

 Executive – 11th September 2013		Agenda Item No. 7
Title	Improvements to Bowls Facilities – Victoria Park	
For further information about this report please contact	Rose Winship/Chris Elliott	
Wards of the District directly affected	Leamington wards	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	Executive – August 2012, December 2012	
Background Papers	November 2011 – Bowls Working Party report to O&S Committee; Impact Assessments – STRI; Neil Allen Associates; WDC 2009 Tourism Economic Impact Assessment WDC Proposal to Bowls England (August 2012) Relocation of Bowls England HQ and the Men's Championships to Royal Leamington Spa (December 2012)	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes Ref: 505
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	02/09	Chris Elliott/Bill Hunt/Andrew Jones
Head of Service	02/09	Rose Winship
CMT	02/09	Chris Elliott, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	02/09	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	02/09	Andrew Jones
Finance	02/09	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	02/09	Cllr Stephen Cross
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI); Local residents, Royal Leamington Spa Bowls Club and other local bowls clubs – Neil Allen Associates; Bowls England Working Party; Internal consultation – Neighbourhood Services, Development Services		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

The purpose of the report is to update members on the Bowls England project and request additional resources to complete the extended improvements to the bowls facilities in Victoria Park.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Executive note the progress that has been made on the projects associated with the relocation of the Men's National Championships and Bowls England's HQ to Leamington.
- 2.2 The Executive approve the additional improvements and costs as detailed in Section 3 of this report, up to a maximum of £249,800 for inclusion within the Council's Capital Programme for 2013/14.
- 2.3 The Executive approve that the additional works are financed by £14,000 from the responsive and cyclical element of the Corporate Repairs and Improvements Budget and £235,800 from the Capital Investment Reserve.
- 2.4 The Executive agree to appropriate £235,800 from the Service Transformation Reserve for transfer to the Capital Investment Reserve.
- 2.5 The Executive agree to amend the Capital Programme to reflect the amendments to the 2013/14 budget and the slippage of £150,000 for proposed irrigation and associated works from 2013/14 to 2014/15.
- 2.6 The Executive agree that within the figures discussed in paragraph 3.13, that the public utilities contingency is specifically ring-fenced for this purpose.
- 2.7 The Executive notes that, in consultation with Group Leaders, Deputy Chief Executives and the Head of Service, the Chief Executive's delegated powers were used to sign an agreement with the building contractors in advance of the Executive meeting on the 11th of September.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 At their August meeting the Executive endorsed a document which contained a series of proposals from this Council to Bowls England. On 24th November 2012 the Company meeting of Bowls England agreed to move the company HQ and the Men's National Championships to Leamington Spa on the basis that the proposals made by the Council would be delivered.
- 3.2 The proposals detailed the outline improvements which would be made to the greens and the ancillary facilities at Victoria Park in order to host both the Men's and Women's Championships annually. These proposals recognised the need to continue to improve the playing surface of the greens, and to extend ancillary facilities for all users of the greens, including the Royal Leamington Spa Bowls Club (RLSBC) (who are the resident club), other local bowls clubs and competitors in county and national events.
- 3.3 The report approved by the Executive in December 2012 included estimates for the replacement irrigation system, greens equipment, a new PA system and improvements to the pavilion. Early in 2013, officers continued their dialogue with Bowls England and RLSBC to develop a scheme that would create a suitable venue for increased levels of use. Experience shows that the existing

facilities already struggle to accommodate bowlers at the current level. These discussions have resulted in the scope of the project being revised in order to provide a facility that is fit for purpose and which will be able to sustain the increased usage that will materialise from 2014 onwards.

- 3.4 Whilst this report highlights the significant increase in the likely capital cost of delivering the extended improvements, officers consider that the result will be a quality facility that will benefit local and national bowlers, and maintain the high reputation of Leamington Spa as the "Home of English Bowls". The profile the district will receive from being the sole host of the national championships, and the ability to realise tangible economic benefits in the region of £1 million per annum (through harnessing the direct spending from increased visitor numbers and indirectly from increased tourism), continue to make this a project worth pursuing.
- 3.5 The increased costs of the overall project are directly attributable to the need to extend and improve the Bowls Pavilion, with cost savings having been achieved on other elements of the project. A new PA system was installed prior to the 2013 Nationals at a cost of £4,258, significantly below the projected budget of £10,000, and the need for a new item of greens maintenance equipment has been superseded as a result of negotiations with the new grounds maintenance contractor.
- 3.6 The table below sets out the breakdown of the £200,000 capital budget approved in December 2012 for the project and the current cost estimates totaling £449,800. It should be noted that, at this stage, the figures given are a budget estimate *only*. The next phase of the Scape framework is to put the project through market testing in order to arrive at more accurate figures.

	December 2012 Estimate £	August 2013 Estimate £
Irrigation system	150,000	156,000
Greens Equipment	20,000	0
PA system	10,000	4,300
Pavilion works (inclusive of contingency)	20,000	289,500
Total	200,000	449,800

- 3.7 As described in previous reports to the Executive, the Pavilion improvements are necessary as the current changing and toilet facilities are inadequate for increased use. In addition, the increased volume of visitors will impact on the club facilities where bar and catering services are provided during events. The improvements required are consequently:
- Increased changing provision with 1 additional changing room to provide an extra 48m² of changing space and greater flexibility to accommodate men and women as required
 - Increased toilet provision with 2 extra cubicles and improved access/layout
 - Increased storage in the club bar and kitchen area

- 3.8 The original cost estimate of £20,000 for the pavilion works was based on a simple timber framed extension, and provided the basic additions to the facilities that formed part of the offer to Bowls England. The December 2012 Executive report highlighted that final costs would be confirmed once detailed plans had been drawn up and the necessary consents received. As the project has developed, and more detailed discussions have taken place with Bowls England and RLSBC, the scale of works required to create a facility fit for purpose, and the costs associated with them, have become clearer.
- 3.9 Subject to approval of the additional funding, the construction work will be undertaken through the Scape framework agreement. Use of this procurement method has allowed for dialogue with the proposed contractor and, as a result, officers have been able to identify the most cost effective solutions for delivery of the necessary improvement works. It will also allow the project to be completed in a very short timeframe; one that would not have been possible using a traditional tender. The additional work and cost estimates can be summarised as:

Project Element	Cost Estimate	Of Which:		
		Additional improvements since Dec 2012	Costs which could not have been known in Dec 2012	Costs which could have been known in Dec 2012
Changing Room Extension	£66,000	£5,800	£21,500	£38,700
Additional Toilet Provision	£18,000	£18,000	£0	£0
Bar Storage & Ramps	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£0
Drainage (whole site)	£6,000	£3,000	£0	£3,000
Decoration (whole site)	£9,000	£5,500	£0	£3,500
Replacement Club Area Roof (£12k works & £2,000 Decoration)	£14,000	£14,000	£0	£0
Site Works	£5,000	£0	£0	£5,000
Pre-Construction Costs	£6,000	£3,000	£0	£3,000
Preliminaries	£63,000	£31,500	£0	£31,500
Contractor Fees (including Scape Fee)	£10,000	£4,000	£2,000	£4,000
Contingency (building works)	£20,000	£10,000	£0	£10,000
Subtotal	£247,000	£124,800	£23,500	£98,700
Ancillary Costs				
CDM	£8,300	£0	£0	£8,300
Site Investigation	£7,000	£1,200	£0	£5,800
Public Utilities	£17,200	£0	£17,200	£0
Public Utilities Contingency	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0
Subtotal	£42,500	£1,200	£27,200	£14,100
PAVILION TOTAL	£289,500	£126,000	£50,700	£112,800
Irrigation (system & consultant)	£156,000	£0	£6,000	£150,000
PA System	£4,300	£0	£0	£4,300
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	£449,800	£126,000	£56,700	£267,100
LESS Original Budget	£200,000		Already approved by Exec	
TOTAL FUNDING NEEDED	£249,800			

- 3.10 £126,000 of the revised cost estimate is attributable to the extended improvements needed to create a facility fit for purpose and suitable for a centre of excellence for bowls.
- 3.11 Some £50,700 of costs could not have been foreseen prior to the December report. These have been as a result of things such as the discovery of public utilities and the nature of the made ground requiring piled foundations. A further
- 3.12 Whilst some £112,800 of costs could have been flagged up for the December report, much of this would have required an upfront expenditure on site investigations, extended discussions with Bowls England and RLSBC, and a subsequent delay in presenting the report to members. This, in turn, would have impacted on our ability to confirm the partnership with Bowls England.
- 3.13 A total of £30,000 has been allocated as contingency for the project. This is made up of £20,000 contingency against the building works, and £10,000 against the public utilities works. The site surveys have identified that public gas, electric and water supplies run beneath the area required for the new irrigation tank and the additional changing room. This therefore requires the utilities to be re-routed. There is still some uncertainty around the scheduling and cost of this work. Initial investigations have revealed that the gas main is old cast iron pipework and will likely carry non-standard fittings. At the time of writing, we have yet to receive a clear response from Severn Trent as to the nature and cost of their works. In recognition of this, an additional contingency has been added in respect of the public utilities as this element of the work is beyond officer control. Whilst every effort will be made to hold costs below the level of this contingency, at this stage the true final costs cannot be determined. It is proposed that the public utilities contingency is ring-fenced specifically for this purpose, and will only be utilised if absolutely necessary.
- 3.14 Included within the figures above is a cost of £14,000 for the replacement of a part of the pavilion roof. There have been a number of unsuccessful attempts to resolve a long-standing issue with the current glazed roof and it is now proposed to replace the glazed areas with a tiled alternative while the other works are underway. This will provide a cost effective solution to an existing maintenance issue and these works will be funded from the responsive and cyclical element of the Corporate Repair and Improvements Budget (see paragraph 5.2).
- 3.15 In addition to the works to the pavilion, a Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) technical assessment and subsequent report (July 2012) has identified a need for an enhanced or replaced irrigation system for the 5 greens in the next 1-2 years. The initial plan had been to schedule this replacement in the autumn/winter 2013/14 at the same time as the pavilion work, on the basis that this should reduce the disruption to the Bowls Club and possibly throw up some efficiencies with shared contractors. We commissioned a specialist consultant to design the technical specification, and support us in the evaluation and implementation of the irrigation system. The decision to delay this work does not affect the design work undertaken. As such, £6000 of the consultant's fees will be paid this year, with the remainder being paid on completion of the project in 2014/15.
- 3.16 However, in the process of specifying the new irrigation system it has become apparent that combining this work with the pavilion works will not be straightforward. Instead of realising cost savings by running the works in

conjunction, additional costs would be accrued as a result of increased risk for both contractors, management costs and an extended works period.

- 3.17 An alternative approach is now recommended, with the proposed pavilion works being undertaken as planned in autumn/winter 2013/14 and the irrigation works being completed in autumn/winter 2014/15. This will reduce the works period for each element of the project, reducing the costs associated with contract management and the disruption to the bowls club each year.
- 3.18 This alternative approach has been discussed with and accepted by the Bowls England Chief Executive who is comfortable that the risks of the existing irrigation system failing are no greater as a result of a 12 month deferral of the work than the risk we have been carrying for the last few years. In any case, the greatest risk, of a failing pump, could be addressed by replacement (approx. cost £10,000) and retro-fitting into the new system.
- 3.19 As this new approach has only been considered in the last few weeks the tender process for the irrigation works has continued as planned. Three tenders were received in mid-August, all within the allocated budget, and with one showing a significant saving. Advice from procurement colleagues is that we can delay this element of the project and inform the contractors of this decision without incurring any penalties. The existing specification can then be used to carry out a re-tender in summer 2014 which will allow the original contractors plus others to submit an appropriate tender. Although there is a risk that the delay could lead to an increased cost in the 2014 tenders there is also a possibility that more competitive prices could be obtained. The delay will also enable investigations into any potential external funding sources that could contribute to this project.
- 3.20 It is therefore proposed that, subject to approval of recommendation 2.2, the Capital Programme is amended to allow for the irrigation works to be slipped to 2014/15. As a result, £6,000 of the costs of associated building works have been added to this heading within the table at 3.5 and would also be slipped to next financial year. These works would always have been necessary so do not constitute an increase in costs for this element of the project.
- 3.21 A memorandum of agreement with the building contractors was sealed prior to this meeting using the appropriate delegated authority of the Chief Executive. The contractors have been procured via the Scape framework. Scape are about to start the process of retendering the local element of this framework. In order to secure the services of the contractor, an MOA had to be signed by the 9th September 2013 (two days prior to this meeting). Had the document not been signed, the Council would have had to wait until the retender was complete in January 2014. This would have incurred additional cost and resulted in a delay sufficient to cause the project to fail this year. Please see 6.3 for the alternative that would have to be put into place should this have happened.
- 3.22 The MOA with the contractor incorporates clauses that allow the Council to walk away from the contract without incurring any penalties, other than paying for preliminary work completed up to the termination date, should certain circumstances come to pass. One such clause allows for the termination of the contract should the funding be unavailable.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

4.1 The proposals contribute to the Warwick District Sustainable Community Strategy. In particular it will continue to make direct contributions to the following:

- **Jobs, Skill and Economy** – encouraging visitors to the district who make a significant contribution to the local economy through overnight stays, hospitality, visitor attractions and retail.
- **Health and Well Being** – contribute to encouraging active lifestyles for all sectors of the local community and visitors to the district.
- **Involving Communities** - provide support for local clubs and other community groups.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

5.1 Subject to approval of recommendation 2.2 the revised costs of the project are estimated to be a maximum of £449,800, compared to the original estimate of £200,000:

	December 2012 Estimate £	August 2013 Estimate £
Irrigation system	150,000	156,000
Greens Equipment	20,000	0
PA system	10,000	4,300
Pavilion works (inclusive of contingency)	20,000	289,500
Totals	200,000	449,800
Less existing funding		-200,000
Less Roof works financed from Corporate Repairs and Improvement Budget		-14,000
Balance of new funding required from the Capital Investment Reserve		235,800

5.2 The roof works, at an estimated cost of £14,000, can be allocated to the Corporate Repairs and Improvements Budget, coming out of the responsive and cyclical element (£737,000 budget for 2013/14). As capital works, the remainder of the increased cost (£235,800) should be financed from the Capital Investment Reserve. The unallocated balance on this Reserve is £2.04m, of which £1.6m is earmarked for work coming out of the review of Leamington Assets. The Council's policy is to maintain the balance on this reserve at £2m. To enable the balance on this reserve be maintained, it is proposed that £235,800 is appropriated from the Service Transformation Reserve (unallocated balance £1.895m) and transferred to the Capital Investment Reserve.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Due to the significant increase in the costs of this project, officers have considered a number of options that to try to reduce the cost to the Council.
- 6.2 The proposal from Warwick District Council to Bowls England included improved/extended changing facilities and toilet provision. This was in recognition that the existing facilities already struggle to accommodate current usage. With the addition of the Men's National Championships each August and a number of other high profile events during the season, which will take place alongside existing club and county competitions, the existing facilities would not be sufficient. The proposed new changing space has been designed to have a minimal footprint whilst retaining functionality. Likewise, the additional toilets and their associated access are a scaled down version of the original plans.
- 6.3 An alternative option, of installing temporary changing provision elsewhere in the park during the main events, is not recommended. If the additional changing accommodation was only required for the National Championships each year this option could have merited discussion. However, the current provision is insufficient for normal use throughout the season due to conflicting demands from male and female players, RLSBC and Warwickshire County Bowling Association matches, Pottertons Bowls Club and Home Guard Bowls Club matches. Add to this the additional national events that will be moving to Leamington as a result of the Bowls England relocation, and the additional changing and toilet facilities are needed for the full season. This would render temporary changing facilities a costly and unsightly solution to the problem.
- 6.4 Another alternative option considered but rejected was not to replace the glazed roof above the café area, and to continue to patch repair the existing glazed area. This has been discounted as it would contradict the Council's responsibilities as a landlord to maintain the fabric of the building in a reasonable condition. Numerous unsuccessful attempts have been made over many years to resolve the leaks in the glazed areas, therefore the tiled option is now considered to be the most appropriate action.
- 6.5 The construction element of the project is notifiable under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 and therefore requires the client (WDC) to appoint a CDM coordinator. This is a role that could be carried out in house within the Housing and Property Services (H&PS) team if resources were available, saving approx. £8,300. However, this is not considered a viable option to reduce costs given the current workload of the H&PS team.
- 6.6 The irrigation element of the project could be delayed indefinitely until the current system fails. This would save the estimated £150,000 plus some smaller sums associated with the installation of the water tank, main connection and also reduce the scale of the electrical upgrade until such a time as a new irrigation system was installed. The plans to replace the irrigation system were based on thorough risk assessment of the current system, and the anticipated lifecycle of such a system. It was installed prior to the World Championships in 1997 and is therefore 16 years old. The condition of the greens is fundamental to the success of the competitions held in Victoria Park. The ability to carry out controlled and effective irrigation of the greens is essential if we are to be able to deliver high quality greens each season. To consider delaying until the current system has an irreparable breakdown would be a high risk strategy which could have a financial and reputational impact on

the Council. However, for reasons set out elsewhere within this report it is proposed to delay the irrigation works by one season.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 An officer project team of officers from Cultural Services, Development Services, Housing and Property Services, Finance, Neighbourhood Services and Community Protection was established in late 2012 and has been meeting monthly to monitor the project. A project manager from the Organisational Development Team is allocated to coordinate the project. An Economic Development officer has taken the lead in identifying sponsorship opportunities and ways of engaging local businesses who could benefit from the increase in visitor footfall. The project team also includes an officer from the Media Team to maximise publicity and marketing opportunities in partnership with Bowls England officers.

Planning Applications

- 7.2 A planning application was submitted in May 2013 to identify areas within Victoria Park for a temporary caravan site during the 4 weeks of the championships from 2014 onwards. The application also included approval for temporary marquees which are erected at the venue during the Nationals each year. From 2014 onwards, the extended period of the Nationals will exceed 28 days (to accommodate the women's and the men's events). Planning permission is therefore required. Whilst not part of the planning application, an area was indicated within which parking for up to 350 cars could be accommodated on Victoria Park for the duration of the Nationals each year. Permission was granted for up to 36 days for a period of 3 years subject to a Caravan Management Plan being submitted to Planning Officers prior to the 2013 Nationals. This plan has now been completed and the Planning Conditions have been discharged.
- 7.3 Within the proposal to Bowls England was a commitment to offer space for storage. A further planning application was approved for the installation of storage buildings on the "old tennis courts" at the eastern end of Victoria Park. This storage will be used by Bowls England and Warwick District Council. As the project has developed the opportunity emerged for the Council to jointly fund the storage solution with Bowls England. The Council's contribution of £7,500 has been funded from within existing resources.
- 7.4 Further planning applications will go to Planning Committee at the end of September 2013 for the irrigation scheme and pavilion improvements.

Bowls England HQ Office Relocation

- 7.5 The first of the Bowls England officers moved into Riverside House in April 2013. The Riverside House accommodation has been offered to Bowls England from 2013 and for a period up until the Council vacate the premises or for a period to be agreed by both parties whichever is the shorter. A lease has been signed to formalise this arrangement. This lease sits as an Appendix to the wider legal Agreement which confirms the basis for the partnership between Warwick District Council and Bowls England up until April 2023.

Greens maintenance

- 7.6 The 2012 STRI report also identified a new item of green keeping equipment (Hydroject) to improve the condition of the greens during an extended period of play. Further discussions with STRI and the new GM contractor The Landscape Group, have confirmed that this piece of equipment is no longer available, and therefore alternative equipment is being identified and will be integrated into the routine greens maintenance within the GM contract. Therefore the £20,000 allocated for this item of equipment is no longer required.

Community Engagement

- 7.7 In addition to programming and implementing the physical works, the project team has also been liaising with the local community. A Friends Group has established itself and, whilst this arose at its inception in response to the submission of planning applications, the group has stated its intent to be involved with the Park for the longer term in much the same way that other successful groups have been elsewhere in the District. There have been a few meetings with representatives of the Friends Group and it has now been agreed that a monthly meeting will be held to work through the issues leading up to the Men's and Women's Nationals next summer. A newsletter is also distributed by the Council to local residents at appropriate points in the project progress. The 3rd newsletter is due for distribution at the end of September.
- 7.8 Concerns registered relate primarily to the implications for park users of part of the park being used for a month in summer time for caravans and for car parking. There have also been concerns expressed in relation to parking in Archery Road.
- 7.9 In the meantime, officers have with Bowls England explored other options relating to the siting of caravans elsewhere which officers are reasonably confident of being achieved. By the end of September, officers will have completed the first stage of an analysis of options of providing car parking other than on the park itself. Bowls England and the Friends Group will be involved in these discussions.
- 7.10 Officers from Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Services are also considering options on how the parking provision along Archery Road could be made more effective throughout the year, with particular discussions regarding the current 4 hour period of parking, and how the old tennis courts could be better utilised for bowlers' and residents' car parking.
- 7.11 To assist the continuing dialogue, a survey was undertaken of both those attending the Women's Bowls Championship and general park users this August. The results support the view that the facilities are currently unsuitable for these larger events.