

# The Cabinet Agenda

**Wednesday 27 May 2020 at 3.30pm in Executive Room 1 and 2 at  
Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

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[The Cabinet - 27 May 2020](#)

**This agenda gives notice of items to be considered in private as required by Regulations 5 (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.**

- 1. Apologies**  
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2. Minutes**  
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2020 as a correct record.
- 3. Additional Items of Business**  
To determine whether there are any additional items of business arising which should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.
- 4. Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations of interest from members relating to any item on the agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct and/or S106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

## **Public Items**

- 5. Brandhall Golf Course – Potential Options for Future Use**  
To consider feedback and approve proposals for the future of Brandhall Golf Course.

6. **Children's Centre Contracts**  
To approve children's centre contracts.
7. **Soil Sack Replacements**  
To award a contract relating to soil sack replacement to various properties.
8. **Minutes of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.**  
To note the minutes of the Committee held on 26 February 2020.

**David Stevens**  
**Chief Executive**

Sandwell Council House  
Freeth Street  
Oldbury  
West Midlands

**Distribution:**

Councillor Y Davies (Chair);  
Councillor Crompton (Statutory Deputy Leader);  
Councillor Ali (Deputy Leader);  
Councillor Millard (Deputy Leader);  
Councillors Hadley, Shaeen, Taylor and Underhill.

Contact: [democratic\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)

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## The Cabinet

**Wednesday 6 May 2020 at 15:30 at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

- Present:** Councillor Y Davies (Chair);  
Councillors Ali, Crompton, Hadley, Millard, Shaeen,  
Taylor and Underhill.
- In attendance:** Councillors Allcock, E M Giles, L Giles, Padda, Rollins  
and Singh.
- Officers:** David Stevens (Chief Executive), Alan Caddick (Housing  
and Communities), Alison Knight (Executive Director –  
Neighbourhoods), Rebecca Maher (Head of Finance),  
Lisa McNally (Director – Public Health),  
Elaine Newsome (Service Manager – Democracy),  
Sue Stanhope (Interim Director – Human Resources),  
Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic Services Manager),  
Surjit Tour (Director of Law and Governance and  
Monitoring Officer) and Chris Ward (Director – Education,  
Skills and Employment).

21/20 **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair reported that in accordance with the 2020 Coronavirus Regulations, the meeting was being held virtually to facilitate attendance and enable the consideration of important matters during the current COVID-19 situation, i.e. all members of the Committee joining in remotely were now able to contribute and vote on any matter.

Due to technical issues, the meeting was not being broadcast live but would be made available for members of the public to access after the meeting.

22/20 **Apology for absence**

Members noted the apology of Councillor Moore, Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board.

23/20 **Minutes of Meetings**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.



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### 24/20 **Additional Business**

There were no additional items of business to consider.

### 25/20 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared at the meeting.

### 26/20 **Consultation Feedback and Future Development of Moor Lane**

Approval was sought to close Manifoldia Grange and Holly Grange extra care facilities and to the transfer of tenants to the new Moor Lane Extra Care development, or alternate extra care services by February 2021 or a later date if the Moor Lane build was delayed due to the developing Covid-19 situation.

It was anticipated that Council employed staff teams currently working at Manifoldia Grange and Holly Grange would be relocated to the new Moor Lane development by February 2021 and approval was sought to the proposed staffing structure.

A further report would be submitted detailing the proposed future for the sites at Manifoldia Grange and Holly Grange, as the future of these sites would need to be considered within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the closure of Manifoldia and Holly Grange and the transfer of tenants to Moor Lane, or alternative extra care accommodation within the Borough, by February 2021 ( or a later date if the Moor Lane build is delayed due to the developing Covid-19 situation) be approved;
- (2) that the transfer of affected Council staff members at Manifoldia and Holly Grange to Moor Lane by February 2021 (or a later date if the Moor Lane build is delayed due to the developing Covid-19 situation) be approved;
- (3) that the revised staffing structure for extra care staff, as set out in the Appendix now submitted, be approved as the basis for further consultation with employees and trade unions.

27/20

### **Schools Capital Programme 2020/21 – 2022/23**

Consideration was given to proposals to undertake interim works to prepare sites at three schools for respective major construction works as follows:-

- a new stand-alone classroom block at Bristnall Hall Academy; Phase 3 Q3 Academy Langley, which will see completion of the 1,500 place secondary school;
- Phase 2 West Bromwich Collegiate Academy, completion of the new 750 place secondary school.

The preparatory works would support the statutory provision of 990 new secondary school places by September 2021.

The Chair of the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board welcomed the proposals and in response to questions raised in relation to consultation with local businesses and alternative arrangements in the event of Wilmott Dixon going into administration, the Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life confirmed that:-

- a local consultation strategy was being discussed with Wilmott Dixon who would co-ordinate activities of all its sub-contractors. The Authority had previously delivered a number of school projects with the company and advance notice through the resident newsletters had worked well, however the Project Team would ensure concerns were noted to ensure no issues arose;
- the Construction West Midlands framework had offered the opportunity to engage with contractors much more quickly than previous projects. During the current situation they had continued to work, adopting new safety measures, and their financial viability was regularly monitored through the framework that would alert the Authority to any early signs of failure. The Council had a degree of protection through the framework to re-engage an alternative contractor. In the worst case scenario of going into administration, the Council would have to consider temporary accommodation arrangements whilst a new contractor was appointed.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the funding of Enabling Works at Bristnall Hall Academy, Bristnall Hall Lane, Oldbury B68 9PA; Q3 Academy Langley, Moat Road, Oldbury B68 8EA and West Bromwich Collegiate Academy, Kelvin Way, West Bromwich B70 7JW be approved, as part of the Schools Capital Programme 2020/21 - 2022/23, funded from the Council's balance of Basic Need resources;

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- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, the remaining £533,376 Basic Need funding be retained to support the completion of construction works at all three schools once a government announcement on Basic Need funding has been made for 2021/22 and 2022/23, and a further report has been submitted to Cabinet to approve additional expenditure;
- (3) that in connection with Resolution (1) and (2) above, the Director – Education, Skills and Employment award a contract to Willmott Dixon Construction Limited to deliver the Enabling Works packages, in conjunction with the Executive Director - Resources, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life, subject to meeting the criteria;
- (4) that the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer enter into any legal agreements on terms agreed by the Director – Education, Skills and Employment, as required, to allow building works to be completed at each proposed site.

28/20

### **Local Transport Settlement 2020/21 – Sandwell Allocation**

Cabinet received details of the local transport resources allocated to Sandwell for 2020/21. The funds allocated from the local transport settlement comprised the majority of the Council's capital programme of minor works, highway and bridge maintenance.

Approval was now sought to the allocation of funds to specific categories of projects.

In view of the decrease in the provision of transport funding, the Leader was of the view that post covid-19, all authorities in the West Midlands should be requesting increased transport funding to enable transport to be fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that details of the allocation of resources, as confirmed by the West Midlands Combined Authority in January 2020 for Integrated Transport and Local Highway Maintenance Block funding, be noted;

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- (2) that the following programme of minor works, highways, bridges and street lighting maintenance works for 2020/21 be approved;

Minor Works Programme	Funds 2020/21 £
Major Schemes Development (Ring Fenced)	220,000
Local Area Safety Schemes	115,000
Local Safety Schemes	150,000
Safer Routes to School	125,000
Vulnerable Users	250,000
Demand Management	100,000
Traffic Calming	100,000
Major Route Signing	60,000
Named Schemes Over £250k.	356,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,476,000</b>

Maintenance Programme	Funds 2020/21 £
Carriageway Maintenance – Needs Formula	1,936,000
Carriageway Maintenance – Incentive Fund	538,000
Carriageway Maintenance – Pothole Action Fund	159,000
Bridges – Needs Formula	516,000
Street Lighting – Needs Formula	130,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,285,000</b>

- (3) that the funding pressures relating to highway maintenance resulting from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on supporting income sources, and the potential implications of any long-term economic pressures on Central Government funding in future years be noted.



29/20

### **Bleakhouse Junior School and Warley Infant School – Proposed Closure and Expansion**

Following consideration of the outcome of Stage 1 statutory consultation undertaken on a proposal to close Warley Infant School and expand Bleakhouse Junior School, both located in Bleakhouse Road, Oldbury, approval was sought to the publication of a Statutory Proposal to close Warley Infant School on 31 August 2020, and expand the age range of Bleakhouse Junior School from 8-11 years to 3-11 years with effect from 1 September 2020. This would enable the amalgamation of two twinned schools in Oldbury to form a 420 statutory place primary school, with a 26 full time equivalent place Nursery.

Whilst the proposal was welcomed by the Chair of the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board, regular consultation and engagement should be undertaken on the status of the project.

**Agreed** that having taken the results of consultation into account, approval is given to:-

- (1) the publication of a Statutory Proposal to:-
  - i) formally close Warley Infant School, Bleakhouse Road, Oldbury B68 9DS; and
  - ii) increase the age range of Bleakhouse Junior School, Bleakhouse Road, Oldbury B68 9DS from the ages of 8-11 years old to 3-11 years old to accommodate the displaced pupils from Warley Infant School;
- (2) subject to no objections being raised during the statutory representation period for the Statutory Proposal as referred to in 1 above, authorise the Director – Education, Skills and Employment to make a final decision on proposal for the prescribed alterations at Warley Infant School and Bleakhouse Junior School, Bleakhouse Road, Oldbury B68 9DS, in conjunction with Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life; and
- (3) in the event that any objections are raised during the statutory representation period for the Statutory Proposal, a report is submitted to the Cabinet with full details of representations received to inform a final decision on the proposal.

30/20

**Care Home Fees – Older People 2020/21**

Approval was sought to the care homes fees for older people for 2020/21.

**Agreed** that the following care home fees for older people for 2020/21, calculated in accordance with the agreed model, to be effective from 1 April 2020 be approved and that the Director of Adult Social Care communicate this to the relevant providers and implement the fee increase.

	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Dementia Residential</b>	<b>Nursing</b>	<b>Dementia Nursing</b>
	<b>£ /week</b>	<b>£ /week</b>	<b>£ /week</b>	<b>£ /week</b>
<b>2019/20 Fees</b>	436.28	491.04	599.06	606.74
<b>Increase in SMBC Fees</b>	19.62	22.06	16.48	16.75
<b>Change in 2020/21 NHS RNC</b>	N/A	N/A	Not announced based on 2019/20 rates*	
<b>Notional 2020/21 fee including RNC contribution*</b>	<b>455.90</b>	<b>513.10</b>	<b>615.54</b>	<b>623.52</b>
<b>Movement in SMBC Element of the Fee</b>	4.50%	4.49%	3.80%	3.80%

\* The NHS Registered Nursing Care (RNC) contribution towards the costs of a place in a care home are set nationally by NHS England, this figure is included in the stated fee level at the 2019 -20 rate, any changes will be passported to NH providers once known.

31/20

**Sandwell Green Space Strategy 2020-2030**

Approval was sought to the Green Space Strategy 2020-2030 which set out the strategic directions for the management and maintenance of green spaces in Sandwell to help deliver positive and sustainable outcomes for green spaces, parks and associated facilities and resources in Sandwell.

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The Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board welcomed the proposals and sought clarity on whether the work of the Scrutiny Board enquiry day in relation to rewilding not only in designated green spaces but also verges, etc. could be fed into the strategy and action plans as the benefits of improved air quality, biodiversity and improved environments for people to live in. The Cabinet Member for Safer Communities confirmed that the findings of the enquiry day into rewilding would be fed into the strategy and action plans.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Green Space Strategy 2020-2030 be approved;
- (2) that a further report be submitted setting out action plans for specific recommendations and a Parks and Green Space Investment strategy, outlining external and internal funding opportunities and requirements;
- (3) that the findings of the Economy, Skills and Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board's enquiry day into rewilding be incorporated into the Green Space Strategy 2020-2030 and action plans.


Meeting ended at 16:06

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## REPORT TO CABINET

27 May 2020

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Brandhall Golf Course – Potential Options for Future Use</b>
<b>Presenting Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Maria Crompton – Cabinet Member for Active Communities</b>
<b>Director:</b>	<b>Executive Director – Neighbourhoods – Alison Knight Director – Housing and Communities – Alan Caddick</b>
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member Approval and Date:</b>	Councillor Crompton
<b>Director Approval:</b>	Alison Knight and Alan Caddick
<b>Reason for Urgency:</b>	Urgency provisions do not apply
<b>Exempt Information Ref:</b>	Exemption provisions do not apply
<b>Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):</b>	Yes
<b>Scrutiny Consultation Considered?</b>	The Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board was consulted
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Gemma Ryan Business Manager – Sport & Leisure <a href="mailto:gemma_ryan@sandwell.gov.uk">gemma_ryan@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

## **DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **That Cabinet;**

- (1) Note the outcomes of the public consultation regarding the proposed closure and alternative uses of the Brandhall Golf Course site;
- (2) Note the responses to the recommendations made by the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board;
- (3) Approve the closure of Brandhall Golf Course and club house;
- (4) Subject to (3) above, authorise the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods to develop a plan for the closure of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House with the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities to confirm the date in the future;
- (5) Subject to (3) and (4) above, authorise the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Interim Director – Regeneration and Growth, to develop a Master Plan for the future use of the Brandhall Golf Course and Club House site to be submitted to Cabinet in due course.

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to present the outcomes of the work carried out by officers, on behalf of the Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group, regarding the future of Brandhall Golf Course. This includes the Golf Needs Assessment and public consultation. Further to this, based upon the outcomes presented, seek authority to close the facility.

## **2 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S VISION**

- 2.1 Agreeing the future of Brandhall Golf Course will ensure that council resource and assets are meeting the needs of local residents. This will contribute to Ambitions 2 and 8 of Sandwell's Vision 2030. Future re-development proposals have the potential to contribute towards Ambitions 4 and 7.

### **3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 At the Cabinet meeting on 31 January 2018, the following recommendations were resolved (Minute No. 19/18);
1. That the adoption of Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facilities Strategy be approved;
  2. That the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods develop further reports to Cabinet for the following priority opportunities:
    - Opportunity 8 (O8) – Secure the long-term sustainability of golf in Sandwell by supporting independent clubs, creating a golf development pathway, and identifying potential alternative uses for Brandhall Golf Course.
  3. That Council be recommended to appoint Members to the Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group.
- 3.2 A Members Steering Group was established to further develop the opportunities contained within the Built Facilities Strategy and oversee the Opportunity 8 (O8) as recommended by the Cabinet.
- 3.3 ‘Sustainability of Golf’ referenced above, refers to ensuring that Sandwell has a sustainable golf offer for residents, which includes provision for entry level golf up to competitive golf.
- 3.4 To explore the golf provision and need in Sandwell external consultants were appointed to investigate and provide a report on a Golf Needs Assessment and golf development pathway (Appendix 1).
- 3.5 The Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group has overseen the work relating to the first part of the Cabinet recommendation, i.e. investigating whether Sandwell has a sustainable golf offer.
- 3.6 Officers have explored the second part of the recommendation, i.e. potential alternative uses of the site.
- 3.7 A further report was presented to the Cabinet on 30 October 2019 which outlined the outcomes of the Golf Needs Assessment and golf development pathway – Final Report.

3.8 In summary, the main outcomes of the Golf Report and investigative work found the following;

- Declining usage of Brandhall Golf Course
- Low numbers of members compared to other courses
- The facility is in 'poor' condition therefore requires significant investment
- Significant financial loss to the Council associated with the operation of the facility (£257,000)
- Oversupply of golf facilities in the surrounding catchment area for Sandwell and low latent demand for golf (a total of 39 within a 20-minute drive of Sandwell)

3.9 At the Cabinet Meeting on 30 October 2019, the following was resolved (Minute No.124/19);

(1) That the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods, undertake all requisite steps necessary to ensure effective consultation with regards to the proposed closure and alternative uses of the Brandhall Golf Course site

(2) following consultation, consider a more detailed report on future use of the site.

3.10 A six-week public consultation exercise was then carried out from 7 November 2019 to 19 December 2019.

3.11 The consultation included future use options and indicative site layouts for proposed future development (Appendix 2). These include the following elements;

***A new park / open space;***

Brandhall Golf Course is classed as an 'Outdoor Sports Facility'; it is not classified as public open space. Access to the site by the general public is restricted although there are public rights of way that cross the site and afford limited access to walk across the site (Appendix 3).

As outlined in Sandwell's Green Space Strategy, the golf course is excluded from the Unrestricted Green Space calculations for Sandwell. This, as well as the semi-private nature of the site, means that the site is not accessible green space.

Oldbury town has 2.10 hectares of unrestricted open space per 1,000 population. The borough average is 3.63 hectares. Old Warley ward has 0.86 hectares of unrestricted open space per 1,000 population. As noted above, Brandhall Golf Course is not unrestricted open space so is excluded from the figures above.

The redevelopment of the site provides a unique opportunity to increase the amount of unrestricted open space in the Old Warley ward. A small part of the site is already community open space, Parsons Hill Park, however, it is recommended that in any redevelopment option part of the wider site is set aside for a new public park that meets the needs of the local community. This has the potential to provide space for people to walk, play informal sports and provide some facilities for children's play.

Developing a new park in the site provides the opportunity to develop the first new major public park in the borough's history.

***New school to replace Causeway Green Primary School;***

The existing Causeway Green Primary School, located on Penn cricket Lane, is in poor physical condition. As a result, there is an identified need for a new school.

The school, which is a 420-place primary school, is identified as a priority for replacement due to ongoing condition issues associated with the original building construction and localised flooding.

The original school was built in 1953 utilising the 'Hills' system-build method, which consisted predominantly of concrete panel and flat roof construction, with single glazed windows. Core elements of the building are very expensive to maintain, repair or replace. Whilst this building type satisfactorily met its design life of approximately 60 years, the buildings are presenting increasing challenges for repair and maintenance. For similar reasons, 'Hills' type-built school buildings at Abbey Infant School and Yew Tree Primary School have been replaced through the government's 2014 Priority Schools Building Programme.

Unfortunately, the school was also severely affected by flooding during excessive rainfall in May 2018, causing significant damage and disruption. The site has historically suffered with flooding and, despite additional drainage systems being installed, the site appears to continue to be vulnerable to possible flooding during periods of high rainfall. The drainage system and water levels continue to be regularly monitored.

***New local housing;***

Sandwell has a shortfall in housing land supply. The unmet housing need is circa 11,062 homes to 2036.



The redevelopment of the site for housing will help contribute towards meeting the unmet housing need in Sandwell. There is the potential to provide a variety of house types in accordance with the adopted Black Country Core Strategy and to meet local needs. Moreover, any redevelopment would be required by adopted Planning Policy to provide affordable housing of up to 25%. This affordable housing provision should include a variety of house types and a mix of housing tenures including rental and intermediate market-discounted housing. The redevelopment of the site provides an opportunity to improve housing options for local people.

In relation to the planning position, the site is not allocated in the adopted Development Plan for the borough although there are designations such as a wildlife corridor, a small Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation and a small area of Community Open Space at Parsons Hill Park. Given the site is unallocated, residential redevelopment is considered appropriate in principle, subject to the need for mitigation to reduce any detrimental impact on these designations and any impacts from the proposed development itself such as traffic generation and the potential impact on the Flood Zone. Furthermore, the proposed redevelopment will help contribute to addressing the housing shortfall and contribute towards the level of publicly accessible open space in Sandwell. In addition, it is recommended that any potential redevelopment supports the need to replace Causeway Green Primary School.

Three potential options have been developed that provide some indicative ideas of how these three objectives of reducing the housing need in the borough, reducing the deficit in open space in Oldbury Town and addressing the need to replace Causeway Green Primary School could be addressed.

- Option 1: New school, 4.5 hectares of open space and housing scheme
- Option 2: New school, 6 hectares of open space and housing scheme
- Option 3: New school, 8.5 hectares of open space and housing scheme

The changing variable in these options is the amount of open space which rises from 4.5 hectares in Option 1 to 8.5 hectares in Option 3. Option 3 with 8.5 hectares would be an equivalent size of open space to Brunswick Park in Wednesbury.

### 3.12 The consultation included the following elements;

- Letter to residents and golf club members  
This outlined the Council's proposals and the consultation process
- Public survey (online and paper where required)  
This was promoted via letters, press releases and social media

- “Drop in” sessions
- General enquiries via a dedicated inbox ([brandhall\\_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk)) and letters

3.13 The outcomes of the consultation have been collated into a report ‘Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses – Consultation Report’ (February 2020) (Appendix 4).

3.14 Summary of the consultation process and outcomes;

- As outlined in Section 2 of the consultation report, proactive measures were taken to promote the consultation process to as many residents as possible.
- Over 2,000 households (5,107 people) were contacted to participate in the consultation.
- The consultation was promoted twice by the Council via the Council’s Facebook page, reaching over 28,000 people with a second post receiving 3,500 engagements.
- The Council made five Tweets promoting the consultation with a mean average reach of 3187 people per Tweet.
- Overall, while promoting the consultation process as outlined above, the Council reached circa 35,000 people.
- Despite this level of engagement, just 712 residents completed the survey, an estimated 100 people attended the ‘drop in’ sessions, and 37 people wrote directly to us to express their views.
- The majority of people who participated in the consultation never or rarely use the facility and around half of survey respondents would not be affected if it were to close.
- Objections to the Council’s proposals were expressed by some golfers and local residents. This was mainly captured at face-to-face sessions and via general written enquiries.
- Overall those who live closest to Brandhall Golf Course, had similar views to those from other areas of Sandwell.
- Most survey respondents felt that the amenities that the Council is proposing are important, with most respondents opting for Option 3 of the development proposals.

- The consultation findings supported the outcomes of the Golf Needs Assessment carried out previously (i.e. that the facility is underused by Sandwell residents in general). In particular, the majority of local residents do not use the facility and would not be affected if it closed.
- Many of the concerns raised can be mitigated through the delivery of the Council's proposals and careful consideration would be given to addressing these concerns.

## **4 THE CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 On 27 February 2020 the 'Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses – Consultation Report (February 2020)' was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board for consideration.

4.2 The Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board made the following recommendations;

- (1) that the Cabinet and Council be requested to note the comments and concerns expressed by the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board in relation to the proposed closure and alternative future uses of Brandhall Golf Course;
- (2) that the Sandwell Leisure Trust and Executive Director – Neighbourhoods submit a further report, as soon as possible, to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board detailing: -
  - (a) a full breakdown of the operating and subsidy costs of Brandhall Golf Course;
  - (b) a copy of all assessments that been conducted by the Council to date on Brandhall Golf Course;
- (3) that prior to any final decision being taken on the proposed closure and alternative future uses of Brandhall Golf Course, the Cabinet be recommended to: -
  - (a) carry out further detailed assessments, modelling and technical assessments, including an assessment on social isolation and inclusion;
  - (b) carry out an assessment on the availability of affordable golf courses in the vicinity;

- (c) explore the feasibility of retaining an element of the Course by reducing it to a 9-hole course;
- (d) explore the feasibility of members of the Brandhall Golf Club and the local community taking on the running and operation of Brandhall Golf Course or a community asset transfer;
- (e) undertake further consultation with the community in the event that it is proposed to close Brandhall Golf Course.

4.3 The recommendations have been considered as follows;

- (1) that the Cabinet and Council be requested to note the comments and concerns expressed by the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board in relation to the proposed closure and alternative future uses of Brandhall Golf Course;**

Cabinet have noted the recommendations of the Active Communities and Safer Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board and have addressed the points raised below.

- (2) that the Sandwell Leisure Trust and Executive Director – Neighbourhoods submit a further report, as soon as possible, to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board detailing: -**

- (a) a full breakdown of the operating and subsidy costs of Brandhall Golf Course;**

As outlined in the Cabinet report of 30 October 2019, the annual subsidy provided to Sandwell Leisure Trust, by the Council, to support the operation of Brandhall Golf Course is £257,000.

The Council has written to Sandwell Leisure Trust to formally request a copy of financial information relating to the operation of Brandhall Golf Course. An update shall be provided to both the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board and the Cabinet when a response is received from Sandwell Leisure Trust.

**(b) a copy of all assessments that have been conducted by the Council to date on Brandhall Golf Course;**

As with all potential development sites within its ownership, the Council carried out an initial high-level review of any constraints on development of the site to ascertain its likely potential. This initial review which is illustrated in the attached document did advise that in principle the site is suitable for development and there are no foreseen constraints that cannot be reasonably overcome.

In detail, the assessments revealed that there were public rights of way, adopted public surface water sewers, flood zones and nature conservation areas within the site. However, it is considered that these features could be reasonably accommodated and either preserved or relocated within any redevelopment layout. In addition, a review of the historic Ordnance Survey plans did not identify any previous land uses that would constitute a significant constraint on development. Moreover, the development would not be contrary to adopted Planning Policy. The site is allocated as a wildlife corridor so the ability for wildlife to cross the site should be retained in any layout and a small section of the site is allocated as Community Open Space (Parsons Park) and this would either need to be retained or accommodated elsewhere within the site. In conclusion therefore, the initial review did suggest that subject to compliance with these amendments the site is considered suitable for development in principle. More detailed assessments would be required however as part of any planning application.

The information pack, Appendix 5, outlines the information obtained by the Council to confirm the acceptability of the development of the Brandhall Golf Course in principle.

**(3) that prior to any final decision being taken on the proposed closure and alternative future uses of Brandhall Golf Course, the Cabinet be recommended to: -**

**(a) carry out further detailed assessments, modelling and technical assessments, including an assessment on social isolation and inclusion;**

The proposed development includes the provision of a fully accessible park and open space area. This is much needed in the local area, in line with the Green Space Strategy, which outlines that this part of the borough has the lowest amount of accessible green space. Brandhall Golf Course is restricted open space and is not considered to be accessible, i.e. to the whole community. Therefore, the provision of accessible open space shall provide more opportunities than, currently exist for people, to take part in physical activity and integrate as a community. Social opportunities could also be enhanced as the Council is considering the re-provision of a community facility within the proposed development. This will enable meetings, clubs and social gatherings that currently take place to continue for the local community.

There are already a number of services and activities in the local area that support minimising social isolation and encourage inclusion.

These include 11 activities mapped on the Council's Public Health directory that are social and physical activities, specifically for those who are older adults. Given that most of the population in Old Warley ward are between the ages of 25 and 64 and compared to other towns and wards, there seems to be plenty of activities available to people who live within a 2-mile radius of Brandhall golf course. As part of Public Health's stronger service directory work, gaps in provision are RAG rated Oldbury physical and social activities are currently RAG rated green. Activities can be found here <https://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/strongersandwelldirectory/>.

Services to reduce social isolation and provide inclusive opportunities to engage in the local community would be further enhanced if development proposals are taken forward.

The Council's proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course and no longer utilise the site as a golf facility was a result of the recommendation within the Built Facilities Strategy and the outcome of the Golf Needs Assessment Report. The Golf Needs assessment concluded that there is an oversupply of golf provision within the local area. The Golf Course currently has low, declining membership and usage and requires a Council subsidy of £257,000 per year to maintain operation. These factors lead to the proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course and Club House and investigate potential future uses for the site.

If the site is deemed unviable for the proposed developments further options shall be explored. However, utilising the site as a Golf Course is not currently one of these options as we have already ascertained that it is unviable as a Golf Course, based upon the evidence summarised above and contained within the Cabinet Report 30 October 2019.

An initial high-level review has revealed that in principle, the site is considered suitable for redevelopment. Historic Ordnance Survey maps indicate that the site is a green field site that has not been subject to previous development and potentially contaminative uses. There is a high degree of confidence therefore that the site is suitable for redevelopment. It is considered that any intrusive investigations prior to closure to confirm this assessment would be costly, may be abortive and are not necessary at this stage.

**(b) carry out an assessment on the availability of affordable golf courses in the vicinity;**

An assessment has been carried out via the Golf Needs Assessment which outlined that there are a number of courses locally within a similar price range. The cost per round at Brandhall Golf Course is particularly low, by comparison, which is likely to have contributed to its financial unsustainability over a long period of time.

**(c) explore the feasibility of retaining an element of the Course by reducing it to a 9-hole course;**

If the course were to be retained as a 9-hole course there would still be an oversupply of Golf Courses in the local area. It is anticipated that the capital cost of reconfiguring the facility from an 18-hole to a 9-hole golf course, to ensure required land remains for other future uses, would be considerable. This would also have a further detrimental effect on the business plan (i.e. income) for the facility. Whilst some members would favour a 9-hole facility this would further detract other golfers from joining / attending. This would also saturate the demand for 9-hole golf courses locally with Warley Woods Golf Course (also a 9-hole facility) just 2.2 miles from Brandhall Golf Course.

It has been previously considered that a 9 hole course could be preserved on roughly half the site which would leave land to accommodate a school and approximately 320 houses (compared to 560 with the largest area of open space of the three options) which would be a significant reduction in capacity and not include the provision of a park. It is considered that this proposed arrangement with its smaller central residential area would reduce this dwelling capacity even further.

Any full length 9 hole course could reduce the area for a park which was a popular suggestion during the public consultation period and it is considered that any joint use would be detrimental to residential amenity for new residents, however designed.

**(d) explore the feasibility of members of the Brandhall Golf Club and the local community taking on the running and operation of Brandhall Golf Course or a community asset transfer;**

The Council, to date, has not formally received a detailed business and operation plan for this option. An outline proposal has been received from a club member, informally, but this includes the retention of a full length 9-hole course which may be problematic, as outlined above.

The retention and conversion of the facility as a 9-hole Golf Course would not be viable and would still result in an oversupply of golf courses locally, as outlined above in section (c).

The Council has a formal policy regarding consideration of Community Asset Transfers of any Council owned land, buildings or facilities, however, a robust business case must be presented to demonstrate that the Group have sufficient funding from either existing reserves or from potential funding streams to keep the premises in a good state of repair and condition over the term of the agreement. The Group will also be required to demonstrate that they are an established entity with a proven record of delivering community based outputs that are measurable and in accordance with the council's Vision 2030 and Corporate Plan.

The Council would also need to consider the potential benefits of any Community Asset Transfer approach against the likely benefits of an alternative use proposal being developed.

Any proposals coming forward must also take account of the fact that the Council has proposals for the potential future use of the Brandhall Golf Course site in advance of a Community Asset Transfer proposal being received, these future use proposals are based upon all of the relevant and appropriate feasibility work at this point.



**(e) undertake further consultation with the community in the event that it is proposed to close Brandhall Golf Course.**

At the Cabinet of 30 October 2019, it was recommended that Cabinet; delegate authority to the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods to undertake all requisite steps necessary to ensure effective consultation with regards to the proposed closure and alternative uses of the Brandhall Golf Course site as set out in the report

This recommendation was resolved, and a six-week public consultation exercise was carried out from 07 November – 19 December 2019. Over 2,000 households (5,107 people) were contacted to participate in the consultation. Overall, while promoting the consultation process, the Council reached circa 35,000 people and circa 800 people engaged via the different routes provided.

The outcomes of the consultation are contained within the ‘Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses Consultation Report – February 2020’.

Should the closure proceed a detailed masterplan will be commissioned to advise on the composition of any redevelopment options and this process will incorporate a further period of public consultation. At a later stage, any future planning application required to secure approval to development will be subject to detailed public consultation in accordance with the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

## **5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)**

- 5.1 The Executive Director – Neighbourhoods, Director for Housing and Communities and portfolio holder, the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, have been consulted on the content of this report. Sandwell Leisure Trust has also been consulted as the operator.
- 5.2 Public consultation has been carried out regarding the proposed closure of Brandhall Golf Course and club house as well as consultation on the potential alternative future use of the Brandhall Golf Course site.

As outlined in detail in the ‘Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses – Consultation Report (February 2020)’ the consultation included the following;

- (1) An online survey for all stakeholders to provide views on future use of the site

- (2) A series of drop-in sessions for all stakeholders to provide views on future use of the site
- (3) Inbox for all stakeholders to email questions
- (4) Letters to local residents, golf members and representatives of Brandhall Golf Club
- (5) Stakeholders to include;
  - Local residents
  - Golf club representatives
  - Golf members
  - Golf course employees
  - Causeway Green Primary School staff and parents

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 6.1 If the Council takes no action the Council would be required to continue to support a golf facility at a current annual net cost of £257k. With a declining membership, the annual net cost to the Council will increase for a facility that requires major investment.
- 6.2 Alternative uses. The land is located in a predominantly residential area. It is not considered appropriate for alternative uses such as commercial use to be considered. Residential, educational and recreational uses would greatly support the Council's 2030 Vision for the borough.

## **7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The closure of the Golf Course will remove the need for the subsidy of £257,000 pa paid to Sandwell Leisure Trust annually. There will be significant financial implications arising from the proposed alternative uses of the site and these will be refined and incorporated into the proposed Master Plan, for consideration by Cabinet at a later date.
- 7.2 In the short term there are likely to be maintenance and site security costs, following the closure of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House.

## **8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Brandhall Golf Course is owned and managed by the Council under a lease arrangement with SLT and Brandhall Golf Club.

## **9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out (Appendix 6).

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

10.1 All information held for this work has been subject to the Council's Data Protection policy.

## **11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT.**

11.1 N/A

## **12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS**

12.1 The proposals will ensure that the Council's assets and resources are utilised in the most effective way that best meets local community need.

## **13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)**

13.1 Future development of Brandhall Golf Course will ensure that social value is maximised by providing the services and amenities that achieve priority social outcomes.

## **14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

14.1 Brandhall Golf Course is owned and managed by the Council under a lease arrangement with SLT and Brandhall Golf Club.

## **15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 In summary the feasibility work has found the following;

- There is an oversupply of golf courses in the local area
- There are a number of alternative local golf courses that have been independently assessed and deemed affordable
- Brandhall Golf Course has both declining attendance and membership numbers
- The facility requires a significant Council subsidy
- The consultation found that the majority of respondents would not be affected if the facility closed
- The consultation found that the majority of respondents support the three elements of the proposed future development

- There is a crucial need for new local housing and sites are in short supply
- Causeway Green Primary school requires replacement and there are not any other more suitable sites

15.2 It is after careful consideration of all of these factors that the Council makes the recommendations, as outlined above, including the closure of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House.

## **16 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Golf Needs Assessment and golf development pathway
- Future use options and indicative site layouts for proposed future development
- Public Rights of Way
- Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses – Consultation Report (February 2020)
- Information Pack
- Equality Impact Assessment

## **17 APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1:	Golf Needs Assessment and golf development pathway
Appendix 2:	Future use options and indicative site layouts for proposed future development
Appendix 3:	Public Rights of Way
Appendix 4:	Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses – Consultation Report (February 2020)
Appendix 5:	Information Pack
Appendix 6:	Equality Impact Assessment

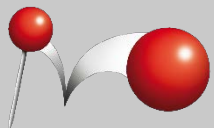
**Alison Knight**  
**Executive Director – Neighbourhoods**

# SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

### FINAL REPORT

APRIL 2019

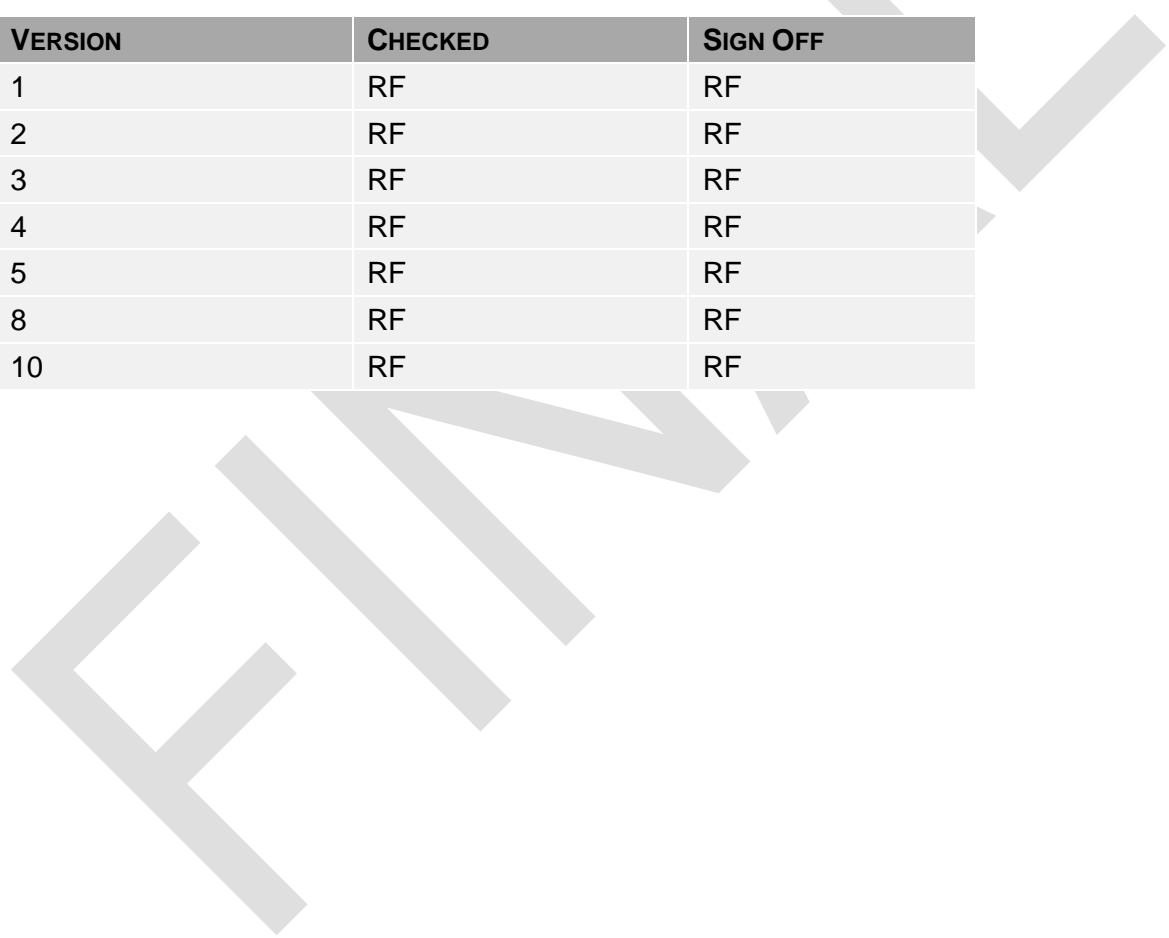


SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

INTERNAL REPORT VERSION CONTROL

<b>CLIENT NAME</b>	Sandwell Council
<b>REPORT NAME</b>	Golf Needs Analysis

<b>DATE OF ISSUE</b>	<b>VERSION</b>	<b>CHECKED</b>	<b>SIGN OFF</b>
21.11.18	1	RF	RF
04.12.18	2	RF	RF
10.01.19	3	RF	RF
24.01.19	4	RF	RF
28.02.19	5	RF	RF
15.03.9	8	RF	RF
02.04.19	10	RF	RF



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<b>4.</b>	<b>GOLF COURSE QUALITY AUDITS</b>

## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. There are currently seven golf facilities in Sandwell including one pitch and putt facility. Two of these facilities Brandhall Golf Course and Sandwell Valley Pitch and putt/Crazy Golf, are operated by third party operators on behalf of Sandwell Council.
- 1.2. Sandwell Council (SC) adopted its Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) – Sport and Leisure in 2018; the BFS highlights that the oldest facilities in Sandwell, are in a poor condition and do not meet the needs of residents. The Sandwell Revised Playing Pitch Strategy and the Sandwell Sport and Leisure Built Facilities Strategy both highlight that there is spare capacity within the Borough's golf facilities to accommodate current and future demand.
- 1.3. Sandwell Council have recently carried out a refresh of their Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) (October 2018) which identified the following recommendation for Golf. 'A further detailed options appraisal is required to identify the potential management and investment options for Brandhall Golf Course. The facility is currently not financially sustainable, and membership is in decline, however the facility does provide a low-cost option for non-member golfers, which is key to the future of the sport although not necessarily through an 18-hole golf course.' It must be noted that whilst this version of the PPS has been signed off by all steering group members, including England Golf, it has not yet been formally adopted by the Council.
- 1.4. The golf market in the UK has changed in recent years from a sport operating through club membership to one where pay and play is now more desirable. Due to this all golf facilities in Sandwell offer pay and play options for use.
- 1.5. There is a high-level supply of golf courses in Sandwell and a low latent demand, leaving each facility competing for the same golfers and increasing the risk of golf courses becoming unsustainable. This risk of unsustainability is further exacerbated by the availability of 32 further golf facilities being within 20 minutes' drive from the borough boundary.
- 1.6. Brandhall Golf Course is in poor condition, requires an annual operational subsidy of circa £170,000 per annum, and would need significant capital investment to bring it up to the required standard.
- 1.7. Golf England's suggested golf development pathway is for golfers to use a driving range, then learn to play on a municipal course prior to becoming a member at a private club. However, now that all private clubs in Sandwell offer pay and play options at their courses, the need for municipal courses has become less important. Therefore, even without the provision of a traditional municipal golf course, a full golf development pathway could be developed in Sandwell.
- 1.8. From this report it can be concluded that, due to the high-level supply of golf courses in Sandwell and the low latent demand for participating in golf, there is an over-supply of golf facilities in Sandwell. The golf development pathway also demonstrates that there is significant opportunity for Sandwell residents to participate in golf at all stages.
- 1.9. Given the over-supply of facilities, the revenue subsidy required for the operation of Brandhall Golf Course, and the capital that would be required to bring this facility up to standard, it is recommended that the Council explore further the long-term sustainability of Council-owned golf facilities as well how best to deliver the golf development pathway.



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- 1.10. Based upon this, it is considered that a full options appraisal is undertaken on all Sandwell Council golf facilities. Therefore, there is an opportunity for Sandwell Council to consider the facilities that it currently supplies and the impact these have on the sustainability of golf in the Borough.

FINAL

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. Following the adoption of the revised Playing Pitch Strategy in 2015 and the Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facility Strategy 2018, Sandwell Council identified the need to undertake a Golf Needs Assessment for the Borough to identify the future level and nature of golf provision needed to meet residents' demands.
- 2.2. Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) was appointed to undertake this needs assessment on behalf of Sandwell Council in October 2018.

### BACKGROUND CONTEXT

- 2.3. There are currently seven golf facilities in Sandwell including one pitch and putt facility. Two of these facilities Brandhall Golf Course and Sandwell Valley Pitch and putt/Crazy Golf, are operated by third party operators on behalf of Sandwell Council.
- 2.4. The Sandwell Revised Playing Pitch Strategy, approved at the meeting of Cabinet on 16 September 2015 (156/15), highlights that there is spare capacity at all golf courses in Sandwell to accommodate current and future demand.
- 2.5. Sandwell Council adopted the Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) at the meeting of Cabinet on 31 January 2018. The BFS identifies the current position of sport and leisure facilities in Sandwell and its ability to deal with residents demands / needs now and forecast in the future. In the Black Country only 1.94% of residents play golf, a figure lower than the national average which is 2.54%. Membership and usage numbers at Brandhall Golf Course have dropped significantly over the past 3 years and the facility requires a substantial subsidy for it to remain open. With demand being catered for by other golf courses in Sandwell and the declining membership numbers at Brandhall Golf Course, the strategy recommends that the future use of the facility is reviewed, and potential alternative uses are identified.
- 2.6. The BFS also highlights that the oldest facilities in Sandwell, including Brandhall Golf Course are in a poor condition and do not meet the needs of residents and sets out a number of opportunities to ensure that demand is met in the future.
- 2.7. At the meeting of Cabinet on 31 January 2018, it was approved that Opportunity 8 within the BFS would be investigated, namely to ***'Secure the long-term sustainability of golf in Sandwell by supporting independent clubs, creating a golf development pathway, and identifying potential alternative uses for Brandhall Golf Course.'***

2.8. The rationale for undertaking the golf needs assessment is therefore to:



**Assess the current and future demand for golf in Sandwell;**



**Identify the nature and level of existing golf provision in the Borough, and other golf provision accessible to Borough residents;**



**Analyse whether supply meets current and future demand;**



**Identify any gaps in provision, and/or key issues with existing golf provision; and**



**Identify the options available to address these gaps/issues.**

2.9. The golf market in the UK has changed significantly in recent years from a sport operating predominantly through club membership, to one where pay and play opportunities have increased and become more accessible largely to counteract declining numbers of club membership. Anecdotally, as it is very hard to evidence, given the reluctance of private clubs to share membership trends, many regular golfers are not club members, but instead choose to play at a variety of courses, where they know they can play good quality facilities for a reasonable cost, and enjoy good social facilities. Day package golf for non-members is growing in popularity.

2.10. It is important to consider this shift in traditional golf participation patterns in considering the level and nature of golf provision in the future in Sandwell, to ensure sustainability, and that available facilities address changing needs.

## APPROACH TO NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2.11. The approach to undertaking the needs assessment comprised:



**Audit (quantitative and qualitative) of all existing golf provision in Sandwell;**



**Audit of golf provision within 20 minutes of each of the towns in Sandwell;**



**Consultation with identified stakeholders;**



**Review of participation trends for golf in the UK;**



**Assessment of supply and demand for golf in Sandwell;**



**Identification of any gaps in provision, and/or key issues with existing golf provision; and**



**Identification of the options available to address these gaps/issues.**

### 3 GOLF PROVISION IN SANDWELL

#### FACILITY SUPPLY

- 3.1 There are seven golf courses within the Borough of Sandwell including one pitch and putt facility. One of these courses, Brandhall Golf Course is run by Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) on behalf of SC. All other golf courses within Sandwell are privately operated facilities. SC also owns the Sandwell Valley Pitch and Putt which also incorporates an 18 hole Footgolf Course; these facilities are operated by Valley Cycles.
- 3.2 Existing golf provision in Sandwell is detailed in Table 3.1 and Map 3.1, which also shows the courses in Sandwell, and those immediately outside the Borough.

**Table 3.1: Golf Courses in Sandwell**

COURSE	OWNERSHIP	HOLES	DRIVING RANGE	ACCESS	AFFILIATED TO ENGLAND GOLF	OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT
BRANDHALL GOLF COURSE	Local Authority	18	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes	Sandwell Leisure Trust
DARTMOUTH GOLF COURSE	Club	9	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes	Private
DUDLEY GOLF CLUB	Club	18	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes	Private
ROWLEY GOLF CENTRE	Club	18	Yes	Pay & play Membership	No	Private
SANDWELL VALLEY PITCH & PUTT	Local Authority	18 Plus 18 Footgolf	No	Pay & play	No	Sandwell Council
SANDWELL PARK GOLF CLUB	Club	18	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes	Private
WARLEY WOODS GOLF COURSE	Trust	9	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes	Trust

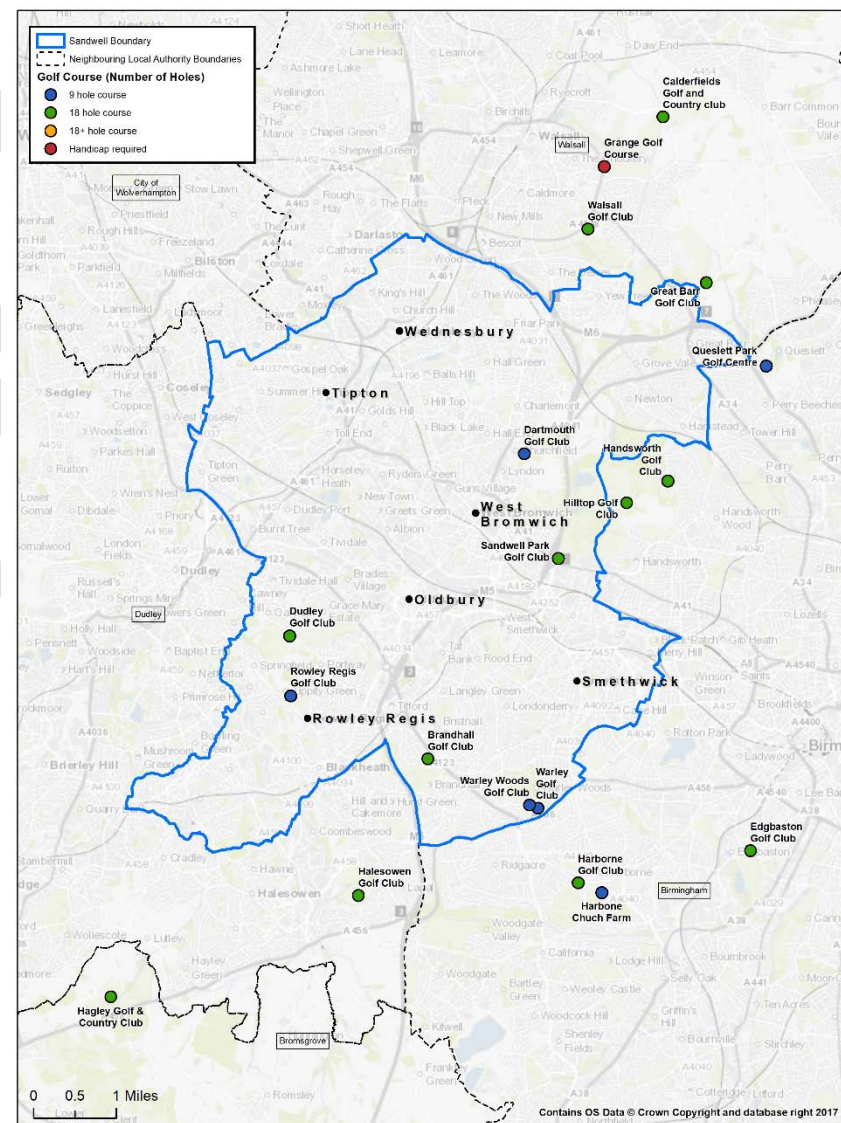
- 3.3 There are 7 golf facilities in Sandwell. Brandhall Golf Course is the only full municipal golf course in Sandwell.
- 3.4 Sandwell Valley is an 18 hole pitch and putt, plus 18 hole Footgolf Course.
- 3.5 Existing golf courses in Sandwell offer 90 holes of golf for the general public to use six days a week (Some clubs have limited public access on Saturdays due to competitions; this is a common operational approach for golf clubs).
- 3.6 A visual quality audit was undertaken on all golf facilities in the Borough. The assessment was made on the basis of the visual appearance and condition of the golf facilities, changing provision, and as available, pro shop, catering, social facilities. The audit did not include on site consultation.
- 3.7 The quality scoring is based on the following rationale:

**Table 3.2: Audit Scoring System**

KEY	RATING
>80%	Excellent
60% - 79%	Good
40% - 59%	Average
20% - 39%	Poor
<20%	Very Poor

- 3.8 A facility scoring highly in terms of visual quality and condition (good – excellent) is likely to require less investment than one which is in a poorer visual condition (average – very poor). The summary of the quality audit is set out in Table 3.3

**Map 3.1: Golf Courses in Sandwell, and those immediately adjacent**



Golf courses in and around Sandwell



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**Table 3.3: Quality audit of golf facilities in the Borough**

GOLF FACILITY	QUALITY OF OVERALL FACILITIES%	COMMENTARY ON QUALITY SCORE, CAPACITY FOR INCREASED MEMBERSHIP, AND PLAYING FEES
BRANDHALL GOLF COURSE	54%	Poor-quality built infrastructure, golf playing facilities are average so the overall score reflects both aspects; capacity for additional members;
DARTMOUTH GOLF CLUB	59%	Average quality; capacity for additional members; affordable membership and pay and play cost,
DUDLEY GOLF CLUB	70%	Good quality; capacity for additional members; affordable membership and pay and play cost; good quality lesson offer, Pro shop and practice area
ROWLEY REGIS GOLF CLUB	71%	Good quality; capacity for additional members; affordable membership and pay and play cost; includes a driving range
SANDWELL PARK GOLF CLUB	81%	Excellent quality; capacity for additional members; affordable pay play cost; good quality clubhouse
SANDWELL VALLEY PITCH AND PUTT (INCORPORATING 18 HOLE FOOTGOLF COURSE)	64%	Good quality; not open in winter; different golf offer
WARLEY WOODS	61%	Good – average quality; capacity for additional members; affordable membership and pay and play cost,

3.9 The SC golf facility in the Borough is rated as being poor quality and would benefit from improvement. Sandwell Valley is a seasonal pitch and putt and footgolf facility, and is not the main municipal golf offer in the Borough. The quality audit highlights that there is significant need and opportunity for improvement and investment at Brandhall Golf Course.

### SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

3.10 Demand for golf in Sandwell comprises membership, 'Learn to Play', casual, corporate and competitive participation.

3.11 England Golf indicates the number of golf members at courses within Sandwell reduced by 16.27% between 2014 to 2016. This has led to all golf courses in and around Sandwell offering tee times for non-members in an attempt to generate additional income. Subsequently, this has led to financial stresses on both municipal and private courses, as customers who would have previously played municipal golf are now able to play at a private course for a similar price. Subsidised local authority facilities work to the detriment of private facilities in the area; the latter are better quality and are not subsidised by a council but are having to compete on price to mitigate the support enjoyed by subsidised municipal facilities.

3.12 The 2015 PPS indicates that 6.8% of the Sandwell public suggested that they would like to play golf. This was the lowest response level of all recorded in relation to participation in a range of sports.

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- 3.13 Importantly, all types of golf demand, except crazy golf, pitch and putt and footgolf in Sandwell can be addressed through the private sector, because it now offers what has previously, and traditionally, been the preserve of municipal courses, and critically, with higher quality playing and ancillary facilities, at the same, or a similar cost.
- 3.14 Nationally, 2.54% of people participate in golf. This figure is lower in the Black Country at 1.94%. The national latent demand for golf is 1.34% (PS9, 2015). Although no equivalent data exists at a Sandwell or a Black Country level, if this figure is assumed to be the same in Sandwell, this would mean 2,966 people (16+) would like to participate in golf who do not already do so.
- 3.15 From Sport England market segmentation data, 'Philip' has the highest participation and latent demand for golf, with 'Tim' being the second highest. 'Leanne' and 'Paula' have the lowest latent demand for golf within the market segments (Sport England, 2015). Sandwell has a lower proportion of 'Philip' and 'Tim' than the national average (11.4% against 17.4%), and a higher proportion of 'Leanne' and 'Paula' (12.9% vs 8.0%). Therefore, Sandwell is likely to have a lower latent demand for golf than the national average, and it is likely that less than 2,966 people in Sandwell would like to participate in golf.
- 3.16 There is a significant level of golf provision in Sandwell (5 private courses as well as two SC facilities (Brandhall Golf Course and the Valley Cycling operated pitch and putt) and close to the Borough. The main municipal facility in Sandwell, Brandhall Golf Course, is of a poorer quality (playing and practice facilities, and ancillary provision) than comparable private golf courses. However, the cost of pay and play golf at Brandhall Golf Course is higher than at similar private golf courses. Membership at Brandhall Golf Course decreased by 53.2% 2014-2016. Annual usage at Brandhall Golf Course has reduced from 30,767 in 2013/14 to 22,887 by 2017/18.
- 3.17 There is high level of 9 and 18 hole provision, one driving range (at Rowley Regis Golf Club, privately operated) although there is no Par 3, entry level course in the Borough. Membership numbers overall are relatively low compared with the national average, but it is worth noting that each club will have a different financial model in terms of income generation from membership vs green fees etc. Given the level of demand across both club-based and independent profiles, there is clearly scope for clubs to offer additional non-traditional and flexible playing opportunities wherever appropriate. High demand, but lower, and reducing membership levels reflects the trend in golf participation, away from club membership to pay and play day use. Club membership has become less relevant as a handicap can now also be calculated using on-line tools.
- 3.18 All 6 golf courses in Sandwell have capacity for additional members.
- 3.19 Due to the number of golf facilities in Sandwell and the low latent demand to participate in golf, there is an over-supply of golf provision leaving all facilities in the Borough at risk of becoming unsustainable. The continued offer of Brandhall Golf Course by Sandwell Council is further diluting the golfing market and adding to this risk.



## BRANDHALL GOLF COURSE

3.20 Brandhall is the only municipal golf course in Sandwell. Located in Oldbury Brandhall Golf Course is a par 71, 18-hole municipal course, built in 1903. It offers a small practice area, professional's shop and clubhouse. The woodland course is open to the public on both a pay and play and membership basis.

3.21 Brandhall Golf Course is in need of improved maintenance to the greens and fairways, plus the practice area. One issue is that the allocated ground maintenance team are not golf specialists.

3.22 The Golf Club based at the Course operates a small clubhouse and bar; the clubhouse is in need of significant refurbishment. In 2016 there were 89 members of the golf club reducing by 53% from 190 in 2014.

3.23 The course is used by local and regular participants, although membership levels have fallen. The course is also popular for those learning to play golf, but once competent, these individuals do not always remain as members.

The decrease in membership at Brandhall Golf Club is due to an expansion of the private sector pay and play offer, as well as the poorer quality of Brandhall Golf Course; this includes both the course itself and the ancillary facilities.

3.24 There has been limited investment in the course or ancillary facilities by Sandwell Council. SLT's remit is to operate the course and offer lessons through the Golf Professional.

3.25 The 2015 PPS evidences:

**'Multimillion-pound investment would be needed at Brandhall Golf Course to allow the course to compete with other golf provision in the Borough. This would include significant irrigation, drainage improvements and a clubhouse redevelopment.'**

3.26 The 2018 refreshed PPS evidences:

**A further detailed options appraisal is required to identify the potential management and investment options for Brandhall Golf Course. The facility is currently not financially sustainable, and membership is in decline, however the facility does provide a low-cost option for non-member golfers, which is key to the future of the sport although not necessarily through an 18-hole golf course.' It must be noted that whilst this version of the PPS has been signed off by all steering group members, including England Golf, it has not yet been formally adopted by the Council.**

3.27 The 2018 BFS states:

**Multi-million-pound investment would be required to allow the course to become sustainable and maintained to a required standard. This would include the relocation of the club house facilities to be directly off the Wolverhampton Road, a major upgrade to the irrigation / drainage of the course as during wet months the course becomes unplayable due to it being water logged, and the overall quality of the greens and fairways. However, this would still not ensure the sustainable future of the site or an overall increase in the number of residents participating in golf. With the declining numbers of golf club members in Sandwell, and with the low latent demand for residents who wish to play golf, it is likely that any upgrade to Brandhall Golf Course would further dilute the market and dislocate participants from other golf clubs / courses in the area.**

**Therefore, due to the small latent demand to participate in golf, the fact that other Sandwell golf courses are struggling to remain open, the decline in golf club membership numbers, and the condition and cost of making the required improvements to Brandhall Golf Course, it is recommended that an alternative future use is determined for the Brandhall site and that the Council support the sustainability of golf in Sandwell by supporting the independent golf clubs and courses in the borough through the creation of a development pathway for golf.**

3.28 The current Brandhall Golf Course operates at a loss of circa £170,000 per annum. The course is unsustainable and will continue to be so unless there is significant capital investment, which would mean the quality of the playing and social facilities improves.

### **GOLF PROVISION IN NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

3.29 There are six main towns in Sandwell. Within a 20-minute drive time of each town, there are a total of 39 golf courses inside and outside the Borough boundary (See Appendices 1 and 2) managed privately, by local authorities or trusts. Across all of these courses there is a significant difference in relation to quality, accessibility and pricing structures.

3.30 As shown in the Appendix 1 maps, and the lists in Appendix 2 there is a very significant number of golf courses and facilities in close proximity to the Borough. Golfers will travel to access good quality courses and facilities; it is ensuring access to provision for those learning to play, or for those who cannot afford to travel that is the challenge.

### **CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE COURSES IN AND AROUND SANDWELL**

3.31 To identify demand for golf in the Borough, consultation was undertaken with England Golf, private golf courses both those in Sandwell, and those surrounding the Borough, SLT, and SC officers (leisure, grounds maintenance). Feedback from stakeholders is reflected in the supply information above, as well as below.

## SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

- 3.32 Appendix 1 mapping shows which golf courses are within 20 minutes of each of the 6 Sandwell towns. Clearly some courses are within 20 minutes of more than one of the 6 towns. Appendix 2 identifies these golf courses in list format. Appendix 3 details the consultation responses from the golf clubs (via the Pro) that responded to the club survey; responses were received from clubs in and outside the Borough.
- 3.33 In total, 22 golf courses responded to the consultation survey. The responses came from both golf courses in the Borough and those outside the Borough. All feedback can be found in Appendix 3 (green shaded responses are those from golf clubs in the Borough).
- 3.34 All 22 private golf courses responding to the consultation offer a pay and play option for non-members. All 22 golf course professionals confirmed there is capacity to take on new members i.e. both adult and junior members. Six golf courses have increased their membership figures over the last three years, four golf courses have fewer members than in 2015 and ten have memberships which have remained the same.
- 3.35 The cost of membership at these 22 courses ranges from £600 per year to £1,500 per year. Each course offers a monthly direct debit scheme. All golf courses offer a day rate to play ranging between £4.50 (Sedgley Golf Club, 9 holes) to £70 for 18 holes with a considerable variance across the courses. The average price of a green fee is £31. A significant number of these golf courses also provide discounted green fees for juniors, females and older adults.

### ENGLAND GOLF

- 3.36 Consultation with England Golf highlights that whilst there is a good number of golf facilities in Sandwell including one driving range (Rowley Regis Golf Club), membership numbers across these facilities have generally decreased since 2014.
- 3.37 Golf is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest sport in relation to national participation figures. Nationally, 2.54% of people participate in golf. This figure is slightly lower in the Black Country at 1.94%. The national latent demand for golf is 1.34% (PS9, 2015). Although no equivalent data exists at a Sandwell or a Black Country level, if this figure is assumed to be the same in Sandwell, this would mean 2,966 people (16+) who do not currently participate in golf would like to do so. England Golf research identifies that 24% of adults in England are potential players. This is made up of 9% current players, 8% lapsed players and 7% latent players. Within these groups England Golf identify nine defined profiles and clearly identified behaviours, motivations and barriers.
- 3.38 All formats of golf are a priority for England Golf including informal types of the game which have become very popular over the last few years such as Adventure golf and Top golf. However, the suggested pathway to engage committed golfers includes using a driving range, then playing on municipal golf courses before becoming a full course member at a private club.
- 3.39 Due to the change in accessibility at private clubs i.e. very affordable pay and play day access, the need for municipal golf has become less important. The key priority, however, is that there is still a pathway for beginners leading to them playing the full format of the game.
- 3.40 England Golf is running schemes such as 'Get into golf', 'Girls' Golf Rocks, 'Ladies into par' and 'Golf Sixes' to increase participation across the country. Golf Courses across Sandwell are not currently developing and implementing these initiatives; this could be a means of increasing participation, particularly amongst females.

## GOLF DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

3.41 It is important to ensure that there are opportunities to participate in golf from the 'learn to' to recreational and competitive participation levels; this is the only way to facilitate participation growth and retention. The existing golf provision in Sandwell Borough provides opportunities at all stages of the Golf Development Pathway, as follows:

**Table 3.3: Summary of Golf Pathway in Sandwell**

PARTICIPATION LEVEL	EXPLANATION	EXISTING FACILITY PROVISION	SANDWELL VENUES:	PRICE RANGE
LEARN TO PLAY GOLF	Learn to Play relates to both facilities and instruction services; these facilities provide opportunities to learn to play golf, practise and or take lessons.	Driving range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rowley Regis Golf Club</li> </ul>	£3 - £6
		9 hole course/18 hole course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brandhall Golf Course</li> <li>• Dartmouth Golf Course</li> <li>• Dudley Golf Course</li> <li>• Rowley Golf Centre</li> <li>• Sandwell Park Golf Club</li> <li>• Warley Woods Golf Course</li> </ul>	£5 - £20
RECREATIONAL /SOCIAL GOLFER	Social golfers do not play regularly necessarily, but may participate in one-off golf days/events, or play infrequently with friends etc. Need access to good quality facilities, which provide value for money.	Driving Range, 9 hole course, 18 hole course (5 day member of private or municipal course)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brandhall Golf Course</li> <li>• Dartmouth Golf Course</li> <li>• Dudley Golf Course</li> <li>• Rowley Golf Centre</li> <li>• Sandwell Valley Pitch and Putt</li> <li>• Sandwell Park Golf Club</li> <li>• Warley Woods Golf Course</li> </ul>	£5 - £20
SOCIETY GOLF	Non-members, but play regularly as part of an organised group. Includes corporate golf days.	9 hole course, 18 hole course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brandhall Golf Course</li> <li>• Dartmouth Golf Course</li> <li>• Dudley Golf Course</li> <li>• Rowley Golf Centre</li> <li>• Sandwell Valley Pitch and Putt</li> <li>• Sandwell Park Golf Club</li> <li>• Warley Woods Golf Course</li> </ul>	£5 - £20

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

PARTICIPATION LEVEL	EXPLANATION	EXISTING FACILITY PROVISION	SANDWELL VENUES:	PRICE RANGE
COMPETITIVE GOLFER	Regular players, may be members of golf clubs; take part in competitions (if club member). Need practice and playing facilities.	9 hole golf course (municipal course)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brandhall Golf Course</li> <li>• Dartmouth Golf Course</li> <li>• Dudley Golf Course</li> <li>• Rowley Golf Centre</li> <li>• Sandwell Valley Pitch and Putt</li> <li>• Sandwell Park Golf Club</li> <li>• Warley Woods Golf Course</li> </ul>	£5 - £20
FUN GOLFER	Participation with family or friends; focus on fun	Crazy/adventure golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandwell Valley</li> </ul>	£4 - £6
		Footgolf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandwell Valley</li> </ul>	

3.42 Based on the above golf pathway, it is clear that at all stages of the Golf Pathway there is significant non-municipal provision in the Borough, with the exception of pitch and putt/crazy golf and footgolf i.e. the fun golf facilities.

3.43 The fun golf provision in Sandwell Valley (comprising Crazy Golf, Footgolf and Pitch and Putt) is very popular, with circa 7,000 users predominantly young people and families) in 2018. Given the Crazy Golf is now 7-8 years old there are aspirations to refurbish and update the facility.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. From this report it can be concluded that, due to the high-level supply of golf courses in Sandwell and the low latent demand for participating in golf, there is an over-supply of golf facilities in Sandwell.
- 4.2. The golf development pathway also demonstrates that there is significant opportunity for Sandwell residents to participate in golf at all stages.
- 4.3. Given the over-supply of facilities, the revenue subsidy required for the operation of Brandhall Golf Course, and the capital that would be required to bring this facility up to standard, it is recommended that the Council explore further the long-term sustainability of Council-owned golf facilities as well how best to deliver the golf development pathway.
- 4.4. Based upon this, it is considered that a full options appraisal is undertaken on all Sandwell Council golf facilities.

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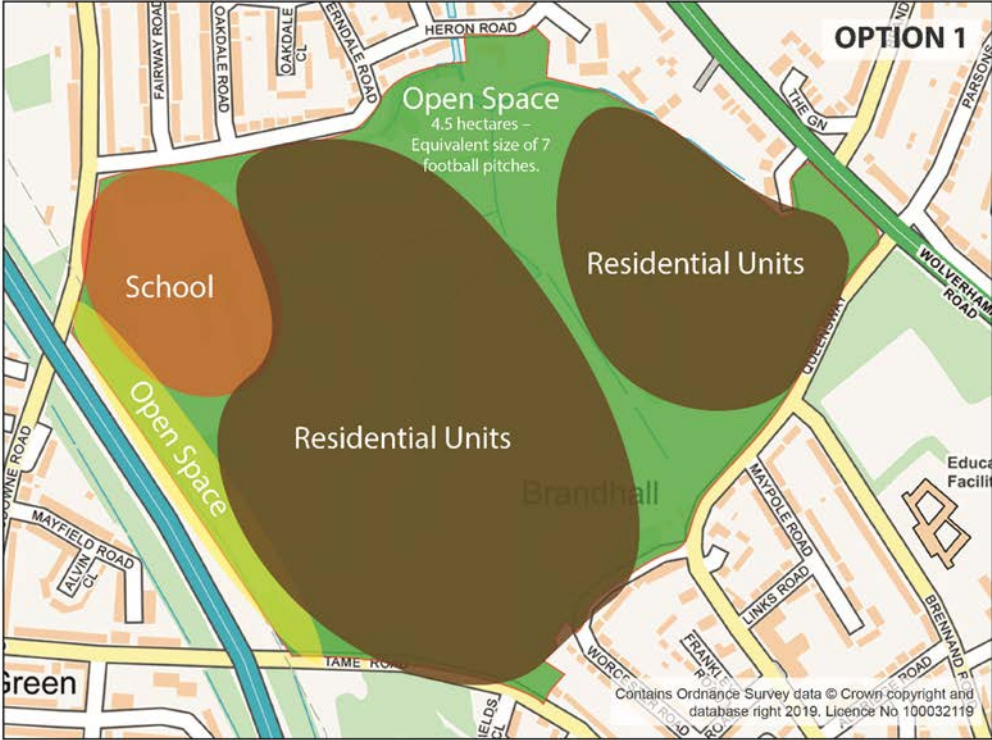


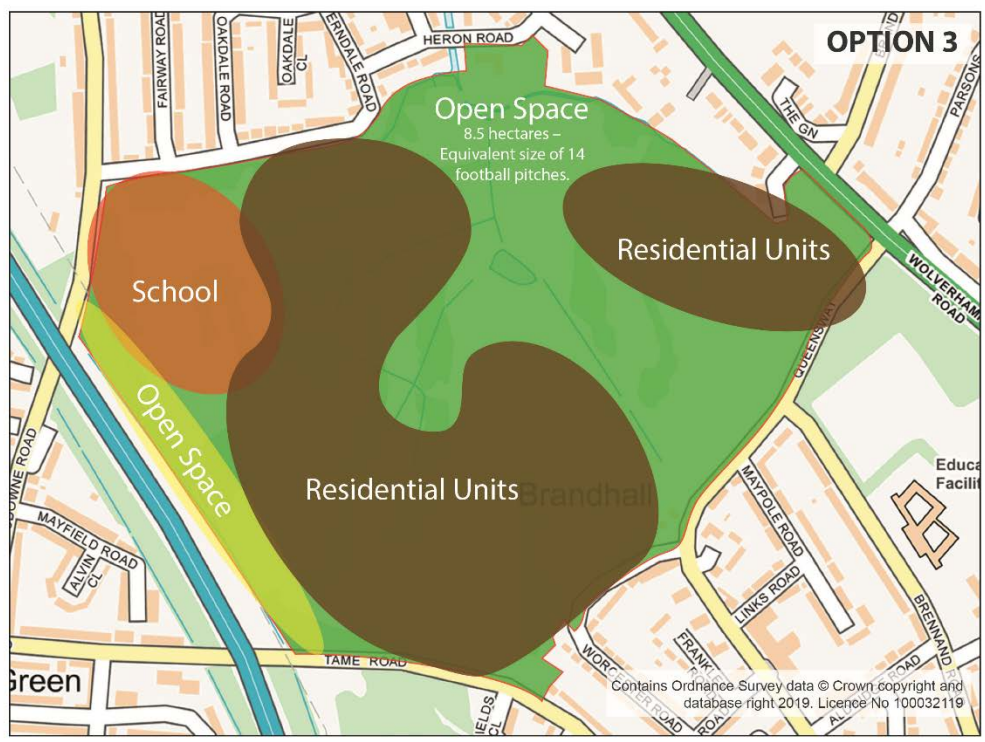
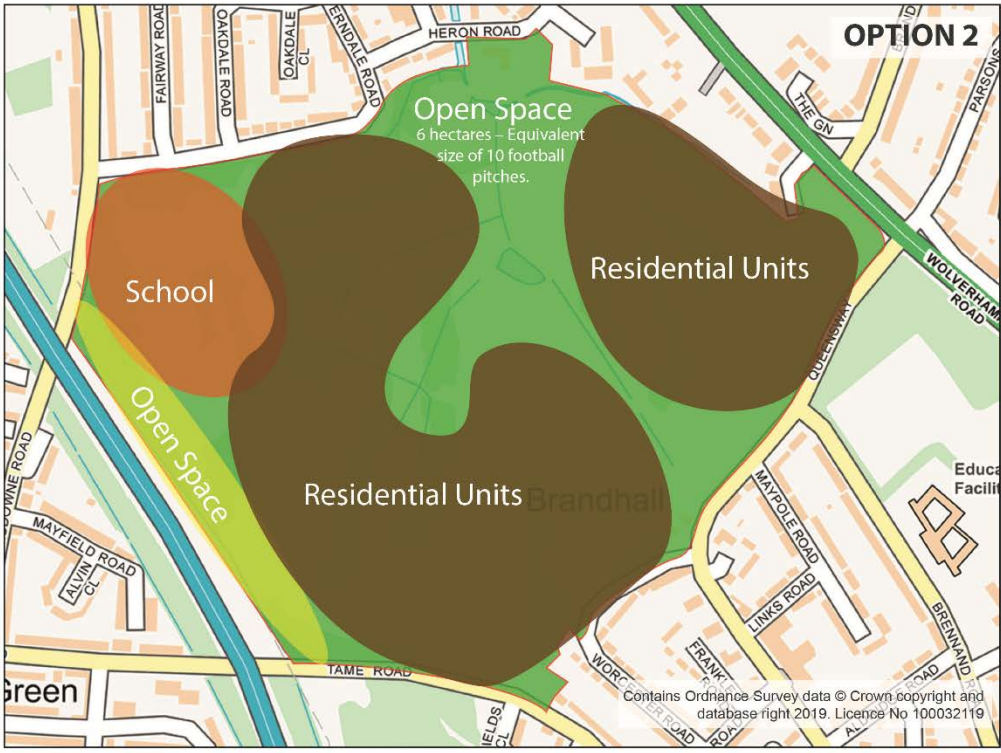


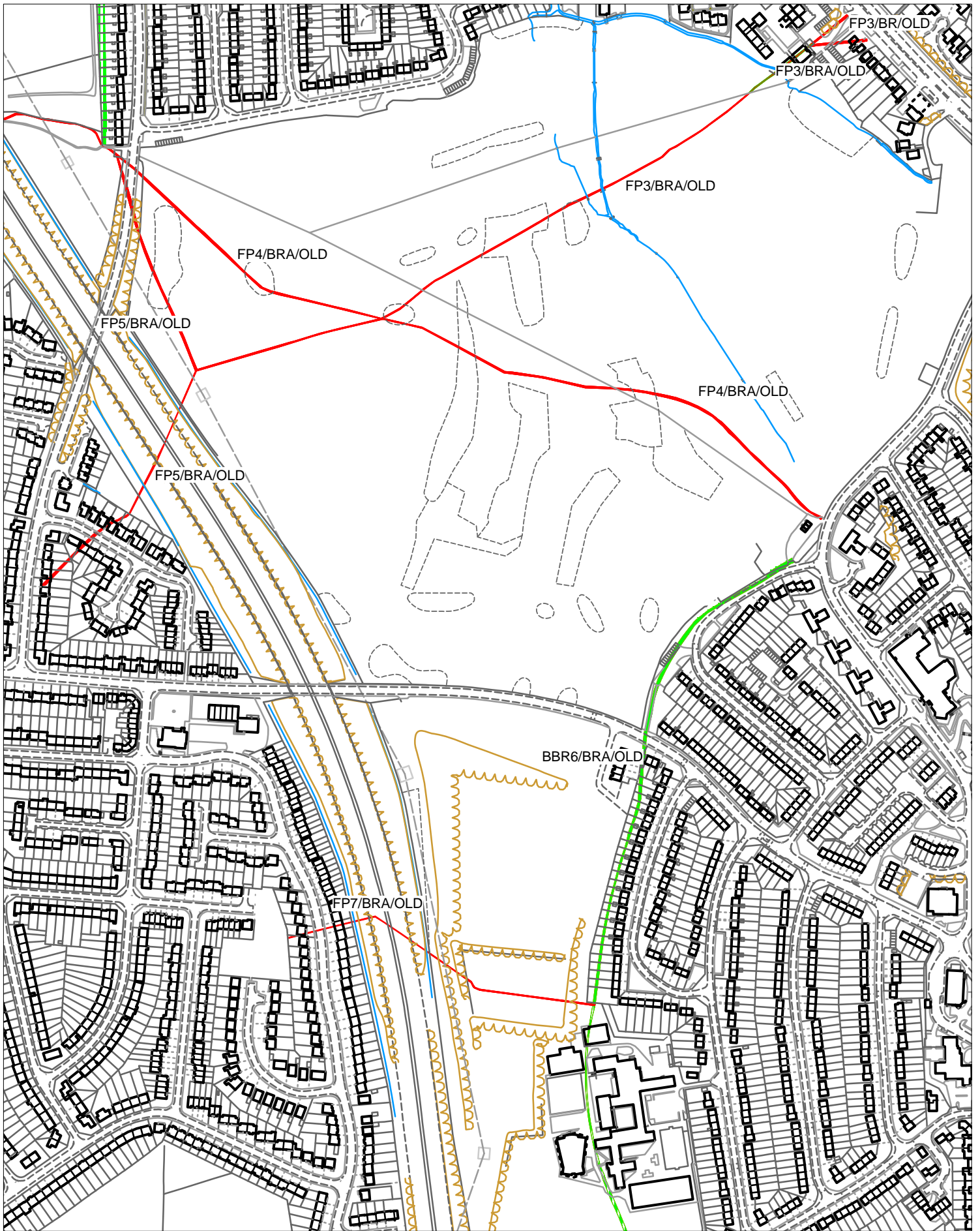
# Appendix 1

## Brandhall Golf Course proposed development options

Some consideration has been given to the potential level of housing and park land that could be delivered on Brandhall Golf Course. These are conceptual ideas only. Any redevelopment proposal would be subject to a full masterplan and planning application.







## Map of Brandhall golf course showing Public Rights of Way

Scale



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# **Brandhall Golf Course - Future Alternative Uses**

## **Consultation Report (February 2020)**

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## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Brandhall Golf Course proposed development options

Appendix 2 - Cabinet Report – Brandhall Golf Course - Potential Options for Future Use

Appendix 3 - Press release

Appendix 4 - Letter to golf club representatives

Appendix 5 - Letter to residents

Appendix 6 - Brandhall Golf Course consultation postal catchment area

Appendix 7 - Press release

Appendix 8 – Follow-up letter to golf club representatives

Appendix 9 – Follow-up letter to residents

Appendix 10 - Brandhall Golf Course survey

Appendix 11 - Drop-in session enquiry form

Appendix 12 - Drop-in session sign-in sheet

Appendix 13 - Enquiry tracker

Appendix 14 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Appendix 15 - Golf Needs Assessment and Golf Development Pathway

# 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 At the Cabinet Meeting on 30 October 2019, the following was resolved (Minute No.124/19);

- (1) That the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods, undertake all requisite steps necessary to ensure effective consultation with regards to the proposed closure and alternative uses of the Brandhall Golf Course site
- (2) following consultation, consider a more detailed report on future use of the site.

A six-week consultation period was then planned and carried out which started on 7 November and ended on 19 December 2019.

1.2 This was proposed as a result of a period of investigative work that was carried out as a result of a previous cabinet approval relating to the Built Facilities Strategy.

At the Cabinet meeting on 31 January 2018 the following recommendations were resolved (Key Decision Ref. No. SMBC16173, Minute No. 19/18);

1. That the adoption of Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facilities Strategy be approved;
2. That the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods develop further reports to Cabinet for the following priority opportunities:
  - Opportunity 8 (O8) – Secure the long-term sustainability of golf in Sandwell by supporting independent clubs, creating a golf development pathway, and identifying potential alternative uses for Brandhall Golf Course.
3. That Council be recommended to appoint Members to the Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group.

Following the above approval officers appointed a consultant to carry out a Golf Needs Assessment and Golf Development Pathway (Appendix 15). The main outcomes of this investigative work found the following;

- The golf market in the UK has changed in recent years from a sport operating through club membership to one where pay and play is now more desirable. All golf facilities in Sandwell offer pay and play options for use.

- There is a high-level supply of golf courses in Sandwell and a low latent demand, leaving each facility competing for the same golfers and increasing the risk of golf courses becoming unsustainable.
- There is a total of 39 golf courses inside and outside the Borough boundary. This includes 7 facilities inside Sandwell and a further 32 golf facilities being within 20 minutes' drive from the borough boundary.
- Brandhall Golf Course is in poor condition and would need significant capital investment to bring it up to the required standard.
- The golf development pathway demonstrates that there is significant opportunity for Sandwell residents to participate in golf at all stages.
- It is a recommendation of the report that the Council explores further the long-term sustainability of Council-owned golf facilities as well how best to deliver the golf development pathway.
- It is also recommended within the report that a full options appraisal is undertaken on all Sandwell Council golf facilities. Therefore, there is an opportunity for Sandwell Council to consider the facilities that it currently supplies and the impact these have on the sustainability of golf in the Borough.
- The report concluded that, due to the high-level supply of golf courses in Sandwell and the low latent demand for participating in golf, there is an over-supply of golf facilities in Sandwell.
- Attendances at Brandhall Golf Course have reduced overall since 2013, see table below;

<b>Year</b>	<b>Attendances</b>
2013/2014	30,767
2014/2015	26,040
2015/2016	28,832
2016/2017	26,944
2017/2018	22,887
2018/2019	23,019

- The number of SLT golf members has reduced each year since 2016 as outlined in table 3 below. The expected number of members nationally for an 18-hole golf course is 480.



<b>Year</b>	<b>SLT Golf Members</b>
2016/2017	352
2017/2018	337
2018/2019	334
2019/2020	318

1.3 As a result of the findings outlined above the Council made proposals regarding the future use of the Brandhall Golf Course site. These proposals were consulted on as part of the consultation process.

## **2 CONSULTATION PROCESS**

### **2.1 Rationale and Scope**

To consult Sandwell residents on the Council's proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course and Club House and utilise the site to build a new school (replacement for Causeway Green Primary School), develop a new park and open space for the local community and provide much needed local housing. The Council provided three initial indicative options of how the proposed development options could be provided (Appendix 1).

Brandhall Golf Course is recognised as a 'boroughwide' facility, therefore the consultation process was open to anyone with an interest in the facility, including all residents of Sandwell. For reference, Sport England guidance states that the primary catchment area for a golf course is 20 minutes' drive time.

The consultation results include the views of all respondents, irrespective of their home location.

Consultation did not specifically target people outside of Sandwell as the views of local people were the primary concern for the Council. The proposed future developments have been identified to benefit Sandwell residents, therefore the views of people who live in Sandwell were prioritised.

Due to the locality of Brandhall Golf Course, responses to the survey have also been analysed and collated into a 'local residents' group. This is defined by those who live within the B68 postcode area to enable the Council to understand the view of those who live closest to the facility.

## **2.2 Elements of the Consultation Exercise**

### **Stage 1: Communications – Press Release and Letters**

The Cabinet Report - Brandhall Golf Course – Potential Options for Future Use (Appendix 2) was published online (via CMIS) in line with the Council's democratic processes on Tuesday 22 October 2019. The Cabinet report detailed the Council's proposal to consult on closing the facility and potentially developing a park, new school and housing on the site. A press release (Appendix 3) was issued to the local media and councillors to coincide with the Cabinet report. This press release was also uploaded to the Council's and Sandwell Leisure Trust's websites.

The Council was keen to ensure that the key stakeholders (i.e. local residents, staff, the golf club and Causeway Green Primary School) were given prior notice of the publication of these proposals. Council officers met with golf club committee representatives on Monday 21 October 2019 at 1pm. Club representatives were informed of the proposals and the process to collate the evidence which led to the proposals. Club representatives were provided with 300 letters (Appendix 4) from the Council to distribute to their members with details of the forthcoming Cabinet report and proposed consultation exercise. The same letter was sent to everybody with a golf course membership with Sandwell Leisure Trust, this included 318 members.

Letters (Appendix 5) were sent to 2,243 local residents prior to the Cabinet report (scheduled for 20 October 2019 Cabinet meeting) being published, informing them of the forthcoming Cabinet report and proposed consultation exercise. Appendix 6 shows the catchment area that was identified to receive letters. These were identified as the residents in the immediate vicinity of the golf course. 173 households (i.e. those closest to the golf course) received hand delivered letters from 6:30am on 21 October 2019 with others receiving posted letters.

Senior representatives at Causeway Green Primary School were also informed of the forthcoming press release and Cabinet Report in advance.

### **Stage 2: Launch of Consultation Period**

Following Cabinet approval on 30 October 2019, the six-week consultation period commenced on 7 November 2019. A press release was issued to the local media and councillors which was also uploaded to the website (Appendix 7). The launch of the consultation was also promoted via the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts, e-newsletter to residents and the staff message.

A further letter (Appendix 8 and Appendix 9) was sent to the golf club and local residents (the same mailing list as initial letters) on 5 November 2019 informing them further that the consultation process was to commence on 7 November 2019. Copies of the golf club letter were provided to the club representatives to distribute to golf course and club users upon their visits. Additional copies were provided throughout the process when required.

### **Stage 3: Live Consultation Phase - 7 November – 19 December 2019**

#### **Survey**

A survey (Appendix 10) was developed to ascertain the following:

- Current usage levels of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House;
- Impact of potential closure;
- Views on importance of open space;
- Views on amount and 'make-up' of proposed open space;
- Importance of local school provision and proposed new school;
- Views on quality, type and requirement of new local housing; and
- Overall views on the Council's proposed three development options.

The survey was available online and was promoted via club and resident consultation letters. It was also promoted via social media and on the Council website homepage. Paper copies were made available at the 'drop-in' sessions and support was provided to complete the surveys if required. Attendees at 'drop-in' sessions were actively encouraged to complete a survey as part of the session.

A supply of paper copies was also provided to the golf club and were available from the club house and club shop throughout the process.

#### **'Drop In' Sessions**

The Council wanted to hold consultation sessions to specifically engage the local community in the consultation process. In total, three sessions were held (details below) as well as a further consultation session that was requested by Brandhall Golf Club members and committee.

***Session 1: Tuesday 12 November, 10:00am-1:00pm at Brandhall Library, Tame Road, Oldbury, B68 0JT***

***Session 2: Wednesday 27 November, 1:00pm-4:00pm at Brandhall Library, Tame Road, Oldbury, B68 0JT***

**Session 3: Monday 16 December, 5:00pm-8:00pm at Brandhall Library, Tame Road, Oldbury, B68 0JT**

**Session 4 (additional session at the request of Brandhall Golf Club Representatives): Thursday 5 December, 7:00pm-8:30pm at Brandhall Golf Club**

Three community sessions were held at a neutral venue as close as possible to the golf course (taking into account access and availability). Council officers from relevant service areas (Planning, Education, Parks and Sport & Leisure) were present at each of the sessions to engage with residents on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Local residents could attend at any time within the session on an informal basis to ask questions, raise any concerns and have the opportunity to gain support with completing the survey. Paper copies of the survey were also made available for residents to take away and return to the Council at a later date.

Enquiry forms (Appendix 11) were also provided to capture comments and specific enquiries that were later followed up and responded to, where required. Council officers at the sessions utilised these forms to capture comments and enquiries as part of informal conversations.

For sessions two and three, attendees were asked to complete a 'sign-in' sheet (Appendix 12) on arrival, providing information to enable us to understand who attended and their interest in the golf course. This was not carried out at the first session as it was anticipated that Council officers would be able to collect this information as part of the individual enquiry forms. However, due to the large number of attendees at the first session this was not possible; therefore, an alternative approach of signing in was implemented for following sessions.

A further session was delivered, at the request of Brandhall Golf Club representatives. This took place at Brandhall Golf Club and was attended by club members and local residents. This was delivered as a 'Question & Answer' format with questions being answered by Council officers representing the relevant service areas (Planning, Education, Parks and Sport & Leisure). The Chief Executive Officer of Sandwell Leisure Trust was also present at the club session.

Information was displayed at each of the sessions for attendees. This included key information from the related cabinet report, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and visuals of the three conceptual redevelopment options.

## **General Enquiries**

The Council encouraged and invited written (including email) enquiries. An email address was set up specifically for the consultation period, [brandhall\\_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk). This was promoted within the press release, letters, social media and the Council website. All enquiries to the Council, via the email address or direct to Council representatives, were logged via an 'Enquiry Tracker' (Appendix 13) and responded to at the earliest opportunity. A team member from Sport and Leisure was allocated responsibility for monitoring incoming enquiries for the duration of the consultation period. Responses were collated and checked with relevant colleagues to ensure detailed and robust responses were provided.

A list of questions and answers were added to the Council's website during the consultation, to help answer frequently asked questions (Appendix 14).

## **Press and Social Media**

Press enquiries were responded to by the Council's Communications Team. Social media comments and queries were also monitored by the Communications Team and responded to as necessary. The Communications Team shared relevant links and updates on both the Council's Twitter and Facebook pages.

## **Stage 4: Consultation Analysis – methodology**

Following the completion of the six-week consultation period, all feedback has been collated. Including the following:

### **Survey**

A total of 712 surveys were completed, either online or handwritten. All responses have been tallied to provide overall totals and percentages for each question. A total of 3,473 specific comments were received in the 'open sections' of the survey. Each one of these has been logged and categorised. All handwritten and returned copies of the survey have been manually inputted and, therefore, included in the analysis.

### **'Drop In' Sessions**

Completed 'sign-in' sheets have been collated to provide an overview of attendees. All comments and questions recorded on Enquiry Forms have also been logged, listed and categorised.

## General Enquiries

All emails, letters and Freedom of Information requests were recorded on an 'Enquiry Tracker'. These have been individually reviewed and overarching themes and sub themes have been developed.

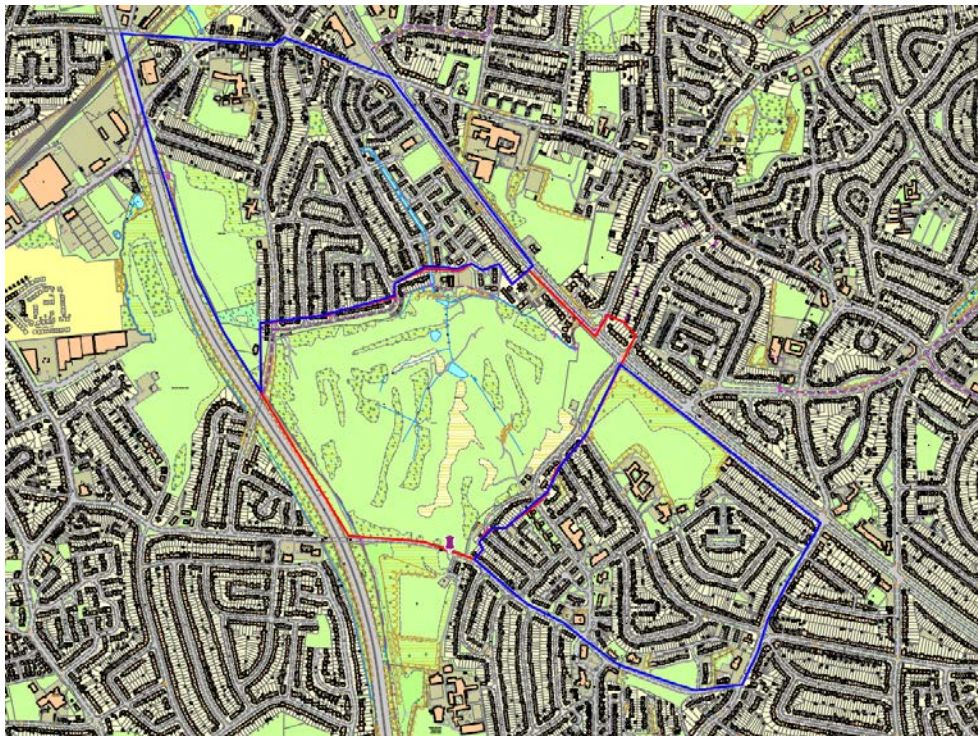
## Press and Social Media

Press coverage and social media comments have been reviewed and categorised into key themes.

## 3 CONSULTATION FINDINGS

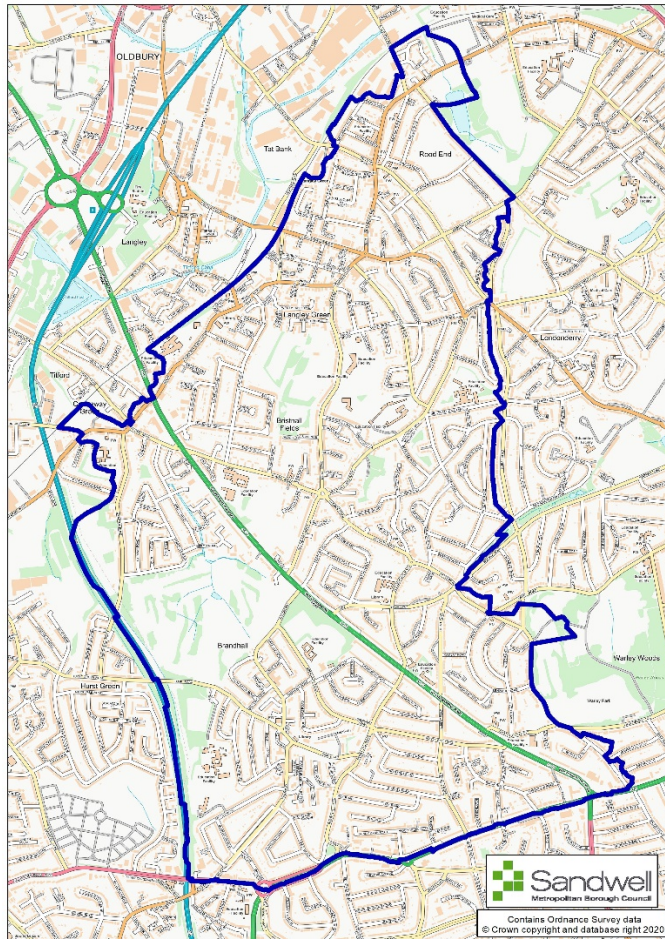
### 3.1 Engagement;

Those residents most local to the golf course were prioritised when promoting the consultation. The catchment area below was identified to form a mailing list. This includes 2,243 households that were written to twice to promote the consultation process - once before the launch of the consultation and once on the day that it went live. These households include 5,107\* individual residents.



\* Data Source: Office for National Statistics, Mid-Year Estimates 2018 LSOAs

Despite directly promoting to 2,243 households, as well as the wider Sandwell community, in total 712 people completed the consultation survey, all of which live in Sandwell. 358 of survey respondents were from the B68 postcode area, including the 'engagement catchment area'.



The consultation was promoted twice by the Council via the Council’s Facebook page, reaching over 28,000 people with a second post receiving 3,500 engagements. The Council made five Tweets promoting the consultation with a mean average reach of 3187 people per Tweet.

Overall, while promoting the consultation process as outlined above, the Council reached circa 35,000 people.

3.2 Overall feedback from those who engaged in the consultation presented a balanced view about the closure of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House and a largely positive view about the proposed development options.

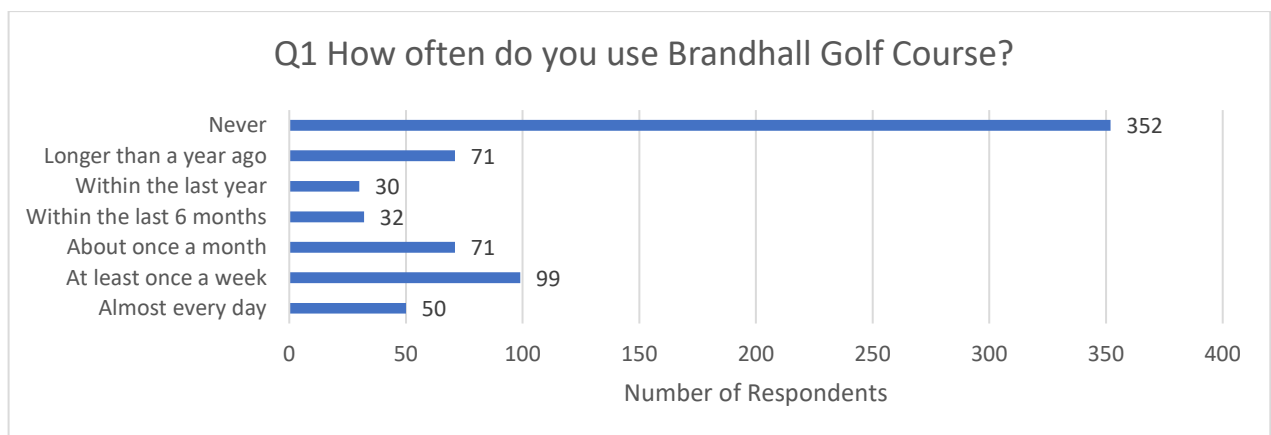


Figure 1: Frequency of usage of Brandhall Golf Course

Figure 1 above shows that the majority of survey respondents never or rarely use Brandhall Golf Course. This is also evident when just looking at responses from those who live in the B68 postcode area. 56.4% of those who live in the B68 area never use the facility. Please note, 705 out of 712 respondents answered this question. Seven respondents chose not to answer Question 1.

18 of the 50 respondents who use Brandhall Golf Course 'Almost every day', as shown in Figure 1 above, stated that this was to play golf, and 74 of the 99 respondents who use Brandhall Golf Course 'At least once a week' stated that this was to play golf.

60% of the members of Brandhall Golf Course are from outside of Sandwell which provides some explanation to the responses received from local people, i.e. there is currently low usage by Sandwell residents, therefore low anticipated impact to local residents should it close.

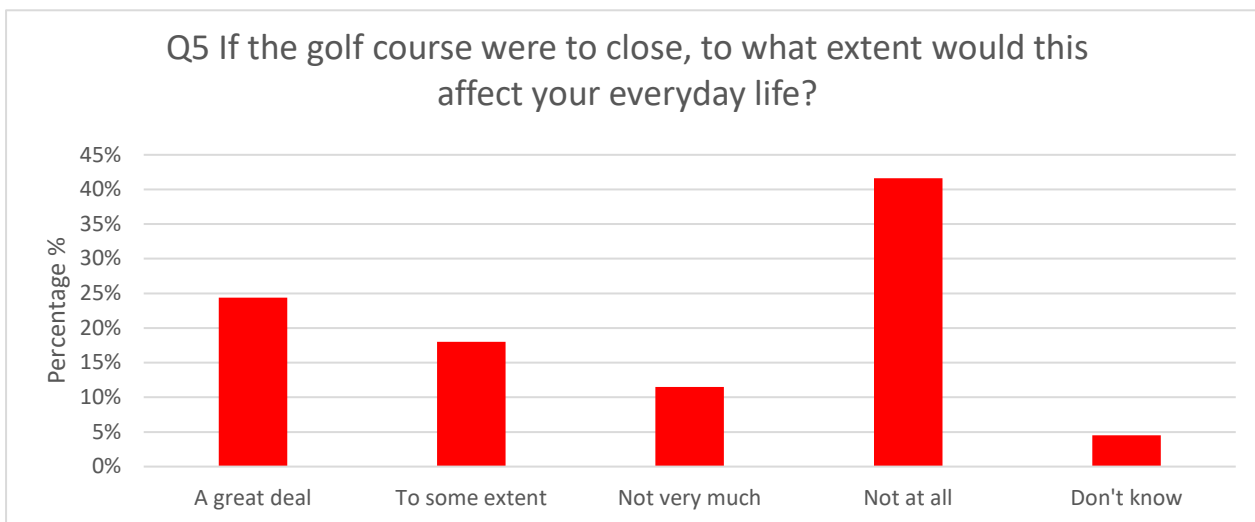


Figure 2: Potential impact of closure (all respondents)

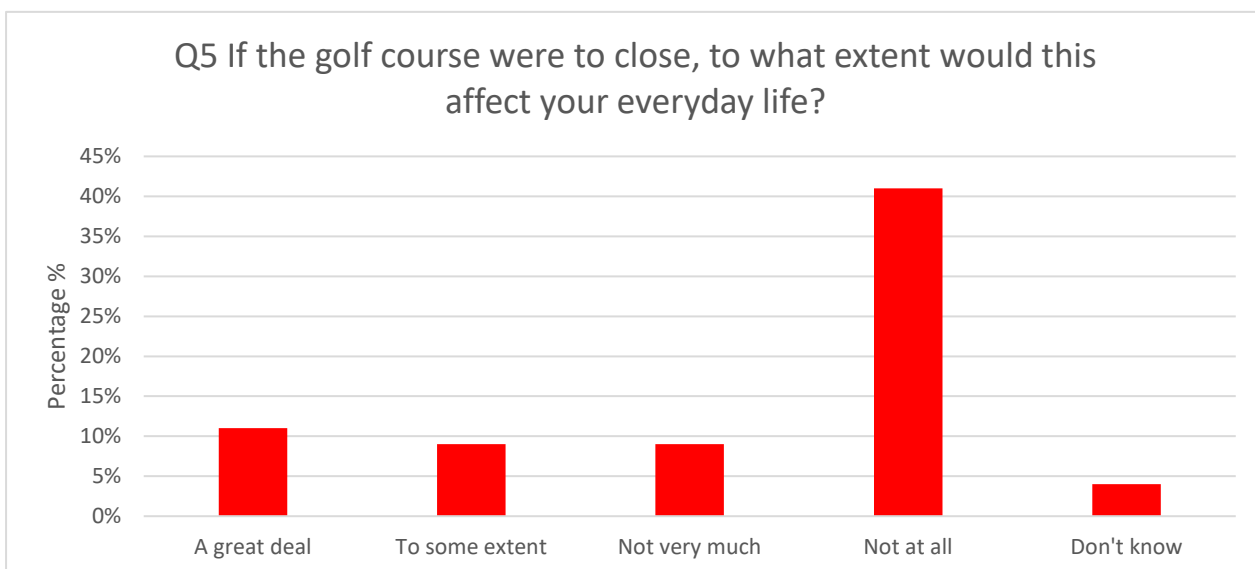


Figure 3: Potential impact of closure (local residents only – excluding golfers)



Figure 2 and 3 above show the extent to which respondents felt they would be affected should the facility close. Figure 2 presents the responses of all respondents with most (294 respondents) stating that they would not be affected at all. Many of those who stated they would be affected 'a great deal' were golf course users.

When considering the views of people who do not play golf at Brandhall Golf Course, just 11% or 70 respondents stated that they would be affected 'a great deal'. All of these respondents stated that they currently use the golf course for 'physical activity' or 'to walk the dog'. Both of these activities could continue under the Council's proposed development which includes a significant new local park and open space. There are two existing 'rights of way' across the course which would be retained should a development take place. The position of these may need to be adjusted but access would be retained.

3.3 The survey also asked respondents to state how they would be affected if they had said they would be. Figure 4 shows a summary of these responses.

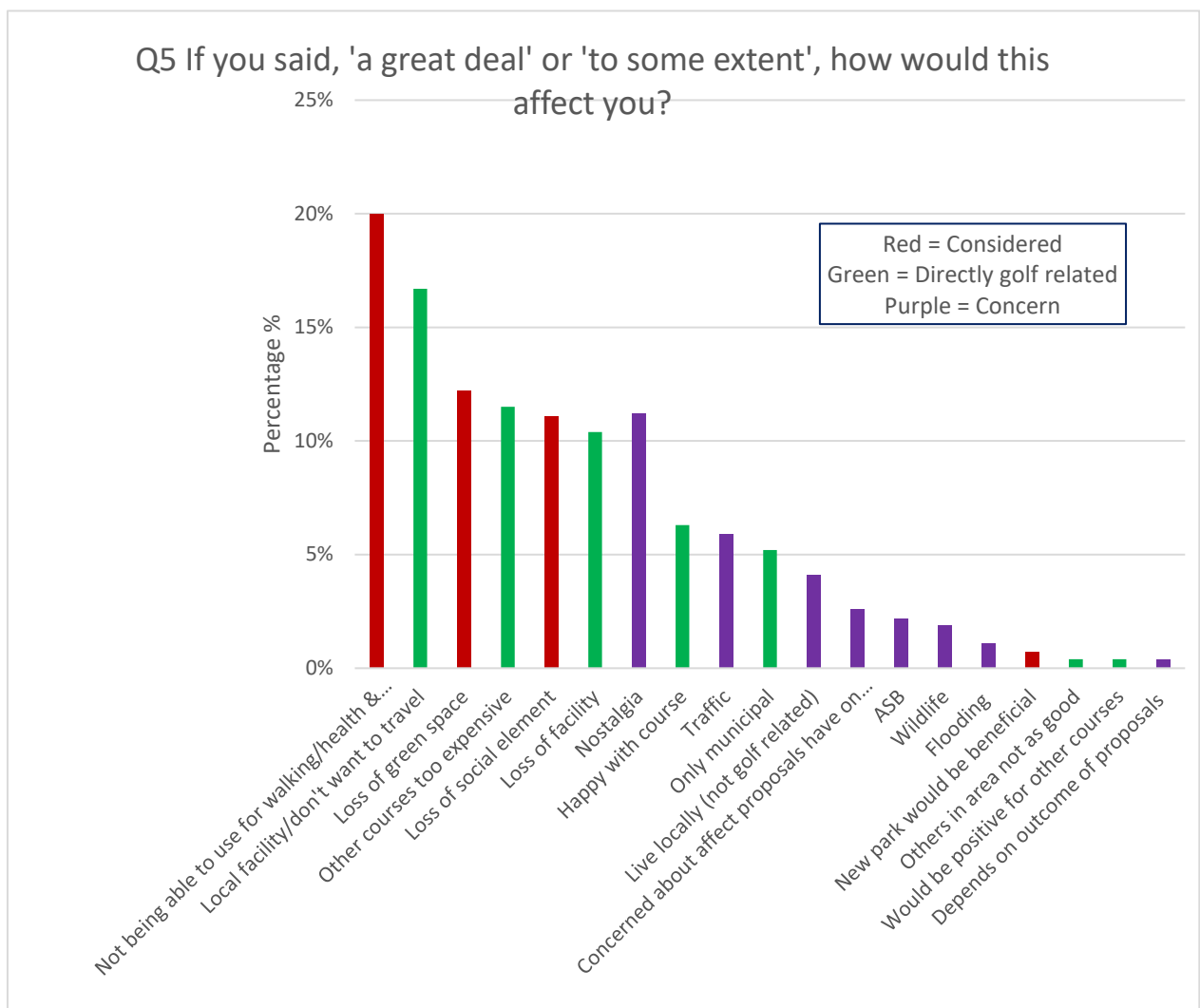


Figure 4: Summary of responses showing how respondents would be affected by closure of the golf course

The responses highlighted in green are those which relate directly to the potential loss of the golf provision. As stated within the Golf Needs Assessment Report (appendix 15) there are a further 38 golf facilities within a 20-minute drive of Sandwell. This includes 26 18-hole and eight 9-hole golf courses, with the report concluding that there is an oversupply of golf facilities in the local area. Within Sandwell, there are three 18-hole and two 9-hole courses all of which offer 'pay-and-play' options.

The responses highlighted in purple are those that can be regarded as 'concerns'. It is not yet known whether these issues would come to fruition. Should the Council proceed with a development on this site, all of the appropriate site surveys and assessments would be carried out to ensure mitigation of any potential issues.

The responses highlighted in red are those that the Council have already considered in terms of the amenities that the proposed future development would provide. In particular, the provision of a new local park would convert the golf course from restricted open to accessible open space, a net gain for the area.

3.4 The survey asked how important people felt it was to have a local park, good educational facilities and good quality local housing. Most respondents stated that this was important. This was also consistent with the views of those respondents that live in the B68 postcode area (open space 89.5%, education 77% and housing 63.8%)

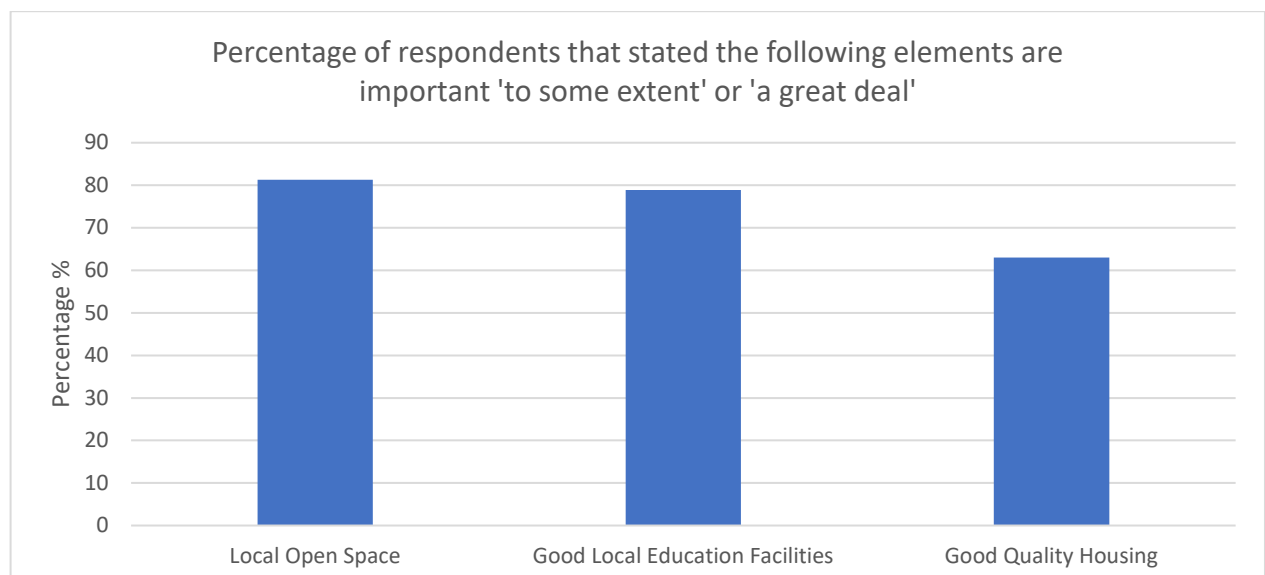


Figure 5: Percentage of respondents that stated that local open space, good educational facilities and good quality housing are important 'to some extent' or 'a great deal'.

3.5 There was a very strong reaction (objection) to proposals from some golfers and local residents (i.e. those who live in the immediate vicinity to the golf course). This strength of feeling was predominantly expressed 'face-to-face' at the 'drop in' sessions and at the club session.

The main concerns of this group were captured at the 'drop in' sessions and via the general enquiries that were received. In total, 37 written (email or letters) were received. The main queries and comments from these enquiries included;

- Environmental concerns, i.e. potential loss of trees and perceived loss of green space. Master planning for the site would ensure that there would be no loss of trees overall.
- Health concerns were also raised regarding the proposed proximity of the school to the motorway and overhead power cables. The location of the school would be subject to a full environmental assessment and has not yet been agreed.
- Some people raised concerns regarding the proposals for the change of use rather than keeping the golf course open. The survey (appendix 10) asks a number of open questions and provided a number of opportunities to make open comments and express their views.
- The potential loss of the social facility (club house) was also raised. Consideration is being given to the re-provision of a community facility within the proposed development.
- Concerns about an increased flood risk as a result of a housing development. Should a development proceed then a full flood risk assessment would be carried out.
- Concerns about increased traffic in the local area as a result of the proposed development. Again, a full traffic assessment would form part of a master plan.
- A new local park would benefit the local community and environment.
- The proposed development, as a whole, would be positive for the local area.
- A number of comments were received stating that new housing is needed in the local area.
- There were also comments made regarding the subsidy that the Council currently provides for the operation of the facility, that the level of subsidy is not justified.

Despite the issues raised, the majority of people felt that each of the elements of the Council's proposals are important. Around 80% of respondents felt that local open space and good educational facilities are important. Over 60% felt that good quality housing is important. This is outlined in Figure 5 above.

3.6 Some golfers and local residents reported anecdotally that the social element of the golf course (i.e. the club house) was of great importance to local people. This was also captured via general enquiries that were received. However, this was not reflected in the responses received via the survey, which is illustrated in the graph below.

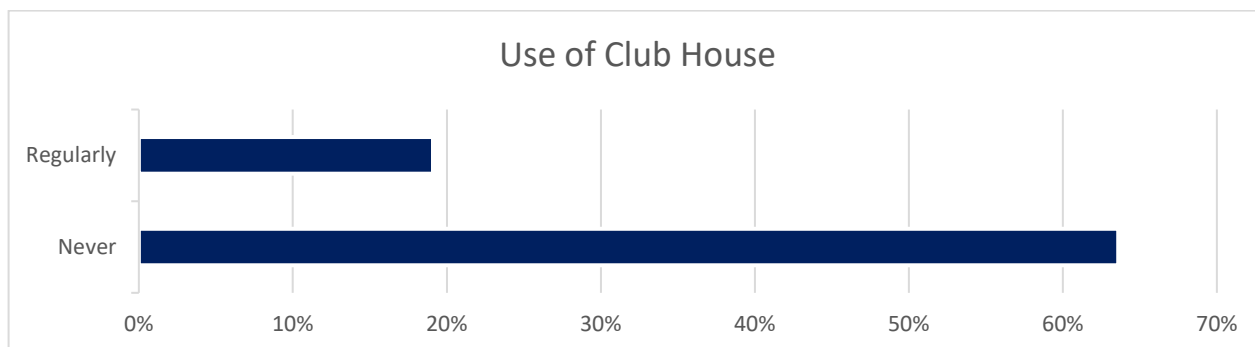


Figure 6: Use of club house for social activities (all respondents)

Further to this, 69.6% (250) of respondents who live within the B68 postcode never use the club house. 13.4% (48) of the 359 respondents use the club house 'regularly' (i.e. 'about once a month', 'about once a week' or 'almost every day'). However, as outlined above, consideration will be given to the re-provision of a social facility for the local community as part of future developments should the golf course close.

- 3.7 The survey provided respondents the opportunity to provide any further comments. The table below shows a summary of the comments made and how many respondents made them. The most common comment related to keeping the golf course open. However, this accounted for just 13.5% of all respondents. 5.5% of the 13.5% were from the B68 postcode.

**Table 1: Further comments**

<b>Q13 - Further comments</b>		
Keep BGC	96	13.5%
Keep green space/keep more green space	47	6.6%
Happy to see alternative proposals for BGC	46	6.5%
traffic/parking/congestion/infrastructure issues	40	5.6%
Build on brownfield or alternative sites	36	5%
Consider environment/wildlife/trees in alternative use	34	4.8%
Change to 9 hole/make improvements/improve advertising	32	4.5%
Don't need more houses	30	4.2%
'Done deal'/unhappy with survey	27	3.8%
Nostalgia	23	3.2%
Questioning Golf Report/subsidy/costs to improve	18	2.5%
Loss of health benefits with loss of BGC	18	2.5%
Agree with new school build	15	2.1%
New school in incorrect location	13	1.8%
Flooding	13	1.8%
Disagree with new school build	10	1.4%
Need council/affordable/social houses	7	1%
Criticism of how currently run and current operator	6	0.8%
Need houses	5	0.7%
Can't afford private housing	4	0.6%
Enough parks already	2	0.3%

3.8 The Council's proposed future development options were included in the survey and respondents were asked to state which option they preferred.



The majority of respondents stated that they preferred the option with the largest park and fewest houses. A breakdown is shown below;

- Option 1: 40 respondents (7.9%)
- Option 2: 40 respondents (7.9%)

- Option 3: 428 respondents (84.3%)

## 4 Summary

- 4.1 The strongest objections to the Council's proposals were expressed by some golfers and local residents. This was mainly captured at face-to-face sessions and via general written enquiries. Overall, the majority of respondents expressed a more balanced view regarding the potential closure and proposed development options.

The overall analysis of the survey, taking into account all responses regardless of respondents' postcode location, reflected very similarly when analysing responses of local residents. Overall those with B68 postcode had similar views to those from other areas of Sandwell.

The consultation exercise sought to explore the current usage of the facility and the impact on local people should it close. The consultation findings show that the majority of people engaged in the consultation never or rarely use the facility and around half of survey respondents would not be affected by closure.

The consultation exercise also sought to capture what local people felt was important to their local community. Most survey respondents felt that the amenities that the Council are proposing are important, with most respondents opting for Option 3 of the development proposals. However, a number of golf club members and local residents that attended the 'drop in' sessions made their feelings clear that they wanted to golf course to remain.

Overall, the consultation findings supported the work carried out previously (i.e. that the facility is underused by Sandwell residents in general). In particular, the majority of local residents do not use the facility and would not be affected if it closed.

Many of the concerns raised can be mitigated through the delivery of the Council's proposals and careful consideration would be given to addressing these concerns. As outlined in Section 2, proactive measures were taken to promote the consultation process to as many residents as possible.

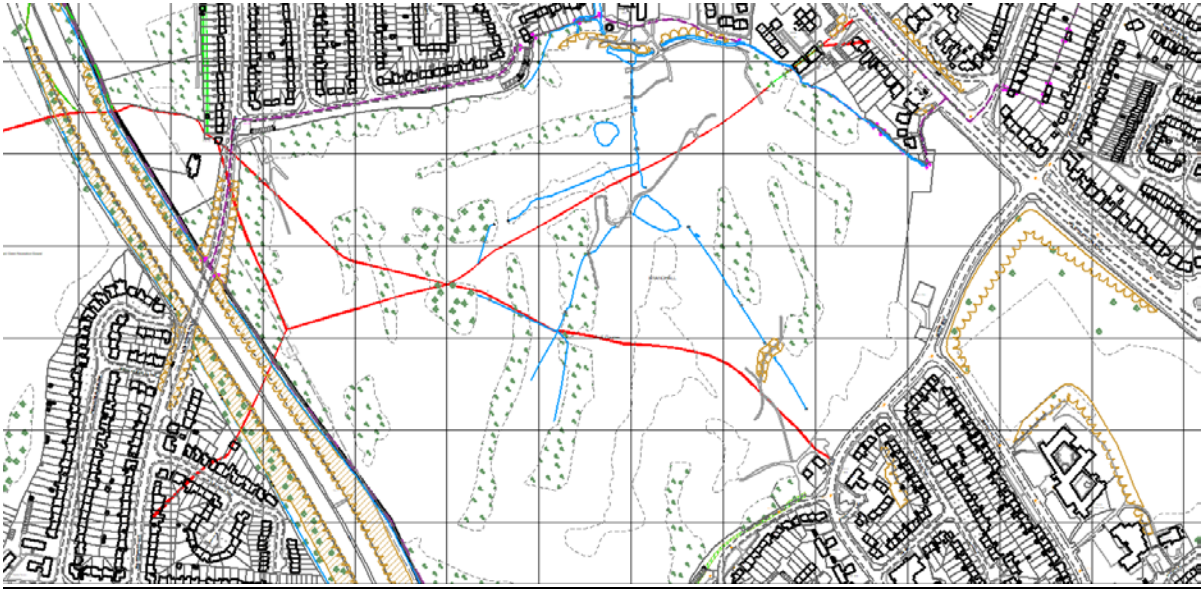
Over 2,000 households (5,107 people) were contacted to participate in the consultation. The consultation was promoted twice by the Council via the Council's Facebook page, reaching over 28,000 people with a second post receiving 3,500 engagements. The Council made five Tweets promoting the consultation with a mean average reach of 3187 people per Tweet.

Overall, while promoting the consultation process as outlined above, the Council reached circa 35,000 people. Despite this level of engagement, just 712 residents completed the survey, an estimated 100 people attended the 'drop in' sessions, and 37 people wrote directly to us to express their views.

## **5 Next Steps and Considerations**

- 5.1 Consultation findings to be presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board on 27 February 2020. The scrutiny board will then make recommendations for Cabinet to consider.
- 5.2 Further site feasibility work is required and a full site investigation, including ecological surveys, topographical survey, traffic assessments and flood risk assessments. This will enable the development of a master plan for the site.

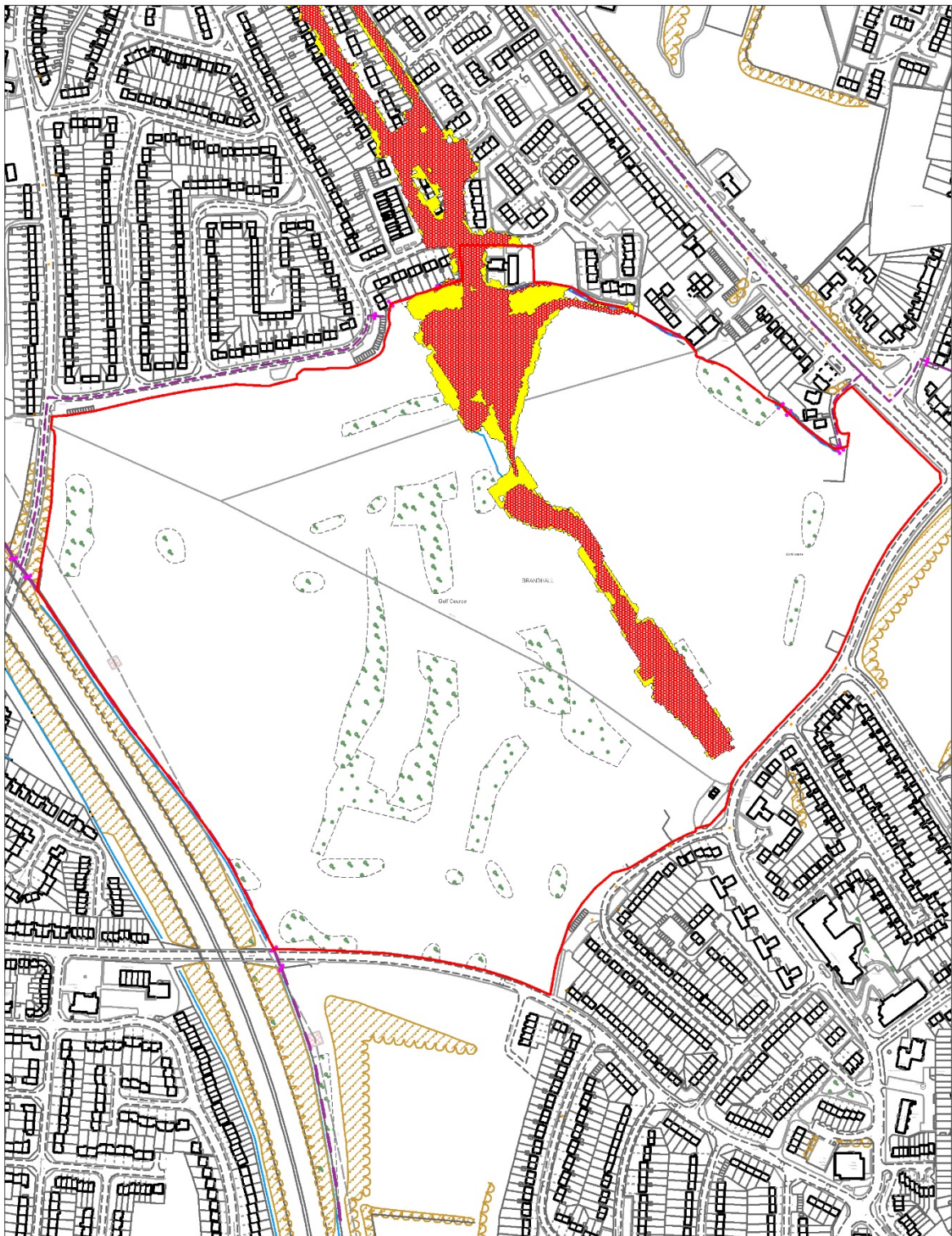
**Pack collating the information obtained by the Council to confirm the acceptability of the development of the Brandhall Golf Course in principle.**







**Public Rights of Way crossing the site shown coloured red.**

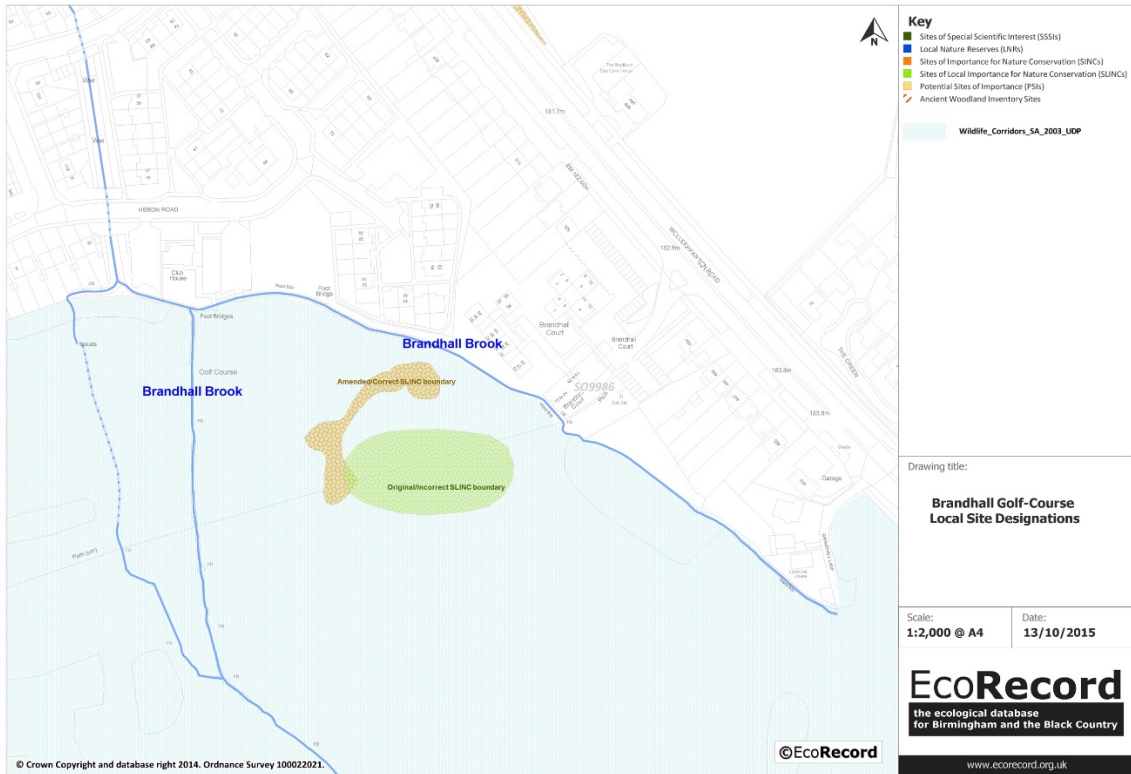
Copyright Ordnance Survey





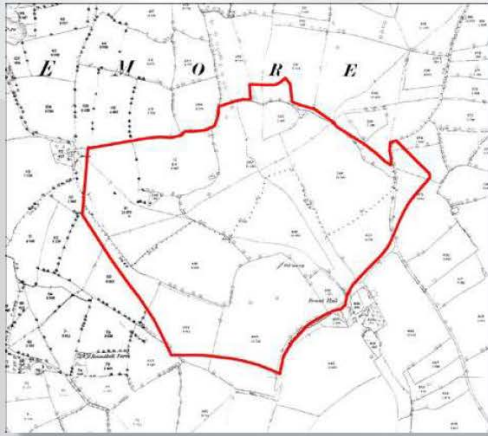
	 Flood Zone 3  Flood Zone 2	<p>This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright.</p> <p>Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.</p> <p>Sandwell MBC Licence No 100032119 2015</p>
<p>Not To Scale</p>	 <p>NORTH</p>	

**Designated Flood Zones**



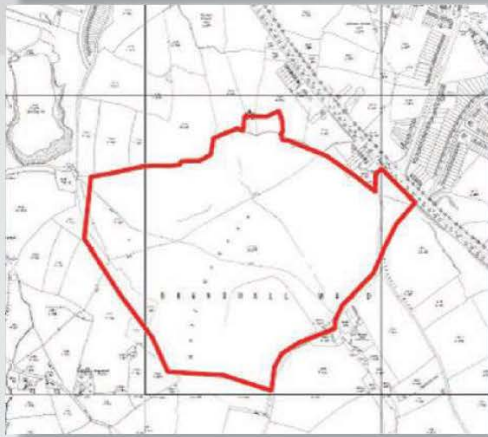
**Designated Nature Conservation Areas.**

### 3.1 SITE HISTORY



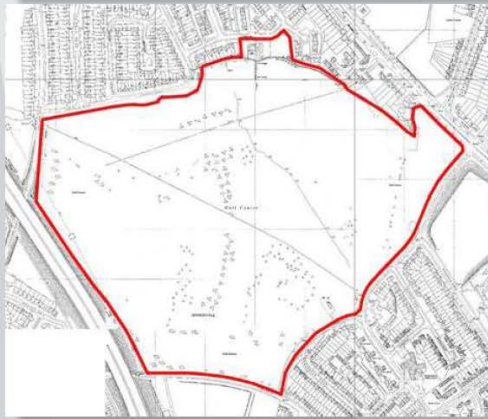
**Figure 7: 1890**

Ordnance survey records indicate that in 1890 the site was undeveloped farmland including an old quarry to the north of "Brandhall" which was a large property.



**Figure 8: 1937**

The 1919 Edition showed that the site was now a golf course with undeveloped fields around it. The 1937 map as shown opposite indicated that the property known as "Brandhall" was now the club house for the course.



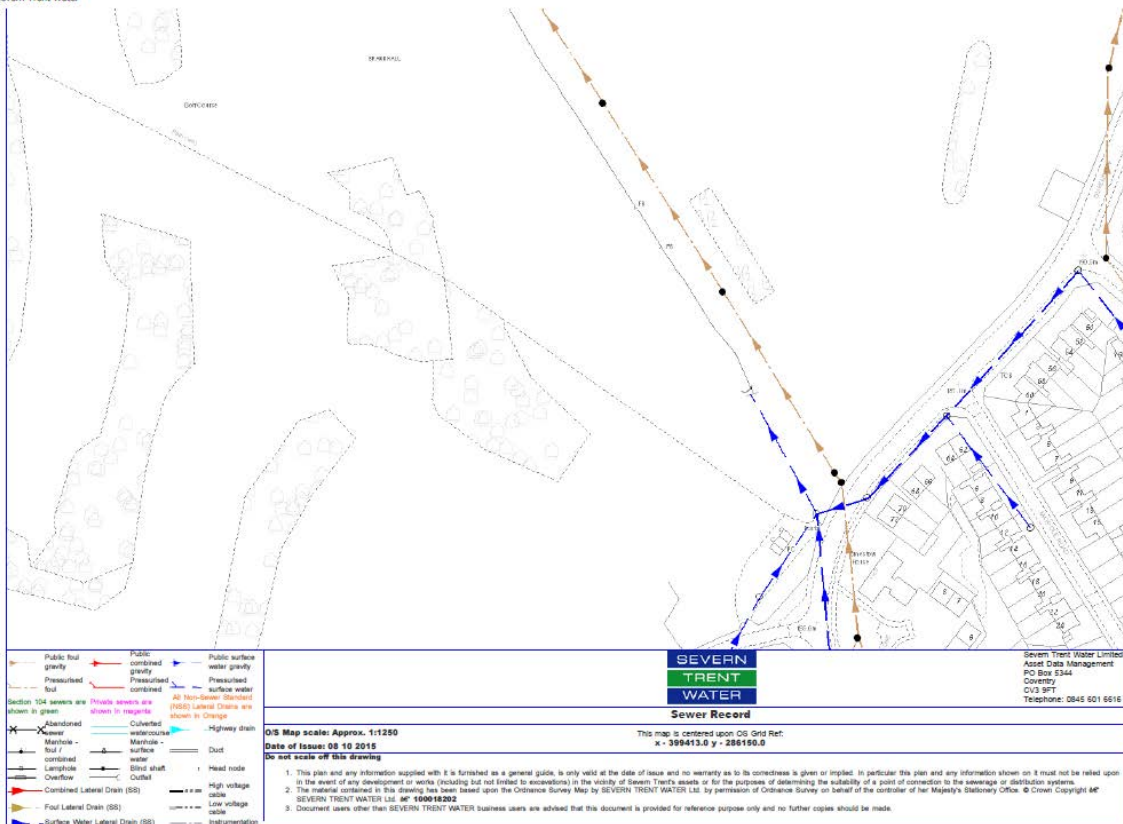
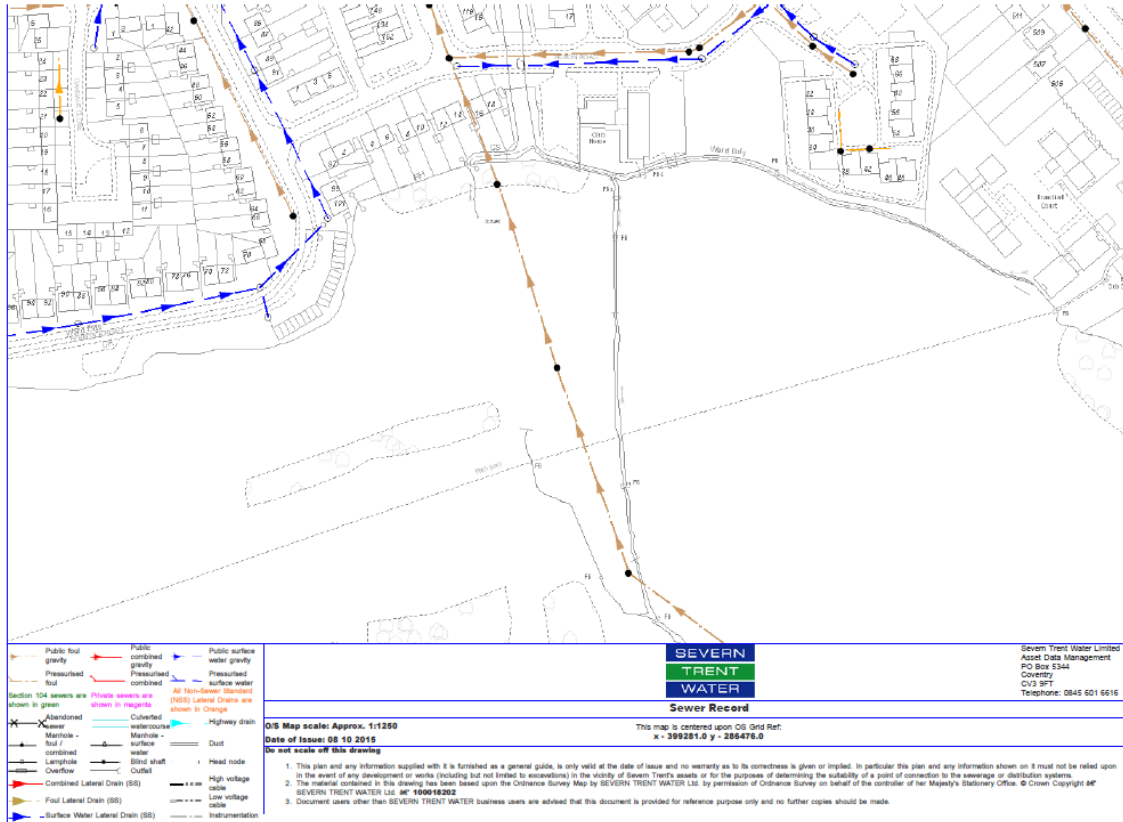
**Figure 9: 1963**

In the 1950s the area to the north of the course was occupied by Causeway Green Hostel which was a complex of residential blocks to house national servicemen. This facility was partly on the site of the golf course but by 1963 had been removed and was replaced by the new club house which is still in the same location today.

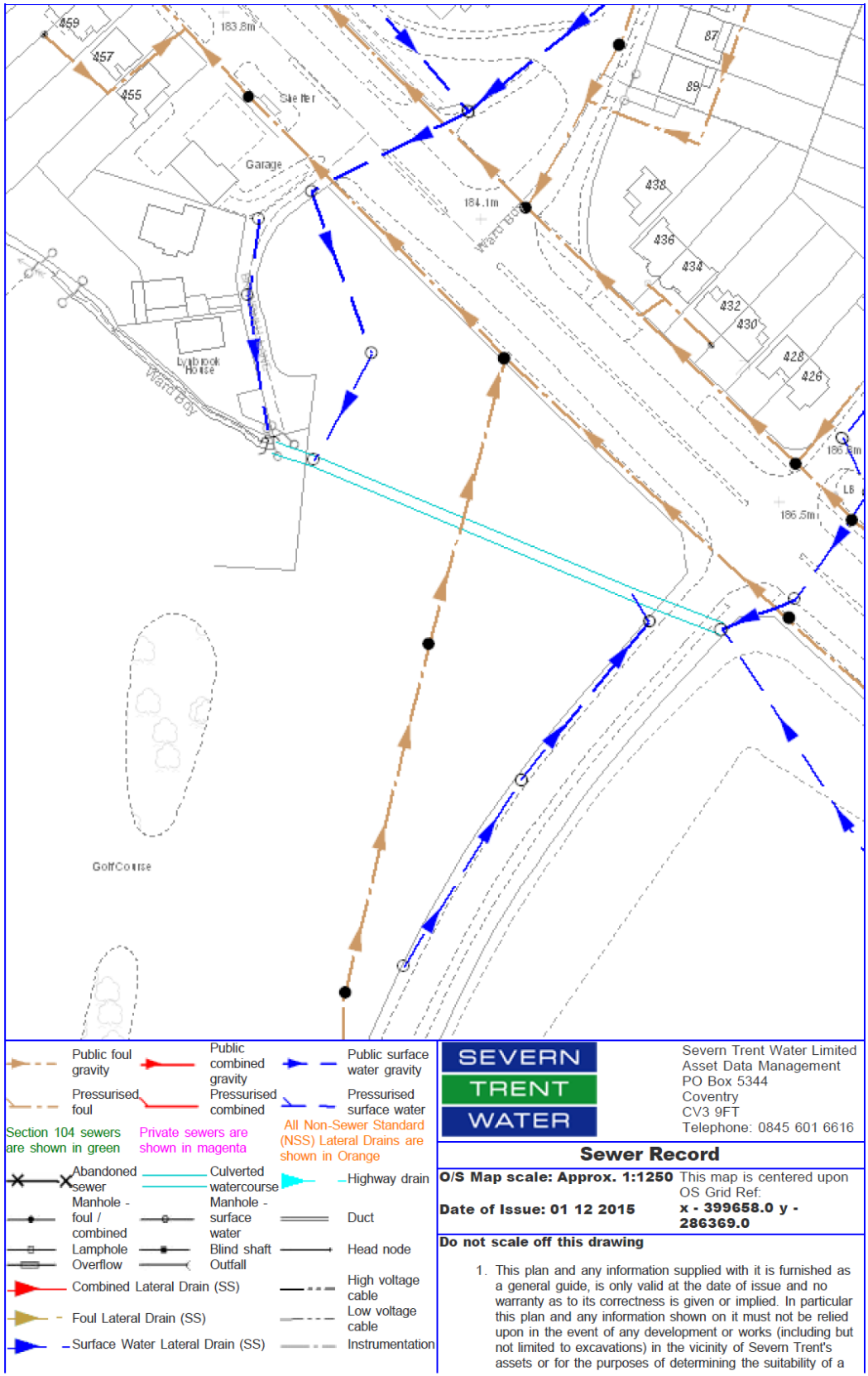
By 1967, residential redevelopment had commenced in earnest around the course.

The golf course is now surrounded by residential use, a primary school on Brennand Road and the M5 Motorway. The boundary of the golf course has remained relatively constant.

## **Review of Site History**



## Sewer Trent Sewer Plans. (1).



<http://www.stwmaps.co.uk/.../map1.do?gridX=399658.0&gridY=286369.0&printType=A4&viewType=Sewer&scale=smallSc>

**Severn Trent Sewer Plans. (2).**



**Brandhall Golf Course**

- Site Boundary
- Wildlife Corridor
- Community Open Space
- SLINC

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Scale

NORTH

**Planning Policy Allocations.**

# Equality Impact Assessment Template

Please complete this template using the [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance document](#)

## Brandhall Golf Course

Draft No	Date	Summary of alterations
1	11/10/19	1 <sup>st</sup> draft
2	11/05/20	Consultation carried out

Title of proposal <i>(include forward plan reference if available)</i>	Brandhall Golf Course. Potential options for future use.
Directorate and Service Area	Neighbourhoods Sport and Leisure
Name and title of Lead Officer completing this EIA	Gemma Ryan Business Manager – Sport and Leisure
Contact Details	<a href="mailto:gemma_ryan@sandwell.gov.uk">gemma_ryan@sandwell.gov.uk</a> 0121 569 4712
Names and titles of other officers involved in completing this EIA	Rob Marlow Senior Lead Officer
Partners involved with the EIA where jointly completed	
Date EIA completed	
Date EIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EIA	
Date EIA considered by Cabinet Member	

See [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for key prompts that must be addressed for all questions



**1. The purpose of the proposal or decision required  
(Please provide as much information as possible)**

This Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared following the Cabinet meeting on 31 January 2018 at which the following recommendations were resolved (Key Decision Ref. No. SMBC16173, Minute No. 19/18);

1. That the adoption of Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facilities Strategy be approved;
2. That the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods develop further reports to Cabinet for the following priority opportunities:
  - O8 – Secure the long-term sustainability of golf in Sandwell by supporting independent clubs, creating a golf development pathway, and identifying potential alternative uses for Brandhall Golf Course.
3. That Council be recommended to appoint Members to the Sandwell Sport & Leisure Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group.

The Members Steering Group recommended above was duly established to further develop the opportunities contained within the Built Facilities Strategy and oversee securing the long term sustainability of Golf within the Borough (this includes golf at all levels from 'entry level' through to 'competitive golf').

Following an open and competitive tendering process - specialist external consultants were appointed to investigate and provide a report on a Golf Needs Assessment and golf development pathway. This has identified;

- All golf facilities in Sandwell offer pay and play options for use.
- There is a high supply of golf courses in Sandwell and a low demand, leaving each facility competing for the same golfers.
- There are 39 further golf facilities being within 20 minutes' drive from the borough boundary.
- Brandhall Golf Course is in poor condition and would need significant capital investment to bring it up to the required standard.
- The golf development pathway demonstrates that there is

significant opportunity for Sandwell residents to participate in golf at all levels.

- That there is an over-supply of golf facilities in Sandwell.

Discussions with the Brandhall Golf Course operator, Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) has identified that a subsidy of £257,372 per annum is required to sustain the course.

As outlined in Sandwell's Green Space Strategy, the golf course is excluded from the Unrestricted Green Space calculations for Sandwell. Oldbury has a 'below average' level of green space when compared to the rest of the Borough indicating an opportunity to create a new public park.

A potential re-development of the site to provide some additional residential dwellings will support the Black Country Core Strategy and meet local needs. A re-development would (as required by adopted Planning Policy) provide affordable housing of up to 25%.

In addition, the site could help to support educational demand and provide an alternative site for a replacement to Causeway Green Primary School.

## **2. Evidence used/considered**

Built Facilities Strategy

Golf Needs Assessment

Greenspace Strategy report and calculations

Playing Pitch Strategy

Membership details of the golf club

Membership details of SLT golf members

User Numbers of 'pay and play' golfers.

CIFA spreadsheets.

Sport England facility mix mapping tools

SMBC Financial profiles of likely future Sport and Leisure budgets.

Future school admissions data

Black Country Core Strategy

### **3. Consultation**

Public consultation was carried out between 07 November 2019 and 19 December 2019

Consultees;

- Cabinet Member for Leisure
- Local ward members
- SLT Senior Management
- Greenkeepers / SMBC maintenance staff
- Golf club management committee
- Facility users (SLT golf members and pay / play customers)
- Any schools using the centre
- Facility staff and golf professional.
- Local residents
- People using the facility for access / walking / exercising / dog walking
- Environment agency
- Causeway Green Primary School

Summary of the consultation process and outcomes;

- Proactive measures were taken to promote the consultation process to as many residents as possible.
- Over 2,000 households (5,107 people) were contacted to participate in the consultation.
- The consultation was promoted twice by the Council via the Council's Facebook page, reaching over 28,000 people with a second post receiving 3,500 engagements.
- The Council made five Tweets promoting the consultation with a mean average reach of 3187 people per Tweet.

- Overall, while promoting the consultation process as outlined above, the Council reached circa 35,000 people.
- Despite this level of engagement, just 712 residents completed the survey, an estimated 100 people attended the 'drop in' sessions, and 37 people wrote directly to us to express their views.
- The majority of people who participated in the consultation never or rarely use the facility and around half of survey respondents would not be affected if it were to close.
- Objections to the Council's proposals were expressed by some golfers and local residents. This was mainly captured at face-to-face sessions and via general written enquiries.
- Overall those who live closest to Brandhall Golf Course, had similar views to those from other areas of Sandwell.
- Most survey respondents felt that the amenities that the Council are proposing are important, with most respondents opting for Option 3 of the development proposals.
- The consultation findings supported the outcomes of the Golf Needs Assessment carried out previously (i.e. that the facility is underused by Sandwell residents in general). In particular, the majority of local residents do not use the facility and would not be affected if it closed.
- Many of the concerns raised can be mitigated through the delivery of the Council's proposals and careful consideration would be given to addressing these concerns.

Consultation was conducted via a variety of channels including online, face to face discussions, questionnaires, surveys and group meetings and community 'drop in' sessions at a local library

#### **4. Assess likely impact**

Please give an outline of the overall impact if possible.

Should it be agreed that Brandhall Golf Course were to close then there would be a need for current golf players to travel to alternative facilities in order to pursue their interest.

These include;

- Warley Woods Golf Club
- Dartmouth Golf Club
- Sandwell Park Golf Club
- Rowley Regis Golf Club
- Halesowen
- Hill Top
- Harborne

There is potential for 'communities of interest' to be adversely affected e.g informal golfing / walking groups. It is acknowledged that golf is a particularly social sport with an integral part of the interest being spending time with others of a similar interest.

**Please complete the table below at 4a to identify the likely impact on specific protected characteristics**

**4a. Use the table to show:**

- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands (protected characteristics), that is it could disadvantage them or if there is no impact, please note the evidence and/or reasons for this.
- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Age</b>			✓	<p>Older people are unlikely to be adversely disadvantaged by a closure. Whilst it is noted that some older people may be less able to travel (have less access to private vehicles) there is another similar facility within a short distance. Bus transport is well provided within the area.</p> <p>Should the facility be used by school / youth groups. There will be a need to consult with these users to understand any possible concerns and seek solutions</p>
<b>Disability</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes

<b>Gender reassignment</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes
<b>Race</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes . It is understood that there are no specific sessions / times aimed at BME groups. This would however be explored further as part of any consultations.
<b>Religion or belief</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes

<b>Sex</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes, however it is noted that the club does hold ladies tournaments / competitions. Specific consultation will be required in order to understand this further and potentially assist in identifying alternative provision.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>			✓	This protected characteristic would be unlikely to be impacted via any of these possible changes
<b>Other</b>				Not applicable

Does this EIA require a full impact assessment? Yes  No

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then you do not need to go any further. You have completed the screening stage. You must, however, complete sections 7 and 9 and publish the EIA as it stands.

If you have answered yes to the above, please complete the questions below referring to the guidance document.



**5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?**

At the present time this EIA has been completed only to 'Initial Screening stage' and a detailed public consultation has been carried out.

There may be a need (as part of any future consultations) to actively 'market' other golfing / walking facilities within the Borough and further afield to demonstrate what is 'on offer'. This could involve visits / tours to other facilities or taster sessions for groups.

**6. As a result of the EIA what decision or actions are being proposed in relation to the original proposals?**

N / A

**7. Monitoring arrangements**

Monitoring would be carried out in order to ensure that no groups have been disadvantaged over the long term. This would include follow up communications with a selection of individuals.

**8. Action planning**

You may wish to use the action plan template below



**9. Publish the EIA**

## Where can I get additional information, advice and guidance?

In the first instance, please consult the accompanying guide “Equality Impact Assessment Guidance”

### **Practical advice, guidance and support**


Help and advice on undertaking an EIA, using the electronic EIA toolkit or receiving training related to equalities legislation and EIAs is available to **all managers** across the council from officers within Improvement and Efficiency. The officers within in Improvement and Efficiency will also provide overview quality assurance checks on completed EIA documents.

#### **Please contact:**

Kashmir Singh - 0121 569 3828  
Surinder Punn - 0121 569 3810

## REPORT TO CABINET

27 May 2020

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Children's Centres Contracts</b>
<b>Presenting Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Joyce Underhill, Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life</b>
<b>Director:</b>	<b>Lesley Hagger, Executive Director of Children's Services</b>
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member Approval and Date:</b>	Councillor Joyce Underhill - Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life: 29.4.20
<b>Director Approval:</b>	Lesley Hagger, Executive Director of Children's Services: 29.4.20
<b>Reason for Urgency:</b>	The Coronavirus 'shut down' has meant that consultation on future provision and an associated procurement process are not possible.
<b>Exempt Information Ref:</b>	No exemption provisions apply
<b>Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):</b>	Ward councillors have not been consulted
<b>Scrutiny Consultation Considered?</b>	Councillor Rajbir Singh, Chair – Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Peter Forth, Senior Commissioning Manager peter_forth@sandwell.gov.uk 0121 569 2034

### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Cabinet:**

1. Authorise the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to agree a 12-month extension to the existing children's centre contracts until 31 March 2022.

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The current contracts for the operation of the core Children's Centre services in Sandwell expire at the end of March 2021. A re-procurement process should start in May 2020 but this is not possible.
- 1.2 Unfortunately, the Coronavirus (CoVid-19) situation has led to major delays in undertaking the necessary consultation with elected members and the local community.
- 1.3 SMBC Procurement have duly advised that in these circumstances Cabinet should be asked to approve an extension to the existing children's centre contracts for a further 12 months until 31 March 2022.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to approve the extension of the contracts for 12 months.

## **2 IMPLICATION FOR THE COUNCIL'S AMBITION**

- 2.1 Fundamentally the children's centre service provides a strong base for the council's ambitions in relation to children benefitting from a good start to life.
- 2.2 This ranges from antenatal education groups for new parents-to-be, through to baby clinics run by Health Visitors and joint work with colleagues for the delivery of Baby Massage classes for parents with young babies designed to encourage attachment and promote communication and early language.
- 2.3 The Council's new Corporate Plan 'Big Plans for a Great Place' makes a commitment to the continued provision of early years services through an Early Years Transformation Academy approach.

## **3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 In 2016 a tender process was undertaken to identify suitable organisations to operate the core children's centres in Sandwell. The contracts subsequently awarded commenced on 1 April 2017. The contracts were for a total of 4 years and had a total contract value of £15,322,980.
- 3.2 There are seven core children's centres in the borough. One in each town with two in West Bromwich due to the size of the area.
- 3.3 The core centres are then grouped together into three lots to reduce administration and management costs. The three lots are:

- Oldbury and Smethwick
- Rowley and Tipton
- Wednesbury and West Bromwich

3.4 The three lots are currently operated by two voluntary sector organisations namely Action for Children (who run two lots) and Murray Hall Community Trust.

3.5 Summary of core centres

<b>Name of centre</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>
Burnt Tree Children's Centre	Tividale Street Burnt Tree	Action for Children
Cape Hill Children's Centre	Corbett Street Smethwick	Action for Children
Rowley Springfield Children's Centre	Dudley Road Rowley Regis	Murray Hall Community Trust
Tipton Children's Centre	Ridgeway Road Tipton	Murray Hall Community Trust
Friar Park Children's Centre	Dorsett Road Wednesbury	Action for Children
Hillside Children's Centre	Connor Road West Bromwich	Action for Children
Greets Green Children's Centre	Off Claypit Lane West Bromwich	Action for Children

## 4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 Core children's centres in Sandwell provide a range of early years services namely:

- Information and advice about local services
- Antenatal education and support
- Early Years support to families with a particular focus on speech and language development
- Access to Health Services eg Midwifery and Health Visitor clinics and general health promotion
- Family Support at differing levels dependent on need
- Benefits advice and support through Sandwell Consortium
- Promotion of active volunteering to help people to take steps towards further education and employment

4.2 If Cabinet agree to extend the current contract as per the recommendations of the report the role of centres will continue as detailed above.



## 5 **CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)**

- 5.1 The issues noted in the report have been subject to consultation with colleagues internally.
- 5.2 Wider consultation with other stakeholders and families will take place later in the year as part of the development of an options appraisal and subsequent tender process.

## 6 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

### 6.1 **Immediately commence a re-procurement exercise**

An alternative solution would be for Cabinet to approve the commencement of the procurement process for a new provider of children's centre services with immediate effect.

- 6.2 This option would fail to capture the direction of travel for the future delivery of children's centres as part of the Council's new Corporate Plan due to the lack of time available to consult on options. That consultation would include elected members, partner agencies and parents. The necessary specification for the service would need to be drawn up prior to the commencement of the tender process.

### 6.3 **Bring the service in-house**

An alternative solution would be to bring the operation of core children's centres into the local authority. This would require the TUPE transfer of existing children's centre staff that meet the TUPE requirements into the local authority.

- 6.4 By bringing the service in-house it would remove the requirement to go out to tender to seek appropriate providers. This would save time in the long run and give stability so that staff have greater certainty about their long-term security however it would greatly impact the voluntary and community sector offer.
- 6.5 Bringing the service in house would however be extremely complicated and would require considerable input from legal, finance and Human Resources services at a time when the council's focus must be elsewhere.

## 6.6 **Extend contracts but for a shorter period**

A further option would be to extend contracts for a shorter period for example 6-9 months.

- 6.7 This option was considered but was discounted due to the current lack of certainty about when the necessary consultation could be completed. The longer 12-month timescale gives more assurance that the work can be completed and carefully considered prior to the next Report to Cabinet in 2021.

## 7 **STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Subject to the Cabinet's decision to extend the contracts, the sum for 2021/22 would be the same as the core children's centre budget for 2020/21 as set out in the table below. This will take first call and will be accommodated within the Children's Directorate budget allocation for 2021/22.

Oldbury/Smethwick	£1,111,838
Rowley/Tipton	£ 964,860
Wednesbury/West Bromwich	£1,118,222
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,194,920</b>

- 7.2 An additional £3,194,920 will be added to the original contract value. The total contract value will now be £18,517,900.
- 7.3 It is envisaged that demand for children's centre services will increase due to the economic recession brought about by Covid-19. The local authority will duly work with the existing service providers to prioritise the different aspects of service delivery as necessary.

## 8 **LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Section 5A of the Childcare Act 2006 states that local authorities must make arrangements, as far as practicable, for 'sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local needs.' The proposals in this report do not conflict with that duty.
- 8.2 The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) Section 72 (1) (c) allows for modification of existing contracts without a new procurement procedure being undertaken where all of the following conditions are fulfilled:
- i) The need for modification has been brought about by circumstances which a diligent contracting authority could not have foreseen;

- ii) The modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract;
- iii) Any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract.

In this particular case, the reason for the modification is the impact of Covid-19 on the consultation process, which could not have been anticipated. The overall nature of the contract remains the same. The original contract value was £15,322,980 and the increase in contract value that results in this modification is £3,194,920 which does not exceed 50% of the original contract value. The requirements of PCR 2015 Section 72 (1) (c) are fulfilled.

## **9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) initial screening has been undertaken. The screening identified that there will be no adverse impact on people or groups with protected characteristics because of the proposals contained within the report.
- 9.2 The extension of the contracts as proposed in this report will enable children's centre services to be continued to be offered across the borough as currently.
- 9.3 A full EIA is not therefore required.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 The proposals in this report will not affect the existing data protection arrangements working with the contracted voluntary sector agencies.

## **11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 There are no significant crime and disorder implications in extending the current contracts with providers as proposed in this report.
- 11.2 The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with – to identify and assess the significant risks associated with this decision / project. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks.

Based on the information provided, it is the officers' opinion that no significant risks have been identified.

- 11.3 The proposal to extend the contracts for a further 12 months falls outside the usual contract and procedure rules. This is addressed however as detailed in 8.2 of the report in relation to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 11.4 As existing providers with no major concerns about performance over the past 4 years there are limited risks in extending their contracts for a further 12 months

## **12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS**

- 12.1 The proposal in this report enables the authority to continue to offer children's centre services as detailed while the originally planned review and consideration of future options is considered.
- 12.2 A further report about children's centre services will be tabled for consideration by Cabinet in early 2021 with an options appraisal in preparation for conducting a tender process later that year.

## **13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)**

- 13.1 Children's Centre have a very broad remit in supporting young children and their families. A range of activities and services are designed to offer both early help at a universal level and targeted support as necessary working alongside our partner agencies.

## **14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

- 14.1 There are existing leases between the local authority and the existing providers in relation to the core children's centres. These would continue to run in tandem with the associated children's centre contracts.

## **15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 15.1 The current contracts expire at the end of March 2021 and a re-procurement process should start in May 2020 but this is not possible.
- 15.2 The recommendation will allow time for future consultation with elected members about the future role of children's centres as part of the Corporate Plan.
- 15.3 The recommendation to authorise the extension of existing contracts would stability and consistency to current children's centre providers over this period and ensure that families can continue to access services.

## 16 BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 None

## 17 APPENDICES:

### Appendix 1 of 1 - Sample performance data

## Lesley Hagger Executive Director – Children’s Services

## 17 APPENDICES:

### 17.1 Sample performance data

### 17.2 Antenatal Education Groups

In 2019/20 there was a total of 428 bookings for our Antenatal Education Groups with a completion rate of 75% for those attending the courses.

17.3 The evaluation of the courses showed a major increase in attenders confidence in caring for their baby, bonding with their child and being a parent. They also had greater awareness of where to go for support.

### 17.3 Play, talk, read (PTR) programme.

In Quarter 3 of 19/20 our proactive pre-school PTR programme, designed to support and encourage parents in developing their child’s language, worked with 1397 children and their parents.

17.4 The evaluation in Q1 showed that parents reading or sharing a book with their child rose by 19%; parents singing songs and rhymes to their child rose by 13% and children making marks, drawing and painting at home rose by 12%

### 17.5 Family Support programmes.

In 2019/20 the centres had a caseload of over 500 families per quarter. In each quarter the centres had an average of 150 cases where a member of children’s centre staff acted as the Lead Professional for the associated multiagency support package

17.6 The service uses the Outcomes Star to measure the impact of the centre’s work with families. Over 85% of families had a positive score at the end of their involvement with the service.

## 17.7 Joint work with Sandwell Consortium

Sandwell Consortium work from the children's centres to deliver welfare rights advice and support to local families.

In 2019/20 (to February 2020) a total of £112,996 of additional benefits have been claimed by children's centre families.

## 17.8 Volunteers

17.9 Children's Centres encourage parents to come forward as volunteers for the service to develop their own experience, learn new skills, undertake training and build their self-confidence. This can be a vital stepping stone towards further education and future employment. We now have a number of staff that have come through that route into posts within the service.

17.10 There are currently 61 regular volunteers working across the children's centres in the borough.

## 17.11 Impact of Covid-19

17.12 Although the children's centres are largely closed at present the service has continued to operate. Regular contact has been maintained with our family support cases on at least a weekly basis with some families being contacted on three times a week as necessary

17.13 Other families that utilise services are being contacted and duly supported as necessary. Families are expressing their gratitude for the proactive contact from centre staff.

17.14 Staff are adapting to the situation and many of our groups are starting up again but are now being provided on line. All parents that were due to start a parenting group have been contacted and 60% have signed up to do the course by telephone or video calls.

17.15 Parents due to start the latest PTR programmes are being sent 6 weekly packs accompanied by staff telephone support and a series of live feeds eg singing, story-telling

17.16 Follow up sessions for children who have been subject to Wellcomm (speech and language) screening are also being offered through video calls. Again these are being well received and each child is given tailored support as necessary.

**Lesley Hagger**  
**Executive Director – Children’s Services**

# Equality Impact Assessment Template

Please complete this template using the [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance document](#)

**Version 3: January 2013**



Title of proposal (include forward plan reference if available)	Children's Centre Contracts
Directorate and Service Area	Children's Services
Name and title of Lead Officer completing this EIA	Peter Forth Senior Commissioning Manager
Contact Details	0121 569 2034
Names and titles of other officers involved in completing this EIA	N/A
Partners involved with the EIA where jointly completed	N/A
Date EIA completed	20 April 2020
Date EIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EIA	Lesley Hagger Executive Director of Children's Services
Date EIA considered by Cabinet Member	

See [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for key prompts that must be addressed for all questions

- 1. The purpose of the proposal or decision required  
(Please provide as much information as possible)**

The purpose of the proposal is to extend the existing Children's Centre contracts for 12 months due to the current Coronavirus CV-19 which has impeded the planned consultation with elected members and local families for a new tender process programmed in 2020/21

## 2. Evidence used/considered

The proposed is based on the continuation of a current contract.

That contract already involves current monitoring returns and quarterly performance review meetings with service providers which give evidence about services provided and the families that utilise services through the existing contracts.

## 3. Consultation

Due to the CV-19 pandemic the planned consultation with elected members and with local parents and partner agencies for the scheduled re-tender process has not been able to take place. That is the fundamental reason for tabling this proposal to extend the current contracts for 12 months.

Clearly for the same reason only limited internal consultation has been able to take place about this current proposed 12-month extension.

A specific consultation was undertaken in May/June 2016 with agencies, partners and parents about the core principles which underpin the current children's centre contracts. Those principles still have validity even now as they underpin the existing contracts.

## 4. Assess likely impact

If the proposal is agreed the existing services will be extended for 12 months.

It is not expected that there would be any major impact on different aspects of service delivery or families accessing services. The service is already boroughwide with a town-based approach.

**Please complete the table below at 4a to identify the likely impact on specific protected characteristics**

**4a. Use the table to show:**

- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands (protected characteristics), that is it could disadvantage them or if there is no impact, please note the evidence and/or reasons for this.
- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.

<b>Protected Characteristic</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)</b>
	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Age</b>	✓			The Service would continue to work with children and young people 0-19 years and their families.
<b>Disability</b>	✓			The Service provider would continue to work with families with children with disabilities and families where the parent has a disability.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>			✓	The services are borough -wide and are accessible to all children and families.
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>			✓	The services are borough -wide and are accessible to all children and families.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>			✓	The Service includes aspects of maternity in terms of antenatal education groups, maternity clinics and joint working with midwives.

<b>Race</b>			✓	The services are borough -wide and are accessible to all children and families
<b>Religion or belief</b>			✓	The services are borough -wide and are accessible to all children and families
<b>Sex</b>			✓	The services are borough -wide and are accessible to all children and families
<b>Sexual orientation</b>			✓	The services are borough -wide and are accessible to all children and families
<b>Other</b>				

Does this EIA require a full impact assessment? Yes  No

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then you do not need to go any further. You have completed the screening stage. You must, however, complete sections 7 and 9 and publish the EIA as it stands.

If you have answered yes to the above, please complete the questions below referring to the guidance document.

[IL1: PROTECT]

**5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?**

**6. As a result of the EIA what decision or actions are being proposed in relation to the original proposals?**

**7. Monitoring arrangements**

## **8. Action planning**

You may wish to use the action plan template below

Question no. (ref)	Action required	Lead officer/ person responsible	Target date	Progress

**9. Publish the EIA**



## Where can I get additional information, advice and guidance?

In the first instance, please consult the accompanying guide “Equality Impact Assessment Guidance”

### **Practical advice, guidance and support**



Help and advice on undertaking an EIA, using the electronic EIA toolkit or receiving training related to equalities legislation and EIAs is available to **all managers** across the council from officers within Improvement and Efficiency. The officers within in Improvement and Efficiency will also provide overview quality assurance checks on completed EIA documents.

**Please contact:**

Kashmir Singh - 0121 569 3828

## REPORT TO THE CABINET

27 May 2020

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Soil Stack Replacement</b>
<b>Director:</b>	<b>Alan Caddick – Housing and Communities</b>
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b> 	
<b>Cabinet Member Approval and Date:</b>	Cabinet Member for Homes
<b>Director Approval:</b>	Director – Housing and Communities
<b>Reason for Urgency:</b>	Urgency provisions do not apply
<b>Exempt Information Ref:</b>	Exemption provisions do not apply
<b>Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):</b>	This is a Borough wide initiative.
<b>Consultation of the Relevant Scrutiny Board:</b>	Scrutiny consultation has not taken place
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Simon Parry Business Manager – Contract Procurement and Improvement Programmes 0121 569 2949  Jonathan Rawlins Senior Quantity Surveyor - Asset Management and Maintenance 0121 569 5045

## **DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **That the Cabinet**

1. Award the contract to undertake the Soil Stack Replacement to various properties to Vinci Construction UK Limited for a contract period of four years, from April 2020 to March 2024 to a value of £750,000 per annum.
2. That in connection with 1. above, the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into an appropriate contract with Vinci Construction UK Limited.

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to award the contract to undertake soil stack replacements to various locations within Housing Stock owned by Sandwell Council.

## **2 IMPLICATION FOR THE COUNCIL'S AMBITION**

- 2.1 The award of this contract will enable the Council to meet a full range of housing needs.

## **3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Within the Council's housing stock primarily in its low, medium and high rise flatted accommodation the soil and vent pipes are those that were installed at the time the buildings were built, typically in the 1950's and 1960's.
- 3.2 The existing pipework generally decays from the inside irrespective of the material used, typically either cast iron, galvanised steel or copper. Problems also occur as a consequence of the build-up of material reducing the bore of the pipe. These two issues lead to leaks on the system which cause damp and foul smells within flats affected.
- 3.3 The following High-Rise blocks have been identified and are experiencing issues
  - 1 Harry Price House, Hackwood House, Wallace House – Oldbury
  - 2 Alfred Gunn House – Oldbury
  - 3 Moorlands Court, St Giles Court – Rowley

- 4 Holly Court, Oak Court – West Bromwich
- 5 Addenbrooke Court, Wesley Court – Rowley
- 6 Meadow Avenue (Willow House, Birch House, Aspen House) – West Bromwich

3.4 The following Low/Medium Rise Blocks of flats are also experiencing issues related to the soil stacks as identified through our repairs service

- 1 Severn house, Avon House, Arrow House, Smestow House, Stour House, all at Queensway, Oldbury
- 2 163 - 193 Stanhope Road, Smethwick  
128 - 150 Beakes Road, Smethwick
- 3 93 - 104 Thompson Gardens, Smethwick  
108 - 119 Thompson Gardens, Smethwick

3.5 From the list of High Rise blocks all are covered by the High Rise External Programme agreed by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Whilst these works are not deemed external they will benefit from inclusion in the programme given the disruption typically associated with the works.

3.6 The exceptions to this are Harry Price House, Hackwood House, Wallace House – Oldbury. These works were not contained within the scope of the external refurbishment of the contract. As a consequence of the current condition it is proposed that these blocks will form the initial phase of this programme.

3.7 Similarly, the 3 blocks at Meadow Avenue, West Bromwich when refurbished did not include the replacement of the soil stacks. It is envisaged that these blocks will receive works following the completion of the works at Lion Farm.

3.8 The contract will also include a survey of soil stacks in all our high-rise blocks to provide up to date stock information on the age, condition and any remedial works required.

3.9 The Council is seeking to appoint one contractor to undertake the replacement of soil and vent pipes within the Council's Housing stock. The contract period will be for four years, from April 2020 to March 2024.

- 3.10 Three compliant tenders were returned by the deadline of 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
- 3.11 The anticipated value of the contract is in the region of £3.0 million (£750,000 per annum) for a period of four years.
- 3.12 Owing to the significant price differences within the three compliant tenders received, Officers have undertaken due diligence checks including issuing several queries to each tendering contractor in order to validate both their full compliance with the specification and the commercial viability of their submissions. Responses received indicate that the tender of Vinci Construction UK Limited is a fully compliant bid inclusive of being priced on the basis of the soil stack replacement system specified within the tender documentation.
- 3.13 The three compliant tenders received have been evaluated in accordance with the criteria stipulated within the tender documentation; the Contractor with the winning submission is Vinci Construction UK Limited.

#### **4 THE CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 There is currently no contract in place to replace soil stacks within our properties.
- 4.2 Across the various sites identified we continue to repair, where required, through the Repairs Service within Asset Management and Maintenance.
- 4.3 On 18 October 2017 Cabinet approved the Housing Investment Programme which included reference to the ongoing issues with the internal soil stacks, which have begun to fail owing to the age and condition of the pipework.

#### **5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)**

- 5.1 Consultation with tenants and Leaseholders affected by these works will be undertaken prior to and during works being undertaken, subject to approval.

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 6.1 The alternative option is to continue to provide a repairs service to those properties affected by the deterioration of the soil pipes and the associated leaks. However, given the age of the pipework and the issues that have occurred since their installation typically over 60 years ago this may lead to a catastrophic failure.

## **7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The proposed budget for the contract is £3m (£750k per annum) and will be funded by reserves within the Housing Revenue Account.
- 7.2 The budget is intended to provide capacity to deliver remedial and or replacement works dependant on the results of surveys undertaken through the course of the contract.

## **8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 The Council's responsibilities include to maintain the structure and exterior of the property in good repair. Failure to address failing soil pipes may lead to damp and if untreated may become harmful to the health of tenants.
- 8.2 The contract will be awarded in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

## **9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT.**

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was not undertaken as this is a Boroughwide contract.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 The sharing of any relevant data for the delivery of this contract will be in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

## **11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder issues needed to be considered as part of this report.

## 12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

- 12.1 Undertaking the work identified within this report will assist in sustaining the lettability of properties identified in our housing stock.
- 12.2 The properties will be managed and maintained by the council and all the associated costs will be met from within the Housing Revenue Account.
- 12.3 The funding set out within this report is part of an affordable programme that remains within our borrowing capacity limits.

## 13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 13.1 In providing new soil stacks to the building identified in this report this will prevent any potentially negative impacts to tenant's health.
- 13.2 The contract will include the provision for Social Value to be generated because of the works, through employment and training opportunities.
- 13.3 Social Value will be achieved through the inclusion of an Employment and Skills Plan contained within the formal contract with Vinci Construction UK Limited. The plan includes contractual performance indicators such as work experience placements, apprenticeships in addition to school engagement and community activities.
- 13.4 Vinci Construction UK Limited through their tender submission have expressed their passion for delivering real and tangible social value outcomes across all the contracts they have delivered on behalf of Sandwell Council. They fully understand the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, focussing on environmental, economic and employment initiatives, supporting clients to maximise positive outcomes and support delivery of our compliance obligations.
- 13.5 Vinci Construction UK Limited have committed to continue to build on the good work and initiatives already being delivered for Sandwell via the Voids Maintenance, Major Adaptations and External Refurbishment contracts. Examples of their Social Value to date includes working with schools, Vinci have arranged 6 work experience placements, have planned and attended a range of events at schools and Sandwell College including Breakfast Business Events, visits to Vinci's Technology Centre, careers events and mock interviews. Three apprentices are currently employed directly working on Sandwell Projects with another planned on resumption of services. Furthermore, a graduate is now employed as an assistant Quantity Surveyor.

13.6 Across the Voids Maintenance, Major Adaptations and External Refurbishment Contract a total of 145 people are employed to deliver these works. Of these 72 have Sandwell postcodes representing 50% of the overall number employed. There are 25 sub-contractors used across these contracts, of which over 90% are from the West Midlands, with 6 based in Sandwell.

#### **14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

14.1 The award of this contract will enable Sandwell MBC to maintain identified properties within its Housing Stock.

#### **15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 This is a new contract to carry out the replacement of Soil Stacks in identified properties as well as those subsequently identified through survey.

15.2 The successful delivery of the scope of works covered by this contract will allow the Council to provide properties that are free from the issues raised by the degradation of soil stacks.

#### **16 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 Report to the Cabinet, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017 Housing Revenue Account Funded Housing Investment Programme Minute no 167/17 refers.

#### **17 APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1, Tender Return Results.

**David Stevens**  
**Chief Executive**



**Appendix 1  
Tender Return Results**

SCC 531 - Soil Stack Evaluation			
	Price Score	Quality Score	Total Score
Vinci Construction UK Ltd	70.00	30.00	100.00
Contractor B	39.53	25.80	65.33
Contractor C	36.43	19.55	55.98

**Cabinet Petitions Committee**

**26<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 5.00pm  
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillors Millard (Chair), Hadley and Taylor.

3/20 **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

4/20 **Progress Report**

Details were submitted of petitions received and of the action taken or proposed in each case, as detailed in the Appendix.

**Resolved** that the action taken or proposed, as detailed in the second column of the Appendix, be approved.

(Meeting ended at 5.26pm)

Contact Officer: Trisha Newton  
Democratic Services Unit  
0121 569 3193

## Cabinet Petitions Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020

### Appendix

Petition Received From	Action Taken/Proposed
<p>1. Business/residents in the vicinity of Bridge Street South, Smethwick requesting removal of double yellow lines in Bridge Street South or provision of limited parking to enable customer parking.</p>	<p>This matter was being investigated by officers and an update would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>2. Residents in the vicinity of Eastwood Road/Jayshaw Avenue, Great Barr requesting that parking be prevented on both sides of Eastwood Road near its junction with Jayshaw Avenue during the day.</p>	<p>This matter was being investigated by officers and an update would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>3. Residents in the vicinity of Eastwood Road/Jayshaw Avenue, Great Barr requesting the verge be restored and a replacement tree to be planted in Eastwood Road.</p>	<p>This matter was being investigated by officers and an update would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>4. Service users/residents against closure of Brandhall Golf Course and Brandhall Golf and Social Club.</p>	<p>This matter was being investigated by officers and an update would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>5. West Bromwich market traders, shopkeepers and shoppers requesting that the Council liaises with West Midlands Police regarding anti-social behaviour concerns.</p>	<p>The issues had been raised at Borough Tasking and a subsequent meeting was held with stakeholders including West Midlands Police, SMBC Markets and Town Centre Management, Neighbourhoods Team, Environmental Protection and Enforcement, Sandwell College, Kings Square Shopping Centre and West Bromwich BID to discuss a partnership-based approach to tackling the issues raised in the petition.</p>

## Cabinet Petitions Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Petition Received From	Action Taken/Proposed
	<p>Each partner agreed to review their operations and to report back the actions they could contribute. A further update would be provided to the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>6. Residents of the Hateley Heath area requesting that the SAPA building on Hateley Heath estate be brought back into use for the community.</p>	<p>The availability of the building for community purposes was advertised in an SCVO newsletter and three formal expressions of interest had been received. The selection process for a community-based organisation to make a bid for the former SAPA building had commenced and an application form would go out to the three organisations who had expressed an interest. The groups would be given 28 days to submit their proposals. A further update would be provided to the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>7. Road users and residents in Wednesbury requesting a traffic light system at the junction of Park Lane/Manor House Road and Hobs Road/ Hawthorn Road, Wednesbury</p>	<p>The funding for road safety schemes such as traffic signals was prioritised where injury accidents were occurring. A five-year injury accident analysis showed there had been three recorded injury accidents during this period. This was low when compared to other locations that were being considered for major traffic calming schemes. Although this junction did not meet the criteria for the installation of traffic signals a road safety scheme to implement additional carriageway markings and vehicle activated speed signs either side of the junction would be undertaken. This would help to warn drivers and reduce vehicle speeds on the approach to the junction. The Committee requested the junction be monitored to ensure that the traffic calming measures made a difference. Arrangements had been made for a further traffic survey to be undertaken along Park Lane.</p>

## Cabinet Petitions Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Petition Received From	Action Taken/Proposed
	<p>The data would then be compared to the traffic survey which was undertaken prior to the installation of the vehicle activated speed sign. An update would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>8. Residents of View Point, Tividale requesting installation of night and day gates in the gulley located at View Point.</p>	<p>Greenbelt Group wished to assist in reducing anti-social behaviour and would not oppose the installation of gates in principle, if this represented the wishes of the 299 households which were currently billed in respect of the areas. However, Greenbelt Group had specified that the Council would need to be responsible for the maintenance thereafter, agree to indemnify Greenbelt Group in respect of the gates (e.g. to cover any injury) and agree to fund the removal of the gates, if and when required. The head petitioner had advised that residents were not prepared to contribute. As the land was not in Council ownership the Council could not take on the liability or maintenance of the gates. No further action was proposed by the Council. Following representations, further investigation would be undertaken, and a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.</p>
<p>9. Service users/park visitors requested immediate action to stop the deaths and illness of wildfowl at Victoria Park, Smethwick Hall Park and West Smethwick Park, following a serious pollution incident at Stoney Lane, be desilting the pool and restoring the park pools to a safe environment for wildlife and humans.</p>	<p>Due to a large number of wildfowl death at Smethwick Hall Park, the Council had facilitated a number of meetings with multi agencies including the Environment Agency, Severn Trent, RSPCA, Animal Plant Health Agency and Swan Watch where it was agreed that the build-up of silt at Smethwick Hall Park was the energy source for the Clostridium Botulism.</p>

## Cabinet Petitions Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Petition Received From	Action Taken/Proposed
	<p>Avian Botulism had been identified as the most probable cause of the bird deaths although post mortems carried out by the Animal Plant Health Authority had proved inconclusive. Overall, presumptive diagnosis was made based on the clinical and epidemiological presentation of the disease and absence of other obvious causes of death on post-mortem examination and laboratory testing. The Council was now in the process of procuring contractors to remove the silt from the pool. Once obtained a report would be provided for consideration. The head petitioner had been informed.</p>
<p>10. Residents of Queens Road, Smethwick had concerns regarding speeding and traffic accidents on Queens Road, Smethwick.</p>	<p>A seven-day traffic survey had been undertaken for Queens Road between Basons Lane and the traffic island at the junction with Warley Road. It showed that 85% of vehicles were travelling at 32.8mph or less (included both directions). A three-year injury collision analysis had also been undertaken and it showed there has been one recorded injury collision. When Queens Road was compared to other roads in Sandwell it had a very low number of injury collisions and did not therefore meet the criteria for the implementation of a traffic calming scheme. Although the vehicle speeds were slightly higher than the 30mph speed limit, this was still within the parameters of 35mph set by the Police for enforcement purposes. However, a carriageway lining scheme was implemented in October last year in response to enquiries received from residents at Queens Road.</p>

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	Following representations submitted to the Committee, a further traffic survey would be undertaken in the Spring/Summer and compared to the survey results from the winter. An update would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.