

Cabinet – 14 April 2010

Leisure Strategy

Portfolios: Councillor A Harris – Leisure and Culture
Councillor A Andrew – Regeneration
Councillor B McCracken - Health

Service: Leisure and Culture

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Summary of report

- 1.1 Walsall Council's stock of leisure facilities includes buildings varying in age from the early 1930s to its latest swimming pool built in 2000. An initial review along with outline proposals was submitted in a report to the Corporate Management Team in September 2007. There have been several update papers for the Portfolio Holders for Leisure and Regeneration during 2008 and 2009.
- 1.2 Members will be aware that the Council needs to reduce revenue spend over the next three years by up to £50m. It is likely that a disproportionate amount of savings will need to be found within Leisure Services because of their largely non-statutory nature. This report should be considered in the context of the extremely challenging financial situation the Council faces in the years ahead.
- 1.3 The proposals focus initially on the Gala Baths site (including the Central Library and museum), Oak Park Leisure Centre, Willenhall Leisure Centre, Bloxwich Leisure Centre and Darlaston Swimming Pool. There is however a relationship with other public and private provision within the Borough, as well as the twenty-two school pools. There is also the potential opportunity arising from the Building for Schools (BSF) programme.
- 1.4 To ensure the best possible use of limited future resources, it is now prudent that the Council should plan holistically and consider all provision together. Indeed, the BSF programme has specifically highlighted the requirement to create a plan to rationalise swimming pool provision across Walsall. The PPG17 audit states that whilst there is 4,800m² of pool provision across the Borough, future planning need requires only 2,000m².
- 1.5 Whilst there is no statutory obligation to provide leisure centres, the council as part of its Education duties, is obligated to ensure it has available recreation, social and physical facilities as are adequate for the purposes of its schools. These facilities can be provided in cooperation with other bodies.

- 1.6 The future provision of well designed, attractive and modern multi-purpose Health & Well-being centres across the Borough will have a key role in tackling issues relating to health, health inequalities, improving adult activity levels, childhood obesity, as well as supporting community cohesion and social interaction and tackling anti social behaviour. Such a strategic review, planning for the future 10, 20 and even 30 years, can and should have a real and long-lasting positive impact on the health and well-being of all residents. Such centres should be branded as *Health & Well-being* centres.
- 1.7 Members of the Community Services Scrutiny & Performance Panel have been asked to indicate what their views are regarding the various options outlined in **Appendix A** and the matrix shown at **Appendix B** and to make a recommendation to Cabinet.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the recommendation made by the Community Services Scrutiny Panel of 30 March 2010
- 2.2 To receive a more detailed report on the preferred option at a future meeting of Cabinet.

3. Background information

- 3.1 Work to review the sport and leisure facilities within Walsall has been on-going for several years; initially from an acknowledgement that the current facilities are generally of a poor standard and do not now meet the twenty-first century needs of the Borough. This work has been given increased significance and urgency by the need to achieve on-going revenue savings year on year, and in particular with the consideration to close Willenhall Leisure Centre in 2010/11. It was therefore decided that Cabinet should consider a paper covering the entire leisure estate and what outline options were available to the Council. The Community Services Scrutiny & Performance Panel was also asked to consider the issue and offer views on the way forward.

4. Resource considerations

- 4.1 **Financial:** As this is a discussion paper on possible future proposals, there is no capital or revenue implication at this stage. Officer time has been considerable to date and will continue as the scheme progresses. **Appendix E** to this report details the potential capital and revenue implications of the various proposals which range from savings to the revenue account if all remaining sites were to close of £1.301m which is based on 09/10 outturn excluding Willenhall, due to cabinet decision to close in 10/11, to the requirement for investment should the council choose to upgrade and/or replace it's facilities.

In 2008/09 leisure centres incurred gross expenditure of £3.406m and generated income of £1.718m, a net cost of £1.688m funded through the council, whilst there

were 870,000 attendances. All the Council's Leisure Centres receive a revenue subsidy. This subsidy ranges from £0.95 per user per visit to £4.01 with an average of £2.28. Details of this and other financial data are given at **Appendix E**.

As the process of closing the financial year 09/10 still continues the expected gross expenditure is £3.388m and expected income of £1.778m, therefore requiring council funding of £1.611m as per budget monitoring submitted in February 2010.

A more difficult issue to quantify is the on-going additional repairs and maintenance cost which reflects the age and condition of the facilities (including in recent months the re-wire of the Gala Baths at £0.300m and emergency asbestos removal from the plant room ceiling at Oak Park leisure centre)

Significant financial savings have been necessary in recent years and these have already led to the closure of the Darlaston Multi Purpose Centre in 2008 and the Grange golf course at the end of 2009. The Council's future financial position from 2011/12 and beyond will mean that the strategic review of cultural / leisure facilities and planning for the future will be especially important.

4.2 **Legal:** Whilst there is no statutory obligation to provide leisure centres, the council as part of its Education duties, is obligated to ensure it has available recreation, social and physical facilities as are adequate for the purposes of its schools. These facilities can be provided in cooperation with other bodies.

4.3 **Staffing:** The results of the strategy would have implications for the staff based in our leisure centres. Any changes would involve the normal consultation.

5. Citizen impact

5.1 A number of modern, high quality Health & Well-being Lifestyle Centres located strategically across the Borough will contribute towards several of the Council's priorities in making a difference for its customers and communities, these being:

- Improving health
- Reducing crime and feeling safe
- Developing strong and dynamic communities
- Improving education and skills
- Improving the quality of our environment
- Creating opportunity and potential
- Increasing enterprise and making Walsall a vibrant borough

5.2 Such centres also offer the opportunity to deliver, promote and contribute towards a number of Government initiatives for Sport England, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) as well as the Department of Health (DoH). These include for example:-

- Free Swimming for under 17 and over 60s
- GP Exercise Referral programme
- Change4Life ("Eat well, move more and live longer")
- 5 a day (fruit and veg) for Cancer and coronary heart disease
- Know your limits (alcohol consumption)

- Smokefree (Quit Kits)

5.3 A further benefit of the Sport & Leisure service is that it is able to target and reach large numbers of certain target groups such as overweight men that other health interventions fail, or find difficult, to access. For example, this year, £100,000 has been secured from NHS Walsall to offer discounted fitness packages to men aged over 50 in disadvantaged areas of Walsall. Other programmes delivered in partnership between Sport and Leisure and NHS Walsall include Way4ward young persons and Adult “Time to Change” exercise referral programmes, the Fun4Life Young Persons Weight Management Programme, and Active Steps, a community falls prevention programme.

5.4 The positive impact on the quality of life and health and well-being of all residents should be fostered at every opportunity through such centres and we should also aim to develop and foster a strong strategic alliance alongside and with NHS Walsall’s community delivery services.

5.5 Sport England rely heavily on the local provision and investment in sport by councils nationwide to help them deliver their national strategy for sport. As the government agency responsible for building the foundations of sporting success, it aims to do this with councils by creating a world-leading community sport system of clubs, coaches, facilities and volunteers to:-

Grow

- One million people taking part in more sport
- More children and young people taking part in five hours of PE and sport a week

Sustain

- More people satisfied with their sporting experience
- 25% fewer 16-18 year olds dropping out of at least nine sports - badminton, basketball, football, hockey, gymnastics, netball, rugby league, rugby union tennis

Excel

- Improved talent development in at least 25 sports

5.6 A strong, service led, co-ordinated programme of services will support residents of all ages and ultimately the intention will be to improve the quality of people’s health overall and reduce the 8.4 years differential in life expectancy within the Borough between the East and West.

6. Community safety

None

7. Environmental impact

By proactively improving and replacing certain facilities there will be the opportunity to include a range of eco friendly, energy efficient schemes whilst also closing a significant number of increasingly old, inefficient and expensive to maintain facilities.

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 **Risk:** The management of any changes arising from these decisions would be risk assessed and controlled in the normal way and to the Council's established procedures

8.2 **Performance management:** Taking only the Council's own leisure centres with a current 870,000 users per annum, the revenue subsidy per head is approximately £2.28. Excluding Willenhall Leisure Centre's costs but retaining the borough's overall attendances figures and with a good, co-ordinated promotions campaign would mean the subsidy would reduce to about £1.90.

New and modernised facilities in the correct location, along with the strategic closure of the over supply of pools, alongside the marketing campaign could realistically increase attendances to 1.5m per annum. At a net cost of £1.365m this would equate to a subsidy figure of less than £1.00.

9. Equality implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out.

10. Consultation


The Leader, Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Regeneration, Health and Leisure & Culture, Chairman of Community Services Scrutiny & Performance panel, Property, Finance, Legal, Human Resources.

Background papers

A Strategy for Walsall's Leisure Centres (draft background paper)
Comparison Subsidy spreadsheet 2008/9
Strategic Leisure Draft PPG17 Audit report

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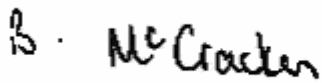
26 March 2010

Councillor Anthony Harris
Portfolio Holder



29 March 2010

Councillor Barbara McCracken
Portfolio Holder



29 March 2010

Councillor Adrian Andrew
Portfolio Holder



29 March 2010

1. Introduction

Following a meeting on 3 December 2009, the three Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Regeneration, Health and Leisure & Culture outlined their proposals for the future of Walsall Council's leisure facilities.

Walsall wants to move from a position of having five aging and increasingly costly to maintain leisure centres and a sports pavilion to (perhaps fewer) facilities that are suitable for the 21st century. The Council has aspirations to deliver the highest quality of customer service and facility provision that it can afford.

To meet budget saving targets in 2007/8 and 2008/9, Darlaston Multi Purpose Centre closed in 2008 and the nine hole municipal Grange golf course closed on 3 January 2010. This now leaves the Council with:-

- Bloxwich Leisure Centre
- Oak Park Leisure Centre
- Darlaston Swimming Pool
- Gala Baths
- Willenhall Leisure Centre
- Bentley Leisure Pavilion

The youngest facility, Darlaston, is ten years old whilst certain structures within the leisure property portfolio such as the 1930s art deco pool hall at Bloxwich now being used as a function hall, being over eighty years of age. There are a further twenty-two pools within the secondary and primary school sector ranging in size from 16.5m to 25m in length and 7m to 12.5m in width. All are similar to the Council's own pools in terms of age, condition and maintenance. There are also several other pools such as The Village Hotel and Wolverhampton University. A map of the Council, Education (secondary) and other pool provision is shown at **Appendix C** along with a one mile catchment area for each shown in **Appendix D**.

At Council on 22 February 2010 the proposed closure of Willenhall Leisure Centre was deferred for a period of six months whilst the nine ward Councillors, local residents and officers put together proposals that would reduce its operating subsidy from £4.01 per person towards the average subsidy level of £2.28 per person or less. A "use it or lose it" campaign has recently been launched. This work is on-going and a report outlining progress due in May. A comparison spreadsheet of costs is shown at **Appendix E**.

2. Aspiration

The vision proposed for Walsall's leisure centres is to:-

"Provide a range of high quality, well designed and up-to-date sports, leisure, recreation and cultural facilities, and associated support services, which will support improvements in health inequalities and the quality of life across the Borough."

In delivering this it has already been recognised that there are several fundamental issues, these being:-

1. Overall, including school sport facilities, the Borough has a clear over supply of underused, unattractive and dated facilities,
2. the Council cannot afford to continue with what it currently has within its cultural portfolio. A clear move towards rationalisation and consolidation alongside, and with, some key strategic partners will be essential,
3. the objective is to improve the quality of life, lifelong learning and well-being of all residents. As a consequence, any proposals that are taken forward from this strategic review should be branded as *Health & Well-being*, and
4. the *Health & Well-being centres* would be a key regeneration opportunity for Walsall in the same way that cities such as Liverpool, Sheffield, Birmingham and Glasgow have used culture as a way of facilitating their own high profile regeneration.

Considering these needs and the expectations and needs of Walsall residents alongside the existing facility infrastructure, it is worth re-stating the significant amount of work that has already been undertaken, some of which is still on-going, to present members with a realistic picture of what future provision could look like.

3. Key Drivers

The provision of leisure centres originated from the Baths and Wash Houses Act (1846); considered one of the great Victorian health interventions it allowed councils to provide municipal washing facilities for urban populations that had no such facilities at home. These facilities evolved throughout the nineteenth & twentieth centuries to provide recreational opportunities for urban populations without access to recreational open spaces and also embracing the greater organisation, popularity and globalisation of sport.

When planning for future provision we must fully acknowledge the actual purpose of public sport and leisure facilities. Although the requirement for municipal washing facilities has significantly reduced there is now once again a greater emphasis on the broader health and social benefits of leisure facility provision.

Contributing to the Council's corporate priorities, the Sustainable Community Strategy, and that of partners such as NHS Walsall, there are a number of key drivers that can be positively affected through the outcomes of having a co-ordinated strategic plan for Healthy & Well-being centres in Walsall, including:-

Health & Health Inequalities ~

There is a clear divide between the East and West of the Borough, in so much as adult men can expect to live up to 8.4 years longer if they live in the East than if they live in the West.

Walsall also has higher than normal levels of childhood obesity, smoking, alcohol abuse and teenage pregnancy. In addition, incidents of anti social behaviour and the fear of crime tend to overlay on areas of deprivation where residents often feel that there is nothing to do, little hope and there are low levels of expectation that anything will (or can) change.

Quality of Life ~ Cradle to Grave

There is now recognised to be a clear link between the demographics of an area, and the likely educational attainment, alcohol use, obesity levels, smoking, activity levels and unemployment as well as anti social behaviour. Such factors also have an impact on stress levels, depression, sickness levels (short and long-term) and general mental health. Families will almost certainly bring their off-spring up in a similar way to the way that they themselves were raised and as a result successive generations may either succeed or fail to succeed to achieve their aspirations.

Cross-service and cross-organisational support and service delivery, such as those that can be delivered from Health & Well-being centres, can have a significant impact on the way that people ultimately have a much better chance in being happy, healthy and achieve what they want to in life.

Adult Participation ~

The initial Active England survey published in November 2007 found that only 16% (30,400) of Walsall's 190,000 adult population took part in 3 x 30 minutes per week of regular and vigorous activity. Whilst this placed the Borough in the bottom ten nationally, of more concern was that 60% (114,000) do absolutely nothing in terms of activity. Making a difference to this is one of the targets of the CANdo network however there is a need for a much more high profile and co-ordinated delivery of services, perhaps led through Change 4 Life (see below).

Free Swimming ~

The Council commenced the Government's "Free Swim" initiative on 1 January 2009 and is delivering the under 17 and over 60's programmes as part of the Government's cross-departmental (Culture, Media and Sport, Childrens, Schools and Families, Health, Communities and Local Government, as well as Work and Pensions) scheme. In addition Sport & Leisure Services have a very active sports development and health development programme and works with key partners through the CANdo network which comprises sports development, the leisure centres, Green Spaces, Wolverhampton University, NHS Walsall, School Sports Partnerships, Walsall College and local sports clubs.

Free swimming demonstrates a new and high profile commitment to sport, leisure, recreation and health as well as to increase activity levels. Walsall chose to start the programme three months earlier than the national scheme as a sign of its commitment to getting more people (young and old) active. Leading up to the London 2012 Olympics there will also almost certainly be heightened awareness and interest in sport, leisure and recreation.

Government intervention ~

Government departments such as those listed above have recognised that there is now a need to target certain problems and issues with a range of initiatives aimed ultimately at improving the quality of life of all people whilst decreasing health inequalities. Such initiatives include:-

- Change4Life

Change4Life is a nationwide scheme designed to help people make changes to their lifestyles, so that they can “Eat well, move more and live longer”. It is part of a £75m three year advertising campaign to help families make positive changes to their lives. It is expected that organisations, groups and individuals will offer a lot of support in promoting the Change4Life message.

- 5 a day

Cancer and coronary heart disease account for 60% of all early deaths and a key feature of the NHS’s prevention strategy to reduce such deaths is to improve diet and nutrition.

Increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables is a national priority defined by the “5 a day” catchphrase and the intention to eat five pieces of fruit and/or vegetables each day.

- Know your Units

Another programme aimed at improving healthy lifestyles and reducing poor levels of health is Know your Limits aimed at limiting, controlling and reducing alcohol consumption.

The chance of suffering from high blood pressure, various cancers and heart attacks are increased as alcohol consumption increases. Drinking above daily acceptable levels on a regular basis is associated with an increased risk of disease and regular drinking over a long period can lead to various cancers, (mouth, throat, larynx and breast), heart disease, and strokes, liver damage, depression, memory loss, stomach damage.

- Smokefree

Targeted through the issuing of “quit kits”, Smokefree aims to reduce the various impacts of smoking such as cancer, heart or lung disease, circulatory problems, asthma, fertility levels, taste of food, breathing and general fitness.

Second-hand smoke to family, friends and strangers is also an issue and the campaign indirectly aims to reduce this potential threat as well.

All programmes listed above have a contributory impact on the physical and mental health and well-being of all residents and should be accepted as a cornerstone of the services delivered from any Health & Well-being centres within Walsall.

4. Background data

There are several interdependent but related pieces of work being undertaken almost simultaneously by Strategic Leisure, Genesis (Sport England) and Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC). In brief these are:-

- Strategic Leisure - PPG17 audit on quantity and quality of leisure provision
- Genesis - Assessment of swimming pool supply and demand
- PwC - Asset management study of all Council assets

The information from all three will join together to provide the necessary information required to assess all of the Council’s major properties. PwC’s work is due for completion by September 2010.

The Planning Policy Guidance note 17 (PPG17) audit & assessment will quantify the level of provision required for a variety of sports facilities as well as green space, allotments and amenity sites. Work undertaken separately by Strategic Leisure and Genesis both concluded that there is a very large over provision of water space within the Borough, so much so that whilst there is currently 4,800m² of available water, the actual supply needed by the Borough represents around 2,000m². This would mean a reduction in facilities from twenty-seven pools to around nine or ten; a closure programme of up to seventeen pools.

It is worth noting that there is other sport and leisure provision both within and just over the Borough boundary including Wolverhampton University, The Village, Wolverhampton Swimming & Fitness Centre, Wood Green Table Tennis Centre, Burntwood Leisure Centre, Aston University Recreation Ground, Fitness First, Walsall College and David Lloyd Leisure. In addition Bilston Leisure Centre is currently being rebuilt and Sandwell Council has recently confirmed an intention to build a new 25m 6-lane pool to replace the current facility in Tipton.

Pool Provision

An integral element of Strategic Leisure's PPG17 audit is the issue of pool provision and supply / demand within the Borough.

There are currently a total of twenty-seven "publicly owned" pools of various sizes, this being made up of the Council's own five leisure centre along with a further twelve on secondary schools sites and ten on primary sites. There is an over supply of water space by about 140% in addition to the pools at The Village at M6 J10, Wolverhampton University, the Fairlawns and Barons Court Hotel although access to these is not generally by means of pay and play.

Calculations by both Strategic Leisure (PPG17 audit) and Genesis (Sport England swimming consultants) suggest that schools use per pool in Walsall would equate to a realistic need for only six pools. This could then be supported on a geographic basis around the Council's existing leisure centres.

One proposal therefore could be that Walsall would retain its own four (or five with Willenhall) leisure centres and that these would be augmented by six school swimming pools.

Hall Provision

Strategic Leisure's audit of sports halls within the Borough is very similar to that of the pool provision. Existing facilities are generally of a poor quality, construction and design, and often have poor complementary facilities such as changing, showers, toilets, lockers, hair dryers and mirrors as well as few pre/post activity social areas.

The need to rationalise halls is much less than for swimming pools although there is still acknowledged to be over-supply against the required demand. In general terms there is an over supply of about six, four court halls within the Borough.

Asset Review

The Council's Property Service is just commencing a corporate-wide assessment through Pricewaterhouse Coopers of all 600 Council assets including the leisure stock. It is

understood that this will include a full condition survey, an estimate of current and short-term facility costs as well as medium to long-term life-cycle costs. The full results are not due until September 2010.

Building Schools for the Future

A key complementary programme running alongside the Leisure Centre review is Building Schools for the Future (BSF). On 17 November 2009 Walsall Council was accepted into wave 6a by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Six schools are included, these being:-

- Alumwell
- Frank F Harrison
- Joseph Leckie
- Pool Hayes
- Shire Oak
- Streetly

With the exception of Shire Oak, all these schools already have their own swimming pool although these are general now relatively old and not of a quality and appearance for the paying public nor the 21st century.

Within BSF, schools will be entitled to a basic entitlement for PE, Sport & Physical Activity, generally including a four court hall, gym, store and changing facilities. There is an opportunity for flexibility and creativity, in particular to make best use of existing good quality and highly valued sports facilities already on site, although the BSF programme is not be able to contribute towards any capital costs for school swimming pools.

The Council's own leisure centre provision could be augmented by a network of dual-use sports facilities on school sites. Initial calculations suggest that the leisure centres would need to be supported by at least a further six swimming pools on school sites.

The real opportunity for BSF is to formulate and guarantee clear community access to school PE and sport facilities during evenings, weekends and holiday periods; and to ensure that those facilities provided have ancillary accommodation (access, reception, changing) of a suitable standard.

It is worth noting that given the current over-provision of sports facilities in Walsall schools, BSF could lead to a net overall reduction in the quantity of sports facilities.

Management & Branding

Cabinet has made it clear that they would like to explore the opportunities that may present themselves for a single management approach to the delivering and managing all sports facilities provision (direct Council as well as education) across the whole Borough. This would enable a "single provider" approach to offer the customer a range of benefits including standardisation of service, marketing, pricing, etc. It is worth noting for reference that from September 2009 the overall strategic management of Walsall's schools of behalf of Walsall Council comes under a twelve year contract with Serco.

There is an opportunity that all services could be managed by one operator; either in-house, the private sector or a mix of both. Preliminary discussions have been held with the

two private leisure management operators on options for the redevelopment / upgrading / replacement of existing sites. Initial indications are positive. Both have offered members the opportunity to visit their multi-site operations in Bolton and Rotherham where they have delivered new facilities from a similar historical asset base as Walsall's.

The setting up of trust is also something to be considered as this can release 80% of the rates, potentially for re-investing into the leisure stock. This could be pursued either direct by the Council or via a private leisure management operator. The point to note however is not how the leisure centres are to be managed, but what the leisure centres will actually be made up of. The management of the "re-modelled" stock therefore is in fact the secondary issue.

5. The Opportunity

The Council has the opportunity to combine the various strategic pieces of work currently being undertaken to create a forward thinking, long-term legacy that Walsall residents can fully benefit from. The aspiration can be to support the Borough's continued regeneration whilst at the same time, to work with partners in health, education, the Police and others to have a series of multi-provision, modern facilities from which a range of services can be offered "cradle to grave".

There is therefore a combined problem of over supply, lack of demand, one of the lowest adult participation rates in the country, high levels of smoking, the fact that there is a tendency for adult men in the west of the borough to die eight years earlier than those in the east, plus facilities that are now out of date. The health issues facing Borough residents means that it will be essential to develop and foster a clear, strong and effective strategic alliance with the NHS Walsall delivery services. The vision for this piece of work supports this:-

"Provide a range of high quality, well designed and up-to-date sports, leisure, recreation and cultural facilities, and associated support services, which will support improvements in health inequalities and the quality of life across the Borough."

This is a once in a generation opportunity for Walsall to grasp the nettle for the long-term benefit of residents.

The Council is therefore now keen to explore how it might consolidate and rationalise the Borough's pool provision and at the same time offer good quality, modern services to its residents. This may include the use of the existing revenue budget, the opportunity cost from the capital budget not spent on the old buildings, the formation of a Trust and/or other partners, and through this to then create some realistic, achievable and affordable proposals that Cabinet can discuss. **Appendix B** identifies six broad options that are available, however there are obviously other combinations that Members might wish to put forward for development and consideration. The six are:-

Stop & close ~

This would mean the Council would close all its leisure centres, demolish the sites and withdraw from front-line service provision.

Carry on as now ~

There would no discernible change to the standard and quality of the facilities and no means to address the gradual deterioration of quality from an over extended service.

Carry on with minor improvements ~

Through applications for any external grants and possibilities via prudential borrowing, a small programme of modernisation and improvements would be undertaken as and when required. This would be targeted on the basis of deriving the greatest improvement in user numbers and participation.

Strategic spread of facilities across borough ~

In-line with the strategic intention to reduce pool provision from 4,800m² to 2,000m², reduce the number of publicly owned pools from 27 to 9 or 10. The revenue released from a decrease in the number of the Council's own leisure facilities could be used to fund modernisation works for the centres retained.

Have a single "jewel" facility ~

The intention would be to have a single, high profile, stand-alone facility. This would mean that all other Council leisure centres would close and provision focussed from just the one centre.

Strategic spread and a "jewel" facility ~

A combination of the latter two options; have a high profile, stand-alone facility alongside the strategic spread, thereby meeting the 2,000m² target of pool provision.

6. Summary of the challenge ahead

To create a clear, realistic, affordable and deliverable scheme that offers the Council the opportunity to move from its existing extensive provision including 5 leisure centres and a pavilion, 16 libraries, 14 community associations, 2 town halls plus the 22 school pools to a more streamlined and customer focussed provision which is targeted clearly at health and regeneration under the brand of *Health & Well-being Centres*.

Future discussions will need to focus on the affordability and deliverability of proposals put forward by members and these will be dependent on how many facilities as well as what facility mix is provided at each site.

It should be noted that the concept of providing high quality, modern *Health & Well-being Centres* would also offer a key regeneration opportunity for Walsall in the same way that Liverpool, Birmingham, Sheffield and Glasgow have used culture to facilitate their own high profile regeneration.

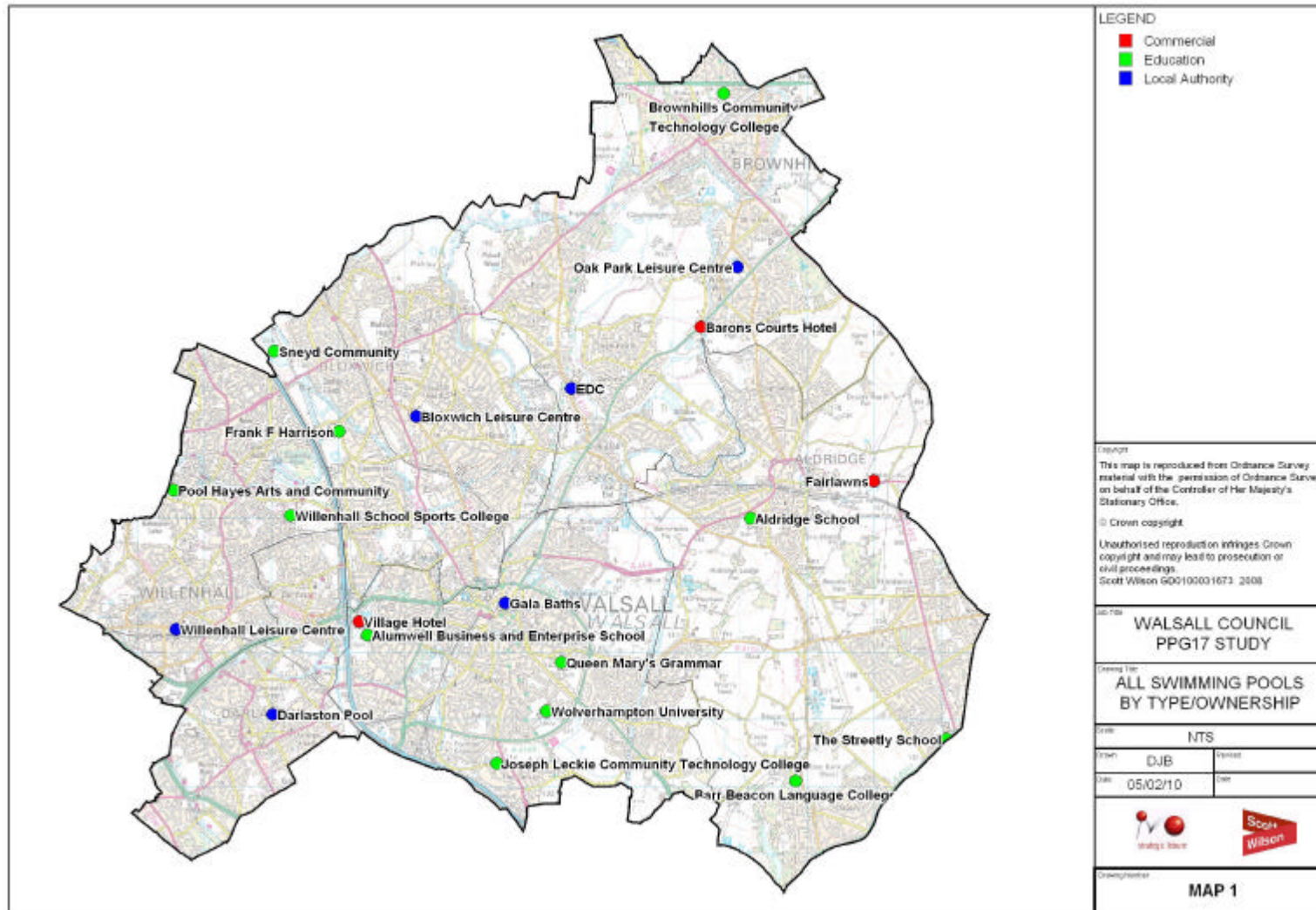
Members of the Community Services Scrutiny & Performance Panel are asked to indicate their views regarding the various options that are outlined in the matrix at **Appendix A** and to make a recommendation to the 14 April 2010 Cabinet meeting.

Appendix B

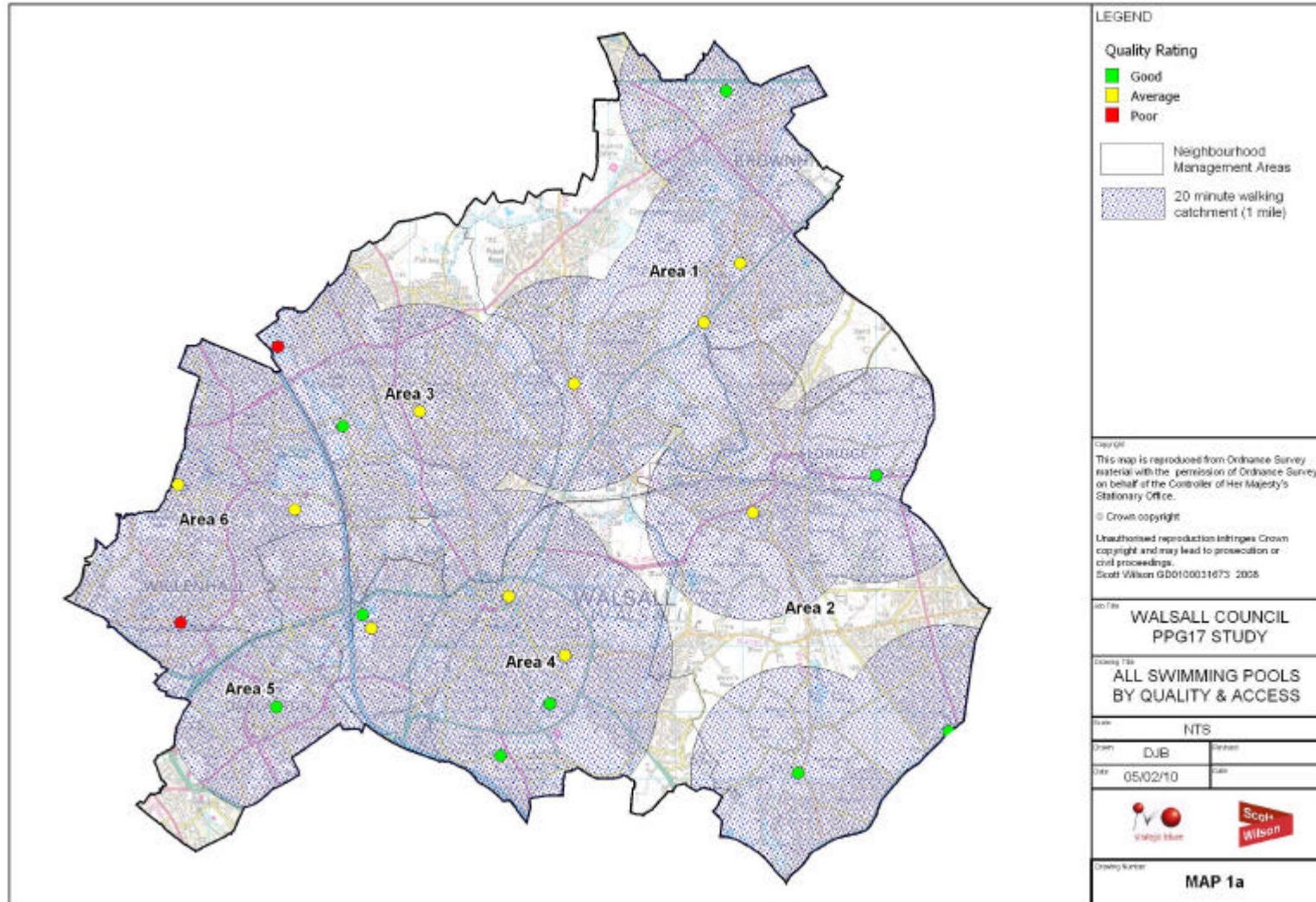
LEISURE CENTRE OPTIONS

| No. | Option | Attend. | Finance | Provision | Health benefit | Comment |
|-----|---|------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 1 | Stop & close | Zero | Council revenue saving of £1.365m | Nothing | Negative impact due to loss of public access. No Free swims | Leaves sector to the private providers |
| 2 | Carry on as now | @ 870,000 | No change | As is | No change | No strategic change |
| 3 | Carry on with minor improvements | up to 1m | Modest investment may be required | Slightly improved | Opportunity for heightened promotional campaign | No strategic change |
| 4 | Strategic spread of facilities across borough | est up to 1.5m | Cost (revenue and capital) would be dependent on number of facilities and the facility mix at each | Council's leisure centres would benefit from up to £7m investment. Other services provided by private / educ. | Co-ordinated range of service providers with a better quality of facility | Would meet the 2,000m ² pool target provision and would make best use of public resources. This option would require a range of providers to coordinate delivery. It would also require the closure of school pools not directly controlled by the Council |
| 5 | Have a single "jewel" facility | est at 1.5m+ | | Brand new but only a single "jewel in the crown" facility | May attract more, but Q on ease of access / travel times | High profile new build / major refurbishment programme. Opportunity to purpose build a facility with co-located partner services such as health and education |
| 6 | Strategic spread and a "jewel" facility | Should be >1.5m+ | | Combination of 4 and 5 | Co-ordinated range of service providers with a better quality of facility | Would have the benefits of options 4 and 5. There would be a funding gap so viability is dependent on engaging partner services to contribute capital and revenue costs. |

Appendix C
PPG17 Audit Pool map



Appendix D
PPG17 Audit Pool map (1 mile catchment areas)



Appendix E
Leisure Centre Comparison 2008/9

| | Bloxwich | Darlaston | Gala Baths | Oak Park | Willenhall | Bentley |
|--|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Employees | £461,183 | £324,398 | £394,067 | £437,196 | £320,400 | £53,644 |
| Premises | £222,086 | £241,936 | £233,452 | £204,850 | £125,770 | £22,723 |
| Supplies & Services | £79,298 | £79,670 | £71,437 | £83,960 | £38,696 | £11,260 |
| CSS & FRS17 | £79,035 | £69,441 | £177,697 | £103,683 | £123,348 | £8,985 |
| Cost Of Capital (depreciation & Impairment of assets) | £1,081,975 | £8,003,041 | £4,785,664 | £5,800 | £2,614,930 | £7,010 |
| Total Expenditure | £1,923,578 | £8,718,485 | £5,662,318 | £835,488 | £3,223,144 | £103,623 |
| Total Expenditure (excl Cost of capital, CSS & FRS17) | £762,568 | £646,003 | £698,957 | £726,005 | £484,866 | £87,628 |
| Income | -£364,202 | -£331,647 | -£355,273 | -£472,412 | -£160,636 | -£33,488 |
| Net Expenditure | £1,559,376 | £8,386,838 | £5,307,045 | £363,076 | £3,062,508 | £70,135 |
| Net Expenditure (excl Capital) | £398,366 | £314,356 | £343,683 | £253,593 | £324,229 | £54,140 |
| Attendances 2008/9 | 187,752 | 147,038 | 164,751 | 266,798 | 80,784 | 22,971 |
| Subsidy per user | £8.31 | £57.04 | £32.21 | £1.36 | £37.91 | £3.05 |
| Subsidy per user (excl Cost of capital, CSS & FRS17)) | £2.12 | £2.14 | £2.09 | £0.95 | £4.01 | £2.36 |
| Average subsidy per user (excl Capital) | £2.28 | £2.28 | £2.28 | £2.28 | £2.28 | £2.28 |
| Subsidy per user variance from average | -£0.16 | -£0.14 | -£0.19 | -£1.33 | £1.74 | £0.08 |

**** Impairment of an asset is a one off in year charge, this occurs when the value of the asset decreases****