

CABINET MEMBERS DELEGATED DECISION

Open/Exempt		Mandatory/			
Any especially affected Wards		Discretionary /			
		Operational			
Lead Member: Cllr Simon Ring E-mail: cllr.simon.ring@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cabinet			
		Other Members consulted: Leisure Member Working Group			
Lead Officer: Honor Howell E-mail: Honor.Howell@West-Norfolk.gov.uk		Other Officers consulted: Kate Blakemore – CEO Michelle Drewery – S.151 Officer Mark Parkinson – Chief Operating Officer			
Financial Implications YES/NO	Policy/Personnel Implications YES/NO	Statutory Implications YES/NO	Equality Impact Assessment YES/NO If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES/NO	Environmental Considerations YES/NO
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)					
Date of publication of report: 17 December 2025			Date decision to be taken: 24 December 2025		
Deadline for Call-In: 08 January 2026`					

TITLE: LYNNSPORT – CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

Summary

In July 2025, Council resolved to allocate capital funding of £1.4m for the redevelopment of Lynnsport to accommodate a new main and learner swimming pool as St James Swimming Pool is nearing the end of its economic life. Feasibility work had demonstrated that relocating the pool and integrating it with the existing facilities would provide an optimum facility mix. The estimated uplift in revenue generation, including a proposal for the introduction of three covered padel tennis courts was estimated at £1.35m.

The project has now completed to RIBA Stage 3. An extensive consultation and engagement programme has been completed which included discussions with the swimming, gymnastics and bowls club. The bowls club required a minimum of 4 rinks at Lynnsport which could not be accommodated within the plans. Discussions were ongoing regarding relocating the bowls facility to a town centre location.

Project costs, including padel, the relocation of the bowls rinks and the cost of interim arrangements at Lynnsport stand at c.£49.3m.



Challenges

A review of the capital strategy and capital programme in the lead up to setting the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has been carried out by the Section 151 Officer. As a result, it has been confirmed that the additional income generated by the development is not sufficient to fully offset the capital borrowing required and the gap will create significant pressure on funding on the council's revenue account and/or the use of reserves.

The requirement for the replacement of St James Swimming Pool remains. High energy costs and escalating maintenance requirements continue and the estimated capital cost to keep the pool operating is c.£4.1m over the next 10 years. A central element is also the borough's future needs for water space in accordance with Sport England's 'demand and supply' model.

The council needs to provide a modern, efficient swimming facility, but due to the unaffordability of the scheme, a further review of the options has taken place.

The initial feasibility study included alternative sites for a swimming pool at Lynnsport. A standalone facility would deliver the benefits identified and is achievable at a significantly lower cost.

Decision to be taken

Under the Delegated Powers of the Portfolio Holder, allocate the remaining, already approved funding, to carry out high level investigations and feasibility for a standalone Swimming Pool on the location of the miniature railway at Lynnsport (adjacent to the Kaset building).

Reason for Decision

To assess the feasibility of the creation of an Aquatic Centre at Lynnsport, with supporting business case to replace St James Swimming Pool.

1 Background

- 1.1 In July 2025, Council resolved to allocated capital funding to progress the redevelopment of Lynnsport to the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 3 to include the relocation of St James Swimming Pool to Lynnsport and to undertake a wider redevelopment programme of the Lynnsport building to accommodate the new main and learner pool.
- 1.2 The initial feasibility study for the location of a new swimming pool concluded that relocating the pool to Lynnsport and integrating it with the existing facilities would provide the optimum facility mix to bring forward economies of scale from combining both wet and dry side leisure facilities. At the same time, it was considered that a partial rebuild / remodel of Lynnsport would resolve existing



issues around access and the existing layout and fabric of Lynnsport which needs modernisation and investment and would allow better integration of the relocated pool and associated change. The design would also incorporate improve energy efficiency, renewable energy and general reductions in our carbon footprint (removal of gas and fossil fuels).

- 1.3 During August and September 2025, a proposed redesign of Lynnsport, incorporating both wet and dry side facilities was completed. This included a significant programme of stakeholder and user engagement on the proposed facility mix. Feedback from the engagement was incorporated into the final design within the RIBA 3 programme and the proposed cost of the significant redevelopment has been received at **£46m**.
- 1.4 The proposed facility mix and business planning model was based on continuing to provide leisure, health and wellbeing services to our various clubs which meet their evolving needs. This was evaluated within the framework of revenue generation. This modelling of revenue improvement from the current position would contribute some way towards borrowing the capital required for the redevelopment.
- 1.5 A key proposed change to the facility mix was the provision of bowls rinks within the Lynnsport complex. The revenue generated from bowls did not justify the space for the required 4 bowls rinks which was the minimum the Bowls club said they needed for them to survive and play matches. The social and wellbeing value of providing a bowls facility is not underestimated and an alternative option of relocating the bowls facility to a town centre location has been undertaken, in liaison with the bowls club. The estimate cost of relocating the bowls is £1.5m.
- 1.6 Alongside the Lynnsport redevelopment and new swimming pool, the council is progressing the concept of building 3 covered and floodlit Padel courts adjacent to the tennis courts at Lynnsport. This project is being developed to RIBA Stage 4. The capital cost of the Padel courts is estimated at £900,000. Early discussions with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) have indicated the potential for a £500,000 grant contribution towards the cost of padel.
- 1.7 The business plan model for the Lynnsport redevelopment to incorporate the swimming pool with the improved facility mix would result in a new revenue improvement on existing costs due to economies of scale from merging two facilities into one. The resulting savings on resourcing, cost of utilities and the expected uplift in usage of a new and purpose-built facility, together with revenue generated by the new padel facility was estimated at £1,339,137pa. Together with an expected grant of £2m from Sport England towards the capital cost, £500,000 from the Lawn Tennis Association and the use of capital receipts, the total borrowing for the Lynnsport project was expected to be approximately £40m.



- 1.8 In accordance with our Capital Strategy and the CIPFA Prudential Code, the Section 151 Officer has carried out a review of the projected borrowing costs of the capital programme. It is now clear that the additional income generated by the redeveloped Lynnsport, including the new swimming pool, will not be enough to fully offset the capital borrowing for this project. This gap will create significant pressure in terms of funding on the council's revenue account and/or the use of reserves.

2 Options Considered

- 2.1 With this evolving financial pressure in mind, officers have reviewed the options to explore if there is a more cost-effective way to achieve the objective of a new swimming pool at the Lynnsport site, balanced against a realistic and viable timeframe.
- 2.2 St James Swimming Pool is nearing the end of its economic life. It has high running costs, particularly energy costs due to the pool and building design, escalating maintenance costs, deteriorating quality and limited capacity for income growth. The expected capital costs for maintenance over the next 10 years are approximately £4.1m over the next 10 years.
- 2.3 A central element of the plan is the borough's future needs for 'water space' in its public swimming pools. To design the new swimming pool Sport England's 'demand and supply' modelling for pools was used to assess needs over the next 10 years. The new water space at Lynnsport included an improved learner pool with moveable floor would have achieved the additional square meterage (sqm) of the recommended Sport England requirements (save just 5sqm).
- 2.4 With the projected cost of maintenance for St James Pool, the option of an alternative plan for a standalone swimming pool at Lynnsport is under consideration.
- 2.5 During the feasibility study of potential sites for a swimming pool at Lynnsport, the area situated next to the Kaset and currently occupied by the Miniature Railway was considered. This option was not pursued at the time due to the existing miniature railway and the estimated increased revenue generation together with economies of scale that a swimming pool located within Lynnsport would generate. Nevertheless, the feasibility study concluded there was potential to build an 8 lane, 25m main pool and a learner pool and splash pad on the area.
- 2.6 Following the review of affordability of the project, this option has been investigated further. The estimated cost of a standalone pool will be £20-25m. This would create a scheme which is affordable and would still achieve the required outcomes. Namely:
- A new, purpose built 8 lane, 25m swimming pool, learner pool and splash pad
 - St James Swimming pool would remain open during the period of the build, ensuring continuity of service



- Co-location of the council's health and wellbeing facilities, albeit in separate buildings. Opportunities would be created for a health and wellbeing 'hub' at Lynnsport
- Minimise the expected disruption to services during the construction period
- The new pool would be thermally efficient, reducing the council's carbon emissions and utility costs.

2.7 There is provision within the already approved funding for RIBA Stage 3 to which will be reprioritised under the delegated powers of the Portfolio Holder to carry out a high-level feasibility study for a new 8 lane, 25m swimming pool with learner pool and splash pad (plus any additional activities which would supplement and support the business case) on the area currently occupied by the Miniature Railway.

2.8 The Delegated Decision will enable initial feasibility works to be carried out for the standalone facility at Lynnsport. This will include:

- Initial planning investigations
- Site surveys
- Indicative plans for the new pool
- Estimated preconstruction and construction costs (Total Project Estimate)
- Business case to support the proposal
- Early discussions with Sport England regarding funding opportunities

3. Policy Implications

3.1 There are no policy implications.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There remains provision within the already approved funding to carry out the initial feasibility work to explore the potential for a standalone swimming pool at Lynnsport. No further funding is required at this stage.

5 Personnel Implications

5.1 None

6 Environmental Implications

6.1 None

7 Statutory Considerations

7.1 None



8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 Pre-Screening form attached.

9 Risk Management Implications

9.1 As the Lynnsport project progressed through RIBA Stage 3, it became clear that the scale of the construction work would have a significant impact on the existing operation and activities at Lynnsport for an extended period of up to 2 years. The estimated cost to implement interim arrangements and plans to ensure that key activities and services remained operational in some form was £900,000. Both the Sports Barn and the Kaset would potentially be required to close for the period of construction and the main sports hall would be closed for a minimum of 4 months. This level of disruption to sports and activities would greatly impact on the many clubs, users and members and the likelihood of attrition of members to alternative providers was a considerable risk to the project, which will be mitigated by the option to build a separate swimming pool at Lynnsport.

10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

10.1 None

11 Background Papers

11.1 Cabinet Report July 2025

Signed: 

Cabinet Member for: Business

Date: 16/12/2025



Stage 1 - Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

For equalities profile information please visit [Norfolk Insight - Demographics and Statistics - Data Observatory](#)

Name of policy/service/function	Feasibility Study for a standalone swimming pool at Lynnsport				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function? (<i>tick as appropriate</i>)	New	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Existing		
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations, and identify relevant legislation.	Reprioritise the already approved funding for RIBA Stage to carry out the initial feasibility work on a standalone swimming pool at Lynnsport.				
Who has been consulted as part of the development of the policy/service/function? – new only (<i>identify stakeholders consulted with</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cabinet - Leisure Member Working Group - Chief Executive - Section 151 Officer 				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group. NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p> <p><i>If potential adverse impacts are identified, then a full Equality Impact Assessment (Stage 2) will be required.</i></p> <p><i>*For more information on health inequalities please visit The King's Fund</i></p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			x	
	Disability			x	
	Sex			x	
	Gender Re-assignment			x	
	Marriage/civil partnership			x	
	Pregnancy & maternity			x	
	Race			x	
	Religion or belief			x	
	Sexual orientation			x	
	Armed forces community			x	
	Care leavers			x	
	Health inequalities*			x	
Other (eg low income, caring responsibilities)			x		
Please provide a brief explanation of the answers above:					
For the purpose of the feasibility work, a full EIA is not required. However, if, in the future, a decision is taken to progress with the standalone swimming pool then a full EIA will be carried out.					



Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	Yes/ No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	Yes / No				
<p>If 'yes' to questions 2 - 3 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:</p> <p>Decision agreed by EWG member:</p>					
<p>4. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions?</p> <p>If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	Yes / No	<p>Actions:</p> <p>Actions agreed by EWG member:</p> <p>.....</p>			
5. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes / No	Please provide brief summary:			
<p>Assessment completed by:</p> <p>Name Honor Howell</p> <p>Job title Interim Assistant Director – Transformation and Change</p> <p>Date completed 11.12.2025</p>					
Reviewed by EWG member		<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="890 1843 1098 1908">C. Marriott</td> <td data-bbox="1098 1843 1241 1908">Date</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1843 1481 1908">16.12.25</td> </tr> </table>	C. Marriott	Date	16.12.25
C. Marriott	Date	16.12.25			

Please tick to confirm completed EIA Pre-screening Form has been shared with Corporate Policy (corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)