

No.

## HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor J.E. Charles (Chair); Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chair); Councillors G. Ball, I. Buckley, C.A. Cave, A.M. Collins, M. Cowpe, E.J. Goodjohn, J. Lynch-Wilson, J.M. Norman, and C. Stallard.

Also present: Councillors J. Aviet, L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport, and Wellbeing), Dr. I.J. Johnson, B. Loveluck-Edwards, H.M. Payne, and E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

### 968 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chair read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”

### 969 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor R. Fisher.

### 970 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 be approved as a correct record.

### 971 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

### 972 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COLCOT AND BUTTRILLS RECREATION SITES IN BARRY – CALL IN – COUNCILLOR DR. I.J. JOHNSON –

The Call-in was received from Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson following consideration by Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 (Minute No. C250 refers). Councillor Dr. Johnson requested that the matter receive further scrutiny in the interests of

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transparency and public interest, as per the reasons set out within their call-in request form included within the agenda papers.

The Cabinet report advised that existing changing facilities at the Barry Sports Centre at Colcot were in urgent need of replacement as they had fallen into disrepair and did not meet the needs of all customers. The former Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) at the Colcot was also surplus to requirement with recent developments and improvements at Barry secondary schools and also Jenner Park. Given that the existing old sports centre changing rooms at the Colcot primarily catered for the pitches on the Buttrills, some distance away, an opportunity existed to consider improvements to changing facilities at the Buttrills site as well as the potential to masterplan that part of the Colcot site currently used for car parking, the changing rooms and ATP.

The report therefore proposed the development of a new changing facility at the Buttrills funded by grants and the disposal of the redundant part of the old Colcot Sports Centre site, this being that part currently used as the car park, the changing rooms, and the ATP facility. The opportunity to look at future recreational opportunities also formed part of the initial proposals, and this could potentially include the development of a new pump (cycle) track and children's play area.

There were also impacts on other existing users at the present site at the Colcot and the report considered these and also the next steps for these users. As a result of the development proposals the report also recommended declaring part of the Colcot site surplus to requirements and to facilitate its disposal to the Housing Revenue Account. The report advised that the proposed scheme was being designed to be self-funding via a mix of grants and capital receipts.

In introducing the report, the Chair advised that the meeting had been arranged in line with the Council's Call-In procedure as per section 7.24 of the Council's Constitution and that the running order would reflect the criteria as set out in Section 11 of the Scrutiny Public Participation Guide. The Chair also took the opportunity to remind Committee of its remit, to encourage and promote active and healthy lifestyles, and therefore to consider the matter under that objective.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing was supported by the Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance who presented the report.

The Officer emphasised key points in relation to the proposal as follows:

- The proposals were firmly focused on significantly improving the opportunities for increased levels of physical activity by providing quality recreational facilities that the Council was currently lacking.
- Primarily, the changing facilities at the existing Barry Sports (Colcot) Centre did not meet the current expectations of users, the building was beyond its life expectancy and did not support women and girls football which was the fastest growing sport in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- The Council's first thoughts were to refurbish the existing Colcot building or to rebuilt on the same site. However, following consultation with the

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Council's property section, and looking at future needs, combined with the issues of the present site, such as the need for young people to cross Colcot Road to access the pitches at the Buttrills Recreation ground, the issues over a number of years with car parking at the Sports Centre site, and the opportunity to maximise the two sites for different activities (mini football and 11-a-side Football), offered many advantages.

- Consultation had taken place with those organisations/ clubs who would be directly affected by the proposals contained in the Cabinet report.
- Fundamental to the proposal was also the opportunity to attract grant funding from the Football Association for Wales (FAW) trust of £500,000 towards a new facility. The FAW had been consulted on the scheme and were supportive given the impact new changing rooms should deliver on the Buttrills site, particularly in relation to women and girl's football. The FAW funding was an opportunity that the Council wished to see used in the Vale of Glamorgan (Barry) rather than another area of Wales although it was acknowledged that the FAW funding was not guaranteed and was subject to a bidding process. During discussions with the FAW, feedback had been extremely positive. The FAW acknowledged the advantages of moving to the Buttrills site and the ability of the Colcot site to continue to cater for mini football and senior training on the smaller ATP's that would remain at the location and be serviced by the newer sports hall on the site.
- Whilst a grant was available to be applied for in relation to the proposed changing rooms on the Buttrills site, significant further funding would be required to build the facility. Traditional capital funding provided to local authorities in Wales was significantly decreasing with many demands for expenditure. Therefore, when exploring options for the proposed scheme at the Buttrills site, it was proposed that the existing site at the Colcot would no longer be used after the new changing rooms opened and therefore the redundant Colcot ATP at the site would provide the opportunity to generate a capital return for reinvestment in recreation.
- Combined with the housing crisis in the Vale of Glamorgan, and the specific demand for housing in the Colcot area, there was an opportunity to explore a housing related proposal and was therefore identified in the Cabinet report after consultation with housing officers.
- As confirmed in the Cabinet report, any housing proposals for the Colcot site would be subject to a further Cabinet report and planning application. Plans that were currently being developed were sympathetic to the location and a public consultation event was being planned with Local Ward Members, Leisure, and Housing officers later in April 2024, at the Colcot site, to share said proposals with the community. Details of the consultation event would be advertised on the Council's website and social media channels in the near future.
- No current land used for organised sports in the past five years would be used for the proposed housing development. The same was also true of the proposed development at the Buttrills site. Both sites would also have their own dedicated car parking provision, that it was hoped would relieve some of the traffic issues currently experienced at the Colcot site.
- The larger ATP located at the Colcot site had not been used for organised sport for the last five years. This followed investment proposals in terms of new ATPs across Barry that were located on school sites as this ensured

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that optimum use could be made of the facilities with school use in the day and public use at evenings and weekends. As part of the previous discussions when considering the locations of said school pitches, the locations chosen were considered more advantageous than the Colcot site. The decision was therefore made to invest in those alternative sites, rather than the Colcot ATP that had come to the end of its life, having been established as a sand filled ATP in the mid 1990's.

- Given the number of different ATP surfaces currently available to schools, a strategic decision was made to ensure that the three main sports that use ATPs were catered for; with a Rugby orientated surface being installed at Bro Morgannwg Secondary School, a football orientated surface at Whitmore Secondary School and a Hockey orientated surface at Pencoedtre High School. Each of the aforementioned pitches could also be used by all three sports mentioned for practice purposes.
- The Council was aware that comments had been publicly made about the need for another sand filled ATP in Barry, at the Colcot site, for hockey and that funding was available for this from Hockey Wales. This was not the case as the local secondary schools could train for hockey on their individual ATPs with any matches between schools being able to be played at Pencoedtre High School, where facilities such as toilets and changing rooms were available, as confirmed by the new Headteacher in place. At a meeting with Hockey Wales, the organisation confirmed that the provision at Pencoedtre High School met the needs of Barry at the present time and that Barry would not be a priority area for the funding of an additional pitch at the present time.
- It was also acknowledged that a sand filled ATP, as used for hockey at club level and as provided at Pencoedtre High School was significantly less popular with other sports and therefore more difficult to hire out than the 3G surfaces provided at the other ATPs in the Barry area. Unfortunately, Barry did not have a hockey club at present and one hockey focused ATP should be able to meet the demand of up to four clubs. The Council would be working with Hockey Wales in the future to provide hockey opportunities outside of School provision with the aim of establishing an independent club.
- Sport Wales were currently carrying out an evaluation of ATPs across Wales and the early indications from said study was that the Vale of Glamorgan was well served in the provision of full-sized ATP's with Barry currently having 4 (including the Council owned Jenner Park), 2 pitches in Penarth (with the hockey orientated pitch at Stanwell and used by Penarth Hockey Club) and further pitches in the Llantwit Major and Cowbridge areas.
- Other facilities were set out in the proposal for the Colcot site that would provide additional free to use recreational facilities. These included a new playground, which would be located near the small-sided ATPs, providing an activity for younger children who were often at the site when their older siblings were using the football facilities as well as being available to the local population at all times.
- The pump track was another free to use facility proposed and was designed to cater for young people, who, in the recent school sports survey, were not necessarily interested in team sports but wanted an activity they could

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attend unaccompanied. Pump tracks had been highly successful in other areas in engaging with potential users and would build upon the success of the recently upgraded skate park at the Knap, Barry, which had proved highly popular. Early indications on the pump track project were that grant funding could be available from Sport Wales who were highly impressed with the investment at the Barry Knap Skate Park.

- It would also be hoped to add additional free to use facilities as time progressed with a proposed Multi-use Games Area amongst the possibilities.

Following the Officer's presentation of the report, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing echoed the points as set out by the officer and noted that football changing facilities were historically provided on the Buttrills site, however, these were disbanded when the Colcot Sports Centre was opened in 1963 which met the purpose and requirements of the football sport at that time.

It was an embarrassment that Wales' largest town did not have adequate facilities to support both men's and women's football and the proposal was a wonderful opportunity to accommodate 11 a side Adult football on the Buttrills site and under 7s/mini football on the Colcot site.

The Vale of Glamorgan Football League was lucky to be included within the Alliance League due to the quality of pitches often not meeting Alliance League standards in relation to changing facilities and the proposal would ensure that changing facilities were provided on the Buttrills site near to pitches.

The Cabinet Member also stressed that there were no proposed changes to football pitches on either site or therefore, the 10 pitches available would continue to provide staggered matches. The expectation was that junior football would be played on Saturday mornings with men's football then played from Saturday lunchtimes onwards. Women's football would then be accommodated on Sundays.

In conclusion, the Cabinet Member stated that it would be foolish for the Council to miss the opportunity of the FAW funding and therefore urged the Committee to support the report as presented, which was requesting Committee to look at improvements to leisure facilities and not housing requirements. If any housing proposals were progressed in the future, then these would be presented to Cabinet after consultation.

The Chair then advised Committee of a written statement received from the Chairperson of the Vale of Glamorgan Football League who had been invited to attend the meeting as an expert witness but had needed to provide their apologies. On behalf of the expert witness, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer read the statement aloud which advised that the Vale of Glamorgan Football League was fully supportive of the proposals put forward to the Council's Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2024 and that the plans were discussed extensively by the League Committee and, as Chairperson, they had been kept informed as the proposals had been developed.

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The statement went on to echo the points as raised by both the Operational Manager and Cabinet Member in relation to the significant growth in women's and girl's football as well as a lack of suitable facilities that were holding teams back. The current facilities meant that it was not possible for clubs to progress as they were not able to be used for teams to access higher leagues due to ground criteria regulations. It was also impossible to have two official women's games taking place at the same site in Barry due to a lack of suitable changing facilities.

The Chairperson also acknowledged that, with the relocation of the changing rooms to the Buttrills site, the existing Colcot building could continue to be used allowing football to continue during the construction period.

The League also noted the car park proposals that would hopefully assist to redistribute the issues faced weekly at the Colcot Sports Centre during the football season, which were known to be a source of frustration to local residents.

In conclusion, the Chairperson advised that the league would be extremely disappointed and frustrated if an opportunity to provide the facilities the league felt its members deserved was lost. The league acknowledged the financial constraints on the Council's budget and the need, via housing, to generate funds for the proposal. The opportunity to access £500,000 in grant funding from the FAW was unprecedented and should be taken full advantage of for future generations of footballers in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Chair then advised that there were five registered public speakers, four of which were in attendance, who were each allocated three minutes of speaking time as per Council policy. The Chair subsequently asked each speaker in turn to make their representations, which could be summarised as follows:

Mr. M. Goode

- The under 18s girl hockey team from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg won the Welsh Schools Hockey Cup for the under 16s in March 2023 despite losing access to the hockey pitch at Colcot Sports Centre in 2019 when it was decided to close the facility due to surface damage.
- With a lack of repairs to the Colcot hockey pitch, parents were required to take girls on the hockey team to facilities in Penarth and Cardiff, to both practice and play matches, and this had been taking place for a period of four years.
- Ysgol Bro Morgannwg school had been told by the Council to play hockey at the new facilities available at Pencoedtre High School, however, Ysgol Bro Morgannwg were unable to book the facilities at Pencoedtre High School online, there were no toilet or changing facilities, and there was damaged fencing near to the facility.
- It had been stated that no green space would be lost as a result of the proposals however, a large green space area at the Colcot site, which was adjacent to the 3G football cages, would be replaced by a cycle pump track which would mean the loss of a green space used by dog walkers and for other informal recreational activities. It was not clear from the report, the size or scale of the pump track or whether it would be fenced off or open to

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the public on all sides. Still on the topic of green space, a large section of the Buttrills playing field would be removed and replaced by the proposed sports pavilion and boxing gym as well as two car parks.

- The Playing Fields Community Involvement in Disposal Decisions Wales Regulations 2015 required a local authority to publish information on the impact of the proposed disposal of a playing field on the health and wellbeing of the community by reference to a number of key strategies, plans and assessments for the area in which the playing field was located. Mr. Goode subsequently requested if the Council had started the said process with reference to the regulations and, if not, when said works would begin. There had been no consultation with the local community to date and despite the promise of a drop-in session sometime in April 2024, specifics had not yet been given.
- There had not been any informal discussions with the local residents to ask for ideas and/or solution for the current sites. No other alternative proposals were being considered and local residents would be required to live in the area, and knew the issues for the local area, and would therefore want to retain and enhance the facilities of both sites.
- In October 1998 and again in July 2007, nine houses along Woodham Park were flooded by water from the Buttrills playing field and since this time the only remedial works put in place were a long ditch on the Buttrills field to catch all rainwater running off the field. This was also the site of the new proposed car park so local residents were concerned that the flooding issue was not being mentioned in the current proposal despite there being a threat that flooding could return.
- Local residents were trying to be positive about the proposals, however, the scale cost of £2.5m and the significance to the two surrounding communities needed more consideration and active communication.
- It was thought that the proposal would divide both local communities but instead it had brought both communities closer together.

Following the Chair's call for any points of clarification from Committee Members of the public speaker, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport, and Wellbeing confirmed that there would be no loss of 3G pitches at the Colcot site. The Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance also provided further clarity in relation to Councillor Buckley's point of clarification on Mr. Goode's statement to the lack of facilities available at Pencoedre High School. Mr. Goode clarified that teaching staff were unable to get close to the facilities at the school that they needed to run activities on a sustainable level and that the facilities were only accessible during school hours.

In response, the Operational Manager advised that a new headteacher had recently been appointed at Pencoedre High School and had confirmed to the Council that facilities available at the school would be available for school use as well as for hire to any outside club or organisation. There was not currently an automatic booking system in place but the telephone number and hire arrangements had been made available. Unfortunately, there was no active hockey club in the Barry area at the present time and therefore, unsurprisingly, the Council had not received any enquiries to use the Pencoedre pitch outside of school times.

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The Chair then raised a final point of clarification for Mr. Goode and enquired after Mr. Goode's statement that there was a hockey team in operation that was required to transport young people outside of the Barry area. Mr. Goode confirmed the Chair's understanding was correct and clarified that due to the nearby pitch at the Colcot site being closed, Ysgol Bro Morgannwg staff were required to transport school children outside of the area, however, due to the number of children involved, it was necessary for school staff to schedule which half of the hockey group they would transport in the school minibus.

Mr. G. Pooley

- Looking at the proposal from a bigger perspective, it was unclear how a proposal to build housing and new car parks on green land would help with the wellbeing of local residents. It was demonstrated during the Covid-19 national pandemic that green space was needed and the last census for the area demonstrated an increase in the number of people over the age of 65 who have a need for both formal and informal recreation space.
- There was an ever-growing body of medical evidence to support the benefits of sharing time with others and participating in physical activity in an outdoor environment to improve a variety of medical conditions.
- Green spaces helped people to lead independent lives, and this was increasingly important given the increases in an aging population in the densely populated Barry town area.

Mr. J. Giles

- The proposal put forward was not just about football, but it was agreed that the condition of the facilities at the Colcot Sports Centre was a crime and that the people who were accountable for said crime were the Elected Members who sat currently and historically in the Council Chamber.
- It was highly irresponsible of the Council to consider the plans without first consulting with the residents who live around the Colcot Sports Centre, and it was the resident's responsibility as custodians of the town to ensure that recreational facilities were maintained and protected for future generations.
- Both sites were not just sporting facilities but also spaces for non-sporting recreation and contributed to the health and general wellbeing of many residents within the local communities. Therefore, reducing the green space available would undoubtedly have an adverse effect on people's mental and physical health. Once a green space was gone it was gone forever.
- Despite decades of neglect, the Colcot Sports Centre building was still sound with parking, drainage, sewerage, power supply and other infrastructure to the building being sound and in place. The all-weather pitch was established, albeit it required modernisation.
- The boxing gym currently based at the Colcot Sports Centre did not want to move.
- The Colcot sports hall facility was well established with highways infrastructure in place and easy access off Colcot Road. Therefore, investment in the existing site and building would not only be considerably cheaper but it would also create far less disruption and would not cause the



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traffic issues that an additional 200+ vehicles onto the Buttrills site would cause.

- Traffic already overflowed into the surrounding streets at both the Colcot and Buttrills site and therefore isolating parking into the Buttrills site would not only be torture for the local residents, but it would also be a danger to pedestrians.
- In 2015, the Welsh Government published guidelines for the type of development proposed and it stated all playing fields whether owned by public, private or voluntary organisations should be protected from development except where facilities could be retained and enhanced through redevelopment of a small part of the site. However, the proposal was in no way a small part of the site as it was well over 50% of the Colcot sports centre grounds with a loss of the current car park, hall, and large all-weather pitch.
- The proposal being considered was not of a community benefit but rather just a sporting benefit. The proposal did not benefit the community as a whole, as the recreational area of the Colcot sports centre was being reduced by over 50% and the recreation area of the Buttrills site was being reduced by around 20%.

#### Mr. A. Bevan

- The FAW funding was a sizeable amount which would allow redevelopment of the existing Colcot site and mitigate the need for the Council to disrupt the land any further. The executive summary of the Cabinet report stated that the existing facilities at the Colcot Sports Centre had fallen into disrepair and did not meet the requirements of all customers. However, it was argued that the new plans did not meet the requirements of all customers and that some of the current customers would be given notice to leave with no provisions made for where their related services would be offered from in the future i.e., the nursery currently operating at the Colcot site.
- As an avid football fan, Mr. Bevan was a fully paid-up member of the FAW and therefore fully supported there being adequate sporting facilities.
- As a father of three young daughters, Mr. Bevan fully supported the need for adequate facilities to support young girls and young women to enjoy sports with adequate changing facilities. However, Mr. Bevan also wished for his daughters to have the opportunity to play other sports other than football to find out which sport they preferred appropriate to their age group. Therefore, an all-terrain pitch would be beneficial.
- The nursery that currently operated on the Colcot site promoted the education and development of children under the Welsh medium, from two years old to school age, enabling pupils to become bilingual. This arguably made the nursery more than just a nursery in the way it was described within the report. The report also stated that there would be assistance for the nursery to find alternative premises and that there were several community centres in the local area. However, the statement of community centres being in the immediate area was deemed a stretch and the Council had overlooked the fact the nursery provided wrap around care to Ysgol Bro Morgannwg every day whereby children were able to walk to preschool

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to and from the nursery. Given the age of the children involved, it was completely impractical and would have a detrimental impact on the wrap around service which would go against Welsh Government's initiative to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

- Paragraph 1.3 of the proposal report stated that the Colcot sports building was in an extremely poor condition and beyond its expected lifespan, and it was appalling that the Council had allowed a property belonging to them to be used and serve residents in such a poor condition. It was therefore speculated that the Council had deliberately allowed the building's deterioration to happen for the exact eventuality/proposal and money grab exercise to sell off the site for housing.
- It was stated that the ATP at the Colcot site had not been used for five years, however, it was important to acknowledge that for at least half of that time span, society had been blighted by social distancing due to the national pandemic and therefore many facilities were not able to be used. It was ludicrous to think that there was a versatile facility available to be used for other sports, but the proposal was to get rid of it.
- Mr. Bevan was keen to hear some of the statistics for the number of accidents which had occurred to highlight the crossing from the Colcot to the Buttrills site as a safety concern, as quoted within the report, but the proposal did not elaborate on said safety concerns.
- It had been stated that the proposal was not in relation to housing, but it was argued that the proposal was in fact about housing given the eventual impact to local residents. Barry residents had seen housing development for over a decade in the new Waterfront area as well as at Atlantic Park, as well as permissions being sought on the Barry College site on Colcot Road. Therefore, the statement with regards to much needed housing was ill-informed.

Following the representations made by the registered public speakers, it was confirmed by the Chair that there were no further points of clarification for the speakers and therefore, the Chair welcomed contributions from any non-Committee Member and opened the floor to Councillor Dr. Johnson in the first instance as the Member who had raised the call in.

Councillor Dr. Johnson began by stating that he was not a member of the Scrutiny Committee and therefore had no right to vote in the matter and that he was a representative for the Buttrills Ward in Barry however, the Ward boundary did not include the Buttrills field site under consideration. Councillor Dr. Johnson belonged to the football community in the Vale of Glamorgan, but this did not result in any bias for their statement but to ensure that they were in an informed position to ensure the best facilities were available for every sport in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Councillor Dr. Johnson advised that he had called in the matter to ensure wider discussion and an opportunity to give a voice to ordinary people to speak on the topic which was obviously of importance to them. Councillor Dr. Johnson then went on to raise further points on the report as presented, which could be summarised as follows:

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- The Committee was gathered to discuss the principles of the proposal rather than detail because further detail would be forthcoming as part of the consultation on the developments should the Committee endorse Cabinet's previous recommendations.
- The Colcot site was part of the Barry North development at the end of the 1950s with the Sports Centre opening in 1963. The centre was now over 60 years old and during the site visit earlier in the day, Councillor Dr. Johnson noted that there had not been much change to the facility since they played there themselves in the 1980s.
- Councillor Dr. Johnson echoed the comments of previous speakers that it was very sad to see that there was no development of the Colcot site and the facilities over the decades, but it was acknowledged that the Council had reached a point where the facilities were no longer acceptable, in particular in relation to promoting women's football.
- Councillor Dr. Johnson requested further information in relation to the proposals on a) how the proposal would affect the existing nursery on the site, b) promotion of the Welsh language in the Barry area and c) impact on and demand for both Ysgol Bro Morgannwg and Whitmore High School in relation to hockey field facilities. There were two sides to the proposal, recreation as well as education.
- A question was raised as to whether there was a business plan in place for the proposed pump track and play area on the Colcot site and that further information in relation to funding streams and the number of anticipated users was required.
- If the proposal were taken forward, and a new car park was installed on the Buttrills site to support the new pavilion building, assurance would be required from officers in relation to possible flooding on the south side of the Buttrills field to provide reassurance to residents living in the near vicinity. It was recognised that further consideration would be given to the matter as part of the formal planning process, however, assurance at the current time would be appreciated.

With the Committee's permission, the Chair then invited Councillor Loveluck-Edwards to address the Committee in their capacity as local Ward Member. On behalf of themselves and the other Ward Member for the area, Councillor E.J. Goodjohn, Councillor Loveluck-Edwards advised that they welcomed the call-in to widen the debate and provide all interested parties with further factual information. It was recognised that any proposal would bring forward emotive arguments and it was good to see the matter as democracy in action.

The proposal put forward related to the Dyfan Ward of Barry and the detail provided within the report was in relation to the principle of the proposal and not any formal plans or permissions.

Councillor Loveluck-Edwards went on to advise the Committee of regular complaints received by themselves during the football season in relation to the chaos of traffic and young people not willing to use the facilities provided due to their condition at the Colcot site. As a parent of children who used the facilities, the Councillor had first hand knowledge of the facilities but noted that their

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experiences were in relation to boys engaging in sport whereas girls did not even have the chance to engage.

The Council wished to build an inclusive environment for all service users, and it was current fact that a child with disabilities would not be able to access the current Colcot centre and the cost in order to refurbish the building at the current site was not feasible. It was also noted that the topic of wellbeing of children and young people in the Vale of Glamorgan was currently under question and therefore, access to free recreational facilities would be beneficial. If the Council did not seize the opportunity to acquire funding to support the proposal, then it would be failing to support girls and children with disabilities to engage in recreational activities.

Having heard from all invited parties, the Chair then opened the debate to Committee Members and invited Councillor Goodjohn to address in their capacity as local Ward Member.

Councillor Goodjohn began by noting angry comments that had been placed on social media in relation to the proposal and was saddened by the fact that said comments seemed to stem from wrong information in relation to the proposal. Comments implied that the Council sought to sneak through the proposal, but that was not the case, as the report before the Committee demonstrated an initial proposal only and there had not been a formal planning application submitted.

Councillor Goodjohn also advised that there was much about the proposal that made sense and that there were already newer facilities available on the Colcot site, as well as several community centres within the local area, as well as alternative artificial turf pitches at local secondary schools.

There was an obvious need for additional changing facilities as well as new car parking to manage busy traffic at the Colcot site. As a regular user and Chair of the Buttrills Community Centre, Councillor Goodjohn regularly received reports from the centre staff of individuals changing and relieving themselves outside of the Buttrills Community Centre building as there were currently no facilities available on the Buttrills site. Therefore, the proposals would bring dignity for all.

Councillor Goodjohn added that they were not a supporter of building on green fields, but the proposal was only suggesting development on a very small amount of the Buttrills field and would make it easier for the local community to blend with the football provision. Therefore, it was felt that Committee should support the proposal in order to move forward with the FAW funding bid for the Vale of Glamorgan area in the hope that the funding application be successful.

The majority of enquiries received by the Dyfan Ward members in relation to the proposal were around housing development. However, the proposal was focused on leisure and recreational facilities for both older and young people and would provide more free facilities for use by the local community. Councillor Goodjohn was also mindful to represent those with a quieter voice and welcomed all correspondence from local residents.

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Councillor Norman then advised that, in her experience of also sitting on the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee, it was recognised that there were difficulties in engaging teenage girls in sporting activities and therefore, the proposal would provide the Council with the opportunity to provide access and dignity for women and girls.

The Vice-Chair then took the opportunity to thank officers for the site visit that took place earlier that morning and, as a consequence, noted that an update to the current facilities was required. The Councillor echoed the comments previously raised in relation to the importance for promoting women's sport as well as seizing the opportunity of funding available.

In terms of stakeholders that were currently using the Colcot Sports Centre building, the Vice-Chair noted that discussions had been held with all parties and, in relation to the boxing club on site, it was recognised that the preference of the boxing club was to remain with the Sports Centre and with the current level of facilities. The nursery on site had moved to the Colcot site relatively recently and had had a number of moves in the past. As stated in the report, they would be supported to find alternative accommodation. Therefore, the Vice-Chair welcomed the report and subsequently recommended that the Committee endorse the report as presented.

The Chair agreed that new facilities at the Colcot site were needed, however, wished to raise a recommendation to go back to Cabinet to request cost estimates for building a new facility compared to implementing renovations at the current Colcot site. The Council needed to make a decision based on best value for the Council and the estimate information would provide that opportunity.

With the Committee's permission, the Leader of the Council advised that they would be happy to consider anything put forward to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee but wished to stress that the report before Committee was a proposal and not a plan. Proposals could take significant time to come to fruition and when considering works in relation to non-statutory provision, the Council had to find funding and balance against need. By way of example, the skate park at Barry Knap came to fruition via multiple funding streams and, in relation to the FAW funding on offer, if the Council did not have recreational buildings that met current regulation standards, then it would not be awarded the grant funding in any case. If the proposal were to become a plan, it would need to be fully costed at that time and would be reported further to the Council's Cabinet on numerous accounts.

Councillor Cave subsequently seconded the recommendation as raised by the Chair of the Committee but before going to a vote, the Chair welcomed a response from the Operational Manager in relation to comments raised by Elected Members thus far.

The Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance subsequent raised additional points of advice as follows:

- Officers had consulted with the boxing club in relation to the proposals and the club had expressed a wish to expand its operation.

No.

- In relation to flooding, if the Council progressed with the proposal, then it would need to consider any flooding or water drainage implications as part of the formal planning application process.
- The nursery currently on site at the Colcot Sports Centre was re-housed at the Colcot centre from the Alexander Gardens site as a result of renovations to the Alexander Gardens building. Following completion of the Alexander Garden renovations, the nursery was offered the opportunity to return but opted to stay at the current Colcot site as the nursery expressed a wish to stay close to the Ysgol Bro Morgannwg secondary school.
- The Council's architect had considered the existing Colcot building, and it was deemed that a new roof as well as plant room would be required and, even then with updates, it would be difficult to meet the requirements of the FAW funding. Therefore, updating the current site would still not result in the centre being fit for use and the proposal as laid out would match the Council's desire for fit for purpose facilities and leisure growth.
- The opportunity to apply for FAW funding at the current time was unprecedented.
- In relation to local school provision, this was not within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee and therefore the officer was unable to advise at the time of the meeting.
- The newly built artificial turf pitches currently available at all secondary schools in Barry were suitable to be used for the hockey sport. The headteachers at both Whitmore High School and Pencoedre High School had advised that they did not require the use of the pitch at the Colcot site in favour of using their own on site at school.

Councillor Goodjohn subsequently seconded the recommendation as raised by the Vice-Chair of the Committee and the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer advised that two Motions were on the table and would be taken to a vote in order of them being moved.

In response, the Chair recognised that the report before Committee was just a proposal at the current time however, reiterated that it would be reassuring to answer some of the costing questions whilst the Committee was considering the proposal.

To which, the Vice-Chair questioned the benefit of the Chair's recommendation due to the fact that the proposal would be going to consultation and then back to Cabinet for further consideration. The process for looking into funding partners could take considerable years and therefore it was not possible to deal with accurate costing or funding streams at the current time. The Committee was being asked to consider the principle for improved facilities and that was self-evident.

The Chair then reiterated that their recommendation was not in relation to identifying future funding partners but rather looking at estimated costings which could only benefit a final decision on the proposal. The Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance then wished to add that the Council had looked into refurbishing the current Colcot Sports Centre in the first instance, however, it was soon identified that refurbishments could not satisfy the FAW funding aid and the deadline for applying for the grant had now passed.

No.

Councillor Cave then stated that they did not agree with the Vice-Chair's argument in relation to not accepting the Chair's recommendation and provided the opinion that the Committee would not be able to decide what was best until all knowledge in relation to the proposal was in place as part of effective consultation.

Councillor Cowpe subsequently expressed a concern in the proposal being delayed if the Committee were to raise a recommendation to be presented back to Cabinet, to which, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer advised that, in line with the Council's call in procedure, the 11 recommendations as raised by Cabinet at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2024 were currently on hold and could not be progressed by officers until such time that the call in procedure had concluded and a final decision on the matter was taken.

The Chair subsequently took the matter to the vote taking each motion on the table in turn. All Committee Members, apart from Councillor Fisher, were present and cast their vote. To which, the Chair's motion/recommendation failed, and the Vice-Chair's motion/recommendation was carried.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked all participants for their attendance and brought the meeting to a close.

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the contents of the Cabinet report, and therefore the resolutions of Cabinet made on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2024, be endorsed.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to discussion held at the meeting.