it wish to sell the site, to delay the disposal for a minimum of six weeks to give the nominating organisation or other qualifying community body time to confirm whether they wish to make a bid; if during the six weeks a request to bid is made, the Council cannot dispose of the asset (other than to a community interest group) during this six month moratorium period. This gives the opportunity for the community group to make a bid for the asset within the six month period but the owner is not obliged to accept the bid and can dispose of the asset at the end of the period.
 - Shrewsbury BID and the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum have suggested that more time is given to developing an outline business case to show how the Quarry site could be run sustainably.
- The choice that is made on future swimming provision and the mix of facilities provided could influence swimming participation across the whole community beyond the next 25 years. Strategic Leisure Ltd, experienced leisure consultants, appointed to advise the Council alongside other experts such as Mace Ltd have undertaken a range of specialist work to help inform the development of detailed options.
- A detailed Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment has been prepared and will continue to be kept under review alongside further detailed stakeholder engagement.
Reference: Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment, 2016
<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>
- While this work has been undertaken the pressure on the public finance has been accentuated to such a degree that all leisure provision is identified as at risk beyond 2017. This brings the need to develop a sustainable business model that minimises the drain on the public purse into sharp focus as this will be a key requirement going forward.
- This is a significant project that is already delayed and with the risk of further significant delay. There are a number of potential consequences to extending the uncertainty of swimming provision in Shrewsbury including:
 - Price inflation leads to significantly higher construction costs and compromises pool affordability.
 - Threat to achieving external grant funding which may not be achievable if there is a delay.
 - Catastrophic failure to existing pool and /or minimum maintenance to pool.
 - Delayed opportunity to negotiate a reduction in the annual management fee with the contractor because of delay in delivery.
 - Potential need to re-consult.

- The estimated construction costs contained within this report are based on a series of assumptions and figures previously reported in June 2015. It should be noted that there has been inflation in the construction industry and that the detailed costs of material and labour are likely to have increased. Detailed costs relating to site specific issues etc. will be confirmed within subsequent feasibility work prior to a final decision but any delay may mean that all options are unaffordable.
- The finance models used in this report are based upon delivering a minimum facility mix for option 2 onwards – i.e. 8 lane x 25m pool; 10m x 20m learner pool; water confidence area; 50 station fitness suite and 250 spectator seating. Any alternative to this model will have potential capital, revenue and affordability consequences that may not be affordable.
- Assumptions have been made within this report regarding the Council's ability to secure external or partner funding for this project. There is a risk that these assumptions will not materialise which will impact on the overall affordability of the project.
- Within the finance modelling there is an assumption that a contribution from capital receipts generated from the sale of assets not previously identified to fund the current capital programme will be invested in the new facility. This assumption may be unachievable as no such assets may be available and if so, some or all of the options may be unaffordable.

The project is being managed by a Project Board chaired by the Director of Place and Enterprise and including relevant internal officers and external representation from Sport England, the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and the County Sports Partnership, Energize. Subject to a Cabinet recommendation further work will be undertaken to develop and confirm a detailed funding strategy and work will only proceed beyond key milestones when a full understanding of the potential risks is made.

2.0 Financial implications

2.1 Background

Shropshire Council is projected to have a funding shortfall of £77m by 2018/19, resulting in spending on services such as leisure, libraries, museums, public open spaces and support for youth activities facing significant cutbacks or in the worst case scenario closure.

The key question therefore is whether Shropshire Council is able to support non-statutory swimming and leisure provision except to the extent that it is already contractually obliged to do.

This report is written on the assumption that the Council would wish to support the continuing availability of public swimming in Shrewsbury for the benefit of the community, if at all possible, but given financial constraints, that it must be provided and operated as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The current annual revenue budget for the Quarry Pool of £296,792, including a repair & maintenance budget of £30,000 has been identified as a possible saving requirement within the Shropshire Council Financial Strategy 2016-2019. As the value of the annual revenue budget saving has been assumed in the following calculations as required to offset any borrowing liability arising from capital

investment in the provision of improved facilities there will be a requirement to identify a replacement saving from Culture and Leisure's budget should replacement of the Quarry Pool be approved.

The decision to go ahead with the replacement of the existing pool will be taken in light of the financial strategy, assessing the impact of the decision not just on the current cost to Shropshire Council of the Quarry facility but also the impact on the wider costs of the Shropshire Community Leisure Trust contract as a whole.

Reference: Shropshire Council's Financial Strategy, Cabinet, 17th February 2016

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MIId=3300&Ver=4>

2.2 Capital costs and funding opportunities

A new pool, rather than a refurbishment of the existing pool, has the potential to allow the Council to make substantial year on year revenue savings, when compared with current costs. Key elements of this include:

- a. Repairs and maintenance savings reflecting a smaller, simpler and more modern building
- b. Energy savings based on significantly less water area and a building design that meets best modern practice
- c. Improved income based on the provision of a new modern fitness suite, studio availability for exercise classes etc., on-going increased uptake of Learn to Swim classes, etc.

The detailed terms including the Savings identified at (b) and (c) would be subject to the result of re-negotiation with the current contractor.

Detailed work has been carried out to understand:

- The potential capital costs of different location and options for swimming provision in Shrewsbury
- Potential sources of funding in support of the construction of a new pool
- The potential revenue impact of different pool options
- The "affordability" of different pool options based on the capital costs, revenue consequences and different strategies for funding building works.

Strategic Leisure Ltd and Mace Ltd have estimated the capital cost for the different options. The affordability of all the pool options has then been calculated based on capital costs estimates and potential funding sources. The total potential available funding is deducted from the capital cost to determine the prudential borrowing requirement (i.e. the funding shortfall) and is summarised in table 1:

Table 1

Option	Description	Estimated Construction Cost	Potential Funding	Net Borrowing Liability
1A	Quarry Refurbishment	£2,317,656	£0	£2,317,656
1B	Quarry Renovation	£12,808,323	£1,500,000	£11,308,323
2	Quarry New Build	£10,989,859	£3,000,000	£7,989,859
3A	Clayton Way New Build	£10,624,822	£3,000,000	£7,624,822
3B	Ellesmere Road New Build	£10,941,971	£3,000,000	£7,941,971
3C	Shrewsbury Sports	£9,007,843	£3,000,000	£6,007,843

	Village New Build			
3D	Shrewsbury College New Build*	£10,941,971	£3,000,000	£7,941,971

*Note that this figure is based on a prudent assumption that the capital cost would be the higher of a range between a new build and a build at the Shrewsbury Sports Village site

Reference: Summary of swimming pool options - 2 Sept 2015

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

There are a number of caveats to table 1 and these are described below:

It should be noted that capital costs were calculated in 2015 to the midpoint of the construction programmes (ranging between Q4 2016 and Q2 2017). However, there has been inflation in the construction industry and the detailed costs of material and labour are likely to have increased. Costs will be confirmed within subsequent feasibility work prior to a final decision.

Table 1 shows that all of the options have a funding shortfall, and that, therefore, there would be a requirement for the Council to contribute funds to the construction of a new pool. Potential funding options available to the Council as contributing to the capital costs are described in more detail in table 2 and include:

- Capital Receipts (sale of assets)
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Sport England funding
- Public Sector Grant Funding
- Private Sector Investment
- Prudential Borrowing

None of the assumed funding described within table 2 has been confirmed. Further investigation, including the possibility of additional external funding sources, would be carried out as part of detailed feasibility work.

Table 2

Option	Description	CIL	Sport England	Partner Funding	Total
1A	Quarry Refurbishment	£0	£0	£0	£0
1B	Quarry Renovation	£0	£1.5m	£0	£1.5m
2	Quarry New Build	£1m	£1.5m	£500k	£3m
3A	Clayton Way New Build	£1m	£1.5m	£500k	£3m
3B	Ellesmere Road New Build	£1m	£1.5m	£500k	£3m
3C	Shrewsbury Sports Village New Build	£1m	£1.5m	£500k	£3m
3D	Shrewsbury College New Build	£1m	£1.5m	£500k	£3m

Sources of potential funding are described in more detail below.

Capital Receipts

The Council has a programme of asset sales identified in its Capital Strategy and medium-term financial plan. However, these receipts are currently required to finance the existing approved capital programme, avoiding the requirement for any new

borrowing. Potential new assets for disposal would need to be identified as surplus and available for disposal in order to fund the construction of a new swimming facility. The Council could also undertake a review of the current Capital Programme with the option to remove already identified schemes from the programme thereby freeing up expected capital receipts for investment in a new swimming facility.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy allows Local Authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new residential development in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure needed as a result of the development. The levy is intended to fill the funding gaps that remain once existing sources of funding have been taken into account. The Planning Act 2008 defines infrastructure to include sporting and recreational facilities.

An assumption of CIL contributions of £1m from the wider Shrewsbury residential developments has been assumed included on the basis that projects would meet the criteria for this funding. This is untested and will be considered as part of the prioritisation methodology for CIL projects and will only be realised if it can be demonstrated that this project meets the key infrastructure requirements.

Sport England 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.

For the purpose of developing affordability rankings an assumption of a grant of £1.5m has been made on those options that would meet the funding criteria. This has yet to be agreed by Sport England and it is particularly unclear whether this funding would be available for a renovation of the Quarry as this option will not replace an ageing facility.

Partner Funding

The Council receives dedicated Capital Grant Allocations for specific services. Where service clients are the main users of the swimming facilities, an element of this funding could be used to support a new swimming facility. This would, however, need to be agreed through the grant allocation mechanisms for those services.

An assumption has been made that services will contribute £500k to the costs of a new build project. However, this has yet to be agreed by the services themselves.

Private Sector Investment

There may be a theoretical opportunity for the Council to seek an investment contribution into a new facility from the current operator. Opportunities would be dependent on discussions with the current Operator on the wider Shropshire approach to the development and management of the Council's Leisure Facilities, the procurement implications of any such option and the impact of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Within the current funding assumptions no figure has been included to reflect this, but it will be explored in more detail during the feasibility stage although it should be

recognised that this may not be a realistic, affordable and legally sound option without a further open market procurement.

Prudential Borrowing

Although public sector bodies can borrow at rates less than the private sector, the Council must satisfy itself that the increase in debt financing costs can remain affordable within the overall budget and that it is in line with the overall Medium Term Financial Plan. The need to reduce revenue costs going forward has been taken into consideration when reviewing the affordability of the different options.

2.3 Revenue Impact Assessment

In a subsequent revision to the main report Strategic Leisure Ltd provided details on the revenue impact of the development options. These calculations demonstrate the expected operational revenue impact of each development and this may have a benefit to Shropshire Council, as well as a direct benefit to the contractual operator of swimming provision because the terms of a variation with the current operator of the facilities envisages this as part of a revised contractual agreement.

Shropshire Council has a revenue budget of £296,792 (2016/17) for The Quarry Swimming Pool, including a £30k budget for repairs and maintenance. However, the average repairs and maintenance annual expenditure over the last three financial years has been £38,778.

Any deficit generated from the operation of the facility is borne by the operator and any operating surplus on the contract as a whole is shared in three parts, one of which is paid to the council.

From the revenue impact modelling carried out by Strategic Leisure Ltd., we can make assumptions around the future management fee requirement for the different options and this is described within table 3:

Table 3

Option	Description	2016/17 Management fee paid to the operator	Forecast Revenue Impact – (saving to the operator)	Assumed ongoing future management fee requirement	Notes
1A	Quarry Refurbishment	£266,792	£0	£266,792	
1B	Quarry Renovation	£266,792	£0	£266,792	
2	Quarry New Build	£266,792	(£165,815)	£100,977	
3A	Clayton Way New Build	£266,792	(£168,272)	£98,520	
3B	Ellesmere Road New Build	£266,792	(£168,272)	£98,520	
3C	Shrewsbury Sports Village New Build	£266,792	(£446,106)	£0	Possible additional 1/3rd

					surplus share on the contract as a whole
3D	Shrewsbury College New Build*	£266,792	(£168,272)	£98,520	

*Note that this figure is based on a prudent assumption that the revenue saving would be the lower of a range between a new build and a build at the Shrewsbury Sports Village site

Reference: Summary of swimming pool options - 2 Sept 2015

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

Table 3 suggests that there is likely to be a requirement for Shropshire Council to continue to provide a management fee to all of the proposed development options other than Option 3C, a new build at the Shrewsbury Sports Village.

The different options have been analysed in table 4 below to reflect an assumed 25 year project life cycle. For each option this table compares the full cost of borrowing, debt repayment and interest, over a 25 year period, less the expected management fee reduction and maintenance saving over the same period resulting in the total net surplus / (deficit) for the project.

Table 4

Option	Description	Total loan cost (25 years)	Management fee reduction (25 years)	Maintenance Saving (25 Years)	Total Surplus (Deficit)	Ranking
1A	Quarry Refurbishment	£3.516m	£0	£0	(£3.516m)	2
1B	Quarry Renovation	£17.153m	£0	£0.419m	(£16.734m)	7
2	Quarry New Build	£12.119m	£5.311m	£0.419m	(£6.389m)	6
3A	Clayton Way New Build	£11.566m	£5.390m	£0.419m	(£5.757m)	3
3B	Ellesmere Road New Build	£12.047m	£5.390m	£0.419m	(£6.238m)	4 (joint)
3C	Shrewsbury Sports Village New Build	£9.113m	£8.545m	£0.419m	(£0.149m)	1
3D	Shrewsbury College New Build	£12.047m	£5.390m	£0.419m	(£6.238m)	4 (joint)

We have ranked affordability based upon the return on investment that will be realised by Shropshire Council. From this we can conclude that all of the options will create an additional ongoing revenue liability for the Council for a 25 year period, although the Sports Village is the lowest.

But this is subject to the significant caveats set out below.

Whilst the Quarry refurbishment may theoretically be the second most affordable option there is an assumption that the Quarry would be sustainable for 25 years within current levels of repair and maintenance expenditure and that there are no significant additional revenue costs in repairing and maintaining the facility. There is also an assumption that the refurbished Quarry would meet current and continuing DDA issues as at present; the Quarry is currently not wholly accessible to people with disabilities.

If options for both a renovation of the existing Quarry site or a new build at the Quarry site are preferred there are additional potential financial and operational implications to the Council that have not been reflected in the calculations above including:

- The cost of suspending or terminating an element of the current contract with the operator in order to facilitate the closure of the Quarry Pool for the construction period.
- The cost of providing a temporary replacement pool for the period that the pool is required to close, if this is achievable. The Council has not tested the extent to which public and school swimming in Shrewsbury can be achieved during the time that the Quarry is closed for any of these options. Whilst it may be theoretically possible to manage any refurbishment and retain some public swimming at the Quarry during this process, if this is the preferred option, this will add cost and may not be possible because of the constrained nature of the site and health and safety considerations.

A costs estimate will be carried out as part of the proposed further more detailed feasibility work.

3.0 The Quarry Swimming & Fitness Centre

The original Quarry Pool (comprising 2 pools), located within the loop of the River Severn in the centre of Shrewsbury was opened to the public in 1864. The facility underwent extensive modernisation in 1968/69 when two additional pools and the spectator area were added. It underwent a major refurbishment in 1994; this included a new health & fitness suite, changing accommodation and the replacement of plant & equipment.

Today the Quarry Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre, amounting to 868 sq m of water area on several levels (Total = 898 sq m assuming that the main pool is 33.5m long but see comments below), comprises the following facilities:

- Quarry Pool – 33.3 m x 12.8 m with diving boards & seating (assessed as 31m within the needs assessment calculations to reflect the installation of permanent boom) 396.80 sq m
- Priory pool – 25.5 x 9.5 m 242.25 sq m
- Claremont Pool – 17 m x 9.5 m 161.5 sq m
- Teaching pool 10.5 m x 6.5 m 68.25 sq m
- Fitness suite, extended in 2009 - 37 station multi room gym layout, providing 17 cardiovascular machines in one room and 20 resistance training machines in another room.
- Training room
- Catering area
- Health suite

Table 5 shows that demand for swimming in Shrewsbury is significant with over 200,000 swims in the Quarry in 2015/16.

Table 5

	Quarry swimming centre attendance	Quarry fitness suite attendance	Total combined attendance
2005/6	291,523	74,948	366,471
2006/7	254,150	52,032	306,182
2007/8	275,310	53,262	328,572
2008/9	270,823	46,583	317,406
2009/10	293,091	53,387	346,478
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
2015/16	204,575	64,725	269,300

The Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre is the only public swimming pool facility available in the Shrewsbury area with Wem Swimming Pool, Wellington Swimming Pool (both 12 miles) and the Much Wenlock Leisure Centre Pool (15 miles) being the closest. At circa 900sqm the Quarry Pool makes up nearly half of the total water area available within Shrewsbury.

From 1st August 2012 the Council's leisure centres, including the Quarry pool have been operated by the Shropshire Community Leisure Trust, with Serco Leisure Ltd acting as their managing agent, under a 10 year contract which includes an option for the Council to agree a 5 year extension. The contract and associated leases were entered into with the current operator following an open market competitive process during 2011/2012. A subsequent Contract Variation enables the Council to vary the current arrangements to implement the approved option for future pool provision in Shrewsbury.

4.0 Background

Table 6 describes notable work carried out prior to recent consideration of future options for swimming provision in Shrewsbury.

Table 6

September 2007	Major remedial works amounting to approximately £300,000 were carried out by the former Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council to make the building safe for public use and to extend the life span of the current swimming pool for a 5 year period and until a replacement facility was built.
2007	Consultation with the public, clubs and schools; existing changing facilities and car parking identified as the major issues
2007	Torkildsen Barclay Leisure Consultants commissioned to undertake a 'Shrewsbury Swimming Facility Needs Assessment': concluded that, based on the demand and needs assessment, the ideal facility mix to meet the future swimming needs of Shrewsbury would be a 25m x 8 lane pool with longitudinal boom and floating floor able to accommodate county competitions and appropriate spectator provision, a diver / learner pool (10m x 10m) with floating floor, a leisure water area, a fitness and aerobic studio and ancillary accommodation.

	<p>The report concluded that although the proposed facility mix would reduce the supply of water space at the facility to 525 sq m (from 898 sq m), not in itself enough to meet Shrewsbury's theoretical demand of 790 sq m but given the other providers in the area there would still be sufficient water space both currently and for future scenarios.</p> <p>Reference: Shrewsbury Swimming Facility Needs Assessment, A Report to Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council, May 2007, Torkildsen Barclay</p>
2009	<p>Further needs assessment undertaken by Torkildsen Barclay Leisure Consultants; confirmed that all of the options proposed within the 2007 study would continue to meet and to satisfy demand within the centre's catchment. The assessment also provided a justification for a 50 station gym and aerobics facility at the replacement pool both in terms of latent demand and capacity.</p> <p>Reference: Shrewsbury Swimming Facility Needs Assessment Update, February 2009, Torkildsen Barclay</p>
2009	<p>Strategic Leisure undertook a county wide assessment of future indoor facility provision within a strategic assessment; confirms that a key focus should be on the provision of a new swimming facility in Shrewsbury as identified within the Torkildsen Barclay feasibility study.</p> <p>Reference: Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2009 - 2019 and Playing Pitch Strategy 2010 – 2020, Cabinet, 29 June 2011</p>
2011	<p>A Building Condition survey identified a requirement for a total of £666,609 works and repairs over a five year period. This includes over £200,000 for roofing repairs and £45,000 for the provision of a new generator. However, the building condition survey did not make a comprehensive assessment of the pool and all the services (an updated assessment was carried out in 2014, see 5.2).</p>
Summer 2012	<p>Following a procurement exercise the Shropshire Community Leisure Trust through their managing agents, Serco Leisure Ltd, were appointed contractor for the Council's leisure centres for ten years with the potential for a five year extension.</p>
30 July 2014	<p>Shropshire Council approved the recommendation to undertake detailed work on different options for swimming provision within Shrewsbury.</p> <p>Reference: New pool for Shrewsbury, Cabinet, 30 July 2014 http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/</p>
2015	<p>A Variation of the Contract with SCLT to enable the Council to implement the preferred option for future swimming provision in partnership with the current operator. This Variation has limitations.</p>

In developing options for future swimming provision in Shrewsbury the Council developed a vision and this was used to support the 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 were 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.

Reference: New pool for Shrewsbury, Cabinet, 30 July 2014

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

Swimming provision is well positioned to make a significant contribution to several key national and local agendas including supporting a healthy society, personalisation and helping children to reach their full potential.

The Local Sports Profile for Shropshire shows that swimming (along with the gym, cycling and athletics) is one of the most popular sport with 9.3% of adults over 16 years old participating at least once a month. It is also the sport that adults most want to do.

Reference: Local Sports Profile: Shropshire February 2016, Sport England

<https://www.sportengland.org/our-work/partnering-local-government/tools-directory/local-sport-profile-tool/>

5.0 Detailed location and facility mix options analysis

The Council has commissioned and carried out a range of work in support of a public consultation in 2015 on future options for swimming provision. This is summarised below.

5.1 Short-listing of potential sites for swimming provision

An initial identification 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. In evaluating the sites a range of factors were considered:

- Ability of users and staff to access the site and services
- Physical size of site including car parking
- Land ownership, difficulties with acquisition, title issues and timescale
- Ability of site option to deliver the services identified in the vision
- Site condition, ecological considerations and remediation costs
- Planning issues
- Revenue sustainability of the facility including ability to attract new users, potential to work alongside other community facilities and services in support of increased footfall and usage (co-location), scope for future development
- Energy sustainability
- Enhancing the public realm, stimulating economic regeneration, contributing to long-term social and community regeneration
- Housing growth
- Infrastructure requirements including utilities

- Delivery complications and implications (e.g. continuity of service, school access, competing with existing services, impact on budget of site acquisition or access provisions, impact of site on users of existing service)

From this initial exercise, the range of options were narrowed down against an evaluation matrix. The original criteria were revisited and cross referenced with the Councils detailed vision and requirements and then weighted before repeating the evaluation. Strategic Leisure Ltd. subsequently reviewed the shortlisting of sites and confirmed their agreement with the process undertaken.

Reference: Summary of swimming pool options - 2 Sept 2015

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

5.2 The Condition of the Quarry Pool

In September 2014 Shropshire Council commissioned 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 (amounting to £1,405,295, of which £923,564 were considered to be essential) were identified, including work to ceilings, roof, walls and cladding, furniture and fittings, floors and stairs, mechanical services, and redecoration and sanitary services.

Reference: Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre Condition Survey Summary, 2014

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

Reference: Summary of swimming pool options - 2 Sept 2015

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

5.3 Options analysis

Following the short-listing described in 5.1 a detailed study was undertaken by independent leisure specialists, Strategic Leisure Ltd., to consider the following short-listed options for swimming provision:

- 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

In the context of the Council's vision for swimming provision in Shrewsbury Strategic Leisure Ltd. worked alongside quantity surveyors and architects 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 the potential inclusion of diving facilities, a fun water area, and other pool configuration options.

In addition, the study considered the opportunity for 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.

Reference: Summary of swimming pool options - 2 Sept 2015
<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury//>

5.4 Learning from other areas

A number of local authorities that had recently built public swimming pools were visited to learn from their experiences:

- AT7 & XCEL, Coventry (also included discussion over the ongoing plans around the 50m pool in the City.)
- West Bromwich Leisure Centre
- Westminster Lodge, St Albans
- Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre, Rugby

Learning points included:

- The benefit of providing a 20 x 10m learner pool that facilitates club training and warm up / down due to its dimensions being easily incorporated into training regimes, e.g. 400m warm up = 20 lengths.
- The importance of providing a quality gym with the capacity for large user numbers at the same facility to maximise usage
- The popularity and importance of water confidence areas for children, families and people with disabilities
- The importance of appropriate retail space (e.g. swimming and fitness equipment) within the facility to maximise income
- The importance of café / refreshment facilities to maximise the length of user stay and income
- The quality and finish of the facility is extremely important
- The benefits of co-locating swimming with other sports facilities to increase participation across a range of activities, and make the facility more operationally sustainable

6.0 Key findings from the public consultation

6.1 Stakeholder liaison

Throughout the work to date there has been ongoing input from Energize the County Sports Partnership, the Amateur Swimming Association and Sport England within the Project Board.

The Council has also liaised with a number of stakeholder groups on a regular basis including:

- The Shropshire Disability Network - provides a collective voice for disabled people across Shropshire.
- The Pan Disability Forum – represents people with all types of disabilities including learning, physical, mental and sensory across Shropshire.
- The Shropshire Wheelchair Users Group - play a lead role in improving and refining service provision for wheelchair users as well as tackling wider issues of accessibility within the county.
- The Shrewsbury Access Group - considers all access issues for people with mobility problems, the elderly, disabled and parents with young children.
- The Northgate Swimming Club - operates at both Bridgnorth & Much Wenlock swimming pools and runs six clubs.

- The Shrewsbury Rotary Club - holds weekly luncheon meetings to help build lasting friendships and business relationships and fund raises for local and international charities.
- The Severn Loop Forum (formerly the Severn Loop Local Joint Committee) - hosted a series of presentations on the work looking at options for future swimming provision.
- The Shrewsbury Wide Local Joint Committee - hosted presentations on the work looking at options for future swimming provision.
- Shrewsbury Town Council
- The Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum - represents the views of clubs and some users.
- The Shrewsbury Business Improvement District - aims to improve the town centre in line with the priorities of the town's business community.

6.2 Shropshire Star polls

The outcomes of two polls run by the Shropshire Star in February 2015 and in June 2015 are shown in table 7.

Table 7

February 2015		June 2015	
Wash & go	5%	Refurbishment of Quarry Pool	12.01%
Major overhaul	24%	Renovation of Quarry Pool	10%
Rebuild on existing site	34%	New build on Quarry Site	32.31%
Rebuild elsewhere	37%	New build on land at Clayton Way	2.08%
		New build on land at Ellesmere Road	2.99%
		New build on land at Shrewsbury Sports Village	36.1%
		New build on land at Shrewsbury College	4.51%

6.3 Public consultation

A four month public consultation was launched on the 28th May 2015. In response to feedback received during the consultation and the availability of 2014/15 revenue figures for the Quarry the consultation period was subsequently extended by a month until the 30th October 2015.

The consultation was based on a concise web based summary supported by further detailed information available via links and access to a questionnaire.

Although the emphasis was placed on encouraging people to complete the survey on-line, alternative means were made available for people to have their say including:

- Hard copies of the consultation and survey available at Shrewsbury Library and the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre
- Staff at both venues were briefed on the consultation and were available to help people complete the questionnaire
- Access to computers to allow people to complete the survey at the Library and at the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Centre
- Direct contact points for people to discuss the consultation with Council officers: shrewsburyswimming@shropshire.gov.uk and 0345 678 9077
- Hard copies of the consultation and survey provided to groups upon request, e.g. the Shropshire Disability Network

- The offer of direct conversations with both individuals and groups

All of these alternatives were also explained during an interview with the West Shropshire Talking Newspaper.

The public consultation was extensively and frequently referenced and promoted within the media, by the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum, the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District, disability networks and others.

1,924 people took part in the online survey.

Independent detailed analysis of the consultation was carried out by industry experts, 4global. 4global concluded that the consultation process fulfilled research standards sufficiently to support robust findings. First preferences are described in table 8.

Table 8

Option	% of most preferred
Refurbishment of the Quarry	23.50%
New build on the Quarry site	22.89%
Upgrade of the Quarry	21.67%
New build on Shrewsbury Sports Village	16.54%
New build on Shrewsbury College London Road	13.17%
New build on Clayton Way	1.42%
New build on land at Ellesmere Road	0.81%

Combined, the Quarry options represent 68.06% of the most preferred responses with respondents' citing central location, accessibility, economic impact on the town centre and convenience as the main reasons for the Quarry preference. Learn to swim provision is the most important element of a swimming facility with proximity to public transport links and a timetable that caters for all also seen as important.

Reference: Shrewsbury Swimming Pool Consultation Analysis, 4global, March 2016
<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

6.4 The Councils response to the key findings from the consultation

It is possible to identify a number of key areas raised during the public consultation and these are detailed within **Appendix 1** together with a brief council response. The key areas of concern fall into the following broad areas:

- Proposed facilities mix - the capacity of the proposed two pools and whether this will meet future increases in demand, as well as the impact of moving swimming provision to an out of town location on how many people will go there and use the facilities on offer.
- Detailed revenue modelling - further work on the detailed financial modelling including the Quarry refurbishment and renovation options
- Town centre versus an edge of town facility - consideration of the economic, social and community impact of different locations.
- Accessibility, parking, transport and environmental impact - the impact of the location on accessibility and CO2 admissions and detailed consideration of parking availability and pricing in the different locations.
- What will happen to the Quarry Pool site if it is vacated - comments about possible alternative uses for the site.
- Alternative town centre sites and delivery models comments about the availability of other site options and consideration of alternative financing options.

7.0 Further work in support of the development of a preferred approach to future swimming provision within Shrewsbury

7.1 Assessment of need and recommended facility mix aligned to Shropshire Council's vision and priorities

Strategic Leisure Ltd. has updated the swimming and fitness "Needs Assessment" and the recommended facility mix originally carried out in 2015. This is included within **Appendix 2** and is summarised below. The aim of the needs assessment is to provide a robust evidence base for decisions taken on the future scale of swimming and fitness facilities required for Shrewsbury. In updating the Needs Assessment further stakeholder consultation was carried out with the ASA, Sport England, Serco, Shrewsbury University, Energize and the Quarry Swimming & Fitness Forum and these are fully reported on within Appendix 2. It is noteworthy that Serco Leisure, the operator's agent, would like to see a new build as this will be more efficient to operate. Serco favour the pool mix described below and have developed a swimming programme that accommodates existing usage plus the Quarry Forum's club use at Shrewsbury School, and provides increased Learn to Swim opportunities. However, it should be noted that Shropshire Community Leisure Trust at a Board meeting in 2015 voted to keep the pool at the Quarry site.

The assessment reaffirms the Councils vision and aims for swimming provision in Shrewsbury and this is described within table 9.

Table 9

A vision for new swimming provision	A new / refurbished 25 metre 8 lane pool with a learner pool, plus significant fitness provision
Priority aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational swimming • School use • Competition use • Learn to Swim programmes • Club use
Objectives for future swimming facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be modern, efficient and sustainable • Provide value for money • Link to other aquatic provision • Be fit for purpose • Reflect industry standards • Deliver learning and health opportunities

The analysis concludes that:

- There is scope to 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
- There is an undersupply of community accessible fitness facilities to meet demand, both now and in the future

It is noteworthy that the Sport England Facility Planning model highlights that the provision of town centre water space provides marginally more satisfied demand than

an out of town location, but that the latter better addresses the areas of deprivation in the north east of Shrewsbury.

From the conclusions described above the analysis recommends that the council develops the following overall facility mix:

- 8 lane x 25m pool
- 20m x 10m learner/training pool, with moveable floor; will expand provision for Learn to Swim (schools and community); creates more flexibility for aquatic clubs and overall programme; allows for increased demand as a result of population growth and increased participation; reduces pressure on new main pool).
- At least 100 sqm of fun/confidence water space
- 250 spectator seats (confirmed with ASA that this is sufficient for day to day needs; additional seating can be brought in for galas)
- 100 fitness stations
- 2 studios (ideally 3)
- Café and vending provision
- All appropriate facility infrastructure e.g. plant, offices, storage, first aid room, meeting room, changing rooms, toilets, inclusive access, on-site parking to meet planning and SE design guidance requirements

Note that the capital and revenue modeling referenced within this report and used to establish the affordability rankings are based on the facility mix set out in section 4. The financial modelling will be revisited and updated in any subsequent detailed feasibility work and in the light of the final confirmation of the facility mix and pool location.

Reference: Appendix 2: Shrewsbury Swimming and Fitness Assessment of Need, Strategic Leisure, June 2016

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

Reference: Summary of swimming pool options - 2 Sept 2015

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

Reference: Sport England Facility Planning Model, 2015

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

Reference: Appendix 1 within Appendix 2: Indicative Future Programme, Strategic Leisure, June 2016

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury/>

7.2 Evaluation and identification of preferred location

In determining which option best meets the Council's vision a detailed evaluation has been carried out based on all the available information and in particular on the basis of three questions:

1. Which options are deliverable and are the most affordable and sustainable - Is the project deliverable with respect to site conditions, etc.? Which is the most affordable and will it be sustainable, based on predicted throughput for 25 years?

2. Which options best meet the Council's vision and strategy for swimming provision – does the project address Council priorities through its outcomes? Can the community's preferences be met?
3. What are the social, environmental and economic impact and implications of the different options? Note that the Council has a duty under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to consider, at an early stage, whether and how it can secure social, environmental and economic outcomes through its procurement activity. The options appraisal gave prominence to this through allocating a significant proportion (20%) of the total scoring scheme to social, economic and environmental benefits. A more detailed understanding of the Social Value outcomes to be derived through the preferred option will be undertaken during the next steps of the project.

The detailed evaluation of the 7 different site locations / options is included within **Appendix 3** and is summarised within table 10.

Table 10 (all marks are weighted marks)

			1A Quarry refurbishment	1B Quarry renovation	2 Quarry New Build	3A Clayton Way New Build	3B Ellesmere Rd New Build	3C Shrewsbury Sports Village New Build	3D Shrewsbury College New Build
A	Deliverability and Affordability	50%							
A1	Site Constraints	10%	40	60	60	60	60	80	40
A2	Capital Costs – Construction	10%	70	10	30	40	40	50	40
A3	Revenue consequences	10%	0	0	70	70	70	90	70
A4	Affordability	20%	20	0	20	20	20	160	20
B	Meeting Council And Community Priorities	30%							
B1	Council Vision and Priorities	15%	30	75	120	75	75	135	120
B2	Community Preferences	15%	135	135	135	15	15	45	30
C	Social, Environmental And Economic Impact	20%							
C1	Social & Accessibility	8%	64	64	64	40	32	48	48
C2	Environmental Impact	4%	12	20	32	20	20	24	28
C3	Economic Impact	8%	48	56	72	24	24	48	48
	Total score		419	420	603	364	356	680	444
	Ranking		5	4	2	6	7	1	3

The evaluation concludes that the preferred option to improve existing swimming provision in Shrewsbury would be to provide new swimming provision at the Shrewsbury Sports Village followed by a new build at the existing Quarry site on the basis that:

- Significantly it is now more important than ever that capital investment in future swimming and fitness provision is affordable and that operational delivery is sustainable.
- It is recognised that within the public consultation there was an overwhelming preference to retain swimming provision at the Quarry and that the relocation of swimming to a new “edge of town facility” will raise a number of concerns; some of these are explored later within this report.
- Developing a new facility on the Quarry site will result in the closure of the existing facility for a minimum of 18 months and additional potential expense in providing temporary swimming provision. While a full renovation is based on a phased approach keeping some swimming provision open at all times may in practice be difficult.
- The Quarry site is a challenging site due to its location adjacent to a Grade II listed park, on a narrow one-way street, and closer to the flood plain. It is also a very tight site, which means provision of all recommended infra-structure (Sport England planning guidance, ASA guidelines) e.g. sufficient car parking, provision of disability and family friendly car parking spaces adjacent to a ground floor reception, inclusion of coach parking or at a minimum a turning circle, would be difficult to provide. The nature of the site means that any new facility could only be built, as at present, over a number of levels, which increases cost and may impact on user flow throughout the building.
- The Shrewsbury College site is available, but there are operational issues to resolve prior to any development. The demolition of existing sports facilities would be required and the identification of recreational and curriculum needs and their re-location during facility development would need to be considered and provided, which may be an additional project cost.
- The only sites where there is already community provision, and which could contribute to the Council’s vision to create a community hub, are the Shrewsbury Sports Village and the Shrewsbury College site.
- The Shrewsbury Sports Village is a flat site, which is already predominantly allocated to car parking. Whilst there would be a need for additional car parking given the existing parking challenges on site (evening and weekend use by sports teams), there is potential to re-landscape the site by removing the existing grass mound in front of the indoor bowls facility, and re-mark this for additional parking space. The netball/tennis courts at the back of the site also provide a potential location for additional car parking, as they could be potentially replaced elsewhere on site. There is plenty of room on site for coaches to park (mid-week day time), and to turn.
- At the Shrewsbury Sports Village site the construction of a new facility could take place whilst existing facilities remain open, albeit there would be a need to provide alternative access and egress routes to the building during various different construction phases. There would be no need to close the existing

facilities during construction, as the facilities are mainly to the rear of the existing building.

Reference: Appendix 3: Evaluation of different options, Strategic Leisure, June 2016
<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury//>

7.3 Social, Environmental and Economic considerations

The social, environmental and economic consequences of the Shrewsbury Sports Village (edge of town) and Quarry (centre of town) locations are considered in brief below. These considerations would need to be further understood and considered within any subsequent detailed feasibility work.

Social considerations

There are two new major housing developments planned for Shrewsbury to 2031. Whilst neither the Quarry nor the Shrewsbury Sports Village are in close proximity to these two proposed housing development sites, both new housing developments will have easy access to the ring road, off which the Shrewsbury Sports Village is sited.

The most deprived areas in Shrewsbury, with the greatest health needs, are to the north of the town centre close to the location of the Shrewsbury Sports Village. It is therefore likely that a new facility on that site will attract participation from those in these deprived areas including people who do not currently swim as the facility will be more accessible to them.

There is a new health centre adjacent to the Shrewsbury Sports Village site to which people travel already, and this proximity of other public services is likely to benefit participation levels, although this cannot be proven.

Accessibility considerations

The location for new swimming and fitness provision is important to ensuring that it is accessible, and will generate maximum usage, to benefit local residents, and contribute to health improvement within the local community.

There is currently one public transport service/route that would serve Shrewsbury Sports Village, the No 24 operated by Arriva from Shrewsbury town centre at a frequency of 1 bus every 20 minutes. This essentially provides connections for anyone travelling into Shrewsbury from anywhere in the County, where there is an existing public transport network.

The public is able to access the Quarry after a short walk from either the town centre or the bus station, depending on which direction the service is coming from by using one of several services.

So in summary, both locations have access to the same public transport network, with the Sports Village location it means a transfer to another bus from the town centre and so this site is less accessible by bus or on foot from the Town Centre. Public transport would need to be assessed in detail as part of any planning application.

Both the Quarry and Shrewsbury Sports Village are accessible by private transport. It is important to highlight that the majority of swimmers using the Quarry now drive (2016 FPM Report 83.9% of satisfied swimming demand in Shrewsbury is from users

travelling by car), and more people walk to swimming facilities in Shrewsbury (not just the Quarry - 8.98%) than travel by public transport (7.13%).

The Shrewsbury Sports Village is located on a key route into, and out of the town centre, which makes it very accessible for people working in Shrewsbury, travelling in and out for education, or for other purposes such as tourism, retail etc. It is also relatively close to major edge of town retail parks which attract significant use, predominantly by those with cars.

Parking is limited at the Quarry but there is nearby access to a number of public car parks providing pay and display parking.

In addition to private and public transport, accessibility requires consideration of the ability to cycle or walk to a site. Cycling is possible to both the Quarry and the Sports Village site; onsite cycle storage could be provided at both sites, although due to space this would be more constrained at the Quarry. The Sports Village is already on the cycling network around the town.

The re-assessment of need report highlights that existing school users are close to both the Quarry and Shrewsbury Sports Village sites; only 6 schools out of 29 would be significantly disadvantaged in terms of distance if a new facility were not developed at the Quarry site and 24 out of 29 would find it a more convenient location. There are options available to mitigate this and also reduce time and travel; many new sports facilities provide some multi-purpose space to enable schools to bring 2 or 3 classes to swim and facilitate lessons for 1 or 2 classes whilst the other is swimming. This approach is both time and cost effective for schools and reduces negative environmental impact.

All new developments are subject to a travel impact assessment as part of the detailed planning application. In relation to a new community leisure facility, the need for public transport routes to be developed to provide regular access to the facility would be a planning consideration and likely requirement of any successful application.

In this context the high levels of car ownership across Shropshire are also relevant; as a very rural area, car ownership is high at 85%. Given the need to mitigate negative environmental impact from car use generally, it would be beneficial to locate any new leisure provision close to where people are already travelling for work, education, medical services, or shopping. Both the Quarry site and the Shrewsbury Sports village site fulfil at least some of these criteria.

Accessibility also relates to the ability to take part in physical activity opportunities at the site. The Quarry, even if re-developed as a new facility, would offer swimming and fitness – fitness suite and studios. The Shrewsbury Sports Village already offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor facilities; therefore, adding a pool and additional fitness stations and studios to the existing mix would enhance the community leisure offer, and provide increased participation opportunities. This better meets the Vision set out in the Council's Health and Well-Being agenda, and is operationally more sustainable, as usage will derive from a wider and more varied community base, i.e. people who want to play football, cycle, climb as well as those who want to use the fitness suite or pool.

Environmental considerations

Clearly it is desirable that a new development does not increase negative environmental impact, and wherever possible mitigates against increased traffic congestions, journeys, pollution, etc.

The environmental impact of a new development is lessened if users can access provision as part of a journey they are already making. Clearly those travelling to use the Quarry Park would have easy access to any new development on the Quarry site. Equally those already in the town centre would have good walking access to any new provision, once it was operational.

Economic considerations

The location of a leisure facility will have beneficial economic impact, both in and out of town centre, on a local area.

In a town centre location there is more likely to be benefit for car parking revenue, local shops, cafes and restaurants, although the degree to which these latter benefit is dependent on the times that people swim, whether they use the café in a new facility, and whether they combine swimming/fitness participation with a shopping or leisure visit.

There is no existing hard evidence about the economic benefit of the Quarry to Shrewsbury town centre, although anecdotally, it is clear there is some. Equally there is no hard evidence that the Shrewsbury Sports Village does not benefit the town overall, or the town centre although again anecdotally one would expect a better economic impact derived from a town centre location. As an edge of town location, the Shrewsbury Sports Village provides an accessible venue, with free parking, unlike the Quarry which is chargeable.

Users of the Shrewsbury Sports Village may well travel into the town centre before or after using the facility; any new development with public transport direct to the site from the town centre is likely to encourage visits into Shrewsbury, although this could result in parking issues, if cars are left for an excessive period at the Shrewsbury Sports Village site.

The development of a new leisure facility will attract more visitors to a town, irrespective of its location, even if they only use the facility once. A facility capable of hosting events will also attract more visitors to an area, irrespective of its location as participants attend for the event, not the location, but spectators will come for an event and then make use of the local facilities – shops, restaurants, hotels, other attractions etc. (ASA research 2015)

8.0 An alternative approach

In recent months, and following the Council's statement within its Medium Term Financial Plan that leisure services face significant cutbacks or in the worst case scenario closure, external organisations have shown an interest in the development of alternative business models that would support on-going swimming provision from the existing Quarry site. In particular the following suggestions have been received from the Shrewsbury BID and the Quarry Swimming & Fitness Forum:

Shrewsbury BID 14.06.16

“Following the publication of the Cabinet report outlining a recommendation, Shrewsbury BID will work with Shropshire Council to understand further the

evaluation criteria considered and to work within the timescales outlined (i.e. within 12 months).

The Shrewsbury BID will be working with a number of interested partners to present further options for keeping the pool in its current town centre location. The focus for the work will be on creating an overview paper outlining a strategy for the Quarry Pool and Fitness Centre and reasons for further investigation into the opportunities the site offers. Areas which will be included in the work include:

- An outline of infrastructure and facility analysis with suggestions for commensurate/affordable upgrades or improvements that could be made in a cost effective and efficient way
- An outline business case highlighting a sustainable approach to running the Pool in its current location
- A vision for the pool highlighting its important role in the town's broader leisure offer, and encouraging a sustainable mix of fitness, recreation, play and outdoor activity in the Quarry Park and town centre"

Quarry Swimming & Fitness Forum 21.06.16

"The Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum have continued to support keeping the swimming facilities in the town supplying up to date facts and figures to Shropshire Council either at meetings or through documentation.

The QSFF strongly believe the evidence from Strategic Leisure and the recent consultation shows no increase in swimming by moving the pool out of town contrary to the Council's vision. Our concerns are that a decision is being made without a feasibility study, business plans, or Maintenance plan on the present site. 68% of the people that took part in the consultation want the pool to remain in the town.

The Forum will continue to work with Shropshire"

Shrewsbury Town Council has also indicated that they will continue to support the development of options for ongoing swimming provision at the existing town centre location.

In considering alternative business models, it is important to note that Shropshire Council is not considering alternative management models but rather creative approaches to investment that support improved affordability. In section 3 we outline the existing contractual arrangements for the management of the pool by the Shropshire Community Leisure Trust.

9.0 Legal Comments

Outline legal advice is attached at **Appendix 4**. This has been prepared for Shropshire Council by its external legal advisors, Léonie Cowen & Associates. It is anticipated that further and more detailed advice will be available to support further reports to Cabinet and that this advice will also be made available to any parties who have indicated that they wish to have the opportunity of developing any alternative proposals.

Reference: Appendix 4: Outline Legal Advice

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/swimming-provision-in-shrewsbury//>

10.0 Next steps

If Cabinet confirms and approves in principle that the preferred location for the replacement of existing swimming provision (with new swimming provision) is the Shrewsbury Sports Village, and before finally taking a decision on the preferred option, it is proposed that the Council compares the outcome of its own further work with the outcome of the work carried out by any third parties including the Shrewsbury BID, Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum and Shrewsbury Town Council.

It is recommended that other parties including the Shrewsbury BID, Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum and Shrewsbury Town Council are given an opportunity for up to 12 months to develop alternative proposals to retain swimming provision on the existing site which will be compared to the outcome of the work to be carried out by the Council. Any alternatives will need to meet the Council's key objectives referenced within the evaluation criteria described within this report, including for the pool to be affordable and to support participation in the future.

A further Cabinet report will recommend the process to be followed by the Council and any third parties including the timetable, terms of reference and other supporting information to be provided to any parties who wish to develop alternative proposals.

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 2014

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

Shrewsbury Swimming Pool update, Environment & Services Scrutiny, 22 June 2015

Shrewsbury Swimming Pool update, Environment & Services Scrutiny, 30 November 2015

Shrewsbury Swimming Pool update, Environment & Services Scrutiny, 13 June 2016
ESIA, April 2016

Cabinet Member:

Cllr Stuart West, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Libraries and Culture

Local Members:

Cllr Andrew Bannerman, Cllr Peter Adams, Cllr 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 Nic Laurens, Cllr Kevin Pardy, Cllr Mal Price, Cllr Keith Roberts, Cllr John Tandy, Cllr Dean Carroll & Cllr Amy Leibich

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Main areas of concern and the Council's response

Appendix 2: Shrewsbury Swimming and Fitness Assessment of Need, Strategic Leisure, June 2016

Appendix 3: Evaluation of different options

Appendix 4: Outline Legal Advice