

Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

**Safer Neighbourhoods
and Active Communities
Scrutiny Board**

**Thursday 27 February, 2020 at 5.45pm
in the Council Chamber
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Agenda

(Open to Public and Press)

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Members to declare:-
 - (a) any interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting;
 - (b) the existence and nature of any political Party Whip on any matter to be considered at the meeting.
3. To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 30 January and 5 February, 2020 as correct records.
4. Brandhall Golf Course – Proposed Closure and Alternative Future Uses

D Stevens
Chief Executive

Sandwell Council House
Freeth Street
Oldbury
West Midlands

Distribution:

Councillors Moore (Chair);

Councillor P M Hughes (Vice-Chair);

Councillors Akhter, Bawa, Bostan, Edwards, M Gill, S Jones, Padda, Sandars and M Yaseen.

Co-opted Member:-

Mr J Cash

**Agenda prepared by Alex Goddard
Democratic Services Unit - Tel: 0121 569 3178
E-mail: alexander_goddard@sandwell.gov.uk**

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Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

Apologies for Absence

The Board will receive any apologies for absence from the members of the Board.

Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

Declaration of Interests

Members to declare:-

- (a) any interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting;
- (b) the existence and nature of any political Party Whip on any matter to be considered at the meeting.

**Minutes of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities
Scrutiny Board**

**30th January, 2020 at 5.45 pm
at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Moore (Chair);
Councillors Bostan, Edwards, M Gill, M Y Hussain,
S Jones and Padda;
Mr J Cash (Co-opted member).

Apologies: Councillors Akhter, Bawa, P M Hughes and
Sandars.

In attendance: Councillor Millar;
Adrian Spray (Associate Director, CFP);
Alison Knight (Executive Director –
Neighbourhoods);
Alan Caddick (Director – Housing and
Communities);
John Baker (Service Manager - Development
Planning and Building Consultancy);
Richard Hawkins (Team Manager, Citizen and
Consumer Protection - Accommodation Team);
Manny Sehmbi (Business Manager, Community
Partnerships);
Gary Wright (Operations Manager, Citizen and
Consumer Protection - Accommodation Team).

1/20 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st
November, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

2/20 **Tenant Engagement and Participation**

The Scrutiny Board received an update on the review of Tenant Engagement and Participation that was commencing in Sandwell. Currently, the Council had in place a number of ways to support tenant engagement and participation including the Tenant Complaints Panel, Tenant Review Panel and a grant funding

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agreement with Sandwell Community Information and Participation Service (better known as SCIPS) to support tenants and residents to be involved with and to influence decisions affecting their homes and neighbourhoods.

The “A New Deal for Social Housing” Green Paper 2018 and the Dame Hackitt report into the Grenfell Fire presented an opportunity to review the Council’s existing structures for tenant engagement to broaden representation and provide improved opportunities for tenants and residents to have their voice heard.

From the comments and questions raised by members of the Scrutiny Board, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- the Tenant Review Panel was made up of 9 tenants and a leaseholder, however the Panel currently had a number of vacancies;
- it was important to seek the views that represented the diversity of Sandwell’s population, including older and younger people as well as disabled tenants;
- the Green Paper set out a new relationship with tenants, providing for greater accountability to tenants and more involvement at a local level.

Resolved:-

- (1) that Councillor Bostan be appointed to the Tenant Engagement and Participation Working Group, with Councillor M Y Hussain appointed as a substitute;
- (2) that the Director – Housing and Communities be requested:-
 - (a) to ensure that consultation carried out during the review of Tenant Engagement and Participation is accessible and seeks views that are representative of Sandwell’s population;
 - (b) to include timescales for a future review of Tenant Engagement and Participation;
 - (c) to report back to scrutiny on the outcomes of the review prior to any decisions being made.

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3/20

**The Council's role, responsibilities, challenges and future plans
in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation in the borough**

Further to a suggestion from a member of the public, the Scrutiny Board received a report on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Sandwell and what the Council's role, responsibilities, challenges and future plans were.

A property was an HMO if both of the following applied:-

- at least three tenants lived there, forming more than one household;
- toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities were shared.

The Council's Citizen and Consumer Protection Team (Accommodation) enforced housing standards in the private rented sector, which included HMOs. There were three areas of enforcement by the local authority in relation to HMOs:-

- Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 – relation to housing disrepair;
- Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 – relating to HMO licensing conditions;
- The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006.

Further to the enforcement outlined above, the Council engaged in multi-agency work with partners including the Police to tackle modern day slavery, exploitation and housing related crime.

Members were informed that consultation had begun on the introduction of a selective licensing scheme in West Bromwich. This covered private rented sector properties including HMOs and would allow the Council to more easily take action against landlords who provided a poor standard of accommodation and whose tenants caused a persistent level of anti-social behaviour. It was anticipated that the scheme would promote a professional approach to property management amongst private sector landlords in West Bromwich. If successful, the selective licensing scheme approach could be replicated in other areas of the borough that were experiencing issues with landlords not managing their properties effectively and professionally.

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The Board also received a presentation on the Planning aspects of HMOs, primarily that due to the amendments made by Government in 2010, permitted development rights were granted for changes of use from dwelling houses to small scale HMOs. This meant that HMOs for not more than 6 residents did not require landlords to seek planning permission.

‘Article 4’ directions had been made by some local authorities to remove permitted development rights for changes of use from a dwelling house to an HMO, however these had to be justified through evidence including mapping with statistics of HMOs, community consultation and multi-agency working. It was noted that an Article 4 direction did not mean that HMOs were not permitted; only that they would no longer be a permitted right but would be handled through the planning application process.

From the comments and questions raised by members of the Scrutiny Board, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- the Council worked with good landlords, including through an active landlord accreditation group;
- the Housing Health and Safety Rating System assesses 29 housing hazards and the effect each may have on the health and safety of occupants at any residential property, including HMOs. If a hazard was a serious and immediate risk to a person’s health and safety, it was a Category 1 hazard and the Council had a duty to enforce. If a hazard was less serious or urgent it was Category 2 and the Council had the power to enforce, where there was public interest in doing so;
- currently in Sandwell HMOs were concentrated in West Bromwich and Smethwick;
- the Council did not currently have an HMO Policy. Members felt that this was needed to strengthen the Council’s approach to dealing with HMOs;
- even if an Article 4 direction were to be introduced, the Secretary of State could remove it at any time.

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Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director – Regeneration and Economy, as part of the review of Sandwell's Development Plan, undertake further work on a Policy and Supplementary Planning Document on Houses in Multiple Occupation.;
- (2) that further information on how to raise concerns about Houses in Multiple Occupation be circulated to all councillors.

4/20

Sandwell Green Space Strategy

The Scrutiny Board considered the proposals for a revised Green Space Strategy. The previous Strategy was approved in 2010 for the 10-year period ending 2020. There had been significant change since that time, including reductions to parks funding at national and local levels and new priorities such as climate change, biodiversity and the benefits green space has for health and wellbeing. The revised Green Space Strategy would also support all of the ambitions of Vision 2030.

It was reported that extensive consultation had been carried out including a residents survey, Go Play survey of children aged 9-10, survey of community groups, workshops with stakeholders and a public drop-in session.

In addition an audit of existing green space in Sandwell had been carried out on behalf of the Council by CFP. This indicated that Sandwell had less publicly accessible green space than its neighbouring Black Country authorities. While quantity of green space had reduced, the overall quality of sites had been sustained.

From the consultation and the audit a comprehensive set of recommendations had been developed across five themes:-

- A Strategic Approach;
- Environment;
- Place;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Community.

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From the comments and questions raised by members of the Scrutiny Board, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- Approximately one-quarter of Sandwell was green space, but this varied by town;
- it was not just the presence of Green Space that was important, it was the confidence of local communities to access and make use of the sites. Perception of anti-social behaviour, crime and safety could act as a barrier to people making use of their local sites;
- funding for parks and opens spaces across Sandwell was not felt by members to be equal;
- a detailed Action Plan would be prepared once the Green Space Strategy was approved;
- a festival was due to use Sandwell Valley as its venue, which would bring 20,000 people in to visit;
- there was an officer working group with the Canal and River Trust looking at the waterways in the borough and how to encourage their use and develop a Canals and Waterways Strategy. The Executive Director – Neighbourhoods confirmed that it was intended to bring the draft Strategy to scrutiny in due course;
- members felt it was important to encourage Friends groups for parks and green spaces to foster a sense of local ownership and pride in sites.

The Board thanked officers for the work undertaken on the Green Space Strategy.

Resolved that the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Executive Director – Neighbourhoods and Director – Housing and Communities be requested to consider the comments of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board in relation to the Green Space Strategy.

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5/20 Cabinet Forward Plan

The Scrutiny Board noted the current Cabinet Forward Plan.

(Meeting ended at 7.59 pm)

<p>Contact Officer: Alex Goddard Democratic Services Unit 0121 569 3178</p>

Minutes of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

**6th February, 2020 at 5.45 pm
at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Moore (Chair);
Councillors Bostan, M Y Hussain, S Jones and
Padda;
Mr J Cash (Co-opted member).

Apologies: Councillors Edwards, M Gill, P M Hughes and
Sandars.

In attendance: Karl Robinson (Business Manager, Housing
Solutions);
Neville Rowe (Housing Strategy and Research
Manager).

6/20

Adoption of Revised Housing Allocations Policy

Further to Minute No. 3/19 (21st February, 2020) the Scrutiny Board considered a number of proposed policy amendments to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

Officers had carried out an extensive review of the Policy, with the proposed amendments centred on:-

- enhancing the Council's ability to prevent homelessness;
- aligning policy with current legislation;
- enhancing the Council's ability to support vulnerable persons;
- making the policy more efficient and fit for purpose;
- continuing to make the best use of existing stock.

A web-based survey had been carried out, with text messages invites to complete the survey sent to approximately 5200 out of 6500 households on the housing register. Overall an 8% response rate from the register had been achieved, with responses to the proposed amendments being between 56% and 80% in favour.

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The survey also included an option for respondents to provide comments. These had been reviewed and key themes relating to frustration at lack of housing supply and perceived excessive length of time on the housing register had emerged. It was noted that these issues of stock supply were due to national policies such as Right to Buy, welfare reform and the overall national decline in social housing lettings rather than local policy.

From the comments and questions raised by members of the Scrutiny Board, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- the Council operated a range of locally determined schemes (local lettings plans) that placed age restrictions on flatted accommodation. Whilst some were clearly aimed to meet the needs of older tenants, others were restricted to people aged 45+ or 40+. It was acknowledged that age restrictions could be used to help reassure tenants and prevent issues, but that a review of arrangements was required as 70% of housing applicants were under the age of 40 and 50% of the Council's one and two bedroomed flatted stock had an age restriction of 40+ or more;
- it was suggested that a solution to age restrictions could be lowering them by 5 years, which could retain the overall aims of such schemes, but make them accessible to more households on the housing register;
- where a neighbourhood was the location of new build council housing, members felt it was important to ensure that a proportion of units were let to local households so that the local community could feel the benefit;
- members suggested that the survey could have been carried out using a range of methods to encourage responses from people who had no access to mobile telephones/computers or faced other barriers (for example language or cultural);
- there was a lack of clarity around financial incentives available for households downsizing to smaller council properties, especially from 3-bed to 2-bed homes;

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- households could seek support through the Locals if they had difficulty in understanding or accessing the bidding process;
- the proposal to introduce periodic assessments of individual bidding activity would allow the Council to amend levels of priority and also provide additional support where it was determined a household was experiencing difficulties in accessing the bidding process;
- whilst previous committees had suggested that households taking up tenancies with the Council must register to vote, legal advice had indicated that the Council could only encourage households to register. It was suggested that levels of encouragement were not consistent by officers across the borough;
- the proposal to reduce the five year residency test to two years would bring it in line with the requirements placed on the Council by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 in relation to providing support to households;
- the Choice Based Lettings arrangements were last reviewed four years ago;
- members reported instances where households had bid for a property and were, to the best of their knowledge, top of the bidding list at the close of the bidding window, but had ended up not being granted the tenancy for the property. Further details on what might cause this were requested by the Scrutiny Board.

The Scrutiny Board referred its comments on the revised Housing Allocations Policy to the Cabinet Member for Homes.

The Chair thanked officers for their work in reviewing the Policy.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Cabinet Member for Homes be requested to consider the comments of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board in relation to the revised Housing Allocations Policy;

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- (2) that the Cabinet Member for Homes be requested to consider including in the Housing Allocations Policy specific reference to the use of Local Lettings Plans for new build housing and areas experiencing anti-social behaviour;
- (3) that the Cabinet Member for Homes and Director – Homes and Communities be requested to review the support offered to households on the housing register who may have difficulty accessing information or bidding processes due to technological or language barriers;
- (4) that the Director – Homes and Communities be requested to provide the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board with briefing notes on the following topics:-
 - (a) incentive offers for households downsizing to a small Council-owned property;
 - (b) reasons why a household might not be granted a property when to the best of their knowledge they were top of the bidding list;
 - (c) the policy in relation to Council housing exchanges.

(Meeting ended at 7.05 pm)

<p>Contact Officer: Alex Goddard Democratic Services Unit 0121 569 3178</p>

Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

27 February 2020

Subject:	Brandhall Golf Course – Proposed Closure and Alternative Future Uses
Cabinet Portfolio:	Cabinet Member for Safer Communities Councillor Crompton
Director:	Director – Homes and Communities Alan Caddick
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	 
Contact Officer(s):	Gemma Ryan Business Manager – Sport and Leisure

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That;

The Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board consider the findings of the consultation process relating to the Proposed Closure and Future Alternative Uses of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House and make appropriate recommendations to Cabinet.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board regarding the public consultation exercise in relation to the Proposed Closure and Future Alternative Uses of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House.

2 **IMPLICATIONS FOR VISION 2030**

- 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 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.
- 3.2 A six-week public consultation exercise was then carried out from 7 November 2019 to 19 December 2019.
- 3.3 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) and letters
- 3.4 The outcomes of the consultation have been collated into a report and various appendices (Appendix A).
- 3.5 The rationale for the Council's proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course and Club House and proposed alternative uses is detailed within the Cabinet report presented to members on 30 October 2019 (Appendix 2).
- 3.6 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)

3.7 A petition was received by the Council on 6 January 2020 and therefore received by the Petition Committee on 29 January 2020.

3.8 The petition included 386 signatures. 41% (157) of the signatures were from the immediate area i.e. those with a B68 postcode, 24% (91) were from Sandwell, and 35% (137) were from outside of Sandwell.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The agreed six-week public consultation concluded on 19 December 2019.

4.2 It was agreed that Cabinet would consider a more detailed report on future use of the site following the consultation.

4.3 Following consideration by the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board, the consultation outcomes and the Board's recommendations shall be fed back to the Cabinet.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

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

5.2 Internal stakeholders from associated services areas, including Planning, Education, Sport & Leisure, Parks & Countryside Management and Communications have been fully engaged in the development of proposals and in the consultation process.

5.3 The service manager for Tourism, Culture & Leisure, Director for Housing & Communities and Executive Director for Neighbourhoods have been fully engaged in the development of proposals and in the consultation process.

5.4 The Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and the Leader of the Council have been fully engaged in the development of proposals and in the consultation process.

5.5 The operator of Brandhall Golf Course, Sandwell Leisure Trust, has been fully engaged in the development of proposals and in the consultation process.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS.

6.1 Consideration of the consultation outcomes by the Safer Neighbourhoods & Active Communities Scrutiny Board will ensure that a robust process has been followed and appropriate subsequent recommendations are made.

6.2 If the Board do not consider the consultation outcomes, the Council will not be able to effectively move forward with making an informed decision on the appropriate future use of the site.

7 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Recommendations made by the Safer Neighbourhoods & Active Communities Scrutiny Board shall be considered by the Cabinet when considering further decisions regarding the future of Brandhall Golf Course and Club House.

8 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

8.1 The consultation is related the Council's proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course and Club House and to develop for alternative uses. The site is Council managed property and land.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The Safer Neighbourhoods & Active Communities Scrutiny Board is recommended to consider the outcomes of the consultation exercise to further inform Cabinet in the decision-making process regarding the future of this site and property.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix A: Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses – Consultation Report (February 2020)
- Appendix 2: Cabinet Report - Brandhall Golf Course – Potential Options for Future Use – (30 October 2019)

11 APPENDICES:

- Appendix A: Brandhall Golf Course and Future Alternative Uses – Consultation Report (February 2020)
- Appendix 2: Cabinet Report - Brandhall Golf Course – Potential Options for Future Use – (30 October 2019)

Alan Caddick
Director – Homes and Communities

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;

Year	Attendances
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.

Year	SLT Golf Members
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. 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

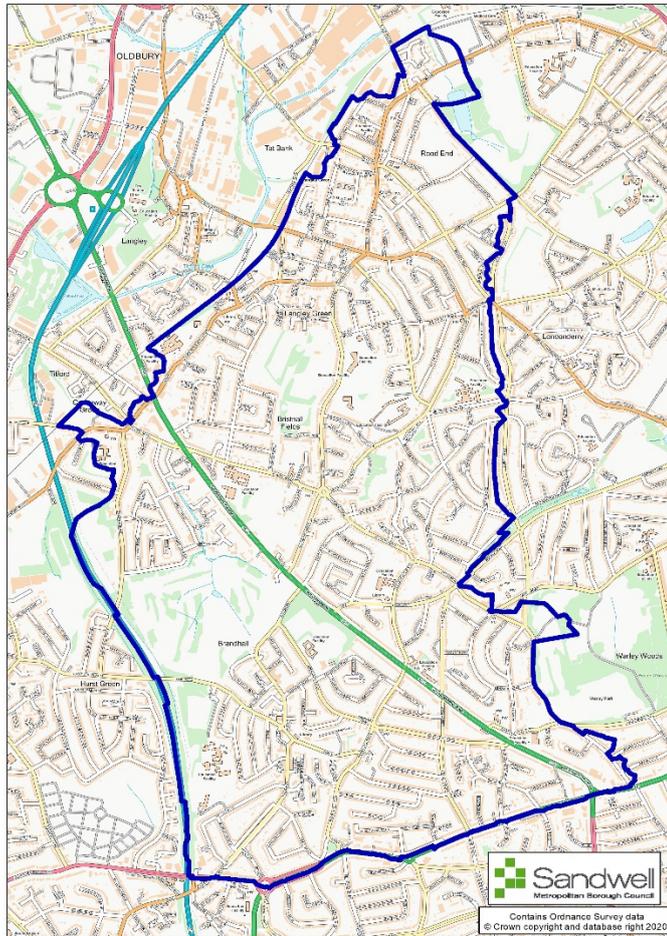
3.1 Engagement;

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.

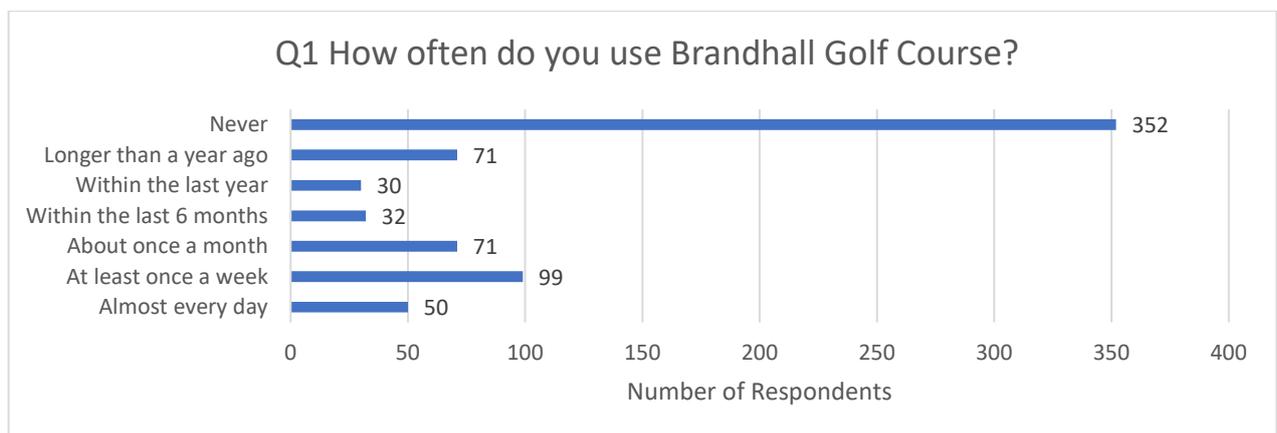


Figure 1: Frequency of usage of Brandhall Golf Course

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.

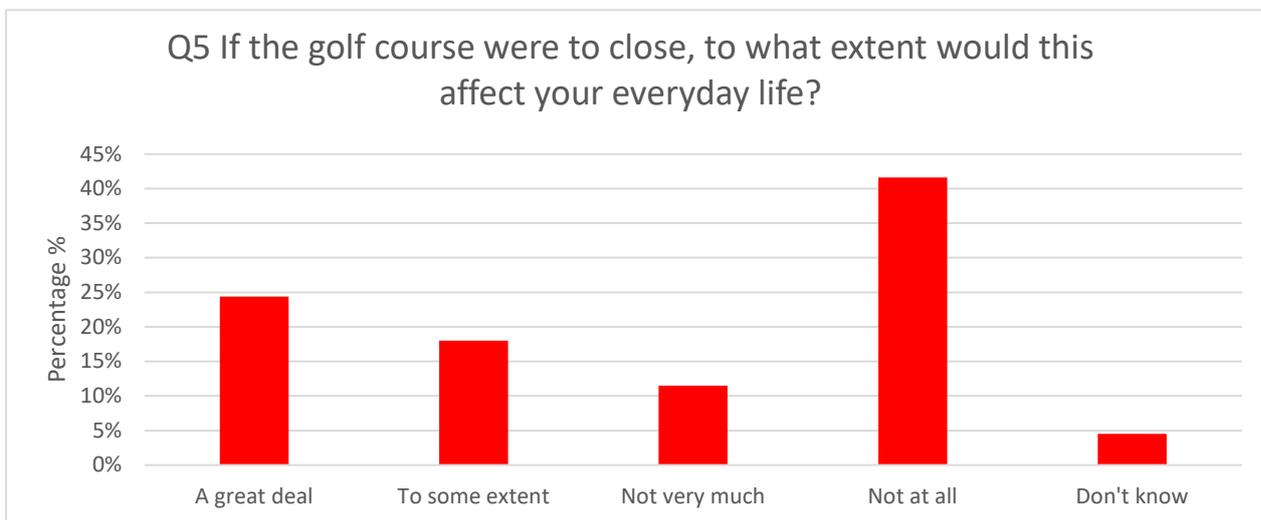


Figure 2: Potential impact of closure (all respondents)

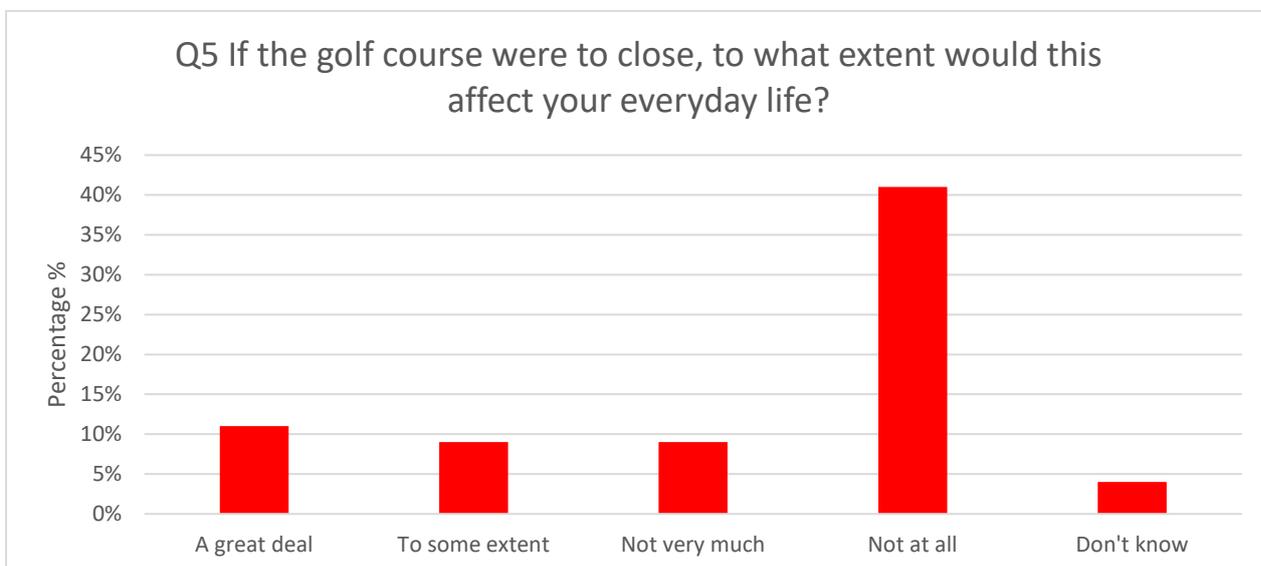


Figure 3: Potential impact of closure (local residents only – excluding golfers)

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.

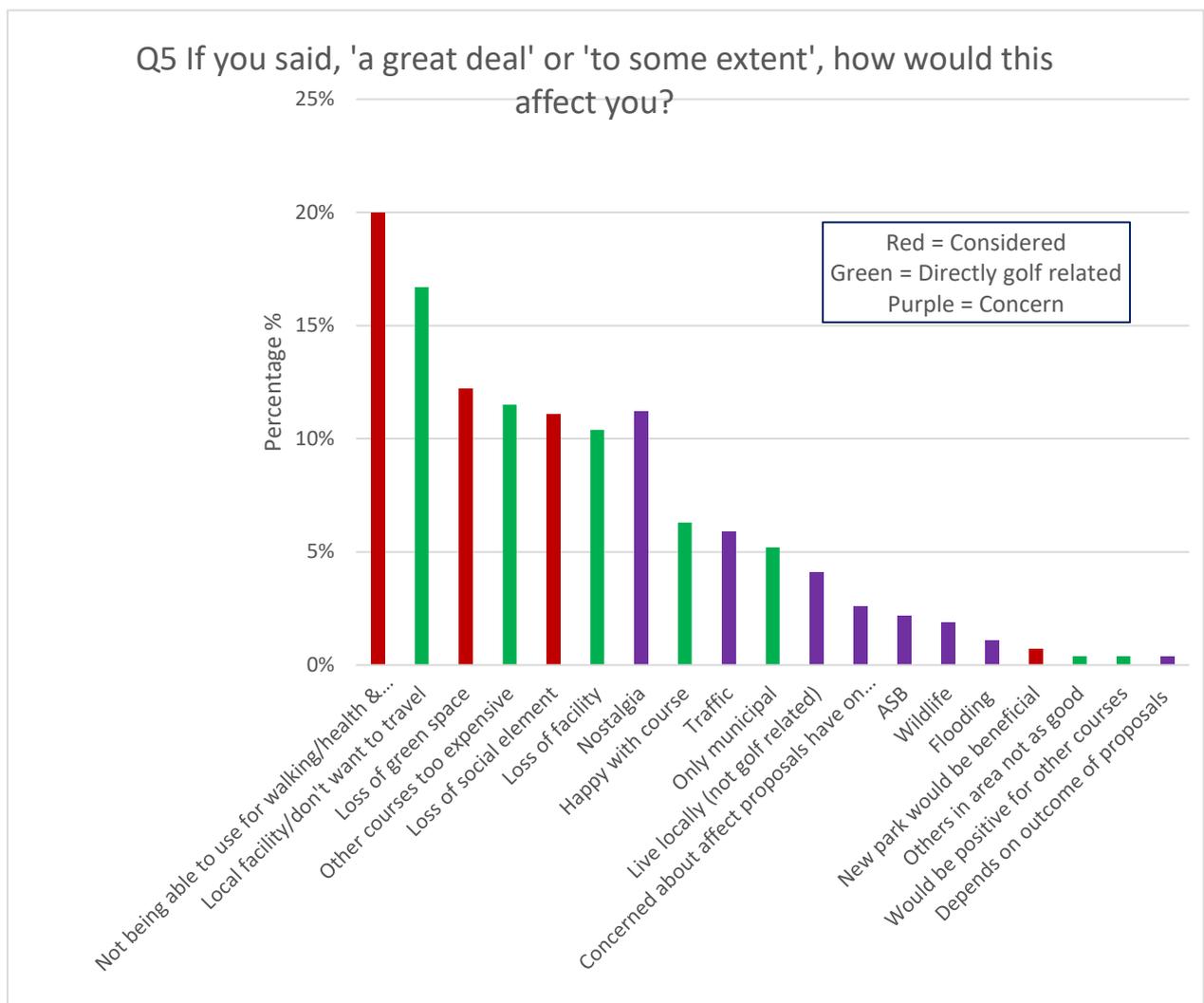


Figure 4: Summary of responses showing how respondents would be affected by closure of the golf course

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%)

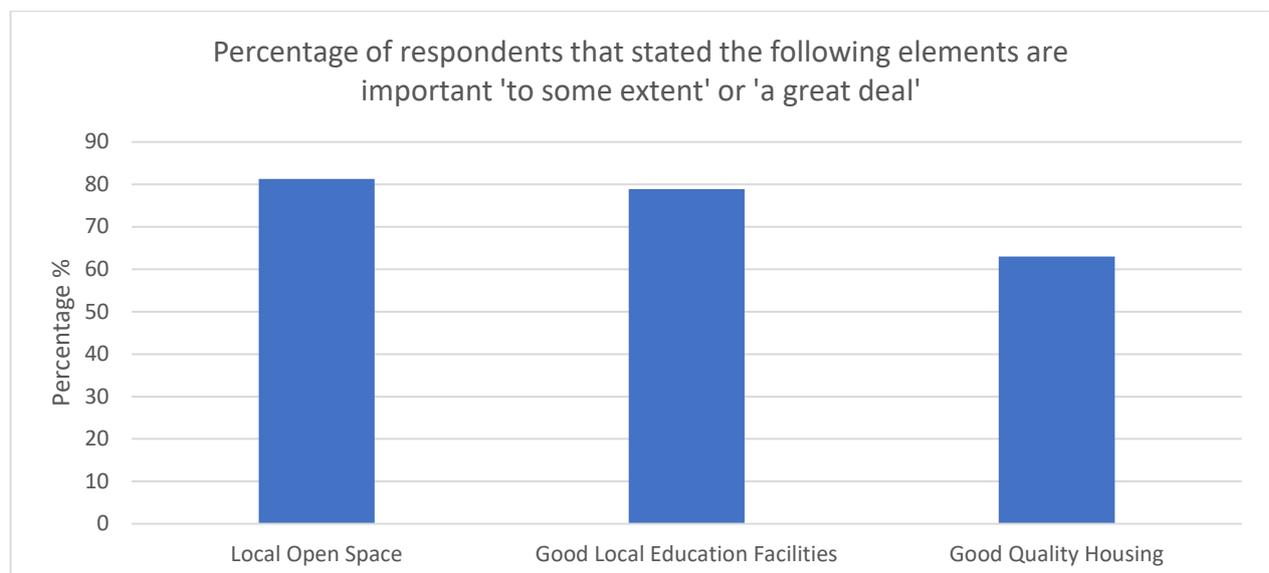


Figure 5: Percentage of respondents that stated that local open space, good educational facilities and good quality housing are important 'to some extent' or 'a great deal'.

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.

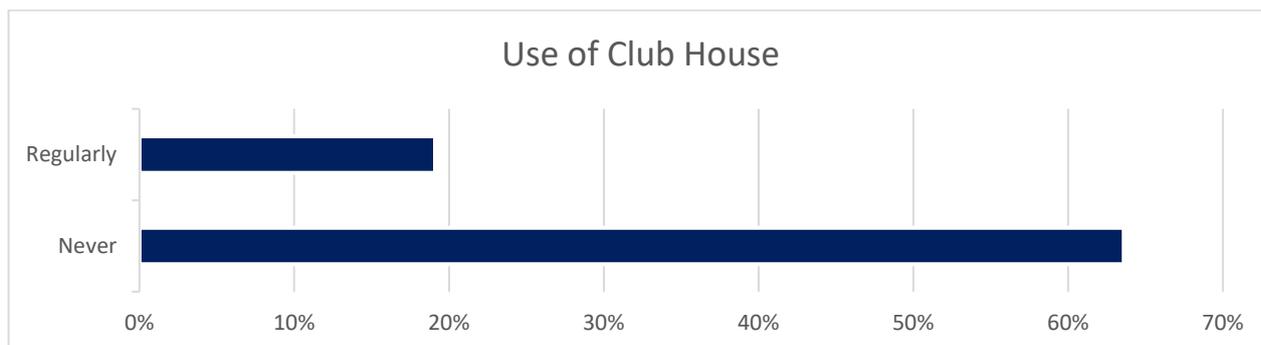


Figure 6: Use of club house for social activities (all respondents)

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

Q13 - Further comments		
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

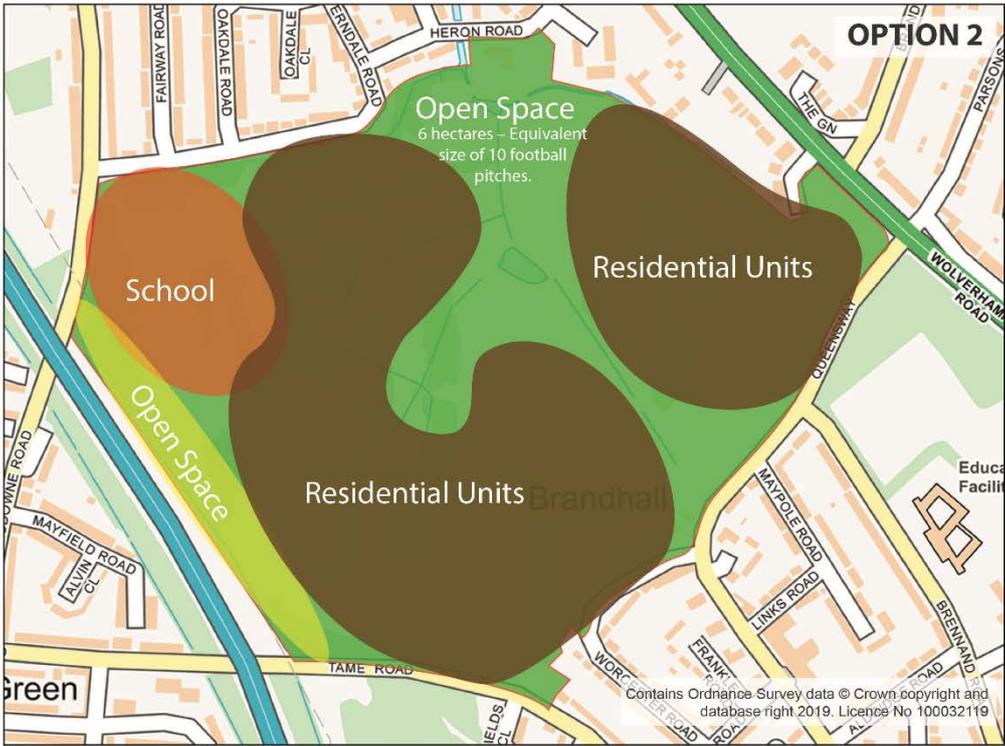
- 5.1 Consultation findings to be presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board on 27 February 2020. The scrutiny board will then make recommendations for Cabinet to consider.
- 5.2 Further site feasibility work is required and a full site investigation, including ecological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

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.





REPORT TO CABINET

30 October 2019

Subject:	Brandhall Golf Course – Potential Options for Future Use
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Councillor Yvonne Davies – Chair of Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group Councillor Maria Crompton Cabinet Member for Safer Communities
Director:	Executive Director – Neighbourhoods – Alison Knight Director – Housing and Communities – Alan Caddick
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Leader of the Council Councillor Crompton
Director Approval:	Dr Alison Knight
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions do not apply
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
<u>Ward Councillor (s)</u> Consulted (if applicable):	Ward members have been consulted
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Scrutiny consultation has not been undertaken
Contact Officer(s):	Gemma Ryan Business Manager – Sport & Leisure gemma_ryan@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet consider the findings and recommendations of the Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group, as follows;

- (1) that Cabinet be recommended to close Brandhall Golf Course and club house;
- (2) that the consultation with local residents, in respect to options for the land, commence as soon as possible.

Subject to (1) and (2) above, Cabinet is recommended to:-

- (3) authorise 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.
- (4) following consultation, consider a more detailed report on future use of the site.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group to the Cabinet, regarding the future use of Brandhall Golf Course and seek authority to carry out public consultation.

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 Section 4 outlines the findings of these two key areas of work.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 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 as outlined in the below.

Course	Ownership	Holes	Driving Range	Access	Affiliated to England Golf
Brandhall Golf Course	LA	18	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes
Dartmouth Golf Course	Club	9	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes
Dudley Golf Club	Club	18	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes
Rowley Golf Centre	Club	9	Yes	Pay & play Membership	No

Sandwell Valley Pitch & Putt	LA	18 Plus 18 Footgolf	No	Pay & play	No
Sandwell Park Golf Club	Club	18	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes
Warley Woods Golf Course	Trust	9	No	Pay & play Membership	Yes

4.2 Brandhall Golf Course;

4.2.1 The course is located within the Old Warley ward in Sandwell. However, the club house associated with the golf club is situated in Langley ward.

4.2.2 Brandhall operates as a municipal golf course, managed by Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT). There is also a golf club on site, Brandhall Golf Club, members of which can only play at Brandhall Golf Course via SLT.

4.2.3 Usage;

Attendances have declined overall since 2013/14, as outlined in table 2 below.

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

4.2.4 Membership;

To use Brandhall Golf Course a fee must be paid to SLT, this also applies to members of Brandhall Golf Club. SLT currently has 318 Eagle Pass or Birdie Pass members, i.e. those who are signed up to a monthly direct debit to use the course. Brandhall Golf Club currently has 89 members who will also be Eagle or Birdie Pass members with SLT. 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.

Year	SLT Golf Members
2016/17	352
2017/18	337
2018/19	334
2019/20	318

Of the current members 125 (39%) live in Sandwell. Therefore, 193 of the members (61%) are not Sandwell residents. A total 48 of the 318 members (15%) live within the immediate vicinity (B68 postcode) of Brandhall Golf Course. Appendix 2 shows the distribution of Brandhall Golf Course members.

4.2.5 Operational Costs;

The facility currently operates at a net cost £257,372 to SLT which is a direct cost to the Council as part of the annual subsidy that the Council provides to SLT. Taking into account membership numbers outlined above, the Council is providing a subsidy of £157,000 for golfers from outside of Sandwell.

4.2.6 The facility, including the course and ancillary facilities, is currently in a poor condition. Major improvements are required to bring it up to the required standard and support a robust business plan. The cost to undertake the improvements is estimated to be in the region of £3,000,000.

4.3 Golf report;

External consultants were appointed to carry out Golf Needs Assessment and Golf Development pathway. The consultants produced a report to outline their findings:

- 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.

4.4 Potential alternative uses of Brandhall Golf Course;

As agreed by the Cabinet on 31 January 2018 (Minute No. 19/18) alternative options have been explored for the use of the site in accordance with the emerging local priorities of improvements to green space, education and housing provision.

Redevelopment proposals forthcoming from the proposed consultation would need to be tested in respect of viability which would require a significant amount of design work and a suite of financial appraisals. Intrusive site investigations and a detailed pre-application process would be required prior to the submission of a potential future planning application.

4.4.1 Green 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.

4.4.2 Causeway Green Primary School;

The existing Causeway Green Primary School, located on Penncricquet 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.

4.4.3 Housing Need;

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.

4.4.4 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. 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.

It is recommended that public consultation be carried out on these three alternative options.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

5.1 The Sandwell Sport and Leisure Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group has overseen the development of this area of work. The findings outlined above have been presented to the members of the steering group. At the meeting of 18 September 2019 members of the steering group resolved the following;

- (1) that a recommendation be made to Cabinet to close Brandhall Golf Course and club house;

(2) that the consultation with local residents, in respect to options for the land, commence as soon as possible.

5.2 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.

5.3 It is proposed that public consultation is 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.

The public consultation would include 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 If consultation on closure is not carried out the council would be operating in isolation to the local community and would not be taking account of the views of the local community to determine the future allocation of the site.

6.3 If limited consultation is carried out this is unlikely to provide a clear representation of the views of key stakeholders.

- 6.4** 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** Carrying out consultation is expected to cost the Council up to a maximum of £5,000. This will include officer time, production and printing of communication materials and venues for consultation sessions.

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. The consultation process would need to take account of and consider the implications on the lease holders of any future changes to the use of the site.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1** An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out (attached).

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

11 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

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

12 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 12.1** Consulting on the future use of Brandhall Golf Course will ensure that social value is maximised by providing the services and amenities that achieve priority social outcomes.

13 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

- 13.1** Brandhall Golf Course is owned and managed by the Council under a lease arrangement with SLT and Brandhall Golf Club. The consultation process would need to take account of and consider the implications on the lease holders of any future changes to the use of the site.

14 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 This report and associated papers provides evidence to suggest that Brandhall Golf Course is underused, poor quality and not financially viable. There is an over provision of golf facilities in the local area compared with local demand to play golf. There is an identified need for open space, a new school and housing in the local area. As a result, authority to consult on closing Brandhall Golf Course and potential future options is required to enable the Cabinet to make an informed decision relating the future use of the site.

15 APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Golf Needs Analysis – Final Report (April 2019)

Appendix 2 - Postcode Map of Brandhall Golf Course Members

Appendix 3 - Public Rights of Way

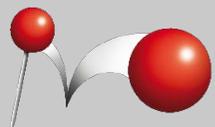
Alison Knight
Executive Director – Neighbourhoods

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

FINAL REPORT

APRIL 2019



SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

INTERNAL REPORT VERSION CONTROL

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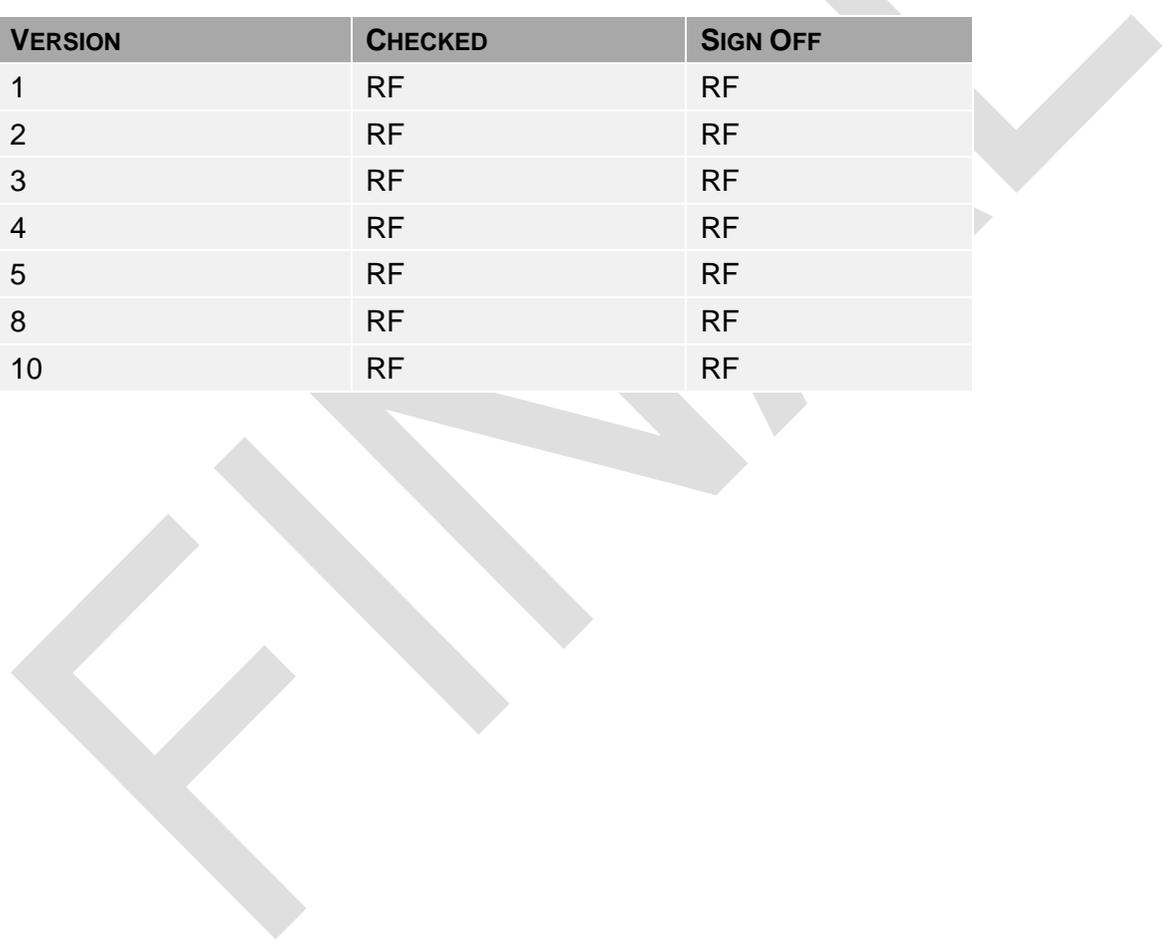


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TABLE OF APPENDICES

- 1. GOLF COURSES WITHIN A 20 MINUTE DRIVETIME OF SANDWELL'S 6 TOWNS (MAPS OF GOLF COURSES)**
- 2. GOLF COURSES WITHIN A 20 MINUTE DRIVETIME OF THE SIX SANDWELL TOWNS (LIST OF GOLF COURSES)**
- 3. CONSULTATION WITH NEIGHBOURING GOLF CLUBS**
- 4. GOLF COURSE QUALITY AUDITS**

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.

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

- 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

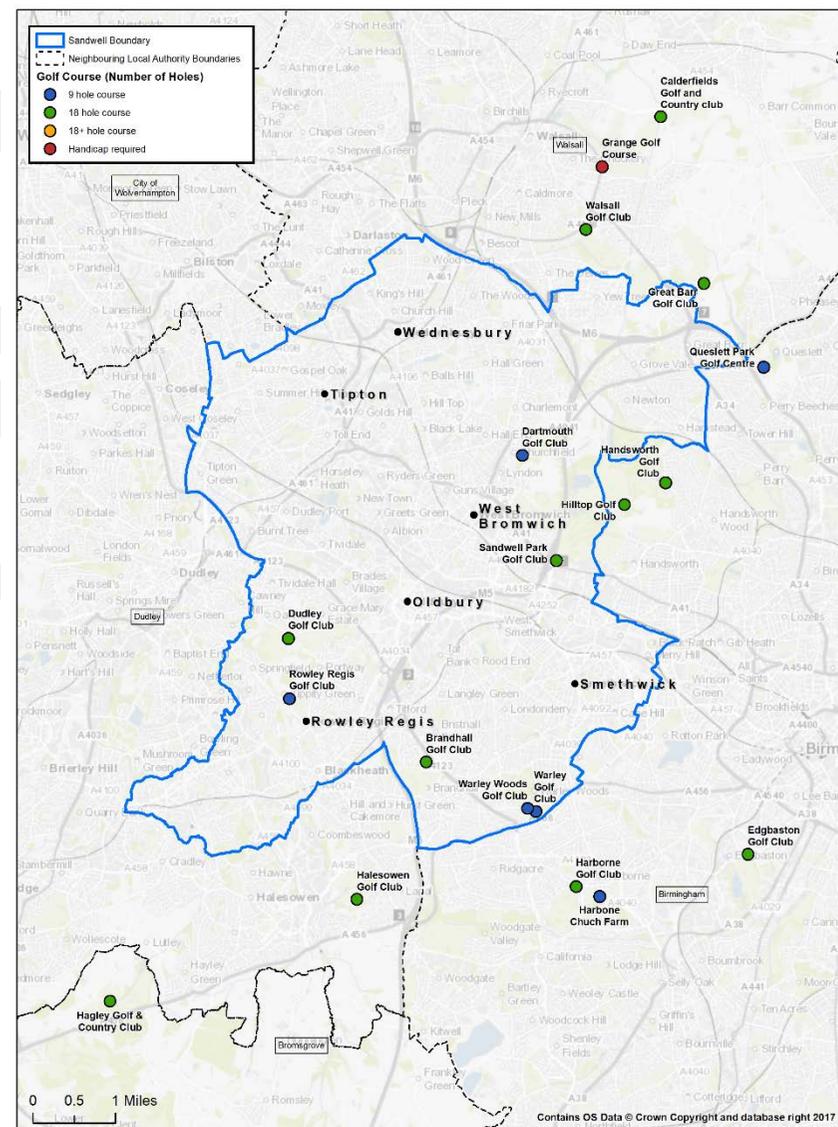
- 3.3 There are 7 golf facilities in Sandwell. Brandhall Golf Course is the only full municipal golf course in Sandwell.
- 3.4 Sandwell Valley is an 18 hole pitch and putt, plus 18 hole Footgolf Course.
- 3.5 Existing golf courses in Sandwell offer 90 holes of golf for the general public to use six days 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



SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
GOLF NEEDS ANALYSIS

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.

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- 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 5th 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"> • Rowley Regis Golf Club 	£3 - £6
		9 hole course/18 hole course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brandhall Golf Course • Dartmouth Golf Course • Dudley Golf Course • Rowley Golf Centre • Sandwell Park Golf Club • Warley Woods Golf Course 	£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"> • Brandhall Golf Course • Dartmouth Golf Course • Dudley Golf Course • Rowley Golf Centre • Sandwell Valley Pitch and Putt • Sandwell Park Golf Club • Warley Woods Golf Course 	£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"> • Brandhall Golf Course • Dartmouth Golf Course • Dudley Golf Course • Rowley Golf Centre • Sandwell Valley Pitch and Putt • Sandwell Park Golf Club • Warley Woods Golf Course 	£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"> • Brandhall Golf Course • Dartmouth Golf Course • Dudley Golf Course • Rowley Golf Centre • Sandwell Valley Pitch and Putt • Sandwell Park Golf Club • Warley Woods Golf Course 	£5 - £20
FUN GOLFER	Participation with family or friends; focus on fun	Crazy/adventure golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandwell Valley 	£4 - £6
		Footgolf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandwell Valley 	

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.

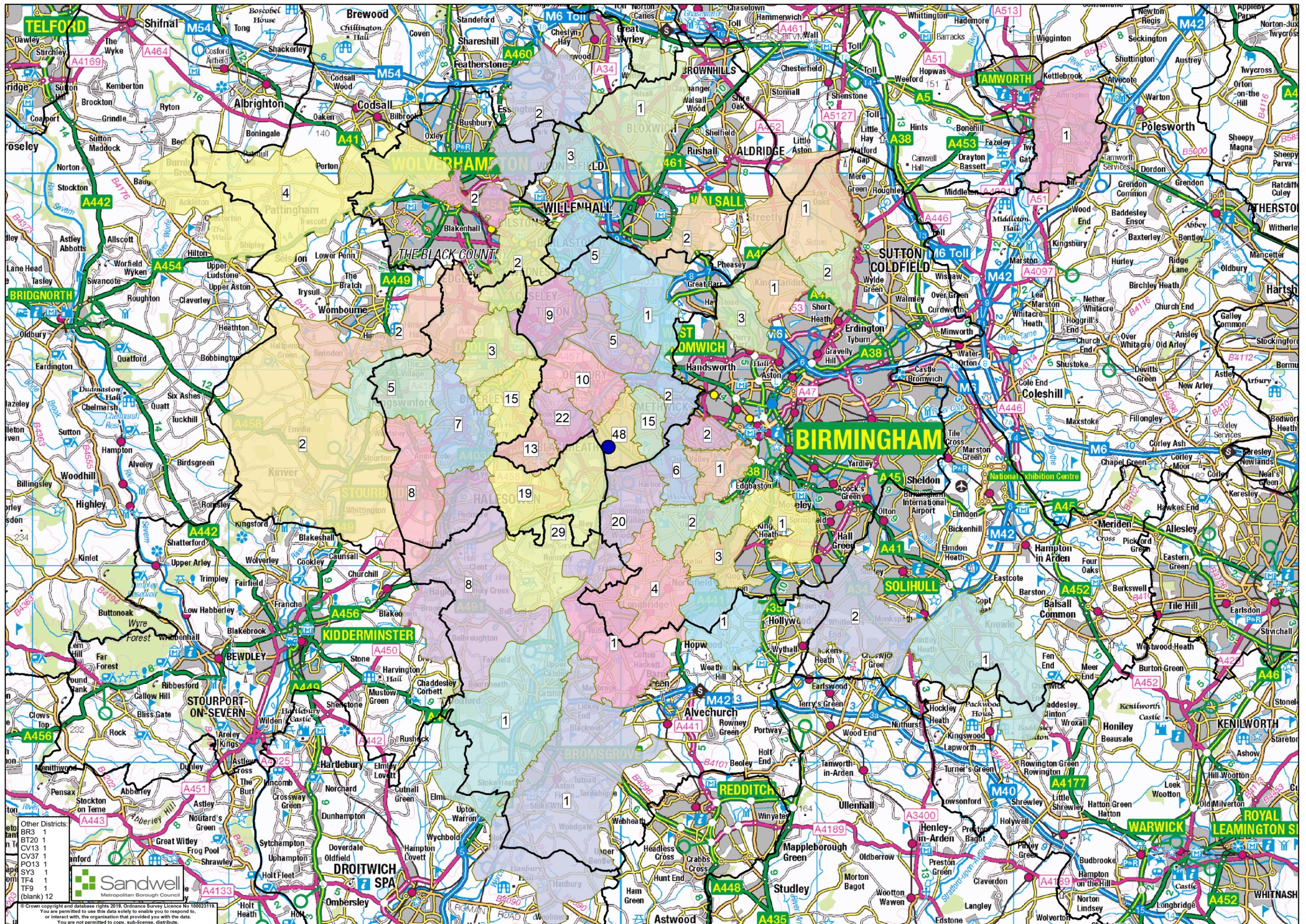
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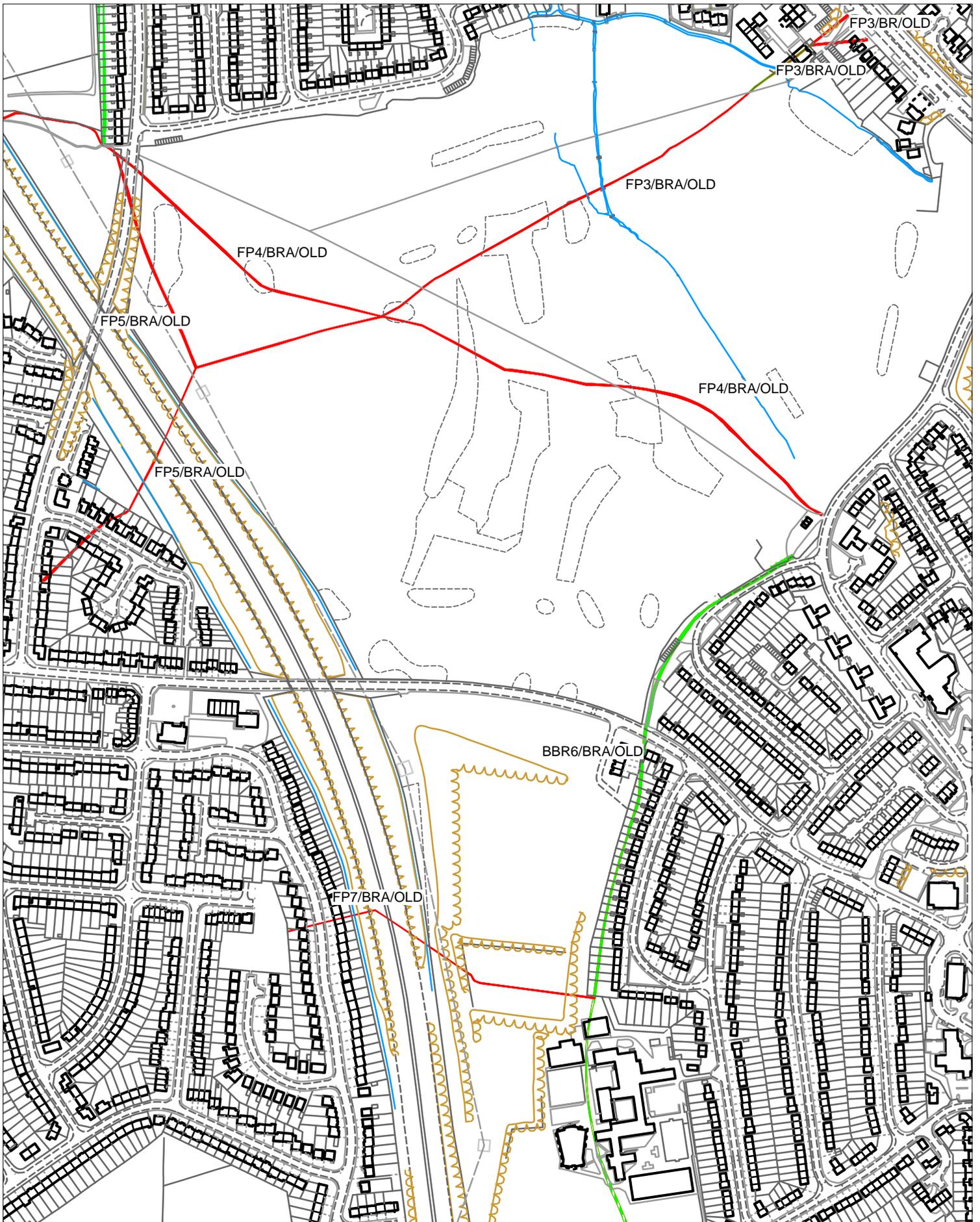




Other Districts:	
BR3	1
BT20	1
CV13	1
CV37	1
PO13	1
SY3	1
TF4	1
TF9	1
(blank)	12

 Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

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Map of Brandhall golf course showing Public Rights of Way

Scale



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News Release



PR 17385

Released - WEB

22 October 2019

Consultation proposed on future of Brandhall Golf Course

The first new major public park in Sandwell's 45-year history could be created in Oldbury alongside a new school and new homes.

The council is looking at possible options for the future of Brandhall Golf Course and is set to launch a consultation for people to give their views.

The consultation would ask people about a proposal to close the golf course and club house as well as potential alternative uses for the site.

The council is putting forward possible options to create a public park together with a brand-new school to replace the existing ageing buildings at Causeway Green Primary and provide much-needed new homes.

The council has carried out a detailed study on golf provision in Sandwell.

Research shows attendances at Brandhall Golf Course have fallen by a quarter in five years, and the course costs £257,000 a year to keep open.

The course has 318 members, which is below the expected number of members for an 18-hole golf course. Nearly two-thirds of current members – 193 of the 318 – live outside Sandwell.

Around £3 million would need to be spent on major improvements to bring it up to the required standard for the future.

Sandwell Council Leader Councillor Yvonne Davies said: “Brandhall Golf Course is currently costing council taxpayers in Sandwell a quarter of a million pounds a year – with £157,000 of that subsidising golfers who live outside the borough. It also now needs major investment.

“While no one likes to see facilities close, we have to consider how we invest in the long-term future of the local community.

“We’re keen to hear what people think of the proposal to close the course and what they would like to see in its place if it closes.

“The Brandhall site offers an opportunity to create the borough’s first new major public park since Sandwell was formed. This would be a new park that everyone could access and enjoy, which would help promote physical activity and healthy living for all ages.

“A new school to serve local families could also be provided as well as new homes to meet people’s housing needs.”

Membership at Brandhall has fallen each year since 2016 from 352 to 318 members, and usage has reduced significantly since 2013/14.

An external report commissioned by the council found an “over-supply” of golf provision in Sandwell, with seven facilities competing for the same customers. These include 18-hole, nine-hole and pitch and putt courses. There are more than 30 further golf facilities within 20 minutes’ drive from the borough boundary.

The proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course and club house follows a recommendation from the Sandwell Sport and Leisure Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group. In January 2018, the council’s Cabinet asked for further reports on long-term golf provision in Sandwell and potential alternative uses for the site.

A report to the council's Cabinet on Wednesday 30 October recommends a six-week consultation period to start in early November.

People would be able to give their views via an online survey, email and drop-in sessions in the Brandhall area.

Any proposals to develop the site in the future would be subject to a detailed master plan for the site and planning permission. Local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken.

The municipal golf course at Brandhall is currently operated by Sandwell Leisure Trust for Sandwell Council.

**For further information please contact:
Sandwell Council Communications Unit
0121 569 3031
Out of hours/emergency: 07920 027 723
www.twitter.com/sandwellcouncil
www.facebook.com/sandwellcouncil**

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Wednesday 6 November 2019

Future of Brandhall Golf Course – Consultation

Dear Brandhall Golf Club / Course Member,

Further to our recent letter regarding the future of Brandhall Golf Course, we wanted to update you now a report has been considered by Sandwell Council's Cabinet (which is made up of councillors who are responsible for making decisions on important matters).

The Cabinet approved a recommendation to carry out a consultation on both the proposed closure of Brandhall Golf Course and club house and potential alternative uses for the site.

We are keen to hear what people think and this consultation gives everyone the chance to have their say before a final decision is taken on the future of the course.

We know some golf members are disappointed at our proposal to close the course, which we understand. There are six weeks of formal consultation to share your views with us.

Following the consultation, we will collate all the responses to the survey and report back to a Cabinet meeting for councillors to consider.

The consultation process:

The consultation starts on Thursday 7 November and runs for six weeks, ending on 19 December.

The consultation will include an online survey available at www.sandwell.gov.uk/brandhall

A series of local 'drop-in' sessions have been arranged where people can ask council officers questions about the proposals. There's no need to book, you can just turn up at a time convenient for you. These will take place as follows:

- **Session 1: Tuesday 12 November, 10am-1pm at Brandhall Library, Tame Road, Oldbury, B68 0JT**
- **Session 2: Wednesday 27 November, 1pm-4pm at Brandhall Library, Tame Road, Oldbury, B68 0JT**
- **Session 3: Monday 16 December, 5pm-8pm at Brandhall Library, Tame Road, Oldbury, B68 0JT**

We also have an email address, so you can contact us directly with any enquiries at brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

Background to the consultation:

As outlined in our previous letter, the Council has looked at the current use and condition of the golf course, as well as assessing how many local people play golf or want to play golf.

What we have found is that usage of Brandhall Golf Course has reduced significantly over recent years and memberships at the course are also much lower than expected. An external report commissioned by the Council found that the facility is in "a poor condition" and we estimate it would cost around £3 million to improve the course to an appropriate standard.

There are six other golf facilities in Sandwell, and more than 30 further golf facilities within a 20-minute drive of Sandwell.

The Council is currently contributing £257,000 each year towards the running of the golf course, with the majority of golf members at Brandhall coming from outside of Sandwell.

Taking this into account, the Council is proposing that, subject to consultation, Brandhall Golf Course and club house are closed, and that the site be used to provide services and amenities that are of better use to your local community.

We have been looking into the local area's needs and have found that the top priorities include:

1. A new park
Oldbury and the ward of Old Warley have the lowest amount of open space in Sandwell. The golf course is not considered open space as its use is restricted. We could provide a significantly sized park – potentially the size of Brunswick Park in Wednesbury – that the local community has open access to. This would be the first new major public park in Sandwell's history.
2. A brand-new school to replace Causeway Green Primary School
As you may be aware, the school is in poor physical condition and it's a priority to replace it. The school was severely damaged by flooding in May 2018, causing significant disruption. The site has historically suffered with flooding and, despite additional drainage systems being installed, it remains vulnerable to possible flooding in the future.
3. Housing for local people
There is a critical need for housing across Sandwell and the borough has a shortage of land suitable for building houses. Part of the site could be used to help provide some of the houses that are needed. The site could have a mix of housing types for the local community including affordable housing, varying sizes and a mix of rental and privately-owned properties. This would provide a variety of housing options for local people.

These are our thoughts and proposals based upon our research, but we would now like to hear the thoughts of those who could be most affected by any future developments, including golf members and local residents.

Should firm plans be drawn up to develop the site in the future, these would be subject to a master plan for the area and planning permission. Local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken.

If you have any questions about the consultation, please contact us at brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Maria Crompton
Cabinet Member for Safer Communities

Dear Resident,

We are writing to you because we wanted you to be among the first to know about a planned consultation exercise on the future of Brandhall Golf Course.

The Council has looked at the current use and condition of the golf course, as well as assessing how many local people play golf or want to play golf.

What we have found is that usage of Brandhall Golf Course has reduced significantly over recent years and memberships at the course are also much lower than expected. The course is in poor condition and would cost around £3 million to improve to an appropriate standard.

There are 39 other golf facilities within a 20-minute drive from Sandwell.

The Council is currently contributing £257,000 each year towards the running of the golf course, with the majority of those playing golf at Brandhall coming from outside of Sandwell.

Taking this into account, the Council is proposing that, subject to consultation, Brandhall Golf Course and club house are closed, and that the site be used to provide services and amenities that are of better use to your local community.

We have been looking into the local area's needs and have found that the top priorities include:

1. A new park
Oldbury and the ward of Old Warley have the lowest amount of open space in Sandwell. The golf course is not considered open space as its use is restricted. We could provide a significantly sized park – potentially the size of Brunswick Park in Wednesbury – that the local community has open access to. This would be the first new major public park in Sandwell's history.
2. A brand-new school to replace Causeway Green Primary School
As you may be aware, the school is in poor physical condition and it's a priority to replace it. The school was severely damaged by flooding in May 2018, causing significant disruption. The site has historically suffered with flooding and, despite additional drainage systems being installed, it remains vulnerable to possible flooding in the future.
3. Housing for local people
There is a critical need for housing across Sandwell and the borough has a shortage of land suitable for building houses. Part of the site could be used to help provide some of the houses that are needed. The site could have a mix of housing types for the local community including affordable housing, varying sizes and a mix of rental and privately-owned properties. This would provide a variety of housing options for local people.

These are our thoughts and proposals based upon our research, but we would now like to hear the thoughts of local people, especially from those who could be most affected by any future developments.

What happens next?

- A report on the future of Brandhall Golf Course will go to the Council's Cabinet of decision-making councillors on 30 October. The report will ask councillors to authorise a public consultation on the future of the site.
- If approved, the consultation will start on 7 November and run for six weeks.
- The consultation would include an online survey and a series of local 'drop-in' sessions where people could ask council officers questions about the proposals.
- The consultation will be available at www.sandwell.gov.uk/brandhall from 7 November.

Should firm plans be drawn up to develop the site in the future, these would be subject to a master plan for the area and planning permission. Local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken.

We will write to you again with further details following the Cabinet meeting on 30 October.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the consultation process before it starts, please email brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Maria Crompton
Cabinet Member for Safer Communities



Brandhall Consultation Plan Letter drop edged red Posted
Letters edged blue

Date: 09/10/2019

Author: Your name

Office: Your company name

Company logo

News Release



PR 17408

Released - WEB

06 November 2019

Consultation to start on future of Brandhall Golf Course

A six-week consultation on the future of Brandhall Golf Course in Oldbury will start tomorrow (Thursday 7 November).

People will be asked to give their views on a proposal to close the golf course and club house as well as potential alternative uses for the site.

Sandwell Council is putting forward possible options to create a new public park and build a new school to replace the existing ageing buildings at Causeway Green Primary as well as much-needed new homes.

Last Wednesday (30 October), the council's Cabinet approved a public consultation on both the proposed closure and possible options for the future.

People can have their say via an online survey, email at brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk and three drop-in sessions, which will be held at Brandhall Library, Tame Road, on Tuesday 12 November (10am-1pm), Wednesday 27 November (1pm-4pm) and Monday 16 December (5pm-8pm).

The online survey will be available at www.sandwell.gov.uk/brandhall from tomorrow (Thursday 7 November).

The findings of the consultation will then be reported back to the council's Cabinet for consideration early next year, so that a final decision can be taken on the future of the course and club house.

The proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course follows a detailed study the council has carried out on golf provision in Sandwell.

Research shows attendances at Brandhall have fallen by a quarter in five years, membership has dropped and the course costs £257,000 a year to keep open.

The course has 318 members, which is below the expected number of members for an 18-hole golf course. Nearly two-thirds of current members – 193 of the 318 – live outside Sandwell.

Around £3 million would need to be spent on major improvements to bring it up to the required standard for the future.

Sandwell Council Leader Councillor Yvonne Davies said: “We’re keen to hear what people think and this consultation will give everyone the chance to have their say.

“We’ve heard from some club members who are disappointed at our proposal to close the course and they will have six weeks of formal consultation to present their views to us.

“We have to consider how best to invest in the long-term future of the local community, so we also want to hear from local residents to make sure everyone’s needs are considered.”

Councillor Davies said the Brandhall site offered an opportunity to create the borough’s first new major public park in Sandwell’s 45-year history.

She added: “This would be a new park that everyone could access and enjoy, which would help promote physical activity and healthy living for all ages.

“A new school to serve local families could also be provided as well as new homes to meet people’s housing needs.”

The consultation will include three different options for the size of park that could be created alongside a school and homes if the course were to close.

Any proposals to develop the site in the future would be subject to a detailed master plan for the site and planning permission. Local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken.

The proposal to close Brandhall Golf Course and club house follows a recommendation from the Sandwell Sport and Leisure Built Facilities Strategy Members Steering Group. In January 2018, the council's Cabinet asked for further reports on long-term golf provision in Sandwell and potential alternative uses for the site.

An external report commissioned by the council found an "over-supply" of golf provision in Sandwell, with seven facilities competing for the same customers. These include 18-hole, nine-hole and pitch and putt courses. There are more than 30 further golf facilities within 20 minutes' drive from the borough boundary.

The municipal golf course at Brandhall is currently operated by Sandwell Leisure Trust for Sandwell Council.

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Wednesday 6 November 2019

Future of Brandhall Golf Course – Consultation

Dear Brandhall Golf Club / Course Member,

Further to our recent letter regarding the future of Brandhall Golf Course, we wanted to update you now a report has been considered by Sandwell Council's Cabinet (which is made up of councillors who are responsible for making decisions on important matters).

The Cabinet approved a recommendation to carry out a consultation on both the proposed closure of Brandhall Golf Course and club house and potential alternative uses for the site.

We are keen to hear what people think and this consultation gives everyone the chance to have their say before a final decision is taken on the future of the course.

We know some golf members are disappointed at our proposal to close the course, which we understand. There are six weeks of formal consultation to share your views with us.

Following the consultation, we will collate all the responses to the survey and report back to a Cabinet meeting for councillors to consider.

The consultation process:

The consultation starts on Thursday 7 November and runs for six weeks, ending on 19 December.

The consultation will include an online survey available at www.sandwell.gov.uk/brandhall

A series of local 'drop-in' sessions have been arranged where people can ask council officers questions about the proposals. There's no need to book, you can just turn up at a time convenient for you. These will take place as follows:

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We also have an email address, so you can contact us directly with any enquiries at brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

Background to the consultation:

As outlined in our previous letter, the Council has looked at the current use and condition of the golf course, as well as assessing how many local people play golf or want to play golf.

What we have found is that usage of Brandhall Golf Course has reduced significantly over recent years and memberships at the course are also much lower than expected. An external report commissioned by the Council found that the facility is in "a poor condition" and we estimate it would cost around £3 million to improve the course to an appropriate standard.

There are six other golf facilities in Sandwell, and more than 30 further golf facilities within a 20-minute drive of Sandwell.

The Council is currently contributing £257,000 each year towards the running of the golf course, with the majority of golf members at Brandhall coming from outside of Sandwell.

Taking this into account, the Council is proposing that, subject to consultation, Brandhall Golf Course and club house are closed, and that the site be used to provide services and amenities that are of better use to your local community.

We have been looking into the local area's needs and have found that the top priorities include:

1. A new park
Oldbury and the ward of Old Warley have the lowest amount of open space in Sandwell. The golf course is not considered open space as its use is restricted. We could provide a significantly sized park – potentially the size of Brunswick Park in Wednesbury – that the local community has open access to. This would be the first new major public park in Sandwell's history.
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As you may be aware, the school is in poor physical condition and it's a priority to replace it. The school was severely damaged by flooding in May 2018, causing significant disruption. The site has historically suffered with flooding and, despite additional drainage systems being installed, it remains vulnerable to possible flooding in the future.
3. Housing for local people
There is a critical need for housing across Sandwell and the borough has a shortage of land suitable for building houses. Part of the site could be used to help provide some of the houses that are needed. The site could have a mix of housing types for the local community including affordable housing, varying sizes and a mix of rental and privately-owned properties. This would provide a variety of housing options for local people.

These are our thoughts and proposals based upon our research, but we would now like to hear the thoughts of those who could be most affected by any future developments, including golf members and local residents.

Should firm plans be drawn up to develop the site in the future, these would be subject to a master plan for the area and planning permission. Local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken.

If you have any questions about the consultation, please contact us at brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Maria Crompton
Cabinet Member for Safer Communities

Wednesday 6 November 2019

Future of Brandhall Golf Course – Consultation

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Further to our recent letter regarding the future of Brandhall Golf Course, we wanted to update you now a report has been considered by Sandwell Council's Cabinet (which is made up of councillors who are responsible for making decisions on important matters).

The Cabinet approved a recommendation to carry out a consultation on both the proposed closure of Brandhall Golf Course and club house and potential alternative uses for the site.

We are keen to hear what people think and this consultation gives everyone the chance to have their say before a final decision is taken on the future of the course.

Following the consultation, we will collate all the responses to the survey and report back to a Cabinet meeting for councillors to consider.

The consultation process:

The consultation starts on Thursday 7 November and runs for six weeks, ending on 19 December.

The consultation will include an online survey available at www.sandwell.gov.uk/brandhall

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We also have an email address, so you can contact us directly with any enquiries at brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

Background to the consultation:

As outlined in our previous letter, the Council has looked at the current use and condition of the golf course, as well as assessing how many local people play golf or want to play golf.

What we have found is that usage of Brandhall Golf Course has reduced significantly over recent years and memberships at the course are also much lower than expected. The course is in poor condition and would cost around £3 million to improve to an appropriate standard.

There are six other golf facilities in Sandwell, and more than 30 further golf facilities within a 20-minute drive of Sandwell.

The Council is currently contributing £257,000 each year towards the running of the golf course, with the majority of golf members at Brandhall coming from outside of Sandwell.

Taking this into account, the Council is proposing that, subject to consultation, Brandhall Golf Course and club house are closed, and that the site be used to provide services and amenities that are of better use to your local community.

We have been looking into the local area's needs and have found that the top priorities include:

1. A new park
Oldbury and the ward of Old Warley have the lowest amount of open space in Sandwell. The golf course is not considered open space as its use is restricted. We could provide a significantly sized park – potentially the size of Brunswick Park in Wednesbury – that the local community has open access to. This would be the first new major public park in Sandwell's history.
2. A brand-new school to replace Causeway Green Primary School
As you may be aware, the school is in poor physical condition and it's a priority to replace it. The school was severely damaged by flooding in May 2018, causing significant disruption. The site has historically suffered with flooding and, despite additional drainage systems being installed, it remains vulnerable to possible flooding in the future.
3. Housing for local people
There is a critical need for housing across Sandwell and the borough has a shortage of land suitable for building houses. Part of the site could be used to help provide some of the houses that are needed. The site could have a mix of housing types for the local community including affordable housing, varying sizes and a mix of rental and privately-owned properties. This would provide a variety of housing options for local people.

These are our thoughts and proposals based upon our research, but we would now like to hear the thoughts of local people, especially from those who could be most affected by any future developments.

Should firm plans be drawn up to develop the site in the future, these would be subject to a master plan for the area and planning permission. Local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken.

If you have any questions about the consultation, please contact us at brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Maria Crompton

Cabinet Member for Safer Communities

The Future of Brandhall Golf Course

The Council has been looking into the current use and condition of the golf course, as well as assessing how many local people play golf or want to play golf.

What we have found is that usage of Brandhall Golf Course has reduced significantly over recent years and memberships at the course are also much lower than expected. The course is in poor condition and would cost around £3 million to improve to an appropriate standard.

There are six other golf facilities in Sandwell, which include 18-hole, nine-hole and pitch and putt courses, and more than 30 further golf facilities within a 20-minute drive of Sandwell.

The Council is currently contributing £257,000 each year towards the running of the golf course, with the majority of golf members at Brandhall coming from outside of Sandwell.

Taking this into account, the Council is proposing that Brandhall Golf Course and club house are closed, and that the site be used to provide services and amenities that are of better use to your local community.

We have been looking into the local area's needs and have found that the top priorities include:

Public Open Space (Park)

Oldbury and the ward of Old Warley have the lowest amount of public open space in Sandwell. The golf course is not considered public open space as its use is restricted. We would like to provide a significantly sized space that the local community have open access to, where families can be active. This could potentially be the size of Brunswick Park in Wednesbury and it would be the first major public park in Sandwell's 45-year history.

Brand-new school to replace Causeway Green Primary School

As you may be aware, the school is in poor physical condition and it's a priority to replace it. The school was 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.

Housing for local people

There is a critical need for housing across Sandwell. This site would be ideal to help provide some of the houses that are needed. The site could have a mix of housing types for the local community including affordable housing, varying sizes and a mix of rental and privately-owned properties. This would provide a variety of housing options for local people.

These are our thoughts and proposals based upon extensive research, but we would now like to hear the thoughts of local people, especially from those who could be most affected by any future developments. That's why we are carrying out this public consultation, starting on 7 November, to include an online survey and a series of local 'drop-in' sessions where you can ask council officers questions about the proposals.

Please note proposals to develop the site would be subject to a detailed long-term masterplan for the area and planning permission, on which local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken.

Enquiries can also be sent to brandhall_consultation@sandwell.gov.uk

About you...

Are you...?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

How old are you?

- Under 25
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 & over

Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/not sure
- Prefer not to say

What is your postcode?

Which of the following groups do you consider you belong to?

- White - British*
- White - Irish*
- White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller*
- Any other White background*
- Mixed - White & Black Caribbean*
- Mixed - White & Black African*
- Mixed - White & Asian*
- Any other mixed background*
- Indian*
- Pakistani*
- Bangladeshi*
- Chinese*
- Any other Asian background*
- Black - Caribbean*
- Black - African*
- Any other Black background*
- Arab*
- Any other background*
- Prefer not to say*

Golf

Q1 How often do you use Brandhall Golf Course?

- Almost every day
- At least once a week
- About once a month
- Within the last 6 months
- Within the last year
- Longer than a year ago
- Never

Q1a What for?

- To play golf
- Walk the dog
- Physical activity
- Other

Other, please specify

Q2 How often do you use Brandhall golf club house for social activities?

- Almost every day
- At least once a week
- About once a month
- Within the last 6 months
- Within the last year
- Longer than a year ago
- Never

What for?

Q3 How often do you use the club shop?

- Almost every day
- At least once a week
- About once a month
- Within the last 6 months
- Within the last year
- Longer than a year ago
- Never

What for?

Q4 Have you ever had a golf lesson(s) at Brandhall Golf Course?

- Yes No

If yes, when was this?

- Within the last week
- Within the last month
- Within the last 6 months
- Within the last year
- Longer than a year ago

Q5 If the golf course were to close, to what extent would this affect your everyday life?

- A great deal
- To some extent
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

If you said "a great deal" or "to some extent", how would this affect you?

Public Open Space

Q6 How important is it to you to have a park in your local community?

A great deal

To some extent

Not very much

Not at all

Don't know

Why do you say that?

Q7 What would you like to see included in a park? *Please choose your top 5 choices*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Allotment gardens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports facilities e.g. multi-use game area, tennis courts, etc | <input type="checkbox"/> Trim trails |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycle paths |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature areas | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing pitches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Café | <input type="checkbox"/> Community buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green gym | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

If "other", please specify

Local school provision

Q8 How important is it to you to have good educational facilities for local children in your community?

- A great deal
- To some extent
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

Q9 An option could be to build a new school on the site to replace Causeway Green Primary School. Do you believe this is a good idea?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

Local housing

Q10 How important is it for you to have good quality housing in your local community?

- A great deal
- To some extent
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

Q11 Adopted Sandwell Planning Policy requires a variety of tenures and a mix of house types in any redevelopment scheme to respond to local demand and need. What types and tenures of housing would you like to see included in a potential development?

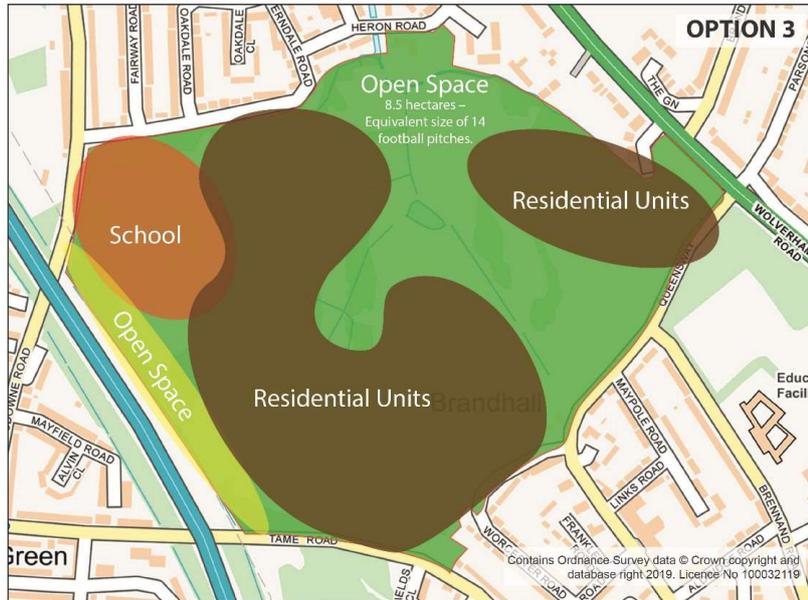
	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom	4+ bedroom	Other
Private	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Affordable	<input type="checkbox"/>				

If you ticked "other", what "other" type of housing?

Some consideration has been given to the potential level of housing and parkland 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.

Please consider these 3 options below:





Q12 After looking at the options, which of these do you prefer?

- Option 1
- Option 2
- Option 3

Why do you prefer this option?

Q13 Do you have any further comments you would like to make about the future of Brandhall Golf Course?

Q14 Following this survey, Sandwell Council will be doing further consultation. How would you like to be consulted in future?

- Email
- Consultation events
- Electronic surveys
- Paper questionnaires

If you would like to be contacted via email, please provide your details:

Name

Email

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please return to:

Sport & Leisure Team
 Council House
 Freeth Street
 Oldbury B69 3DE

Brandhall Golf Course Consultation

Drop in session enquiry form (Date: _____)

Name: _____

Question / Query:

How would you like to be contacted;

Email _____

Telephone _____

Post _____

Enquiry Info											Personal Details						
Sport & Leisure Ref No.	Golfer / Club member	Local (B68)	Type (email / FOI / Letter etc)	Date Received	FAO (addressed to)	Recipient	Theme	Officer	Deadline	Date Complete	Forename	Surname	Address1	Address2	Address3	Postcode	Email
SL-001	1		FOI	14/11/2019	n/a		SLT Accounts	GR	04/12/2019	04/12/2019							
SL-002			FOI	14/11/2019	n/a		Golf Report	GR	09/12/2019	29/11/2019							
SL-003			email	24.11.19	n/a		Causeway Green site	RM		25.11.19							
SL-004			email	21.11.19	To whom it may concern		loss of greenspace, obesity rates, traffic, impact on public	RM		22.11.19							
SL-005			email	21.11.19	Dear Sir / Madam		Traffic, flooding, health, loss of greenspace, social, school	RM		21.11.19							
SL-006			email	10.11.19	Officers and Ward Cllrs		Loss of greenspace / history of the facility	RM		11.11.19							
SL-007			email	12.11.19	Sport and Leisure Officer		check comments are recorded. Contrary to planning policy	RM		13.11.19							
SL-008		1	email	8.11.19	n/a		Café facility for workers	RM		11.11.19							
SL-009		1	email	11.11.19	n/a		Café facility for workers - please add to list	RM		11.11.19							
SL-010			email	9.11.19	n/a		flooding, buy to lets, increased traffic, air pollution, loss of	RM		11.11.19							
SL-011	1		Letter	Dated 28.10.19	Cllr Crompton		value of golf course, reject comments about condition,	RM		22.11.19							
SL-012			Email	31/10/2019	n/a	Resident	Consultation event	EM	n/a	01/11/2019							
SL-013	1		Letter inc FOI	31/10/2019	Cllr Crompton	Golf	SLT Accounts	EM	16/12/2019	26/11/2019							
SL-014	1		Letter	27/10/2019	Cllr Crompton	Golf	Golf course	EM	n/a	29/11/2019							
SL-015		1	Email	14/11/2019	To whom it may concern	Resident	General	EM	n/a	15/11/2019							
SL-016		1	Email	14/11/2019	Hello	Golf/Resident	Survey	EM	n/a	15/11/2019							
SL-017			Email	01/12/2019	n/a	Resident	General	EM	n/a	03/12/2019							
SL-018			Email	01/12/2019	To whom it may concern	Resident	General	EM	n/a	04/12/2019							
SL-019			Email	07/11/2019	Email Inbox		Drop in session info doesn't state dates and times	NL		07/11/2019							
SL-020			Email	07/11/2019	Email Inbox		Query on housing tenures	NL		07/11/2019							
SL-021			Email	07/11/2019	Email Inbox		Water run off and traffic	NL		08/11/2019							
SL-022			Email	07/11/2019	Email Inbox		GP for new homes	NL		11/11/2019							
SL-023			Email	12/11/2019	Email Inbox		Proposal for golf course	NL		15/11/2019							
SL-024	1		Email	14/11/2019	Cllr. Davies		General Objection / survey misleading	GR									
SL-025		1	Letter	Unknown	Generic		Objection to closure	NL		22/11/2019							
SL-026		1	Email	04/12/2019	Email Inbox		Questions as unable to attend drop in	NL		10/12/2019							
SL-027		1	Email	12/11/2019	Cllr. Davies		Validity of consultation	GR									
SL-028	1		Email	14/11/2019	Cllr. Davies		General objection / validity of consultation	GR		09/12/2019							
SL-029	1		Email	08/11/2019	Email Inbox	BHCG Member	General Objection	GR		11/11/2019							
SL-030		1	Email	08/11/2019	Email Inbox	Resident	General Objection / survey misleading	GR		11-Nov							
SL-031	1		Letter via email	07/11/2019	Email Inbox	Resident / BHGC Member	General Objection	GR		08/11/2019							
SL-032			Email	23/10/2019	Email Inbox		"Sham Consultation"	GR		28/10/2019							
SL-033		1	Email	26/10/2019	Email Inbox		Support / Clarification re decision making process	GR		28/10/2019							
SL-034			Email	06/12/2019	Email Inbox	Resident	New school health risks / number of homes	GR									
SL-035			Email	06/12/2019	Email Inbox	Resident	New homes - pressure on GP surgery	GR									
SL-036			FOI	25/11/2019	n/a	Resident	Online survey / Green Space Loss / New School Location	GR	09/12/2019	10/12/2019							
SL-037		1	Email	22/10/2019	Email Inbox - Cllr. Crompton		Pre-Consultation enquiry	GR		24/10/2019							
SL-038	1	1	Email / Letter	12/12/2019	Email Inbox	Golf Member	Environmental / Health / New Park / Flood Defences	GR/NL		17/12/2019							
SL-039			Face to Face	08/12/2019	Cllr. Davies		Requested cabinet report and golf report	GR		19/12/2019							
SL-040		1	Email	08/12/2019	Cllr. Crompton	Resident	Queries re new park, new school, new houses	GR		19/12/2019							

Brandhall Golf Course – Your Questions Answered

1. When would the golf course close to customers if closure is approved following the consultation?

Following consultation, the council will consider people's views before making a final decision. If a decision is made to close the course, we will work with the golf club, members and other relevant stakeholders on the timing of the closure. Existing leases would also be considered.

2. If Brandhall Golf Course closes what other golf courses are available in the local area?

There are six other golf facilities in Sandwell, which include 18-hole, nine-hole and pitch and putt courses, and more than 30 further golf facilities within a 20-minute drive of Sandwell.

3. Do other golf courses offer a 'pay and play' option?

Yes, all the golf courses in Sandwell offer pay and play options, giving you the option to turn up and play at these courses without being a member.

4. Is there availability at other local golf club courses to cater for more users?

Yes, following a recent review, all golf courses in the local area can accommodate more golfers.

5. Do other local golf clubs / courses offer lessons?

Lots of other local course do offer lessons, we would advise checking with courses directly because detail will vary.

6. Do other local golf clubs / courses have competitions?

All clubs have competitions, but this will be different at each club – so it is worth checking with each one for their competition schedule.

7. What would happen to the club house – would it be demolished?

If a decision was made following consultation to close the golf course, the future of the existing buildings would depend on any agreed plans moving forward.

8. How many staff are affected/may lose jobs?

There are six people in total involved in running the golf course who could be affected if it closes. They have been briefed about the proposals and consulted as part of the consultation process.

Should the course close following the consultation, the four council grounds maintenance staff who work at Brandhall would move into other positions in the council, and Sandwell Leisure Trust would work with their staff/contractors to look at options for the future.

9. How many new homes do you estimate could be built on the site?

This is one of the key things we have been keen to talk to people about during the consultation. It would depend on the amount of open space included in any development, as well as the size and type of housing provided. We would not know for certain until after the public consultation and after we have prepared a master plan for the site.

The consultation included three different options for the size of park that could be created alongside a school and homes if the course were to close.

10. What type of new homes would they be?

We envisage there could be a mix of tenures/ownerships on the site. Planning policy requires a minimum of 25% affordable housing. These could be affordable homes provided by registered providers of social housing, they could be council homes, or a mix of both.

We shall not know a detailed mix of housing types or tenures until after consultation and after we have prepared a detailed master plan for the site. However, the council would consider all options for tenure including private ownership, shared ownership and starter homes to help meet the housing needs of Sandwell's younger people.

11. How much and what percentage of the Brandhall Golf Course site do you envisage would be retained as green space after new homes and the school are built?

The amount of open space was one of the key parts of the public consultation. The consultation included three different options for the size of park that could be created alongside a school and homes if the course were to close.

There are options with 4.5 hectares area of open space (equivalent to 7 football pitches), 6 hectares of spaces (equivalent to 10 football pitches) and 8.5 hectares of open space (equivalent to 14 football pitches). 8.5ha is the same size as Brunswick Park in Wednesbury or equivalent to six Parsons Hill Parks (1.37ha). The 8.5ha option would mean we would be retaining approximately a quarter of the site as formal open space.

In addition to this there would be elements of landscaping across the site, and a linear area of open space that would be retained as a buffer for the motorway and overhead pylons. These have not been included as part of the 8.5ha figure.

12. Would the road network be redesigned/new roads built to cope with extra traffic?

As with any proposed new development, the impact it would have on the surrounding highway network would be investigated and assessed in depth within a transport assessment. This would include an estimate on the amounts of traffic that would be generated by each element of any redevelopment and at what times that traffic would likely travel (through past experience and using industry standard evaluation tools).

Existing base traffic levels would be collected through surveys and then the impact of any new additional traffic to the network would be modelled to assess what mitigation would be required to negate that impact. This could include junction improvements, new roads and junctions, improved pedestrian crossing facilities and other highway safety improvements depending on the finding of the study.

13. How much would the school cost the council to build?

This would be dependent on the proposed plans.

14. How would wildlife and trees on the site be protected?

An independent tree survey would be carried out as part of a master plan for the site. This survey would help identify where there are important trees that need to be retained and protected in any new development. The survey would also identify any trees that are diseased or of poor quality.

A master plan would show where trees are to be retained and where new trees should be planted. There would also be an ecological survey to identify the species of plants and animals / birds on the site. In accordance with planning policy, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the impact on any animals and birds using the site. We would not know what these could be until we have the ecological survey. There is also the opportunity to enhance the landscape, including trees, as part of a new development.

15. How much would it cost to create a new park and maintain it?

If it was agreed to develop the site and create a new park, the size and type of park would need to be carefully considered and this, together with any facilities, would determine how much it would cost to create and maintain.

16. Would Parsons Hill Park be retained/incorporated into the new park?

It is proposed the Parsons Hill Park is considered as part of the potential wider development site and is replaced as part of any new park. Parsons Hill Park could be a good location for new homes with the park being incorporated into the wider open space provision across the site.

17. Why is Sandwell Council considering building on green space?

Brandhall Golf Course is currently classed as restricted because it is not fully accessible to the public. This means local people are not able to use this green space as they would other local parks. If a decision is made to close the golf course, this provides an opportunity to open part of the site to local people as a fully accessible public park. By doing this we would be making green space more accessible in the community.

18. Why is Sandwell Council considering building houses on a greenfield site when there are brownfield sites available? What brownfield sites have been/are being considered for new homes?

The council has a brownfield first policy, meaning that brownfield sites should be considered for development first. All large brownfield sites are already allocated for housing, meaning that housing development would be supported on these sites.

The issue with some of the brownfield sites is that they are not viable for housing because of land contamination. The council is working with the landowners of brownfield sites, where possible, to support them to bring the site forward for housing using grant where possible such as Mill Lane off Station Road in Oldbury that is currently on site.

However, should the housing supply from all allocated sites be brought forward, which may not be possible, there would still be a shortfall in terms of the council's current targets for housing need. The development of greenfield sites does therefore need to be considered to meet this housing shortfall.

19. What would happen to the existing Causeway Green Primary site if it gets replaced?

Following the public consultation, the council would look to develop an option appraisal for the vacant school site to support the follow-up report to Cabinet. Should the existing school site be released for development, housing development would be considered appropriate as it is within a predominantly residential area although the vehicular access to the site would require further investigation.

20. What and where would extra school places be provided for children who will live in the proposed new housing?

Once planning approval for any residential development was granted, and the type of housing confirmed, the council would look at the number of potential school places a new housing development might create. Over recent years, the council has expanded a number of local primary and secondary schools in response to a significant birth rate across the borough.

Demand for school places has eased with a fall in the latest birth rates, which will lead to a manageable surplus of places in schools that could accommodate any new demand following occupation of any new housing.

21. What will happen after the consultation – will people’s views be listened to? Will findings come back to Cabinet before any decisions are taken?

We’ve been keen to hear what people think and this consultation gave everyone the chance to have their say. Following consultation, a further report including the findings of the consultation will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

If the decision is taken to close the golf course, any proposals to develop the site in the future would be subject to a detailed master plan and planning permission. Local people would be fully consulted before any decisions were taken regarding redevelopment.

22. Has the Council considered the flood risk on the site and how this could affect developing it for housing?

Any proposals for developments, should the course close, would require the preparation of a Flood Risk Assessment to identify any potential flooding issues and solutions. As part of the Flood Risk Assessment, a drainage strategy would be required which would identify how sustainable drainage systems could contribute towards a proposed solution.

The results of the Flood Risk Assessment and the proposed solutions to any potential flooding issues would be incorporated into any master plan layout and concept plan.

23. If more houses are built and the number of residents in the local area increases, how will the Council ensure that everybody has adequate access to local services? GPs etc?

The Council would work with its partners, including the National Health Service at its regional level, to assess the potential levels of future demand for community services as a result of any redevelopment and compare it with the levels of existing provision. Any areas of potential shortfall of provision that are identified would then be a priority to be addressed by the partners.

24. Wouldn’t a new park just encourage more anti-social behaviour?

We would ensure through the design, management and usage of the park that it provides the opportunity for people to engage in positive activities. We would work with our Anti-Social Behaviour teams to ensure that this has a positive impact on the local community.