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**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport – Councillor Caan

17<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**Ward(s) affected:**

Sherborne

**Title:**

Petition – Indoor bowls re-provision – Identify an alternative site for indoor bowls in Coventry

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

A petition and e-petition were received in March 2018 requesting that the Council reassess and identify a more suitable and more affordable site for the re-provisioning of a six rink indoor bowls development than at the Avenue Bowls Club site in Coundon. The petitions, containing a total of 242 signatures, sponsored by Councillor Kelly, state:

“Coventry City Council takes action by reassessing and identifying a more suitable affordable alternative site for the proposed six rink indoor bowls club development at the Avenue bowls club site on Gaveston Road, Coundon, based on no consultation with affected residents and the confirmed lack of consultation performed by the Council in identifying the most suitable site, with either Bowls England or the English Indoor Bowling Association.”

In addition, a further petition and two further e-petitions have been submitted requesting:

“Coventry City Council to take positive action by consulting with the current Indoor Bowls players at the current Sports Centre facility on Fairfax Street, Coventry. The aim being to establish a more suitable affordable venue within the City Centre boundary, to allow players to continue to benefit from a single transport link, instead of the proposed development at Avenue Bowls Club site on Gaveston Road, Coundon, based on the fact there was no consultation with members of possible alternative venues” – 118 signatures, sponsored by Councillor Kelly.

And:

“Coventry City Council reject plans to build a new indoor facility at the Avenue Bowls Club site on Gaveston Road, Coundon. The land locked nature of the site would bring it into close proximity with existing dwellings and create safety problems when accessing the site. A new facility would lead to increased traffic and lead to on street parking problems. – 228 signatures, sponsored by Councillor Bailey.

As these petitions relate to planning matters, it is proposed that they be referred to Planning Committee for consideration when a planning application for the site is submitted.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport is recommended to:

1. Consider the petitions and e-petitions submitted, requesting the Council to reassess and identify a more suitable and affordable site for the proposed re-provisioning of a six rink indoor bowls development to the Avenue Bowls Club, and note the petitioners concerns.
2. Note that a feasibility study into the 18 other sites suggested by local residents has been undertaken and shows The Avenue Bowls Club to be the most suitable and affordable site for indoor bowls relocation within the agreed set criteria.
3. Refer the petitions and e-petitions that relate to planning matters to Planning Committee to be considered as part of the determination of the relevant planning application

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix One - Sites Feasibility Study  
Appendix Two – Equality and Consultation Analysis

**Background papers:**

None

**Other Useful Documents:**

The following paper is posted for reference on the Coventry City Council website at:  
<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=124&MId=11479&Ver=4>

1. Cabinet Paper – Re-provision of Coventry’s Indoor Bowls Facility (Cabinet 9 January 2018, Council 16 January 2018)

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

**Report title:**

Petition – Indoor bowls re-provision – Identify an alternative site for indoor bowls in Coventry

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1. Whilst no decision has been taken to close Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre (CSLC), it is anticipated that a programme of public leisure re-provision would in time see the closure of the Centre, which in 2014 was noted to be no longer considered fit for purpose. Any such decision would result in the closure of the indoor bowls facility at CSLC, which is currently operationally managed by Coventry Sports Trust (CST).
- 1.2. In January 2018, Coventry City Council approved the addition of £2.05million to the capital programme for 2018/19 onwards for the development of a new six rink indoor bowls facility at The Avenue Bowls Club in Coventry.
- 1.3. A petition and e-petition totalling 242 signatures has been received requesting the Council reassess this decision and identify a more suitable affordable alternative site for the new indoor bowls rink. The petition is supported by Councillor Lynnette Kelly.
- 1.4. The petition advises:
- “We the undersigned ask Coventry City Council to take action by reassessing and identifying a more suitable affordable alternative site for the proposed six rink indoor bowls club development at the Avenue Bowls Club site on Gaveston Road, Coundon, based on no consultation with affected residents and the confirmed lack of consultation performed by the Council in identifying the most suitable site, with either Bowls England or the English Indoor Bowling Association.
- 1.5. Officers have been engaging with a group of the petitioners and at their request carried out further feasibility work into 18 alternative sites suggested by the group based on an agreed set criteria of (i) Appropriateness of Site (ii) Affordability (iii) Governance (iv) Operational Management and (v) Commercial Return / Sustainability.
- 1.6. Initial feasibility work (detailed in Table One) discounted fourteen of the sites on the basis of appropriateness of site and capital costs falling within the Councils affordability envelope for the project.

Table One

<b>Location</b>	<b>Appropriateness of Site</b>	<b>Affordability / Capital Cost</b>
Alvis Bowls Club	Y	N
Corley Bowls Club	Y	N
Highway Bowls Club	Y	N
Jaguar Bowls Club	N	N/A
Lime Tree Bowls Club	N	N/A
War Memorial Park	Y	N
Old Coventrians Bowls Club	Y	N
Potters Green	N	N/A
Spencer Park (Albany)	Y	N
Stoke Bowls Club	N	N/A
Standard Bowls Club Triumph	N	N/A
Three Spire's Bowling Club	N	N/A
Walsgrave Bowls Club	Y	N
Wolvey Bowling Club	N	N/A

- 1.7. The other option proposed by the group of petitioners in relation to locating the six lane indoor bowls rink on an existing public leisure site was considered and discounted as part of the original feasibility in relation to the January 2018 Cabinet Report.
- 1.8. Further more detailed feasibility work was undertaken on the four remaining sites – Dunlop, Sphinx Sports and Social Club, Coundon Social Club and Copsewood Sports and Social Club. The results of this work are shown in the feasibility study report (Appendix One). The report demonstrates that when all factors are considered, The Avenue Bowls Club is still the most suitable location.
- 1.9. Consultation has taken place with the English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA) on the feasibility work and the EIBA support The Avenue as the preferred location for indoor bowls provision in Coventry.
- 1.10. A further e-petition with 118 signatures has been received seeking consultation with the existing Indoor Bowls players at the Sports Centre facility with the aim of finding a city centre facility with single transport links . The petition is supported by Councillor Kelly and requested:
 

“Coventry City Council to take positive action by consulting with the current Indoor Bowls players at the current Sports Centre facility on Fairfax Street, Coventry. The aim being to establish a more suitable affordable venue within the City Centre boundary, to allow players to continue to benefit from a single transport link, instead of the proposed development at Avenue Bowls Club site on Gaveston Road, Coundon, based on the fact there was no consultation with members of possible alternative venues”
- 1.11. A petition and e-petition have also been submitted requesting that plans be rejected for the proposed facility at the Avenue Bowls Club site on Gaveston Road due to the landlocked nature of the site. The petition is supported by Councillor Bailey and asks that:
 

“Coventry City Council reject plans to build a new indoor facility at the Avenue Bowls Club site on Gaveston Road, Coundon. The land locked nature of the site would bring it into close proximity with existing dwellings and create safety problems when accessing the site. A new facility would lead to increased traffic and lead to on street parking problems.”
- 1.12. As the petitions in 1.10 and 1.11 relate to planning matters, it is proposed that these petitions be referred for consideration by the Planning Committee when a planning application for the facility is submitted.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

Eighteen sites were considered for indoor bowls provision in Coventry and the Avenue Bowls Club is recommended as the most suitable location.

### **2.1. Option 1 - The provision of a six rink indoor bowls facility at The Avenue Bowls Club (Recommended)**

- 2.1.1. The proposal for the development of an Indoor bowls facility at The Avenue Bowls Club is supported by the existing and proven, strong and sustainable Club governance, with a sustainable business plan that will deliver an on-going annual rental income back to the Council.
- 2.1.2. The proposed facility mix for the indoor bowls facility at The Avenue Bowls Club is as follows:

- six rink indoor bowls facility
- male and female changing
- office accommodation
- first aid room
- Changing Places toilet
- connecting foyer

2.1.3. Locating the Indoor Bowls Facility at The Avenue Bowls Club will consolidate an indoor and outdoor bowls offer on one site, as well as offering 12-month access to indoor bowls provision, which would benefit those who prefer to bowl indoor rather than outdoor during the summer season and further contributes to the sustainability of the business plan.

2.1.4. The proposed development at The Avenue Bowls Club will significantly enable the development and enhancement of facilities designed to support and encourage growth in a range of forms of participation in bowls across the city (e.g. junior leagues / regional competitions/ casual bowling / health programmes) within a strategic, city-wide development approach to key sports and public leisure facilities.

2.1.5. It is proposed that the petitions outlined in paragraphs 1.10 and 1.11 above, relating to planning matters be referred to the Planning Committee for consideration.

## **2.2 Option 2 – To recommend a reversal of the Council’s decision to re-provide the six rink indoor bowls facility at the Avenue Bowls Club (Not Recommended)**

2.2.1. The feasibility study demonstrates that the capital costs of the other options considered within the feasibility report are not within the Council’s current affordability envelope for the project. The relocation of indoor bowls to the Avenue Bowls Club meets the Council’s set criteria and can be delivered within the overall affordability envelope for the project.

## **2.3 Option 3 - Do nothing (not recommended)**

2.3.1 The closure of the existing indoor bowls facility at CSLC with no plan for re-provisioning would mean bowlers travelling outside the city during the indoor season. The nearest indoor bowls rinks are Solihull (17 miles) Birmingham (19 miles), Rugby (13 miles) and Tamworth (21 miles).

2.3.2 The local Coventry bowls leagues would no longer have a home venue resulting in the cancellation of all local league fixtures. In addition, casual indoor bowling on a pay and play basis could no longer be offered within the city.

2.3.3 Travel time of an average of 30 minutes to each venue, increased cost and limited rink time available would potentially result in a reduction in participation in indoor bowls and further negatively contribute to Coventry’s Active Lives and inactivity levels for age 55+.

## **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

3.1 Officers have been engaging with a number of petitioners regarding alternative site locations as considered in the feasibility study.

3.2 Discussions have taken place with the National Governing Body for bowls, EIBA, who support the proposed relocation of indoor bowls provision to The Avenue Bowls Club and acknowledge that there is no other feasible alternative site that meets the agreed set criteria.

3.3 The board of the City of Coventry Indoor Bowls Club have been consulted on the results of the feasibility and also support the proposed relocation of indoor bowls provision to The Avenue Bowls Club.

3.4 Further consultation will take place when the planning application is submitted.

#### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

To enable the feasibility work on the 18 sites suggested by local people to take place, there has been some delay to the original programme. If approved, a planning application for The Avenue Bowls Club will be submitted in January 2019.

#### **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

##### **5.1 Financial implications**

There are no financial implications of the recommendation to note the results of the feasibility study. The capital cost for an indoor rink at The Avenue Bowls Club was approved by full Council on 16 January 2018.

Should any of the key considerations that are to be reviewed result in a change in the proposals regarding the provision of facilities, a further report will need to go to Cabinet to consider the financial implications.

##### **5.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications as a consequence of this report. This matter is dealt with in accordance with the Council's petition procedure rules for dealing with petitions from the public, which is contained within Part 3 of the Council's constitution.

#### **6. Other implications**

##### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?**

6.1.1 Healthier, independent lives – Public leisure facilities play a vital role in addressing social challenges, promoting active lifestyles, increasing physical activity, reducing isolation and improving outcomes for individuals and communities. Vision Aim 1 of the Sports Strategy sets the ambition “to develop a more active, inclusive and vibrant Coventry through positive experiences in sport”. Through encouraging and supporting engagement in regular sport and/or active recreation, the Strategy aims to positively influence and contribute to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the residents of Coventry. In particular, public leisure facilities and their operation have a key role to play in supporting the Council to deliver its public health objectives, directly supporting action to address priorities within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the city.

##### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

None

##### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

None

##### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

An Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) for indoor bowls provision to be relocated to The Avenue Bowls Club was considered as part of the Cabinet Report in January 2018. The ECA showed that the proposal would have a positive impact on age and

disability. Feedback from key stakeholders and the National Governing Body for bowls has been supportive and no equalities concerns have been raised. The ECA document can be found in the appendices (Appendix Two).

## 6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

6.5.1 As stated in the January 2018 Cabinet report, The Avenue Bowls Club currently manage the environmental aspects of the existing site internally. The Council would therefore ask the Avenue Bowls Club to oversee and manage / mitigate the environmental impact of the proposed project through the pre-construction, construction and operational phases.

6.5.2 Construction - would be undertaken in accordance with Secured By Design principles. Modern construction materials would be utilised and would present a significantly lesser impact on the environment than materials that were historically used. Site Waste Management techniques would be utilised and off-site manufacture would be prioritised wherever possible. Local suppliers would be prioritised where appropriate and local specialised sub-contractors and labour sources would also be utilised, wherever possible. If approved, the demolition and disposal of building materials from the affected areas of the existing Avenue Bowls Club would require an approved risk management and methodology strategy.

## 6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

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Julie Fairbrother	Communications Manager	People	22/11/2018	27/11/2018
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Steve Thomas	Finance Business Partner	People	22/11/2018	22/11/2018
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Oluremi Aremu	Major Projects Lead Lawyer	Place	22/11/2018	26/11/2018
David Cockroft	Director of City Services and Development	Place	22/11/2018	28/11/2018
Councillor K. Caan	Cabinet Member (Public Health and Sport)		30/11/2018	30/11/2018

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