

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 3RD JULY, 2025

REFERENCE FROM LIVE WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 27TH MAY, 2025

“74 REQUESTS FOR CONSIDERATION – COLCOT SPORTS CENTRE: NEXT STEPS –

Cabinet, on 19th December, 2024, considered a report that recommended that the proposed scheme for the Colcot and Buttrills recreation grounds, were not progressed.

Subsequently, two requests for a further Scrutiny report on the future of the sites were received, separately by Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson and jointly from Councillors B. Loveluck-Edwards and E.J. Goodjohn. Following consultation with each Councillor it was agreed that these requests would be combined into one report.

The Operational Manager for Healthy Living and Performance advised that the report detailed the work that would be undertaken to address the issues raised by both the December 2024 Cabinet report, and the information requested for the Scrutiny report, which included meetings already held and planned meetings with existing users of the site, additional potential funding options and relevant consultation.

Cabinet had also requested that a further report on the future of the site be presented at a later date, to detail options and consideration for the provision of modern facilities that served communities in the wider context, and the recommendations presented to the Committee reflected as such.

Following the Officer's presentation of the report, each of the Councillors who had submitted a request for consideration in relation to the matter addressed the Committee on the following matters:

- The sports facilities at the Colcot and Buttrills sites were located in the north of Barry and naturally had their neighbours, and they were an investment in health and well-being for the whole of the town and the wider community.
- The Colcot Sports Centre was more than 60 years old and well beyond its usable lifespan. In 2021 the boiler was condemned because of safety concerns. It was a dark and grim building which had barely changed since the 1980s and was not the modern 21st century building you would expect to be the sporting hub for Wales's largest town.
- The Colcot Sports Centre was also not a welcoming environment for women's and girls' football which was the main anticipated growth area for sports, particularly following Wales's qualification for this year's European Championships.

- Councillor Dr. Johnson welcomed investment which would allow local football clubs to progress through the Welsh football pyramid system with facilities that would allow increased women's and veterans football to play in Barry rather than forcing them to travel to Cardiff. That would be a significant improvement with the appropriate spectator facilities that would be expected and available all year round.
- Holton Road Football Club, who were the main users of the grass and so-called barrier pitch at the Colcot site were unable to play a single home game between the end of November 2023 and mid-April 2024 last season.
- There also seemed to be no particular plans for the Buttrills Field site and Councillor Dr. Johnson expressed their worry that those pitches were being forgotten about for the moment.
- Councillor Dr. Johnson would be interested to hear about the plans for the current Colcot Sports Centre users while plans set out in the report were progressed and an idea of time scale would also be welcomed.
- Councillors Loveluck-Edwards and Goodjohn requested that the report be considered by the Scrutiny Committee to ensure that they were kept aware of any proposals that were being put forward for the site, based on all voices of residents in their ward area and not just the particular residents that had raised concerns with them.
- Concerns had been raised by residents in relation to the sort of proposed changes and plans for the site but also on the longevity of the site and the fact that there was still a large number of people who used the site for various purposes.
- Ward Members were seeking confirmation on whether there was any scope for looking outside of the Council to potential partners to see if there was any opportunity to enable the Council to secure funding. Because, as a Council, we worked well in partnership and that would be a key consideration moving forward to secure funding and safeguard the future of the Colcot site.

In response, the Operational Manager for Healthy Living and Performance advised that the motivation and reasoning behind the original Cabinet report was to increase opportunities for all users in terms of physical activity and to address the situation of the facilities that were currently on offer which officers agreed were not ideal. The difficulties in terms of providing facilities at the Buttrills site came down to the extremely high costs related to drainage works that would be required to comply with suds legislation. The Council had been speaking to potential partners, as detailed in the report, in relation to both the Buttrills site and Colcot artificial turf site, and discussions were ongoing. The Council had two free large full size 3G pitches in the immediate area on neighbouring school sites but neither of those particular facilities could provide home facilities for Holton Road and other clubs who aspired to go up the football pyramid because of the requirements that were placed on teams in relation to the provision of a grandstand / spectator facilities. Officers would be unable to give specifics in terms of deadlines for grant applications at the current time as the Council was required to undertake more consultation in terms of the site and we're eager to do some local consultation bearing in mind the expressions / comments that had come from the community.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing also addressed the Committee to express their agreement on the comments raised by Members thus far

and shared Councillor Dr. Johnson's support of promoting local football, however, noted that the Council did not have the financial resources available to progress at the current time. The Cabinet Member also expressed their wish for new facilities at the Buttrills site, especially in recognition of providing adequate female changing facilities, but the Council was not able to source adequate funding at the current time.

In conclusion, Councillor Hennessy questioned whether the Council would be breaking the covenant that was in place on a section of the Colcot Sports Centre site if changes to the site progressed. In response, the Operational Manager for Healthy Living and Performance advised that the Fields in Trust covenant related to the building on the site only and not the grounds. Therefore, any covenant would not be broken but rather amended to hopefully include any future improvement works to changing facilities. However, the Council required extra funds in order to increase opportunities on the site in line with the covenant.

With no further comments or questions raised, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T both the Member Requests for Consideration and subsequent Response Report be noted.
- (2) T H A T it be recommended to Cabinet that discussions progress with key partners, and potential funding opportunities, with the aim of providing quality facilities in the long term at the site.
- (3) T H A T Cabinet be requested to give approval for a no obligation expression of interest to be submitted to the Cymru Football Foundation in relation to investigations for developing the surplus Artificial Turf Pitch at the site, into a 3G facility, and to provide new changing rooms on the existing Colcot site, with the understanding that other considerations regarding the use of the area in the long-term also require evaluation.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of all papers submitted.
- (2) To advise of the interest in the site prior to a further report being prepared on the site as requested in the December 2024 Cabinet Report.
- (3) To ensure that proposals for the site were appropriately considered."

Attached as Appendix – Report to Live Well Scrutiny Committee: 27th May, 2025

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

REQUEST FOR 'CONSIDERATION OF MATTER' BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Name: **Cllr Dr Ian Johnson**

Ward: **Buttrills**

I request the consideration of a report on the following matter.

Subject: **Next Steps following the decision not to proceed with Proposed Facilities Improvements at the Buttrills and Colcot Sports Sites.**

Scrutiny Committee(s): **Healthy Living & Social Care**

I am not a member of the above Scrutiny Committee

Reason(s) for request.

In December 2024, the Vale of Glamorgan Cabinet announced that they would not proceed with proposed facilities improvements at the Buttrills and Colcot sport sites. These plans were initially reported to Cabinet in February 2024 and then, following my call-in, to the Healthy Living and Social Care Committee.

The proposals were a result of the existing Colcot Sports Centre not being fit for purpose, having been first built more than sixty years ago, and the identification of need for modern sports facilities, amongst other reasons to meet the growing number of girls and womens' football participants, something which is only more likely to increase following Wales's recent qualification for the Euro 2025 international tournament.

These issues still remain, following the proposed withdrawal of the plans.

I request a report on the next steps on how the Vale of Glamorgan Council plans to meet these identified needs and challenges, including the ability to access future grants from sporting bodies and other organisations in Wales in order to fund new sporting facilities in the county.

Signed *Ian Johnson*

Date **17.01.2025**

FORM TO BE RETURNED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Date received: **17th January 2025**

Chief Executive's Signature: **20th January 2025.**

(Upon receipt in writing of the request, the request will then be forwarded by the Democratic and Scrutiny Services section to the appropriate Director(s) who will be required to prepare a report for consideration by the relevant Scrutiny Committee(s). A copy of the request will also be forwarded to the relevant Chair for information).

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

REQUEST FOR 'CONSIDERATION OF MATTER' BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Name: **Cllr Belinda Loveluck-Edwards**
Cllr Emma Goodjohn

Ward: **Dyfan**

We request the consideration of a report on the following matter.

Subject: **Alternative Plans and Next Steps following the withdrawal by Cabinet of the proposals linked to Facilities Improvements at Colcot Sports Centre and Buttrills Community Centre**

Scrutiny Committee(s): **Healthy Living and Social Care**

We are not members of the above Scrutiny Committee

Reason(s) for request.

In February 2024 a proposal was set out by the Council which detailed extensive plans that impacted on both Buttrills and Colcot sites. The Report “proposes 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 forms part of the initial proposals and this can potentially include the development of a new pump (cycle) track and children’s play area.”

This was agreed at Cabinet and a Call-In to this Committee was made by Cllr Dr Ian Johnson. A period of public consultation took place and in December 2024 a decision was made by Cabinet to abandon the proposals in their entirety citing a number of reasons.

However, the Colcot site remains in a state of disrepair and critical changing facilities for women and girls is still below the expectations of local Football clubs and the Football Association of Wales.

We therefore request a Report be presented to this Committee to consider these ongoing challenges and how the Council intends to meet the needs of women and girls who play sports in our County. We ask that this is brought to the Committee no later than the April meeting.

Further, we ask that the Report also considers the following:

1. What efforts the Council will make to secure funding from external sources that can help achieve the changes that need to take place?
 2. How will the Council engage with Residents and those groups who utilise the current facilities so that their views can be incorporated into any new proposals or plans?
 3. How will the Council engage with the Football Association of Wales and Fields In Trust now that the original proposals have been rejected?
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Signed *BJ Edwards*
E Goodjohn

Date **3rd February 2025**

FORM TO BE RETURNED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Date received: **3rd February 2025**

Chief Executive's Signature: **4th February 2025**

(Upon receipt in writing of the request, the request will then be forwarded by the Democratic and Scrutiny Services section to the appropriate Director(s) who will be required to prepare a report for consideration by the relevant Scrutiny Committee(s). A copy of the request will also be forwarded to the relevant Chair for information).

Meeting of:	Live Well Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 27 May 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Live Well Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Colcot Sports Centre – Next Steps
Purpose of Report:	To detail the next steps in relation to potential future developments at the site
Report Owner:	Miles Punter – Director of Environment & Housing
Responsible Officer:	Colin Smith - Head of Neighbourhood Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>Committee Reports</p> <p>OM, Property - Lorna Cross</p> <p>OM, Housing Development - Andrew Freegard</p> <p>OM, Finance - Gemma Jones</p> <p>OM, Corporate Communications - Rob Jones</p> <p>Director of Place – Marcus Goldsworthy</p>
Policy Framework:	This Report is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet of 19th December 2024, considered a report that recommended that the proposed scheme for the Colcot and Buttrills recreation grounds, were not progressed. Subsequently, requests for a further Scrutiny report on the future of the sites were received, separately by Councillor Ian Johnson and Councillors Belinda Loveluck-Edwards and Emma Goodjohn. Following consultation with each Councillor it was agreed that these requests would be combined into one report. This report below details the work that will be undertaken to address the issues raised by both the December 2024 Cabinet report and the information requested for this Scrutiny report which includes meetings already held and planned meetings with existing users of the site, additional potential funding options and relevant consultation. 	

- Cabinet has also requested that a further report on the future of the site be presented at a later date, which details options and consideration, for the provision of modern facilities that serve communities in the wider context.
- The report includes recommendations that would need to be referred to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee, after consideration.

Recommendations

1. That discussions progress with key partners and potential funding opportunities with the aim of providing quality facilities in the long term at the site.
2. That this committee request that Cabinet give approval for no obligation expression of interests be submitted to the Cymru Football Foundation in relation to investigate developing the surplus Artificial Turf Pitch at the site, into a 3G facility and to provide new changing rooms on the existing Colcot site with the understanding that other considerations regarding the use of this area in the long-term, also need to be evaluated.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To advise of the interest in this site prior to a further report being prepared on this site as requested in the December Cabinet Report.
2. To ensure that proposals for the site are appropriately considered.

1. Background

1.1 Cabinet minute C212, 19th December 2024 - PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COLCOT AND BUTTRILLS RECREATION SITES, BARRY - RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the results of the Public Consultation exercise, the increased costs associated with the scheme and that the proposals previously considered by Cabinet on 22nd February 2024 be noted and not progressed any further at this stage.
- (2) T H A T a further report on the future of the site be presented to Cabinet to outline other options for the provision of modern facilities to serve the communities in the wider area.
- (3) T H A T the grant application to the Cymru Football Foundation be withdrawn to enable a new bid to be prepared and submitted, that still aimed to improve facilities for Barry Football Clubs.

1.2 Two requests for a further report have subsequently been received. The first of these was from Cllr. Ian Johnson who requested the following:

In December 2024, the Vale of Glamorgan Cabinet announced that they would not proceed with proposed facilities improvements at the Buttrills and Colcot sport sites. These plans were initially reported to Cabinet in February 2024 and then, following my call-in, to the Healthy Living and Social Care Committee.

The proposals were a result of the existing Colcot Sports Centre not being fit for purpose, having been first built more than sixty years ago, and the identification

of need for modern sports facilities, amongst other reasons to meet the growing number of girls and women's football participants, something which is only more likely to increase following Wales's recent qualification for the Euro 2025 international tournament.

These issues still remain, following the proposed withdrawal of the plans.

I request a report on the next steps on how the Vale of Glamorgan Council plans to meet these identified needs and challenges, including the ability to access future grants from sporting bodies and other organisations in Wales in order to fund new sporting facilities in the county.

1.3 The second request was from Councillors Belinda Loveluck-Edwards and Emma Goodjohn who requested the following:

In February 2024 a proposal was set out by the Council which detailed extensive plans that impacted on both Buttrills and Colcot sites. The Report "proposes 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 forms part of the initial proposals and this can potentially include the development of a new pump (cycle) track and children's play area."

This was agreed at Cabinet and a Call-In to this Committee was made by Cllr Dr Ian Johnson. A period of public consultation took place and in December 2024 a decision was made by Cabinet to abandon the proposals in their entirety citing a number of reasons.

However, the Colcot site remains in a state of disrepair and critical changing facilities for women and girls is still below the expectations of local Football clubs and the Football Association of Wales.

We therefore request a Report be presented to this Committee to consider these ongoing challenges and how the Council intends to meet the needs of women and girls who play sports in our County. We ask that this is brought to the Committee no later than the April meeting.

Further, we ask that the Report also considers the following:

- a. What efforts the Council will make to secure funding from external sources that can help achieve the changes that need to take place?
- b. How will the Council engage with Residents and those groups who utilise the current facilities so that their views can be incorporated into any new proposals or plans?

- c. How will the Council engage with the Football Association of Wales and Fields In Trust now that the original proposals have been rejected?
- 1.4** Given the similarity in the requests and the agreement of Councillors it has been agreed that this report will deal with both requests.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** As detailed in the Cabinet report of 19th December 2024, efforts will continue to identify potential solutions to providing new outdoor changing facilities and proposals for the remainder of the site including the surplus Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) area.
- 2.2** Unfortunately, options are extremely limited in relation to the existing building given both its condition and inability to be remodelled to meet present changing room requirements.
- 2.3** It is therefore unlikely to attract any significant grant funding as any potential grant provider would expect confirmation of the buildings long term viability and guarantees that the work to be undertaken would meet specifications, as laid out by sport governing bodies.
- 2.4** Investigation of potential temporary changing units will also be considered but these are also unlikely to attract external funding.
- 2.5** Discussions have taken place with or are planned with the Local Football League, the Cymru Football Foundation, Sport Wales, Fields in Trust and the Football Association of Wales in relation to the site with other organisations likely to added.
- 2.6** Whilst the facilities at both the Colcot and Buttrills are of regional significance, being used by participants from the whole of the Vale of Glamorgan and wider, consideration also needs to be given to the recreation needs of the local population in terms of overall objectives such as increasing healthy living opportunities for residents.
- 2.7** Resident groups will continue to be consulted as part of the process. Additionally, we will also be keen to engage further with women and girls' sports clubs who presently struggle to find facilities that meet their requirements.
- 2.8** The topic has also been raised with the Council's Leisure Management Partner, Parkwood Leisure, who operate some of the existing facilities at the site including the 4-court sports hall and the small artificial turf pitches regarding potential partnership opportunities, but these are likely to be dependent on a further contract extension that is currently under discussion.
- 2.9** The growth of women and girls sport, as highlighted to Scrutiny previously, continues to grow and the priority in providing future facilities that can deliver recreational opportunities for all will continue to a key objective of any future proposals.

- 2.10** The opportunities for the former ATP area are potentially greater if the area is not used for housing. Barry is fortunate in that it has already has 4 full size ATP's that are suitable for the variety of sports that value these types of surfaces. However, potential developments on the ATP, such as additional smaller ATP pitches, Padel courts, Tennis Courts, netball courts etc. would require facilities such as changing rooms and toilets in addition to those present.
- 2.11** Consideration will also be given to the potential to re-instate a full-size ATP at the location but when previously evaluated Barry current provision met the demand for the area making any likelihood of grant funding challenging.
- 2.12** An initial meeting with the Cymru Football foundation, who had previously indicated their support for the changing room proposals on the Buttrills site, have indicated that they could be interested in funding a 3G pitch upgrade at the Colcot site, subject to it being a home fixture venue for club(s) advanced in the Welsh football pyramid system.
- 2.13** They would not however entirely fund such an upgrade and would need other criteria to meet such as conformation of demand, match funding, suitable changing facilities, inclusion of a 150 seat stand, and for the Council to operate the facility.
- 2.14** They have also indicated that they would also consider a further application for changing room funding for such a facility that would have additional changing facilities for the Buttrills pitches. Their preference would however be for changing rooms on the Buttrills close to the pitches as they note there are no toilet facilities as well as changing provision on the site of the vast majority of the playing pitches available at the Colcot / Buttrills site.
- 2.15** They have indicated the maximum amount of grant likely to be available for the new changing rooms at the Colcot is likely to be £400,000 and would also require match funding. They have also indicated that having seen the condition survey of the existing building they would be highly unlikely to offer any financially support to this building and that temporary or off site constructed changing rooms would also not attract funding. They have requested that the Council submits a fresh expression of interest for both these schemes as they can provide some support in developing proposals.
- 2.16** Any proposals for the future of the site will be subject of a future Cabinet report and further public consultation. To assist with developing proposals the option of using the Council's project management unit be considered to oversee the development of proposal and to fully investigate all funding opportunities available could also be considered.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** In terms of the Council's Corporate Plan, the proposals in the original report linked strongly to the Well-Being outcomes with reference to an active and healthy Vale. There were also links to the Council's equality plan with the emphasis on ensuring the new facilities could be enjoyed by all. It would be expected that any future report would also reference these outcomes.
- 3.2** Long Term: Any future proposals need to be designed to ensure that they are considered for the long-term. The Buttrills site is the largest complex of football pitches across the Vale of Glamorgan and future proposals will need to ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy one of the area's most popular activities.
- 3.3** Prevention: Recreation grounds already make a significant contribution to the Council's well-being objectives and future investment could provide new opportunities for residents to take up new physical activities. Remaining fit and healthy is a positive prevention for residents to enjoy healthy lives and any future investment would need to demonstrate the Council's commitment to long term health objectives, whilst at the same time emphasising the commitment to outdoor sports, at a time of budget constraints. This links to both the Council's objectives and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 3.4** Integration: any future proposals will need to take into account the recreation facilities already provided with the objective of complimenting them rather than competing with them.
- 3.5** Collaboration: The proposed project was an example of a collaboration project as its success would have depended upon the efforts of several organisations including the Vale of Glamorgan Football League, The Football Association of Wales, Sport Wales, Welsh Cycling and the Council's own housing department. Any future proposals will need to demonstrate the same levels of collaboration.
- 3.6** Involvement: Community Involvement will be an important factor in deciding how the site is best used in the future.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** None relating to this report at the present time. This is however likely to be significant in future proposals.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** Financial considerations will be key when developing any proposals for the site. It will be necessary to ensure that any plans, as well as meeting the objectives of those using the site, are affordable from both a capital and revenue perspective.

Employment

5.2 There are no employment implications associated with this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.3 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6. Background Papers

None