

REPORT TO

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY BOARD

26 November 2020

Subject:	Sandwell Aquatics Centre Project
Cabinet Portfolio:	Councillor Maria Crompton – Cabinet Member for Safer Communities
Director:	Executive Director - Neighbourhoods Dr. Alison Knight
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Chris Jones Project Director

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board:

1. Consider and comment upon the information presented on the progress of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre; and
2. Identify any recommendations it wishes to make.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Board has requested an update on the progress of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre project that is underway to provide a world-class leisure and sport facility for Sandwell, as well as acting as a host venue for the swimming and diving events at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

2 IMPLICATIONS FOR VISION 2030

- 2.1 The Sandwell Aquatics Centre project contributes to a number of ambitions within Vision 2030:

Ambition 1 – Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience.

Ambition 2 – Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer and where those of us who are vulnerable feel respected and cared for.

Ambition 8 – Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.

Ambition 10 – Sandwell now has a national reputation for getting things done, where all local partners are focused on what really matters in people's lives and communities.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 A report was presented previously at the meeting of the Board on the 3 October 2019. At this time, enabling works had commenced on site to prepare for main construction to start in January 2020 and final designs for the building had been received.
- 3.2 The previous report was prior to final Cabinet approval for the project which was gained at its meeting on 20 November 2019, final contract close with Wates Construction Limited which occurred on 26 November 2019, and the commencement of main construction works.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Following the commencement of the main construction work in January 2020, work has continued positively on the Aquatics Centre project.
- 4.2 Although there has been some impact to the programme due to COVID-19 this has been limited due to a proactive approach by Sandwell Council and Wates Construction Limited and the continuing support of Games partners. This proactive approach led to the site being closed for only 24 hours during Lockdown One to ensure that all appropriate health and safety measures were in place. The site is being managed in line with the Construction Leadership Council's Site Operating Procedures Version 6 and all health and safety arrangements are reviewed on a regular basis.

- 4.3 A delivery plan is in place that has been agreed with all Games partners, including Central Government, Birmingham City Council, and the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee and the project is on target to deliver in line with the timescales required to host the swimming and diving events at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.
- 4.4 The following works are now complete / have been started:
- All enabling works are complete;
 - Foundation piles are complete;
 - All pool tanks are complete and have been measured to make sure they are the correct size;
 - Reinforced concrete works are continuing in line with the programme;
 - The steel frame for the front section of the building is complete and six steel roof trusses are now in place over the pool hall;
 - Work has commenced on the cladding to the front section of the building; and
 - Manufacture of the dive tower has commenced.
- 4.5 Over the next few months the following actions will happen:
- Pool tanks will be filled and tested for leaks (if any leaks should occur time is built into the programme for rectification);
 - Work will continue on the installation of steel structure and roof trusses;
 - Work will continue on the cladding and work will commence on the roofing;
 - Dive tower will start being installed in December; and
 - Work will commence on masonry.
- 4.6 Work has commenced on phase one of the highways works required to support the delivery of the Aquatics Centre. The focus of all highways works associated with the Aquatics Centre is, whilst of course maintain traffic flow in the area, to support sustainable and active travel. The works included in phase one of the highways works are detailed below and will be complete by the end of March 2021:
- Dog Kennel Lane and Bristnall Hall Road – two new zebra crossings (these new zebra crossings are not required to facilitate the new Aquatics Centre but have been installed following consultation with local residents and traders to improve pedestrian travel in the area);

- Manor Road / Londonderry Lane – traffic island to signalised junction with pedestrian crossings and advance stop areas for cyclists;
- Manor Road / Holly Lane – traffic island to signalised junction with pedestrian crossings and advance stop areas for cyclists;
- Holly Lane / St Pauls Road – Give way junction to signalised junction with pedestrian crossings and advance stop areas for cyclists; and
- Londonderry Lane – Puffin crossing upgrade to toucan crossing and associated cycle path.

4.7 Final designs are being developed for highways works phase two which will include improvements to the Queens Road / Londonderry Lane island and also environmental improvements on Londonderry Road. This will be consulted on early in 2021 and completed by the spring of 2022.

4.8 There is a final phase of highways works, phase three, which focuses on road safety on Londonderry Lane close to the Aquatics Centre. These will be complete by spring 2023 prior to the facility opening to the public.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

5.1 Consultation has been carried out throughout the project so far and has been reported to the Commonwealth Games 2022 – Members Steering Group.

5.2 Prior to lockdown, regular community events were being held at convenient locations to keep residents up to date with progress on the project and what to expect in the coming months.

5.3 As it is currently not possible to hold such events, a regular newsletter will be distributed to residents to keep them up to date with what has happened and what is to be expected on the project.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS.

6.1 There are no alternative options associated with this report.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The project is on target to be delivered within the funding allocated to it at the meeting of Cabinet on 20 November 2019.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 There are no specific legal or governance considerations arising from this report.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 No equality impact assessment is required for this report.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 No data protection impact assessment is required for this report.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

12.1 There are no specific sustainability issues associated with this report.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

13.1 The Sandwell Aquatics Centre will contribute to the leisure offer in the borough, providing a world-class facility for our residents to be active, contributing to healthier lives.

13.2 The benefits created by the construction of the Aquatics Centre are already being felt with local people winning new jobs and gaining valuable skills and experience. An example of this is the 12 local people who are gaining valuable skills whilst working on the project through the West Midlands Combined Authority Construction Gateway scheme. These workers will gain an NVQ Level 2 in carpentry, groundwork, or logistics.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

14.1 There is no impact on any Council managed property or land associated with this report.

15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The Board is invited to consider the information presented to it and determine if there are any recommendations it wishes to make.

Dr. Alison Knight
Executive Director – Neighbourhoods