

ITEM NO 4(c)(ii)

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CABINET - 11 DECEMBER 2014	
Contact Officer:	Jim Arnold
Telephone No:	01785 619350
Ward Interest:	Nil
Report Track:	Cabinet 11/12/14 (Only)
Key Decision:	Yes

**SUBMISSION BY COUNCILLOR R M SMITH
LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO**

**CABINET
11 DECEMBER 2014
Sports and Recreational Facilities in Stone**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the findings of a report from Plozajski Lynch Consulting Ltd related to the provision of sporting and recreational facilities in Stone.

2 Proposal of Cabinet Member

- 2.1 To adopt the report (attached as an **APPENDIX**) and use the recommendations as a basis for considering future improvements to the level of sporting and recreational provision in Stone and as justification for future funding.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 In January 2014 the Council commissioned leisure management consultants Plozajski and Lynch to undertake a review of sporting and recreational provision in the Stone area.
- 3.2 It was proposed that the findings arising from the review were used to inform an implementation plan to identify the key priorities for development schemes for Stone and to provide an evidence base and to assist in the justification in requesting financial contributions from proposed Developments arising in the catchment area of Stone.

- 3.3 The review built upon the work carried out in 2009 by Kit Campbell Associates who provided the major source of the data for both the quantitative and qualitative assessments of sporting and recreational provision in and around Stone. This assessment was updated in 2013 and fed into the emerging Plan for Stafford Borough which was adopted in 2014.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 Cleaner, Greener, Safer Communities
4.2 Health and Wellbeing

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The brief for the review by Plozajski and Lynch was to “provide an area specific plan that takes the findings of the existing Borough wide studies and interprets them for Stone, specifically for sporting and recreational provision.”
- 5.2 The Plan was to identify key priorities for delivery for each of the different types of sporting and recreational provision set out below:-
- Swimming pools
 - Sports halls
 - Fitness facilities
 - Football pitches (including A.T.P.s and grass pitches)
 - Bowling greens
 - Play areas and equipped playgrounds for children up to the age of 12 years
 - Tennis courts and M.U.G.A.s
 - Teenage facilities (wheeled sports facilities, BMX tracks, sportswalls and other informal areas for teenagers)
- 5.3 It was intended that the study would produce a sport and leisure based action plan for Stone and the north of the Borough, taking a strategic overview of the existing range of sporting and recreational opportunities in the area and identifying any gaps or possible surpluses.
- 5.4 This was likely to involve not only identifying the potential for the strategic development of additional sporting and recreational facilities and an evidence base for justification but would also involve identifying a rationale for rationalisation, disposal or combining of facilities.
- 5.5 The study included consultation with a range of key stakeholders including:-
- Stafford Borough Council - Leisure, Planning, Finance and appropriate Elected Members
 - Sport England
 - Sport Across Staffordshire
 - Stone Town Council
 - Alleyne's' Academy, Stone
 - National/Regional Governing Bodies for Sport

6	Implications	
6.1	Financial	
	Legal	
	Human Resources	
	Human Rights Act	
	Data Protection	
	Risk Management	
6.2	Equality and Diversity	<p>The Borough Council considers the effect of its actions on all sections of our community and has addressed all of the following Equality Strands in the production of this report, as appropriate:-</p> <p>Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.</p>
Previous Consideration - Nil		
Background Papers - Leisure Services		

Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd.



Stafford Borough Council

A Sports Facilities Strategy for
Stone and Surrounding Area
Final Report

September 2014

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLC Appointed in January 2014

In January 2014 Stafford Borough Council appointed leisure management consultants Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd. (PLC) to undertake a review of sports provision in Stone in the north of the Borough. We were asked as the outcome of this review, which is based on a range of existing studies, to produce an implementation plan to identify the priority development schemes for Stone from 2014 to 2031.

To quote from the council's brief:

“The Council requires an area specific Plan that takes the findings of the Borough wide studies and interprets them for Stone, specifically sports and recreation facilities provision. The Plan must identify priorities for delivery for each of the different types of sports and recreation facility.”

The brief in full is set out in Appendix One.

1.2 Sports and Facilities Covered

The facilities covered are: -

- a. Football pitches (including ATPs and grass pitches)
- b. Bowling Greens
- c. Fitness facilities
- d. Sports Halls
- e. Swimming Pools
- f. Play areas & playgrounds (equipped play areas intended for children up to the age of about 12)
- g. Tennis & Multi-Sport Courts
- h. Teenage Facilities (BMX/skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops and other informal areas intended primarily for teenagers)

1.3 Acknowledgements

Throughout the course of this study we have been greatly aided by the involvement and encouragement of a number of people. We would like to place on record our thanks to: -

- Adam Hill)
- Jim Arnold) Stafford Borough Council
- Melissa Kurihara)
- Roger Leverett)



- Mark Thornwill – Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on- Trent, the County Sport Partnership

Their willingness to share their knowledge, experience and expertise has greatly aided the course of this project.

2 BACKGROUND TO STONE

2.1 Population & Catchment Area

Stone lies some 6.5 miles to the north of Stafford and 7.5 miles from Stoke. The 2011 census measured the population a 16,385. This population is expected to grow by up to 2,500 by 2031 through the provision of up to 1,000 new homes, 500 hundred of which will come in the west of the town.

2.1.1 Population in the Catchment Area

When looking at the demand for sports facilities, it is more useful to look at the population within a certain travel time of a location (known as the “catchment area”) rather than the population. At Stone the catchment populations are: -

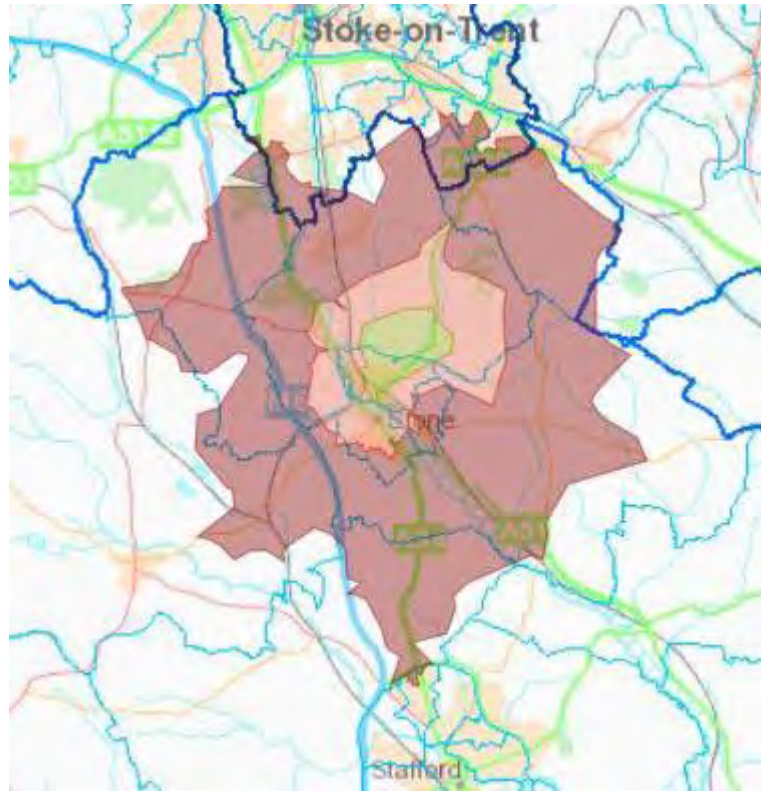
Table One
Catchment Populations by Drive Times

Catchment Area Travel times in minutes	Total Population
0-2.5	4,255
2.5-5	8,716
5-10	26,168
10-15	117,581
15-20	174,377

Source – Sport England, Active Places Power

The large jump in the catchment populations when the travel times are increased from 10 to 15 minutes is accounted for by the proximity of Stafford to the south and Stoke to the north. Because of this great increase it is reasonable for the purposes of this report to look only at the 10 minute drive time population and the facilities within this area. The map overleaf shows the extent of this area.

**Map One
Ten Minute Drive Time from Stone**



Source – Active Places Power

2.2 Participation in Sport

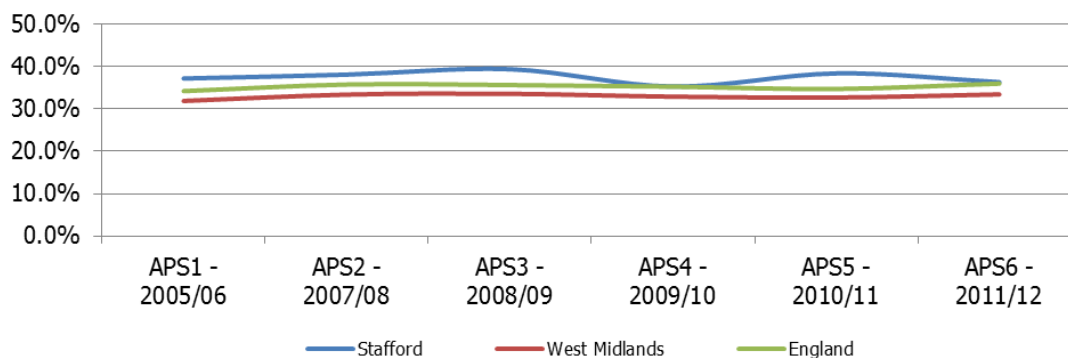
2.2.1 Stafford Consistently Above National Average

Sport England measures weekly adult participation in sport in England by the annual Active People Survey which began in 2005. Between 2005 and the present participation in the Borough of Stafford has been consistently higher than the average for both the country as a whole and for the West Midlands. This is shown in Table 2. In 2011/12 the actual figures were 36.1% for Stafford, 36% nationally and 33.5% for the West Midlands.

This Stafford participation measure is based on a sample size of 499 for the Borough as a whole which is too small to give an accurate split for Stone as a particular area.

Table 2
Adult Participation in Sport

Adult (16+) participation in sport at least once a week - 2005 to 2012



Source – Sport England Active People

2.2.2 Recently Declining Levels of Participation?

However, the most recent Active People Survey for 2012/13 assessed participation in Stafford at 32%. Whether this decline is real or due to sampling error is unclear. It seems unlikely that the positive trend of recent years should reverse so dramatically particularly in view of the effect of the 2012 Olympics. However, planning for the future may need to take into account lower levels of participation

2.3 Sport England Market Segmentation.

Therefore there is a catchment population for sport in and around Stone of 26,100 and with levels of participation which can best be regarded as static. What sports and activities are residents of Stone most likely to participate in?

Sport England has developed a market segmentation tool which divides the adult population into 19 categories and matches them against the sports most likely to appeal. In simple terms rugby union is more likely to appeal to young men and bowls to older men and women. The segmentation details are summarised in Appendix 2 and full details can be found on the Sport England website¹.

2.3.1 Dominant Market Segments

Table three shows how the market for sport is divided in Stafford with the dominant groups highlighted in yellow. The key groups in Stone are identical to those in the Borough as a whole but in every case with a higher percentage. It must be stressed that this applies only to the adult population over 16 – participation by children and young people needs to be assessed separately.

¹ <http://www.sportengland.org/search/?search=market%20segmentation>

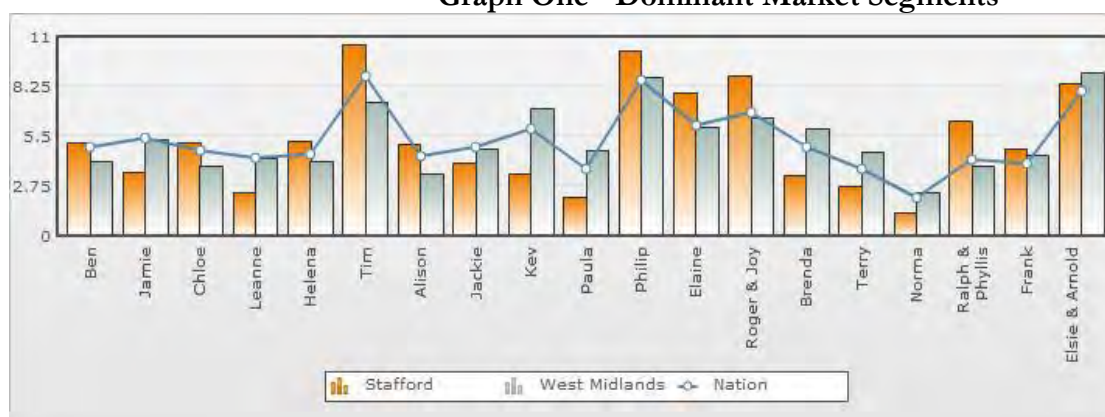
**Table Three
Market Segmentation in Stafford**

Name	Description	Stafford	Stone	West Midlands	England
Ben	Competitive Male Urbanites	5.1%	5.0%	4.1%	4.9%
Jamie	Sports Team Drinkers	3.5%	2.0%	5.3%	5.4%
Chloe	Fitness Class Friends	5.1%	5.2%	3.8%	4.7%
Leanne	Supportive Singles	2.4%	1.7%	4.3%	4.3%
Helena	Career Focused Females	5.2%	5.2%	4.1%	4.5%
Tim	Settling Down Males	10.5%	11.0%	7.4%	8.8%
Alison	Stay at Home Mums	5.0%	5.7%	3.4%	4.4%
Jackie	Middle England Mums	4.0%	3.3%	4.8%	4.9%
Kev	Pub League Team Mates	3.4%	2.6%	7.0%	5.9%
Paula	Stretched Single Mums	2.1%	1.9%	4.7%	3.7%
Philip	Comfortable Mid-Life Males	10.2%	10.7%	8.7%	8.6%
Elaine	Empty Nest Career Ladies	7.9%	8.6%	6.0%	6.1%
Roger & Joy	Early Retirement Couples	8.8%	9.8%	6.5%	6.8%
Brenda	Older Working Women	3.3%	3.0%	5.9%	4.9%
Terry	Local 'Old Boys'	2.7%	2.3%	4.6%	3.7%
Norma	Later Life Ladies	1.3%	1.0%	2.4%	2.1%
Ralph & Phyllis	Comfortable Retired Couples	6.3%	5.9%	3.8%	4.2%
Frank	Twilight Year Gents	4.8%	5.5%	4.4%	4.0%
Elsie & Arnold	Retirement Home Singles	8.4%	9.5%	9.0%	8.0%

Source - Sport England

The graph below illustrates this is a different form

Graph One - Dominant Market Segments



Source - Sport England

2.3.2 Activities Appealing to Dominant Segments

The sports and activities most likely to appeal to these four largest segments are: -

Table Four
Sports Most Likely to Appeal to Dominant Market Segments

Segment Name	Sports Most Likely to Appeal
Tim	Canoeing Skiing Cricket Golf Cycling Squash Football
Philip	Sailing Gym Football Jogging Badminton Golf Cycling Cricket
Elaine	Swimming Yoga Walking Horse riding Aqua aerobics Pilates Step machine Gym
Roger & Joy	Swimming Sailing Walking Golf Aqua aerobics Shooting Bowls Fishing
Elsie & Arnold	Walking Bowls Dancing Gentle exercise

Any future strategy for sport in Stone must take into account the needs of this local market both in terms of facilities and of the programmes they offer. The current level of supply is examined in the next section.

3 SUPPLY & DEMAND

3.1 Facilities in the Stone Catchment Area

Having looked at the size and nature of the market for sports and leisure activities in and around Stone, this section looks at the facilities which serve it. Table Five lists the facilities within the 10 minute drive time. This is based on a combination of sources including Sport England’s Active People Power database, governing body of sport lists and local data gathered by Kit Campbell Associates in 2009 and 2013.

Table Five
Provision by Type
Within 10 minutes Catchment Area

Typology	Number of Facilities	Details
Sports Halls	4	Alleyes Sports Centre, Stone - 4 courts Sandon Business. Enterprise And Arts College, Meir - 5 courts Yarlet School, Yarlet - 3 courts Yarnfield Park Sports Centre, Yarnfield - 3 courts
Swimming Pools (25m)	1	Alleyes Sports Centre 24m x 12.5m
Fitness Facilities	6 venues 149 stations	Moddershall Oaks Health Spa, Stone - 24 stns. Stone House Hotel, Stone - 12 stns Westbridge Park Fitness Centre, Stone - 69 stns Sandon Business. Enterprise And Arts College, Meir - 4 stns Stoke On Trent RUFC, Barlaston - 20 stns Yarnfield Park Sports Centre, Yarnfield - 20 stns
Grass Pitches		
Adult Football	7 venues 15 pitches	Alleyes Sports Centre, Stone (2) The Outlanes Sports Ground, Barlaston (2) Tilling Drive, Sonte Fulford & Tean Football Club, Fulford Dale (2) Sandon Business. Enterprise & Arts College, Meir (2) Wellbeing Park, Yarnfield Lane, Stone (4) Yarlet School, Yarlet Walton Common, Stone
Junior Football	6 venues 8 pitches	Stone Youth Centre, Stone Stone Sp. Cricket Club, Stone Sandon Primary School, Meir St. Augustines Catholic Primary School, Meir Westbridge Park, Stone



		Wellbeing Park, Yarnfield Lane, Stone (3)
Mini-Soccer	6 pitches	Alleyes School , Stone (6)
Adult Rugby	5 pitches	Stone RFC, Enson Lane, Aston by Stone Stoke on Trent RUFC, Barlaston (3) Yarlet School, Yarlet
Junior Rugby	None	
Cricket	9 venues 11 pitches	Alleyes High School, Stone Oulton Cricket Club, Oulton Heath Stone SP Cricket Club, Lichfield Lane, Stone Barlaston Cricket Club, Barlaston Little Stoke Cricket Club, Uttoxeter Rd. Stone (2) Meir Heath Cricket Club, Meir Moddershall Cricket Club, Barnfields, Stone (2) Stone Cricket Club, Lichfield Rd. Stone Yarlet School, Yarlet
Artificial Turf Pitches	3	Alleyes Sports Centre - Sand filled 100m x 60m Stone Hockey Club - Sand filled 100m x 60m Yarlet School - Sand filled 58m x 30m
Bowling Greens	4	Little Stoke Bowling Club Stoke Crown Bowling Club Stonefield Park Tittensor Bowling Club
Play areas	12	Copeland Drive Heathfield Avenue Hill Crescent Pembroke Drive Priory Road Redhill Gardens Springwood Drive Stonefield Park The Lindens Tilling Drive Westbridge Park Whitemill Lane
Outdoor Tennis Courts	7 venues 15 courts	Church Eaton Tennis Club, Stafford (2 tarmac) Moddershall Oaks Health Spa, (1 tarmac, floodlit) Stonefield Park, Stone (2 tarmac) Stone House Hotel, Stone (1 tarmac) Stone Lawn Tennis And Squash Club, Stone (6 tarmac, floodlit) Yarlet School, Yarlet (1 tarmac) Westbridge Park (2 tarmac)
Indoor Tennis Centres	1 venue 2 courts	St Dominic's Priory School, Stone (2 tarmac)
Teenage Facilities/MUGAs	1 venue	Westbridge Skate Park, Stone



3.2 Supply and Demand Assessment

To assess the extent to which this supply of facilities meets the needs of the Stone population PLC undertook a review of existing documents including detailed assessments carried out by Kit Campbell Associates in 2009 and 2013 and an assessment made using Sport England's Facilities Planning Model commissioned by the County Sports Partnership. We supplemented this with a range of consultations with local sports organisations, Stone Town Council and SBC officers.

3.3 Assessments by Kit Campbell Associates

The major sources of data and evidence for the quantity and quality of sports provision in and around Stone are those carried out by consultants Kit Campbell Associates (KCA) in 2009 and 2013. In 2009 KCA made a detailed study of provision using the then standard methodology known as PPG17. This followed the guidance set out in the government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 – hence the name. Sport England had also issued guidance on how to apply PPG17 to the specifics of a local area.

In 2013 SBC commissioned KCA to update this assessment to feed into the emerging Local Plan. By this time the new government had moved away from the strict PPG17 system. However, as the methodology was essentially sound and Sport England had not yet published revised guidance the update closely mirrored the original methodology. This ensured a continuity of approach between the two documents.

3.3.1 Spatial Standards

As one of the outputs from their study, KCA made a number of recommendations for a spatial standard to guide future provision. Sport England no longer advocate the use of such standards, advising instead that local sports plans be based on an analysis of local need and the identification of key local sites. The standards approach also has the in-built assumption that participation rates are constant and unchanging.

However, where such standards do have value is in calculating the requirements for new and/or growing populations, hence their inclusion in the draft plan.

The population of Stone is anticipated to grow by some 2,500 people by 2031. Using the standards recommended by KCA this would require the provision of a number of new facilities as detailed in Table Six. For example, the incoming population would require space the equivalent of 3 adult football pitches, plus one cricket ground plus one third of a 25 metre swimming pool.

Table Six
New Facilities Required by a Standards Approach
Assuming Population Growth of 2,500

Activity	Sq. M	Total	Facility Size	Facility	Facility
	per person	Sq. M	Sq. M	Equivalents	Type
Football	7.4	18,500	5,500 (100m x 55m)	3	Adult pitches
Rugby	2.8	7,000	6,600 (110m x 60m)	1	Adult pitch
Cricket	4.3	10,750	11,309 (60m boundaries)	1	Adult pitch
Multi-Court	0.45	1,125	800 (40m x 20m)	1	MUGA
Teenage facilities	0.3	750	1,000 (40m x 25m)	1	BMX or similar
Sports Hall	0.09	225	700 (35m x 20m)	0.3	4 court hall
Swimming Pool	0.04	100	313 (25m x 12.5m)	0.3	25m pool
Tennis Courts	0.04	100	800 (40m x 20m)	0.1	Court
ATP	0.55	1,375	6,000 (100m x 60m)	0.2*	Full size
Bowls	0.16	400	1,600 (40m x 40m)	0.3	Green

* = as part of a network of 6 additional full size ATPs

This table shows the need for new facilities which would be generated by the incoming population ***assuming that participation rates stay constant and that current facilities are fully used.*** KCA then looked at the current level of supply and demand to produce a more detailed analysis and recommendations for the future. The detailed findings of the KCA report as they apply to this study are as follows.

3.4 Grass Pitches

KCA made an assessment of the three pitch sports with the highest levels of participation namely football, cricket and rugby union. They looked at hockey in the context of artificial turf pitches. The KCA findings were as follows: -

3.4.1 Football Pitches

KCA state that, overall in the Borough, there is a surplus of adult pitches (21) on Sunday morning, the most popular time, but on the other hand a shortage of space for youth and mini-soccer (30.5). In the north of the Borough which includes Stone there is a surplus of 11 adult pitches and a deficiency of 6 mini-soccer pitches at this

time. As a rule of thumb two mini-soccer pitches can be accommodated on a senior pitch; indeed two mini-soccer pitches are often marked out across the two halves of a senior pitch.

KCA assessed the quality of pitches and changing rooms across the Borough as poor. KCA's recommended priority was to provide more facilities for mini-soccer, particularly in the north east and Stafford town areas. They also recommend significantly increased use of artificial turf pitches. They strongly recommended improvements to the quality of facilities for adult football, primarily by upgrading drainage and changing. The playing field at Tilling Drive clearly illustrates both of these issues.

Changing Rooms at Tilling Drive



Tilling Drive Adult Football Pitch



3.4.2 Cricket Pitches



In the Borough as a whole, KCA concluded that there are enough cricket pitches to accommodate all of the demand arising in the Borough, with some limited spare capacity. However, this masks a shortfall of around three pitches in the Stafford town area. Supply and demand in Stone is in balance. Any future demand arising from the strategic housing developments should be accommodated within existing clubs rather than developing new organisations and facilities.

3.4.3 Rugby Pitches

KCA saw a more than adequate number of adult rugby pitches in the Borough so the fact that junior and midi teams use adult pitches does not significantly reduce the availability of pitches for adult teams. However, they saw a need for more junior pitches, particularly in the north and Stafford town areas.

In Stone, this can be accommodated at Enson Lane where Stone Rugby Club is now based. There is sufficient land for the development of small sized pitches and this is included in the club's development plan.

3.5 Artificial Turf Pitches

KCA assess that at present, the Borough has three times as many full size ATPs designed for hockey as for football, but eight times as many football as hockey teams. Therefore the clear priority for the future in terms of ATPs is clearly the provision of more 3G pitches for football.

KCA are major advocates of a move from grass pitches to artificial turf pitches for rugby and football, particularly at junior level. They, therefore, advocate a network of at least 13 sites across the Borough. At least three of these are recommend for Stone including the existing, sand dressed pitches at Stone Hockey Club and Alleynes School. The third pitch is to be a 3G located at Westbridge Park or at a site to be agreed, perhaps Alleynes School.

3.6 Swimming Pools

KCA concluded that there is a shortfall of swimming pool space in Stafford Borough, likely to be higher than the level of unmet demand predicted (140 sq. m) due to Stafford Leisure Centre operating above the recommended level of utilised capacity. Some unmet demand arises from lack of access as the distribution of pools is limited to Stafford and Stone with some rural residents (and some urban) unable to walk to facilities due to distance. Some unmet demand is also due to lack of capacity and this is primarily located in the populated areas of south Stafford.

KCA commented on the age of the pool at Alleynes and the difficulty of maintaining quality and standards of maintenance. They recommended that the quality is maintained (or the facility replaced) as this is key to access in this area and consideration given to additional provision in the south of Stafford. This shortfall



will become more acute if further population/participation growth is planned. It should also be noted that the changing rooms at Alleynes are of the low quality suitable for school children and are not up to the high standards expected by adult customers of a modern pool or fitness centre.

3.7 Sports Halls

Stafford has a relatively good supply of sports halls with a high level of satisfied and retained demand. Any unmet demand is caused by poor access for those reliant on walking and could not be addressed by any new provision

Some facilities are over-utilised and others under utilised so improving access to those Stafford based facilities could be an objective to take the pressure off public centre leisure centres which appear to be under pressure.

Investment options could focus on improving the quality of older facilities (or replacing them if required). If further population and participation growth is intended then further modelling is recommended.

3.7.1 No Specialist Facilities

All sports halls within the Stone catchment area have facilities for the “traditional” range of indoor sports including badminton, basketball and volleyball. However, all are general purpose sports halls and none offers specialist facilities for games such as netball or indoor cricket.

3.8 Fitness Facilities

KCA comment that, proportionally, Stone has slightly more members per head of population so there is also likely to be little unmet demand there as well. If there is unmet or latent demand in either town, commercial operators are likely to enter the market and there is no need for any additional public sector provision.

3.9 Bowling Greens

There is sufficient bowls provision on a Borough-wide basis although some areas have poor access. There is more than enough provision in Stone with the shortages in provision being in the rural parts of the Borough.

3.10 Children's Play Areas

3.10.1 Destination Play Areas

KCA pointed out that the traditional policy of providing very local facilities within a few minutes walk of every family house is becoming outmoded, thanks to the success of

- **Destination** play facilities such as Victoria Park in Stafford which attracts large numbers of children and their parents, even though few people live within walking distance.
- **Natural** play facilities as part of local greenspaces in residential areas. They are designed to offer good opportunities for creative play through the use of changes of level and natural materials such as logs, sand and rocks rather than traditional fenced and equipment-dominated play areas.

KCA recommend that The Council's priority for the future should be to develop more of these types of facility. KCA identified Westbridge Park in Stone as a key location for a destination play area.

3.10.2 Local Provision for Younger Children

KCA identified deficiencies in provision for younger children in local play areas in Stone and Walton at: -

- North west Stone
- North west Walton
- Oulton and Oultoncross
- South west Walton Heath
- The southern part of Stone centred on the Lichfield Road
- West of Little Stoke
- North-west Walton

However, rather than simply use the planning process and direct investment to provide, small traditionally equipped play areas, KCA recommended the development of a network of natural facilities. Sawyer Way in Stone is given as an example of good practice.

3.11 Tennis, Multi Courts and MUGAs

KCA comments on the dearth of facilities outside Stafford with no floodlit multi-court areas being available in Stone or the rural areas. They point to a need to provide easily accessible, informal facilities. KCA identifies Westbridge Sports Centre in Stone as a possible location. Here there hard tennis courts that could be converted to multi-courts fairly easily.



The addition of floodlights at Alleyne's High School in Stone and Church Eaton Tennis Club will also benefit tennis and increase the availability of floodlit facilities across the Borough.

4 SPORT ENGLAND FACILITY PLANNING MODEL

The Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) is a computer-based supply/demand model, which has been developed by the University of Edinburgh in conjunction with sportscotland and Sport England since the 1980s. The model is a tool to help to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities in an area. It covers the provision of sports halls, swimming pools, indoor bowls centres and full size artificial grass pitches.

The county sports partnership Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent commissioned runs of the FPM in February 2014 as part of their wider assessment of supply and demand across the county and in Stafford. The modelling looks both at current provision and at what will be needed to meet the needs of the population in 2024.

We gratefully acknowledge their sharing of this information which is included at Appendix Four. The following sections summarise the findings of the FPM.

4.1 Swimming Pools

The FPM modelling shows that the demand for swimming significantly exceeds the present supply of pools at peak times.

The population in Stafford in 2013 generates demand for some 8,245 swims in per week peak period (pwpp). This is equivalent to 1,359m² of water space (a 25m x 4 lane pool is 212 sq. metres of water). The present supply is only 1,024m². This equates to a shortfall of 25%.

The Pool at Alleyne's Sports Centre is estimated to be currently running at 92% of capacity. This is considerably in excess of the Sport England measure that a pool is "comfortably full" when operating at 70% of capacity.

Hence there is significant shortfall of access to water space in Stone not only for swimming but for a range of other activities such as canoeing, mother and baby sessions and aquarobics for older people. These last two activities are particularly needed during daytime when the pool is not available to the general public.



4.2 Sports Halls

Based only on the FPM Stafford's supply of sports halls is in balance with demand. The level of provision of 1 court per 10,000 residents is just below the regional and county level average.

The basic supply/demand balance indicates that in 2013 total supply for courts available for public use in the weekly peak period is 35 badminton courts. The total demand in the Borough is also 35 courts.

This changes little up to 2024 with total supply assumed to be unchanged at 35 courts whilst total demand only increases by 1 court, so there is a very minor deficit across the Borough of 1 badminton court by 2024.

However when looking specifically at provision in Stone these purely numerical calculations should be tempered by the fact that all the facilities serving the town are on school sites. Hence, as is the case for swimming, on weekdays there is little or no access for the general community. This means that several of the key market segments which include older people are particularly disadvantaged. Opportunities are further curtailed by the lack of evening access during exam periods when sports halls are closed to allow desks to remain in place. Additional provision which is open during the day is needed to meet these needs.

4.3 Artificial Turf Pitches

The supply and demand for artificial turf pitches is, like sports halls, more or less in balance. Stafford has 4 full size AGP's on four sites. One of the pitches is a third generation (3G) surface and 3 are sand filled surfaces.

All four pitches are available for public use in the weekly peak period giving an effective supply is 4 pitches. The demand for AGPs across both football and hockey combined is also for 4 pitches and so supply and demand is in balance. The FPM estimates that 95% of the total Stafford demand for pitches can be met and there is no unmet demand due to lack of pitch capacity.

Looking at the demand by each sport the estimate is that demand for pitches from hockey equals 1 pitch and for football 3 pitches.

5 FUTURE NEEDS ARISING FROM HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

KCA also looked at what impact the new development proposed for the Strategic Development Land (SDL) to the west would bring about. Interestingly, they saw little need for new facilities. Their conclusions were: -



5.1 Bowling Greens

There is already ample provision of bowling greens in the Borough and therefore no need for any additional provision in the SDL.

5.2 Grass Pitches

By applying the Sport England Playing Pitch Models KCA showed that the pitch needs in the north of the Borough are for additional mini-soccer and youth pitches and mini and midi rugby pitches. Population growth in the SDL will generate a need for approximately 1.7 hectares of playing fields. This is the equivalent of 3.1 football pitches or 1.5 cricket grounds.

As there is a surplus of adult football pitches in the area it should be straightforward to convert some of the existing adult football pitches to mini-soccer. Therefore the key needs relate to rugby.

Stone Rugby Club recently moved to the Stone Hockey Club site at Enson Lane. There is ample space on the site for a mini and midi rugby pitch and therefore the Council should seek to negotiate contributions towards enhancing the site rather than the provision of additional grass pitches within the SDL

5.3 Tennis Courts

Although the application of the quantity standards suggests a need for slightly less than one additional tennis or multi-court, the Stone Tennis Club is a thriving organisation which should be able to accommodate any tennis players who move into the SDL. Therefore there is no need for any additional tennis courts.

5.4 Teenage Facilities

As teenage facilities in the town are poor it is desirable for the Council to require developers to provide a multi-court as part of teenage provision.

5.5 Indoor Sport

The population of the proposed SDL will increase the unmet local demand to about one badminton court – not enough on its own to justify additional provision.

At the time there was a current proposal to redevelop the Westbridge Park Fitness Centre as a multi-purpose sports centre with a 25 m pool, a sizeable fitness gym and various multi-purpose rooms. KCA supported this proposal.



6 RESULTS OF CONSULTATIONS

To provide a wider context than the documentary evidence PLC undertook consultations with a range of organisations involved in Stone and sport in the town. These are summarised as follows.

6.1 Stone Town Council

Stone Town Council sees a reasonable level of provision in the town but is concerned about the low quality of much of the stock. Playing pitches are uneven and have poor or no changing and many suffer from poor drainage. Any future provision of pitches should provide proper drainage and good changing rooms.

The swimming pool at Alleynes School is a valuable local amenity but is not available during the day meaning that some sections of the community, particularly older people have no access to swimming. A new pool would be welcomed at a suitable location.

Westbridge Park is valued local asset but requires investment and improvement. The Town Council whilst having no official policy on any specific proposal is concerned about insensitive development proposals or those which would impact on the events currently held at the park.

There is a good stock of play facilities for young children in the town but no provision for older children and teenagers. MUGAs or similar sports courts would be welcome.

The council is keen to see proper provision of open space in the housing developments proposed for the area. Existing public open space should be retained wherever possible.

In December 2012 the Town Council carried out a survey of its councillors with regards to leisure facilities in the town. This was part of a wider consultation exercise commissioned by the Borough council. At that time the Town Council's priorities were set out as: -

- Teenage skate park and other teenage facilities
- Play equipment for young disabled children
- Play facilities for young teenagers
- Netball and badminton court

6.2 Alleynes School & Sports Centre

Alleynes School and the associated sports centre make a major contribution to sport and recreation in the town. Its facilities include an artificial turf pitch, sports



hall, swimming pool, squash courts and grass pitches. They have a good track record in making facilities available to the public and have a good relationship with Stafford Borough Council. There is a formal dual use arrangement in place with SBC which the school is keen to preserve. They are also keen to discuss with SBC proposals to increase public access to the pool during summer and early autumn terms when pupils have good access to outdoor sport.

The school acknowledges the difficulties of keeping an aging pool in operation and would like to offer older pupils access to a fitness gym.

The school would also be supportive of converting the current sand based artificial turf pitch into a rubber crumb, 3G pitch. This support could include re-locating Stone Old Alleyns FC to the school subject to agreement on timetable and access arrangements.

6.3 Stone Old Alleynians Football Club

Stone Old Alleynians FC began as an “old boys” team but are now a well-respected club playing in division one of the West Midlands (Regional) Football League. They currently hire facilities from Stone Dominos FC at Springbank Park, Yarnfield Lane on the edge of Stone.

The club is eager to re-establish links with the school and to have their own base rather than be simply tenants. This could be achieved at a new 3G at Alleynes school and would allow the development of a football partnership between the club, school and local football community.

6.4 County Sports Partnership

Sport Across Stafford and Stoke-On-Trent (SASSOT) is one of 49 county sports partnerships across the country. They are a sub-regional multi-agency organisation made up of key partners who are committed to “working together to champion sport and participation in physical activity. They are hosted by Stafford Borough Council and so have good knowledge of the area. We have already acknowledged their assistance on this project by making available the data from the facilities planning model.

SASSOT’s main concern with regard to Stone is the reliance on facilities at Alleynes Sports Centre. Whilst acknowledging that this makes economic sense it means that there is a lack of daytime access to indoor sport within the 10 minute drive time. Alleynes swimming pool is aging although it was refurbished in 2009. Changing rooms at the pool do not meet modern customer expectations.

The artificial turf pitch at Stone Hockey Club needs replacement.



6.5 Stafford Sports Council

Stafford Sports Council is a voluntary body which plays a co-ordinating, advisory and advocacy role in local sport. The council would like to see facilities in Stone maintained and improved; playing fields in the town suffer cancellations through poor drainage.

The sports council is keen to ensure the continuation of public access to a swimming pool in the town. As a minimum they would like to see Stafford Borough Council continue with its dual use arrangement at Alleyne's School to ensure continued public access. Ideally, they would like to see a pool that is available to the public during the day.

The merger between Stone Hockey Club and Stone Rugby Club has worked well and has the potential to develop as a sporting hub for the town. The hockey club's artificial turf pitch is in need of refurbishment.

6.6 Governing Bodies of Sport

None of the governing bodies of sport we consulted see the need for development of strategic facilities in Stone but wish to see the preservation and improvement of existing facilities.

Football

The Staffordshire Football Association pointed out that facility needs have changed significantly in recent years with the introduction of different sized pitches for different age groups. Whereas in the past, there had been a simple split between 7 a side mini-soccer and the 11 a side game, there is now a requirement for 7 pitch types to accommodate the needs of various age groups. These requirements include both different sized pitches but also different size goals.

Table Seven
Football Pitch Sizes by Age Range

Pitch Type	Length	Width	Overall including run-offs
Adult football	100.5m	64.0m	106.0m x 69.5m
Youth football (U17-U18)	100.5m	64.0m	106.0m x 69.5m
Youth football (U15-U16)	91.4m	54.8m	96.9m x 60.3m
Youth football (U13-U14)	82.3m	30.5m	87.8m x 55.8m
Youth football (9v9)	73.1m	45.7m	78.6m x 51.2m
Mini-soccer (7v7)	54.8m	36.6m	60.3m x 42.0m
Mini-soccer (5v5)	36.6m	27.4m	42.0m x 32.9m

Some pitch providers and clubs have addressed these changes by marking out smaller pitches such as 5 a side inside larger ones such as adult 11 a side, often by means of different coloured lines. Whilst this is a short term, practical expedient it



is at best a compromise. Overall, these changes in the way that football is organised mean that there is an increased demand for space in which to play notwithstanding any increase in participation rates.

Staffordshire FA also pointed to the growth in female participation and the associated need for better accommodation to meet their requirements.

Other Governing Bodies

Governing bodies commented the lack of specialist sports hall space although the general level of facilities is good. Staffordshire Cricket Board commented on a lack of indoor net provision within existing sports halls and the absence of any venue for indoor cricket.

The RFU and England Hockey have supported Stone RFC's move to Enson Lane and look forward to the facility improvements to be funded when the Tilling Drive site is developed.

The most detailed comments came from the Staffordshire Football Association. They have invested in the Alleyne's site as a coach development centre which is heavily used for level one and officials coaching courses. They would welcome the present ATP being converted into a 3G. In the long term they see participation at local level, particularly for youth football, moving more and more to this surface. Conversion at Alleyne's School and Sports Centre could allow the development of a community football centre at the site. It would result in the displacement of a small amount (2.5 hours per week) of hockey use at the site but there is sufficient capacity elsewhere to provide alternative accommodation.

6.7 Sport England

Sport England wish the council to use the evidence base prepared by KCA to develop a masterplan for those areas where facilities are under threat, where development provides opportunities to secure investment etc. They urge the council to look at the issues and solutions in an holistic manner rather than on an individual site by site basis.

Sport England is keen to protect playing fields, or to ensure develop compensation packages that help deliver the priorities in the sports strategy and meet our policy. They are re also keen to ensure a robust evidence base to justify S106 contributions from housing development to maximise investment into sport.

7 CONCLUSIONS & OPTIONS

7.1 Market Led Priorities – Swimming & Older Age Play

The data, analysis and comments in the preceding sections show that there are two key sections of the Stone community whose leisure needs are not presently being fully met. The first of these are people in the older age groups characterised by the Philip, Elaine, Roger & Joy and Elsie market segments as described in Section 2. The second group is older children and teenagers. Both have limited access to facilities either because, as in the case of teenagers, these do not exist or there is limited access. This last factor applies to older people to whom daytime swimming or aqua-aerobics classes would appeal but the local pool is not available.

Therefore, based purely on the needs of the market future priorities should be: -

- The development of a MUGA or skateboard/BMX park to meet the needs of young people between 12 and 18
- Construction of a new swimming pool to modern standards with all day public access.
- Provision of a destination play facility at Westbridge Park

These recommendations are consistent with both the KCA and FPM analysis and the views of local stakeholders.

The ideal location for the new pool and associated MUGA is Westbridge Park which is already home to the fitness centre, tennis courts and a play area.

7.2 Sports Development Priority for Football

7.2.1 Improving Current Provision

From the narrower perspective of providing for the needs of particular sports, the most pressing need is to meet the new facility requirements for football and to provide good quality changing facilities. These will be especially important in meeting the needs of women and girl players.

Our site visits to a number of playing pitch sites in Stone allowed us to confirm the KCA findings regarding the low quality of football pitches and changing accommodation in the area. There is a pressing need for improvements first of all to playing surfaces and then to changing pavilions.

This is made more problematic in Stone by the high proportion of one or two pitch sites. This makes achieving economies of scale difficult. Ideally there should be a well-drained venue with four pitches of varying size with changing rooms provided

within easy travel time of Stone. However, no site of this size immediately available.

There is potential to develop the site at Walton Common as a two or three youth/mini pitch venue. This land is currently occasionally used for football but the pitches would need drainage and levelling

Land at Walton Common



Services are available to the nearby scout hut so could be extended reasonably cheaply.





7.2.2 Community Football Centre at Alleynes School

A further requirement would be to upgrade the artificial turf pitch at Alleynes Sports Centre from a sand based pitch to a 3G suitable for competitive football. Stone Old Alleynians Football Club has expressed a wish for a suitable, enclosed ground to enable them to compete at up to level 5 of the FA system. As 3G pitches have now been sanctioned for play up to this level an improved pitch at Alleynes Sports Centre could meet this need.

Installing a 3G pitch to go alongside the existing grass pitches would also allow the development of a community football centre at Alleynes. The combination of weekday use by the school, with evening and weekend use by the community and home club would maximise the benefit derived from the investment.

7.3 Sites Specific Issues

The council's brief asked that we identify any sites within Stone which are surplus to requirements and where use could be consolidated. We have seen two sites which are of poor quality and which could be considered for alternative use.

7.3.1 Tilling Drive

The first of these is the football pitch and play area at Tilling Drive as pictured on Page 10. It is uneven and has a slight gradient meaning that the quality of play is limited by the pitch itself. The site does have changing rooms although they are of poor quality. Football use could be moved elsewhere. The play area is of good quality but limited in size. This could be accommodated as part of the 3G development or moved to a more accessible area where it could be enhanced.

As with the nearby former rugby club pitch there could be developer interest in the site which could mean the council acquiring a considerable capital sum to enable some of the sporting improvements referred to above.

7.3.2 Westbridge Park

Westbridge Park in the centre of Stone is a recreational hub of great importance to the town. In addition to the fitness centre, tennis courts and play area it is a venue for the Annual Stone Festival and the town's food and drink festivals. This year's festival will be held between 3rd and 5th of October.

The popularity of these events means that the surface of the playing fields at the park is severely compromised. There is now only a single youth football pitch at the site. As the photo below shows the playing surface is not good. The pitch is

often made unplayable by the traffic associated with the bonfire and food and drink festival. The events themselves preclude play on certain days.

Westbridge Park – Youth Football Pitch



It seems to us, therefore, that the value of the site as a playing field is very limited and that the football could be accommodated elsewhere. This could free up land for alternative leisure uses more compatible with the needs of local market including the events programme.

7.4 Priorities for Action

The development options outlined in this section look to improve sporting opportunities in and around Stone. They are market based and, in general, do not take into account the costs involved nor indicate responsibilities for action.

7.4.1 Immediate Priorities – Football Pitches and Teenage Facilities

Where action is most required is to improve the quality of football pitches and to provide some teenage facilities. We recommend these as the most immediate and cost effective priorities to the council and consider Walton Common as a prime location.

7.4.2 A New Pool at Westbridge Park

As finances allow, we recommend the provision of a new pool at Westbridge Park. If it is only possible to invest in the current swimming pool, the priority should be to improve changing rooms.

7.4.3 3G Pitch at Alleyne's



We recommend that the council and school work with other partners including Stone Old Alleynians FC to convert the existing 2G artificial turf pitch to a rubber crumb 3G pitch. This would provide the central facility for a community football centre.

7.4.4 Destination Play Facility

We recommend that Westbridge Parl becomes a destination play facility and a MUGA and skate park be provided for teenagers in this area.

7.5 Table of Recommendations and Priorities

In summary our recommendations and priorities for the future together with first estimates of capital costs are: -

**Table Eight
Summary of Recommendations**

Recommendation	Rationale	Priority	Capital Costs
Destination Play Area and BMX & Skate Park at Westbridge Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet needs of young people in Stone as identified by a range of stakeholders • Current shortage of facilities 	High	£400,000
Improved Football Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current poor quality of facilities • Most popular outdoor game meeting needs of key market segment • Meeting the needs of the FA's new facilities guidance for young players • Improved facilities for female players 	High	£1 million

<p>New Swimming Pool at Westbridge Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current shortage of water space identified by FPM • To improve daytime access for key market segment • Aging pool at Alleynes will need eventual replacement • Improved changing standards needed to meet modern expectations • Ability to cater for a range of water based activities 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>£4 to 6 million</p>
<p>New Sports Hall at Westbridge Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently poor daytime access to facilities for key market segments 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>£1.21 million</p>
<p>3G Pitch and Community Football Centre at Alleynes School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complementary facilities for football facility development elsewhere in Stone • Desire of Old Alleynians to return to Stone 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>£0.6 to £0.7 million</p>



APPENDIX ONE

PROJECT BRIEF

Leisure - Area based Implementation Plan – Stone

Project Brief

The purpose of this implementation plan is to identify the priority development schemes for Stone from 2014 to 2031.

A Borough wide needs assessment and audit of open space, sports and recreation facilities was undertaken in 2009 and updated in 2013, and this should be used as the evidence base for the strategy.

The Council requires an area specific Plan that takes the findings of the Borough wide studies and interprets them for Stone, specifically sports and recreation facilities provision. The Plan must identify priorities for delivery for each of the different types of sports and recreation facility.

Types of sport and recreation facility to be covered:

- Football pitches (including ATPs and grass pitches)
- Bowling Greens
- Fitness facilities
- Sports Halls
- Swimming Pools
- Play areas & playgrounds (equipped play areas intended for children up to the age of about 12)
- Tennis & Multi-Sport Courts (these facilities are broadly similar, but multi-sport courts are hard surfaced outdoor areas, preferably floodlit, designed for a range of sports including tennis, netball and 5-a-side football)
- Teenage Facilities (BMX/skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops and other informal areas intended primarily for teenagers)

For each type the study should identify current provision in Stone and whether this provision is deficient or surplus to current requirements.

The study should also assess future provision, based on anticipated growth. It should clearly identify which sites are surplus to requirements, and which sites could be consolidated.



It should identify specific sites for new provision where appropriate.

The study should refer to the provision standards set out in the Plan for Stafford Borough.

Analysis of the existing data should be used to ;

- identify distance thresholds for each type of facility,
- levels and types of use ,
- the quantity, quality and value of existing provision
- local opportunities for future development or enhancement of indoor and outdoor provision or facilities.. .



APPENDIX TWO

SPORT ENGLAND MARKET SEGMENTATION

Name	Segment name	Characteristics	Sports that appeal
Ben	Competitive male urbanites	Age 18-25 Single Owner-occupied Employed full-time No children Social class ABC1 40% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 19% do no exercise	Rugby Cricket Squash Climbing Windsurfing Gym Tennis Football
Jamie	Sports team drinkers	Age 18-35 Single Private/council rented Employed full-time/student No children Social class C2DE 32% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 30% do no exercise	Football Basketball Martial arts Weight training Boxing Badminton
Chloe	Fitness class friends	Age 18-35 Single Owner-occupied Employed full-time No children Social class ABC1 28% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 34% do no exercise	Body combat Netball Swimming Pilates Gym Running Tennis Aqua aerobics
Leanne	Supportive singles	Age 18-25 Single Private/council rented Employed full-time/student No children Social class C2DE 23% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 44% do no exercise	Swimming Gym Aerobics Ice skating Dance Body pump Utility walking



Name	Segment name	Characteristics	Sports that appeal
Helena	Career focused females	Age 26-45 Single Owner-occupied Employed full-time No children Social class ABC1 33% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 33% do no exercise	Gym Skiing Road running Tai chi Dance exercise Body pump Horse riding Yoga
Tim	Settling down males	Age 26-45 Married Owner-occupied Employed full-time 50% have children Social class ABC1 32% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 27% do no exercise	Canoeing Skiing Cricket Golf Cycling Squash Football
Alison	Stay at home mums	Age 26-45 Married Owner-occupied Employed part-time/at home Children Social class ABC1 25% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 33% do no exercise	Swimming Tennis Badminton Cycling Aerobics Horse riding Pilates Exercise bike
Jackie	Middle England mums	Age 26-45 Married Owner-occupied Employed part-time/at home Children Social class C1C2D 21% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 48% do no exercise	Swimming Walking Dance exercise Aqua aerobics Body pump Ice skating
Kev	Pub league team mates	Age 26-45 Married Private/council rented Employed full-time Children Social class DE 19% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 51% do no exercise	Football Karate Weight training Boxing Fishing Tenpin bowling Cricket Snooker/pool



Name	Segment name	Characteristics	Sports that appeal
Paula	Stretched single mums	Age 26-45 Single Council rented Employed part-time/at home Children Social class DE 16% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 61% do no exercise	Swimming Aerobics Utility walking Skating
Philip	Comfortable mid-life males	Age 36-65 Married Owner-occupied Employed full-time 50% have children Social class ABC1 26% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 39% do no exercise	Sailing Gym Football Jogging Badminton Golf Cycling Cricket
Elaine	Empty nest career ladies	Age 46-55 Married Owner-occupied Employed full-time No dependent children Social class ABC1 25% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 44% do no exercise	Swimming Yoga Walking Horse riding Aqua aerobics Pilates Step machine Gym
Roger & Joy	Early retirement couples	Age 56-65 Married Owner-occupied Retired/employed full-time No dependent children Social class ABC1 19% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 54% do no exercise	Swimming Sailing Walking Golf Aqua aerobics Shooting Bowls Fishing
Brenda	Older working women	Age 46-55 Married Council rented Employed full-time No dependent children Social class C2DE 14% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 65% do no exercise	Swimming Aerobics Utility walking Step machine Dance exercise Keep fit



Name	Segment name	Characteristics	Sports that appeal
Terry	Local 'old boys'	Age 46-65 Married Council rented Employed full-time/economically inactive No dependent children Social class DE 12% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 68% do no exercise	Fishing Darts Snooker Shooting Pool Utility cycling Utility walking
Norma	Later life ladies	Age 56-65 Single Council rented Economically inactive No dependent children Social class DE 9% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 78% do no exercise	Walking Keep fit Swimming Aqua aerobics
Ralph & Phyllis	Comfortable retired couples	Age 65+ Married Owner occupied Retired No dependent children Social class ABC1 14% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 70% do no exercise	Bowls Snooker Golf Walking Tennis Fishing Table tennis Swimming
Frank	Twilight years gents	Age 65+ Married Owner occupied Retired No dependent children Social class C1C2D 9% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 78% do no exercise	Bowls Snooker Golf Walking Darts Fishing Pool Swimming
Elsie & Arnold	Retirement home singles	Age 65+ Single Owner occupied and council Retired No dependent children DE 5% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week 86% do no exercise	Walking Bowls Dancing Gentle exercise



APPENDIX THREE
FACILITY PLANNING MODEL REPORTS

ITEM NO 4(c)(iii)

ITEM NO 4(c)(iii)

CABINET - 11 DECEMBER 2014	
Contact Officer:	Ian Thompson
Telephone No:	01785 619200
Ward Interest:	Nil
Report Track:	Cabinet 11/12/14 (Only)
Key Decision:	Yes

**SUBMISSION BY COUNCILLOR R M SMITH
LEISURE PORTFOLIO**

<p>CABINET 11 DECEMBER 2014 Stone Leisure Strategy</p>

This report is part confidential due to the inclusion of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).

This report is not subject to the call-in procedure and will be referred directly to the Joint Scrutiny Committee for consultation.

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To approve in principle an overall strategy for new leisure provision in Stone, including a new leisure centre and destination play area at Westbridge Park, maintaining the undeveloped part of Westbridge Park as an open space.

2 Proposal of Cabinet Member

2.1 That the Cabinet agree to:-

- (a) approve the overall strategy for new leisure provision in Stone, including an in principle decision to construct a new leisure centre at Westbridge Park and further improvements at Westbridge Park, Walton Common and Alleyne's Academy subject to the necessary finances being in place;
- (b) retaining the existing undeveloped part of Westbridge Park as open space dispose of an area of land at Westbridge Park for retail purposes (subject to the relevant planning approvals being granted);

- (c) enter into negotiations with Alleyne's Academy relating to the future continued provision of leisure facilities at Alleyne's Academy and the Guide Association relating to the relocation of their existing facility at Westbridge Park;
- (d) agree in principle to transfer the Council's interests at Westbridge Park, other than land required to implement the Leisure Strategy, to Stone Town Council or another community body as appropriate;
- (e) delegate to the Chief Executive and the Head of Law and Administration the negotiation and completion of the necessary financial and legal agreements.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 Feedback from residents, businesses and interested parties as part of an extensive consultation in Stone demonstrated a desire for better leisure facilities, but not if it meant losing green space on Westbridge Park to a food store. Previous studies have identified deficiencies in leisure provision in Stone and considerable investment, including a replacement leisure centre, is required if the facilities for Stone residents are to be brought up to the same standard as those in Stafford.
- 3.2 The proposed package of measures will have revenue and capital consequences which need to be examined. The capital cost of the new leisure provision is proposed to be financed through Section 106 monies and the Council's own resources. This will involve funding from its existing capital and revenue resources, borrowing (on potentially an interim basis) and land disposal. Authority is required to dispose of land at Westbridge Park in Stone.
- 3.3 Issues relating to the proposal, together with legal and financial matters require consideration.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The proposals represent a major investment which would contribute to all the Council's Priorities. The proposal as a whole will also impact on the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2014-15 to 2017-18 (which is included elsewhere on the Agenda).

5 Report Detail

Background

- 5.1 In 2009 the Council commissioned Consultants Kit Campbell Associates (KCA) to undertake a detailed study of leisure provision across the Borough, including Stone, using the standard methodology set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17. This was undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan but has also been used to inform the Council on future investment

decisions. In 2013 the Council commissioned KCA to update this assessment as part of their emerging Local Plan. Amongst other things the KCA report

- Commented on the age and quality of existing joint use of facilities at Alleyne's School and the lack of day time access.
- Pointed to the poor quality of existing football pitches, the lack of adequate changing facilities and the deficit in junior pitches.
- Suggested the need for a new generation (3G) artificial turf pitch in Stone.
- Identified the need for a destination play facility at Westbridge Park similar to that provided at Victoria Park in Stafford.

5.2 In 2013 the Council consulted on a proposal for a new leisure centre at Westbridge Park which was to be part financed by the sale of land for a food store of around 30,000 sq. ft. Following the consultation, the Council agreed to look at their proposals again, in particular, with a view to maintaining the "green" part of Westbridge Park as an open space and venue for public events such as the Food and Drink Festival.

5.3 Since this matter was last considered by the Cabinet, the Plan for Stafford Borough has been approved following a public examination. The original Plan for Stafford Borough proposed mixed use development at Westbridge Park but the submitted modifications to the Plan, which were accepted by the Inspector deleted this reference. The proposals map for Stone shows the area to the west of the existing access road at Westbridge Park as green infrastructure. The remaining area containing the existing leisure centre, tennis courts and play area are excluded from this definition but are also shown as being outside the Town Centre boundary. The Inspector also made some comment on the need for retail in Stone, the need for sequential retail assessments and flood risk assessments and the possible impact of the development on the character of the Park and the conservation area. Any proposals for a new development will, therefore, need to address these issues through the planning process.

5.4 More recently the Council have commissioned Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd to undertake a further more detailed study of the future sporting and leisure needs in Stone. This study, building as it does on the KCA Report suggests that there are significant deficiencies in leisure provision in Stone, particularly around teenage play, swimming and football provision. It further suggests that Westbridge Park is the preferred location for any new leisure centre and destination play facilities and that football provision could be best accommodated by concentrating on a multi pitch site such as Walton Common, and the converting the existing artificial turf pitch at Alleyne's to a rubber crumb (3G) surface more suitable for football.

5.5 In parallel with this work the Council has undertaken further detailed work on the business case for a new leisure centre and the means by which it might be financed, bearing in mind the Council does not have the finances to fully fund the leisure centre and the other improvements to leisure needed in Stone. Discussions have also taken place with Alleyne's School on the future

of the remaining leisure facilities at Alleyne's assuming the leisure centre were to go ahead.

- 5.6 Finally, whilst these discussions and investigations have been going on there have been very significant developments in the supermarket sector within the UK such that most of the major supermarket chains are now significantly cutting back on their investment and expansion plans in response to smaller discount retailers and specialist higher end supermarkets such as Marks & Spencer. The Council has taken advice on these changes from its development consultants GVA.

A Leisure Strategy for Stone - Key Principles

- 5.7 The following key principles have shaped the Council's thinking on a Leisure Strategy for Stone:-

- Meet as far as possible the key deficiencies in Leisure provision which have been identified, with a view to giving residents of Stone and the surrounding villages facilities comparable to Stafford
- Put forward a package of proposals which are affordable, accepting that without some form of enabling development, the full package of proposals including a new leisure centre cannot go ahead
- Seek to minimise the impact of any new development on the Council's Revenue Budget
- Meet the concerns of Stone residents arising from the previous consultation concerning the loss of green space at Westbridge Park and the impact of the development on both the environment of the Park and its value as a location for community events
- Work with Alleyne's Academy to adapt the existing facilities at Alleyne's for school and community use in a way which does not impact adversely on the school either functionally or financially

Key elements for the Leisure Strategy for Stone

- 5.8 Meeting the deficiencies in leisure provision in Stone is not easy in the financial climate within which the Council has to operate and can only be afforded through a combination of land disposal, Section 106 monies, the current capital resources available to the Council and borrowing. However, in principle it is suggested that the following elements could form part of a Strategy:-

- A new leisure centre at Westbridge Park comprising a pool, equivalent to or larger than the existing Alleyne's pool, a 100 piece gym, 2 activity studios with associated changing and other facilities
- Improvements to Walton Common to provide a centre for football including more junior pitches and changing facilities
- The conversion of the existing artificial turf pitch at Alleyne's from a sand based pitch to a 3G pitch suitable for competitive football
- The decommissioning of the Alleyne's pool and its conversion to a sports hall

- New play facilities at Westbridge Park particularly aimed at older children and teenagers which would become a destination for the wider Stone/Walton Community

5.9 This package of proposals has initially been estimated at some £6m and cannot be funded in full within existing capital resources. It is likely therefore that the spending may need to be phased, with the emphasis being given initially to the leisure centre and play facilities at Westbridge Park. To increase the capital resources available, it would be necessary to dispose of land. Interest in purchasing land at Westbridge Park has been received from a developer (Liberty Properties Developments Ltd), to provide a small format (11,000 sq ft) store for Marks & Spencer's Simply Food with associated car parking. The site would be centred on the area currently used for tennis courts.

The disposal of this site would raise capital to make a contribution to the implementation of the Strategy. The following sections look at this Strategy in more detail:-

The Case for a New Leisure Centre in Stone

- 5.10 A new leisure centre is by far the most costly of the items included in the above Strategy and will be one of the most significant investments the Council has made for a number of years. If the Council is to proceed, therefore, a case has to be made based on both financial and non-financial considerations.
- 5.11 The financial implications of the Strategy are set out more fully in the following sections to the report but in summary, although it is projected that the new leisure centre will save the Council some £80,000 in year one and £140,000 in year five, when the potential cost of borrowing is taken into account the proposal is broadly cost neutral. In strictly direct financial terms, therefore, there is no particular financial imperative for the Council to proceed with the scheme. There are, however, indirect financial benefits whereby the land disposal at Westbridge Park will create additional Business Rates. The Council's provisional share of business rates inclusive of the share from the Business Rates pool are estimated to be in excess of £25,000 per annum. In addition, a new leisure centre would be purpose built and have low maintenance costs whereas the two existing facilities are likely to continue to be a drain on the Council's Capital Resources because of their age and condition.
- 5.12 Looking beyond financial considerations, there is little doubt that public health and public well-being will become increasingly important issues for local councils and Health and Well-being already features strongly in the Council's list of priorities. A new leisure facility will give residents of Stone and surrounding area a facility comparable to that in Stafford and will for the first time allow full daytime access. This will allow the Council to lay on a wider range of classes in the daytime, focussed on older people. Experience at Stafford show that if modern facilities are provided participation levels increase significantly which ultimately should contribute to more healthy local

population. Early discussions have also been held with the Director of Public Health for Staffordshire and the Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Group. Both are very supportive of the proposal and see the potential for the new leisure centre to act as a focus for a wide range of programmes aimed at improving both the physical and mental health of residents of Stone and the northern part of the Borough.

In addition, to the Health and Wellbeing benefits it is considered that the Westbridge Park proposals taken as a whole will have a significant regeneration impact on Stone Town Centre. Experience in Stafford indicates that residents visiting Victoria Park, also tend to use Town Centre facilities. The combination of a retail offer, new leisure centre and new play facilities will attract significant numbers of additional visits to Stone, with the opportunity for the benefits to be shared with other town centre retailers and services.

Westbridge Park

- 5.13 There is little doubt that Westbridge Park holds the key to an improved leisure offer in Stone. Its central position close to the Town Centre with good public transport and easy access to both the Stone and Walton Communities make it an obvious destination for leisure activities, casual recreation and community events and all previous studies have pointed to its potential as a site for a new leisure centre and destination park. The previous Scheme, subject to public consultation, moved the existing access to the west thus eroding part of the existing "open" area now identified as green infrastructure in the Local Plan. Bearing in mind the views of the public and user groups expressed at the time of the consultation, the starting point for consideration of the revised plans has been to retain the existing access road in its current position, although in traffic terms it would be advantageous to by-pass the section of the former road, and create a new access direct onto the A520. All new development will be to the east of this road thus preserving in its totality the green area of the Park. The proposed site for the new leisure centre would be between the existing leisure centre and the pumping station. By this means, the existing leisure centre can continue trading during construction. The existing play area for younger children (under 5s) would be retained in its current position with the new Marks & Spencer Simply Food Store sited in the vicinity of the existing tennis courts. There would be dedicated parking for the store (around 85 spaces) with a separate car park for the leisure centre on the area of land currently occupied by the existing leisure centre. These proposals will require the relocation of the Guide Hut and discussions have been opened with the Guide Association. There are a number of options for locating any new facility which will need to be discussed further. As part of the proposal a new activity park with equipment suitable for older children (over 5's) and teenagers is proposed. The design and location of this facility will be subject to consultation with local children along the lines developed for Victoria Park and Wildwood Park in Stafford but an initial location has been identified to the south of the new leisure centre where a natural surveillance can be provided from the new building. The above proposals are shown on the plans at **APPENDIX 1**. This can be compared with the satellite image and superimposed image to demonstrate that all new development will be to the east of the existing access road.

- 5.14 One of the main points of contention in the previous consultation was the impact of the proposals on the Stone Food and Drink Festival and the Stone Festival, The revised proposals will leave the existing green area unaltered but with the potential to convert the existing access on the A520 to a dedicated access for events. The Council has previously stated that it would be prepared to put the area used by the various events into a Trust to ensure their future in perpetuity. A similar offer has also been made to Stone Town Council and this offer remains open.
- 5.15 In the previous consultation, whilst there was widespread support for a new leisure centre on Westbridge Park there was more opposition to the proposal for the food store. Some residents opposed a food store in principle, others objected to the scale of the store and its impact on the Park and the setting of the Stone Conservation Area. In the present proposal, the size of the food store has been reduced from 30,000 sq ft to 11,000 sq ft. There would be no incursion onto the Park itself and impact of the development on the environment of the Park, the Conservation Area and residents on the opposite side of the canal would be significantly reduced. Moreover, by attracting a national retailer with the reputation of Marks and Spencer, it is considered the regeneration impact on the rest of Stone Town Centre would be considerable. Not only would the store attract new shoppers to Stone, the close proximity of the site with its enlarged car park would encourage shoppers to make link trips to the various shops and services within the Town Centre. It is also understood that a typical store of this size would generate 50 new jobs.

Football Strategy for Stone

- 5.16 Previous Leisure Strategy Reports, including the recent Facilities Report by Ploskajski Lynch has pointed to the poor quality of football facilities in Stone, including Tilling Drive and Westbridge Park and the lack of junior pitches. They suggest that as part of a longer term Strategy the Council should seek to consolidate football facilities on one site where a better quality surface with more junior pitches and improved changing facilities could be provided. It is considered that the best location for such a facility would be Walton Common where there is sufficient land to convert an existing adult pitch to junior pitches and there is an opportunity to provide changing, possibly adjacent to the existing Scout Hut, as part of that Strategy. It is further suggested that the artificial turf pitch at Alleyne's Academy be resurfaced so as to be better adapted for football use (see following section).

Proposals for Alleyne's Sports Facilities

- 5.17 Discussions have been held with Alleyne's Academy and are still at an early stage. These discussions will need to be taken further in the light of any decisions by the Cabinet on the overall Strategy.
- 5.18 At present the sports facilities at Alleyne's are subject to a dual use agreement and comprise a swimming pool, indoor sports hall, 2 squash courts, an artificial turf pitch, with associated changing and reception facilities. From the discussions to date, the Academy has indicated that it would not be opposed to the continued use of facilities at Alleyne's for community purposes

outside normal school hours. There are a variety of means by which these could be managed, ranging from the Academy running the facilities themselves or the Council running the facilities on behalf of the Academy subject to a management fee. The Academy has indicated that at this stage if the Council proceeded with a new leisure centre at Westbridge Park including a pool, they would not seek to continue operating the swimming pool in competition rather they would seek to decommission the pool and convert it to an indoor hall which could be used for school purposes in the daytime and sporting activities in the evenings and at weekends. Converting the pool hall to a sports hall would obviously have capital implications which would have to be met from the overall scheme but a second sports hall would significantly increase the capacity for indoor sports within Stone and possibly allow for sporting activities not currently offered e.g. basketball, bowling. The second hall would generate additional income and there would need to be a further discussion with the Academy as to how this income was distributed.

- 5.19 The artificial turf pitch at Alleyne's is a first generation sand based pitch which is more suitable for hockey than football. The studies which have been undertaken indicate that there is a shortage of football facilities in Stone rather than hockey. The replacement of the existing surface with a new 3G surface more suitable to football would obviously have a capital cost but it would be considerably less than providing a brand new facility and if it were to follow the pattern of the new facility at Rowley Park in Stafford, would generate additional income.

Financial implications

- 5.20 The package of improvements set out above have both revenue and capital implications. Looking first at the capital costs, all of the schemes will need to be competitively procured so the detailed breakdown of costs is set out in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 2**. However, the total cost is likely to be in the order of £6m. These costings are based on the specific requirements and details of the projects proposed in this report.
- 5.21 There are no specific allocations in the Capital Programme for these works other than a sum of £400,000 towards play facilities at Westbridge Park. There are, however, a number of proposed Section 106 Agreements where contributions to new leisure facilities have been identified, including the strategic development area at Eccleshall Road in Stone. These together with the proceeds from the sale of land would amount to some £1.85m, leaving a sum of £4.15m outstanding. Uncommitted resources as at 31 March 2017 are estimated to be £2.15m Additional Section 106 contributions may be forthcoming from housing developments and the Scheme may be eligible for Sport England Facilities Grant (maximum £350,000). Negotiations have also been opened with the County Council to see if any financial assistance may be available given their responsibilities for public health and the potential long term benefits of the Scheme in that regard. However, none of these sources can be guaranteed and given the existing commitments in the Capital Programme, it is likely that the Council will need to borrow at least £2m to fund the Scheme. Assuming borrowing costs (interest and capital repayments at 8%) the impact on the Council's Revenue Budget would be some £160,000

per annum. In addition to the funding opportunities as outlined above the Council would review its existing capital programme and funding strategy and in particular look to increasing the existing Revenue Contributions to Capital outlay to offset any borrowing requirement. If money from these sources was not forthcoming prioritisation of the Strategy would be necessary, with the leisure centre and play facilities at Westbridge Park the initial priority.

- 5.22 Looking next at operating costs, the Council currently runs two sites in Stone, the Westbridge Park gym and the joint use facility at Alleyne's Academy. Taken together there is a net loss to the Council's Revenue Budget of running these facilities of some £103,000. If the Council were to proceed with a new leisure centre there would be potential savings in running a one site operation in a purpose built more energy efficient building. Offset against this would be the fact that at present Alleyne's Academy contribute 40% towards the cost of running the Alleyne's facilities. In order to assess the financial impact of a new leisure centre on the Revenue Budget a detailed Business Plan has been produced (**CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3**) for the first 5 years of the centre's operation. This includes assumptions about fitness membership and other sources of income and compares this with likely operating costs including wages, energy, maintenance, marketing and other items of expenditure. Although discussions with Alleyne's Academy have not been finalised, for the purposes of this model, it is presumed that the Academy receive the income from the remaining facilities and the Council receive a management fee for taking bookings etc.
- 5.23 The Business Plan indicates that in year one there would be a saving to the Council's Revenue Budget of some £80,000, rising to £140,000 in the fifth year. This can be compared with the requirement to potentially underwrite the current shortfall on capital funding with borrowing at a cost of £160,000, indicating that the cost of the new leisure centre would be broadly cost neutral. Other aspects of the overall scheme have the potential to generate potential income e.g. the resurfaced artificial turf pitch and the proposed new sports hall at Alleyne's but each of these schemes can be looked at individually once capital costs have been established to ascertain whether they represent value for money for the Council. In addition the developments would see an increase in business rates to this council of in excess of £25,000 per annum.

Procurement Issues/Best Consideration

- 5.24 When the Council disposes of land it is required by law to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable. Whilst this is normally tested by actively marketing a site the Council can dispose of land through negotiation. The site at Westbridge Park has not been directly marketed but the advice received from the Council's Development Consultant GVA is that given the well publicised difficulties of the supermarket sector competition for the sites could not be guaranteed and that the price offered represent the best consideration reasonably obtainable by the Council. (Letter from G V A included at **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 4**)

- 5.25 The development of a new leisure centre would constitute a new works contract and under EU legislation competitive tenders would have to be sought. This could either be on a conventional contract route or through design and build. Other elements of the overall Scheme, although not of a scale to invoke the EU procurement regime, will equally need to be procured in accordance with the Council's rules in the normal way.

Value for Money

- 5.26 Notwithstanding the benefits of the Scheme it is still necessary to ensure that the proposal offers value for money to the Council. Although some of the Section 106 money has to be spent on new leisure facilities, the majority of the £6m cost is discretionary spend and rate of return on capital and the opportunity cost of capital (what are the alternative uses for the money) become relevant. In terms of rate of return, the Council make a revenue saving of some £140,000 in year five which will represent a rate of return of 2.3% based on a £6m capital spend. However, if as seems likely the Council has to borrow to finance the leisure centre and other proposals then the Scheme would be broadly cost neutral to the Revenue Budget. The financial case for a new facility, therefore, is not compelling and a case can only be made if broader consideration such as the general improvement to health and well-being and the regenerative impact of the Scheme on the Town Centre, and associated increase in business rates taken into account.
- 5.27 In relation to the opportunity cost of Capital, whilst this is an important consideration the Council has already committed to use any Capital Receipts any land sale to improving leisure in Stone and the monies would, therefore, not be available for other schemes. As noted above Section 106 money identified for the Scheme can only be used for leisure provision in Stone. In addition, although the two existing facilities are in a reasonable repair following recent expenditure at Alleyne's, there will inevitably be a need for further capital expenditure in the future given the age of the facilities. In contrast it would be hoped that a new facility would not require significant capital expenditure for a number of years.

6	Implications	
6.1	Financial	No provision exists within the existing Revenue or Capital Budgets for the proposals as detailed in the report other than a sum of £400,000 towards play facilities at Westbridge Park. The Financial impact including the potential to underwrite the Borrowing Requirement have however been included in the Draft General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2014/15 - 2017/18 included elsewhere on the Agenda.
	Legal	
	Human Resources	
	Human Rights Act	
	Data Protection	
	Risk Management	The risks associated with this strategy need to be

	<p>balanced against the opportunities that it offers to the Council and the Community. There are risks in doing nothing to the existing facilities as they are relatively old. This strategy offers an opportunity to improve the leisure provision within Stone and delivers against the Council's health and wellbeing priorities. Other risks to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to Deliver the strategy - this can be managed by seeking additional project management support in order to deliver the project. • Risk of Competition - new providers of leisure could enter the market and compete with the new facilities; however, it is thought that this is unlikely in the short/medium term.
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<p>6.2 Equality and Diversity</p>	<p>The Borough Council considers the effect of its actions on all sections of our community and has addressed all of the following Equality Strands in the production of this report, as appropriate:-</p> <p>Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.</p>
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Previous Consideration -

Background Papers -

APPENDIX 1

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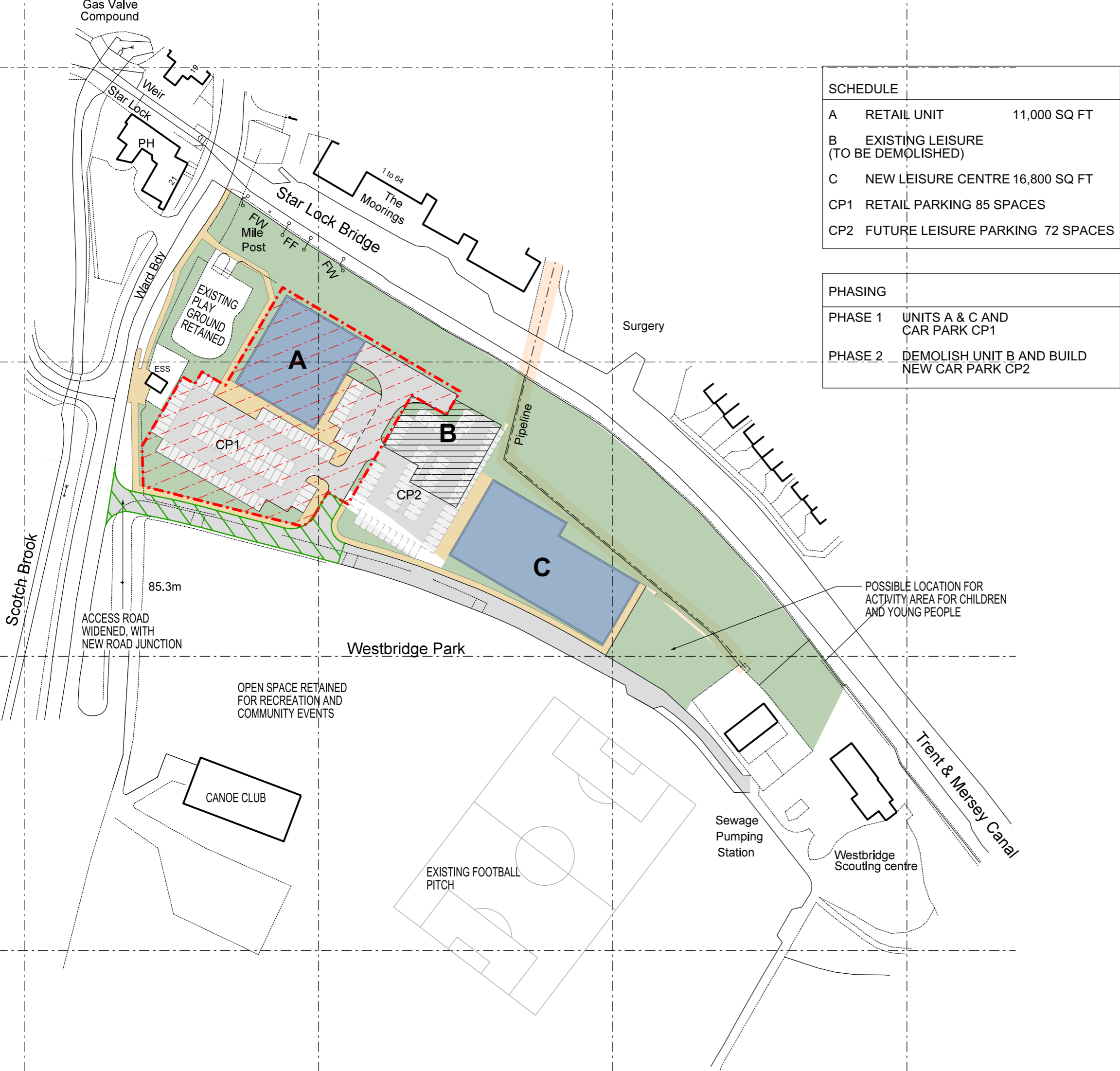
NOTES

KEY

- SEWER WITH 3M EASEMENT
- ADOPTED HIGHWAY
- M&S SITE AREA 1.14 acres

SCHEDULE		
A	RETAIL UNIT	11,000 SQ FT
B	EXISTING LEISURE (TO BE DEMOLISHED)	
C	NEW LEISURE CENTRE	16,800 SQ FT
CP1	RETAIL PARKING	85 SPACES
CP2	FUTURE LEISURE PARKING	72 SPACES

PHASING	
PHASE 1	UNITS A & C AND CAR PARK CP1
PHASE 2	DEMOLISH UNIT B AND BUILD NEW CAR PARK CP2



C	01.12.14 SEWER AND GUIDE HUT LOCATION REMOVED	SW	
B	28.11.14 AREA NOTE AMENDED	SW	
A	26.11.14 GENERAL DRAWING UPDATES	SW	
REV.	DATE	NOTES	INIT.

CLIENT / PROJECT
LIBERTY PROPERTIES
WESTBRIDGE PARK
STONE
 DRAWING TITLE
PROPOSED SITE PLAN

STATUS
FOR INFORMATION

DATE	DRAWN	SCALE @ A3
14.05.15	DHB	1:1250

PROJECT NUMBER	UNIT / BLOCK	CI / SFB CODE	TYPE & NUMBER	REVISION LETTER
9642			02	C

Site Location Plans	L	GA Plans	P	Elevations	E
Sections	S	Details	D	Prefix Colour	C

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01/12/2014 13:22:26 P:\dgm\00000000-969996421-Sheets\9642.dgn
 sam.watson
 Westbridge, Stone



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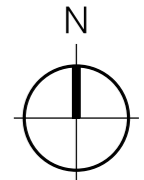
SITE SPECIFIC HAZARDS

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NOTES



REV. DATE	NOTES	INIT.

CLIENT / PROJECT
LIBERTY PROPERTIES
WESTBRIDGE PARK
STONE

DRAWING TITLE
EXISTING AERIAL IMAGE

STATUS
FOR INFORMATION

DATE	DRAWN	SCALE @ A3
26.11.14	SW	1:1250

PROJECT NUMBER	UNIT / BLOCK	CI / SFB CODE	TYPE & NUMBER	REVISION LETTER
9642			03	

Site Location Plans	L	GA Plans	P	Elevations	E
Sections	S	Details	D	Prefix Colour	C

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**Minutes of the Cabinet held at the
Gatehouse Theatre, Eastgate Street,
Stafford on Thursday 11 December 2014**

Chairman - Councillor M R Heenan

Present (for all or part of the meeting):-

Councillors:

F Beatty	-	Planning and Regeneration Portfolio
P M M Farrington	-	Community Portfolio
F A Finlay	-	Environment and Health Portfolio
R M Smith	-	Deputy Leader and Leisure Portfolio
K S Williamson	-	Resources Portfolio

Also present - Councillors M G Dodson, E G R Jones, P W Jones,
J M Pert, R W Stephens and M F Williamson

Officers in attendance:-

Mr I Thompson - Chief Executive
Mr T Manders - Head of Planning and Regeneration
Mr J Dean - Democratic Services Officer

CAB38 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2014 submitted and signed.

CAB39 General Fund Revenue Budget 2014-15 to 2017-18 and Capital Programme 2014-15 to 2017-18

Considered a report setting out the current position of the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2014-15 to 2017-18 and the updated Capital Programme 2014-15 to 2017-18, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member noted that this report was the result of the financial plan and budget discussions held with Heads of Service and the Cabinet Portfolio holders, which incorporated savings identified during these discussions. Continuing, it was noted that Council Tax levels had been maintained together with no reduction in services, along with increased capital commitment to enhance services for the community. He then highlighted the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Resources Portfolio be approved as follows:-

- (a) the level of net spending for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2015 -16 be set at £14.009 million; with indicative net spending for 2016 -17 and 2017-18 of £14.130 million and £14.595 million respectively;
- (b) the Revised Outturn Forecast for 2014-15 of £14.178 million be approved;
- (c) the use of Government Grants in 2015 -16 of £1.751 million with indicative figures of £2.351 million and £2.429 million for 2016 -17 and 2017-18 respectively;
- (d) the consequential freezing of Council Tax for 2015-16; with indicative no changes to the level of Council Tax for 2016 - 17 and 2017-18;
- (e) the revised capital programme, including new schemes, as set out in Appendices 2 and 3 of the report.

CAB40 Resources Portfolio - General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and Capital Programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018

Considered a report setting out the draft detailed Resources Portfolio Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft Resources Portfolio Capital Programme for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet moved directly to voting on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Resources Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the detailed draft portfolio revenue budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft capital programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 be approved for submission to the Resources Services Scrutiny Committee for consultation.

THIS ITEM IS NOT SUBJECT TO CALL IN AND WILL BE REFERRED TO RESOURCES AND CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 14 JANUARY 2015.

CAB41 Management of Strategic Risks/Opportunities

Considered a report providing an update on the strategic risks facing the Council in delivering its objectives during 2014/15, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member provided a definition of 'risk' before highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Resources Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the progress in addressing the Strategic Risks be noted.

CAB42 Council Tax and Business Rates Arrears Submitted for Approval to Write Off - Part Confidential

Considered a report proposing the writing off of Council Tax and Business Rates arrears as set out in the confidential appendix to the report, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member noted the new policy coming forward to address this issue before highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Resources Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the arrears listed in the Confidential Appendix of the report be written off.

CAB43 Planning and Regeneration Portfolio - General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and Capital Programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018

Considered a report setting out the draft detailed Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 – 2017/2018 and the draft Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Capital Programme for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Planning and Regeneration Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the detailed draft portfolio revenue budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft capital programme 2014/2015 -

2017/2018 be approved for submission to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee for consultation.

THIS ITEM IS NOT SUBJECT TO CALL IN AND WILL BE REFERRED TO COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 16 DECEMBER 2014.

CAB44 Staffordshire Leader Programme

Considered a report seeking approval to extend the current Leader loan fund from £20,000 to £50,000 and to agree that the fund support local community groups and the local business sector, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member reported that the scheme would incorporate small businesses as well as community organisations before highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Planning and Regeneration Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the Council allocate a budget of £50,000 specifically to assist successful applicants of the new Leader programme (both community groups and the local business sector in Stafford Borough, who have insufficient funds to pay their project costs up front before being able to draw down the Leader grant funding awarded).

CAB45 Leisure Portfolio - General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and Capital Programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018

Considered a report setting out the draft detailed Leisure Portfolio Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft Leisure Portfolio Capital Programme for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member made specific reference to Appendices 3 and 4 of the report before highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Leisure Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the detailed draft portfolio revenue budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft capital programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 be approved for submission to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee for consultation.

THIS ITEM IS NOT SUBJECT TO CALL IN AND WILL BE REFERRED TO COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 16 DECEMBER 2014.

CAB46 Sports and Recreational Facilities in Stone

Considered a report setting out the findings from Plozajski Lynch Consulting Ltd related to the provision of sporting and recreational facilities in Stone, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member provided the rationale for commissioning the report, which was the first of detailed area reports for the Borough. Continuing the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report was highlighted, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Leisure Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the findings of the report (as set out in the appendix) be adopted and the recommendations be used as a basis for considering future improvements to the level of sporting and recreational provision in Stone and as justification for future funding.

CAB47 Stone Leisure Strategy – Part Confidential

Considered a report seeking to approve in principle an overall strategy for new leisure provision in Stone, including a new leisure centre and destination play area at Westbridge Park, along with maintaining the underdeveloped part of Westbridge Park as an open space, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member noted that this report was produced in conjunction with the previous report and provided details of the proposals as set out. The methodology for financing the scheme was detailed, along with the facilities to be provided. Continuing the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report was highlighted, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

The Leader of the Council noted that all consultation on the matter had been taken into account and that this was an excellent project to replace two outdated facilities.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Leisure Portfolio be approved as follows:-

- (a) the overall strategy for new leisure provision in Stone, including an in principle decision to construct a new leisure centre at Westbridge Park and further improvements at Westbridge Park, Walton Common

and Alleyne's Academy (subject to the necessary finances being in place) be approved;

- (b) the existing undeveloped part of Westbridge Park be retained as open space, but an area of land at Westbridge Park be disposed of for retail purposes (subject to the relevant planning approvals being granted);
- (c) negotiations be entered into with Alleyne's Academy relating to the future continued provision of leisure facilities at Alleyne's Academy and the Guide Association relating to the relocation of their existing facility at Westbridge Park;
- (d) (in principle) to transfer the Council's interests at Westbridge Park, (other than land required to implement the Leisure Strategy), to Stone Town Council or another community body, as appropriate;
- (e) the negotiation and completion of the necessary financial and legal agreements be delegated to the Chief Executive and the Head of Law and Administration.

CAB48 Former Sports Ground, Silkmore Lane, Stafford

Considered a report seeking to approve the amendment of the terms and rent provisions in the lease and sub lease of the former sports ground, Silkmore Lane, Stafford, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member provided background detail regarding the site in question prior to highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Leisure Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the term of each lease be extended to 35 years and the rent be reduced to a peppercorn.

Councillor P M M Farrington declared a personal interest in this item and remained in the meeting during consideration of the matter, taking no part in the debate and voting thereon.

CAB49 Community Portfolio - General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and Capital Programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018

Considered a report setting out the draft detailed Community Portfolio Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft Community Portfolio Capital Programme for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member noted the Council's commitment to addressing empty properties, homelessness issues and continued improvements to the CCTV system before highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Community Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the detailed draft portfolio revenue budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft capital programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 be approved for submission to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee for consultation.

THIS ITEM IS NOT SUBJECT TO CALL IN AND WILL BE REFERRED TO COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 16 DECEMBER 2014.

CAB50 Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: Reforms of Anti-Social Behaviour

Considered a report detailing an provisions of the new Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and the new statutory duty placed on the Council in relation to anti-social behaviour, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member noted the statutory duties as detailed in Paragraph 5.3 of the report before highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Community Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the report be noted and the scheme of delegation be amended to allow the Head of Policy and Improvement to undertake the necessary actions as outlined in paragraph 5.3 of the report to ensure the Council fulfils its additional responsibilities under the Act.

CAB51 Environment Portfolio - General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and Capital Programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018

Considered a report setting out the draft detailed Environment Portfolio Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft Environment

Portfolio Capital Programme for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018, as set out in Section 2 of Digest No 202 of 12 December 2014.

The Cabinet Member referred to Appendix 4 of the report before highlighting the recommendation as set out in Paragraph 2, to which the Cabinet voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member - Environment Portfolio be approved as follows:-

the detailed draft portfolio revenue budget for 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 and the draft capital programme 2014/2015 - 2017/2018 be approved for submission to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee for consultation.

THIS ITEM IS NOT SUBJECT TO CALL IN AND WILL BE REFERRED TO COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 16 DECEMBER 2014.

CHAIRMAN

A Leisure Strategy for Stone

The following banner outlining the Leisure Strategy for Stone was displayed at the following locations in 2015 for approximately 12 months; the banner at Westbridge Park is still on display.

- Westbridge Park Fitness Centre, Stone
- Alleyne's Sports Centre, Stone
- Civic Centre, Stafford
- Stafford Leisure Centre

A Leisure Strategy for Stone

KEY PRINCIPLES

The following key principles have shaped the Council's thinking on a Leisure Strategy for Stone:-

- Meet as far as possible the key deficiencies in Leisure provision which have been identified, with a view to giving residents of Stone and the surrounding villages facilities comparable to Stafford
- Put forward a package of proposals which are affordable, accepting that without some form of enabling development, the full package of proposals including a new leisure centre cannot go ahead
- Seek to minimise the impact of any new development on the Council's Revenue Budget
- Meet the concerns of Stone residents arising from the previous consultation concerning the loss of green space at Westbridge Park and the impact of the development on both the environment of the Park and its value as a location for community events
- Work with Alleyne's Academy to adapt the existing facilities at Alleyne's for school and community use in a way which does not impact adversely on the school either functionally or financially

Key elements for the Leisure Strategy for Stone

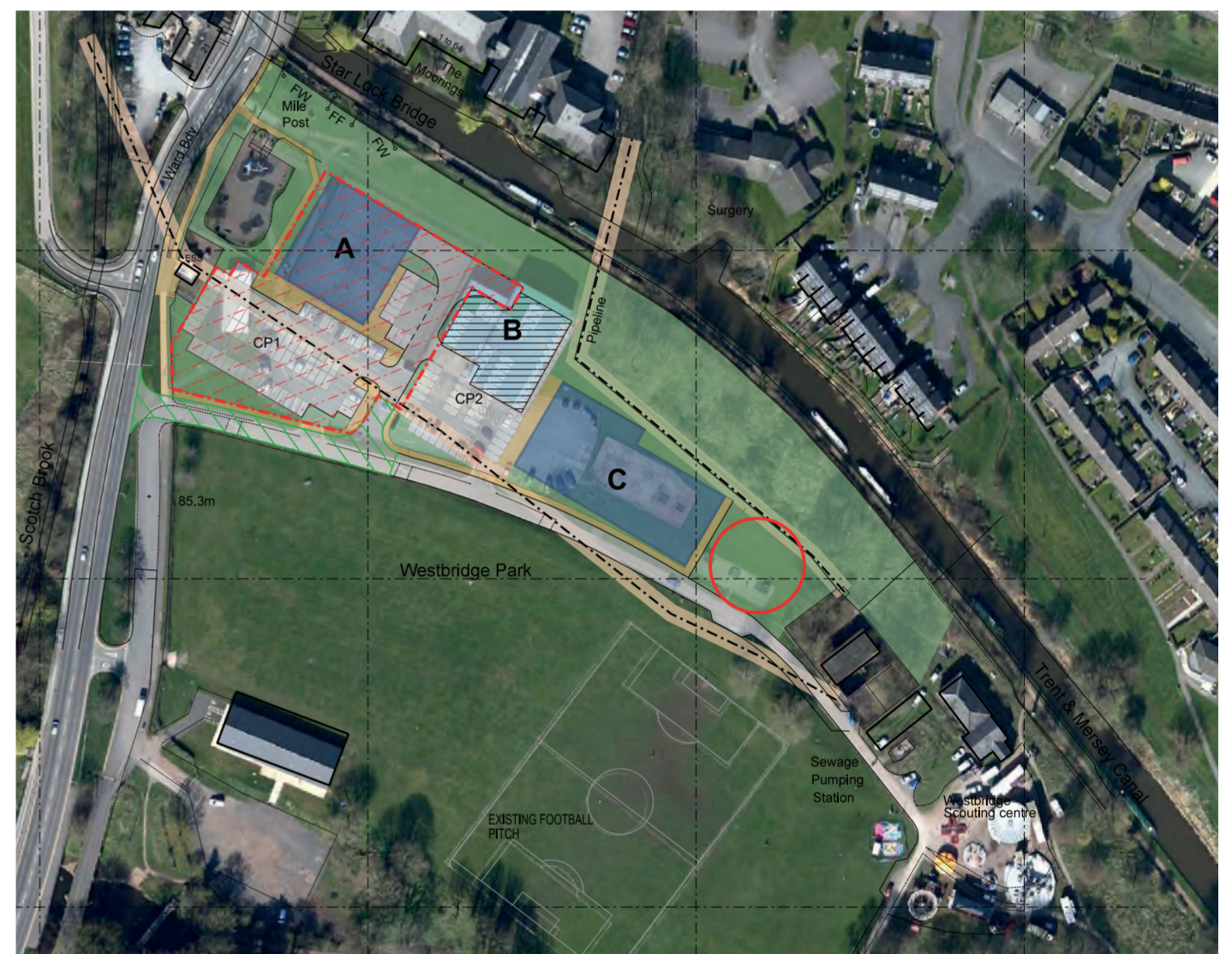
Meeting the deficiencies in leisure provision in Stone is not easy in the financial climate within which the Council has to operate and can only be afforded through a combination of land disposal, Developer contributions, the current capital resources available to the Council and borrowing. However, in principle it is suggested that the following elements could form part of a Strategy:-

- A new leisure centre at Westbridge Park comprising a pool, equivalent to or larger than the existing Alleyne's pool, a 100 piece gym, 2 activity studios with associated changing and other facilities
- Improvements to Walton Common to provide a centre for football including more junior pitches and changing facilities
- The conversion of the existing artificial turf pitch at Alleyne's from a sand based pitch to a 3G pitch suitable for competitive football
- The decommissioning of the Alleyne's pool and its conversion to a sports hall
- New play facilities at Westbridge Park particularly aimed at older children and teenagers which would become a destination for the wider Stone/Walton Community
- Relocate guide hut

EXISTING AERIAL IMAGE



PROPOSED SITE PLAN OVER AERIAL IMAGE

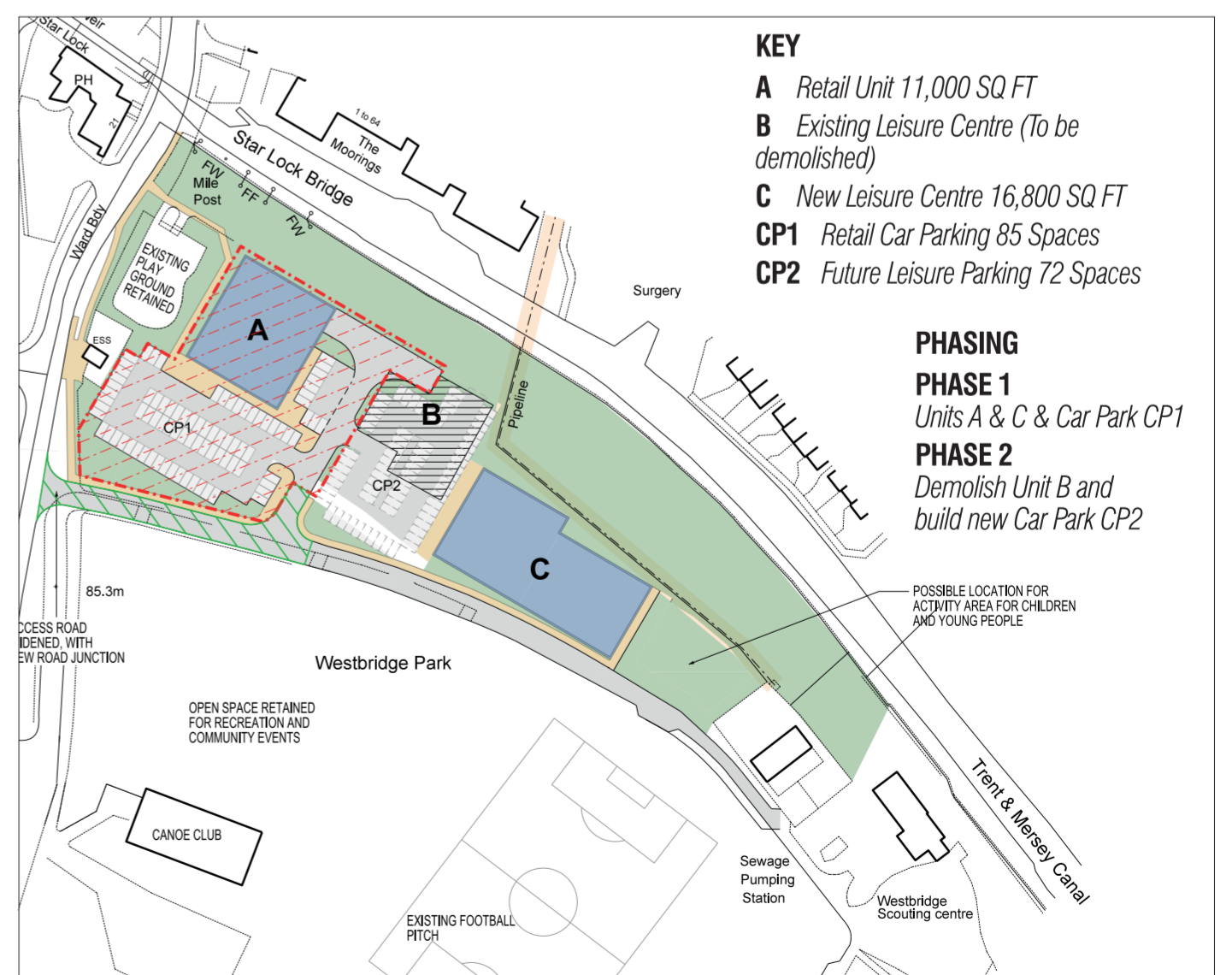


Details

All new development will be to the east of the existing road thus preserving in its totality the green area of the Park. The proposed site for the new leisure centre would be between the existing leisure centre and the pumping station. By this means, the existing leisure centre can continue trading during construction.

The existing play area for younger children (under 5s) would be retained in its current position with the new Marks & Spencer Simply Food Store sited in the vicinity of the existing tennis courts. There would be dedicated parking for the store (around 85 spaces) with a separate car park for the leisure centre on the area of land currently occupied by the existing leisure centre. These proposals will require the relocation of the Guide Hut and discussions have been opened with the Guide Association. As part of the proposal a new activity park with equipment suitable for older children (over 5's) and teenagers is proposed.

The design and location of this facility will be subject to consultation with local children along the lines developed for Victoria Park and Wildwood Park in Stafford but an initial location has been identified to the south of the new leisure centre where a natural surveillance can be provided from the new building.



More details at

www.staffordbc.gov.uk/stoneleisure