

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Director of Strategic Change and Communities  
to Cabinet  
of 16 January 2024**

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**Subject: Golf South Ayrshire – Golf Course Improvements**

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**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to develop design proposals for an enhanced practice area at Belleisle Golf Course as part of the approved Golf Course Improvements.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:**

- 2.1.1 approves the development of design proposals for an enhanced practice area at Belleisle Golf Course, Ayr;**
- 2.1.2 approves the inclusion of the enhanced practice area within the planned public consultation in relation to the already approved course redevelopment; and**
- 2.1.3 requests that the Director of Strategic Change and Communities provides a follow up report to Cabinet in March 2024 with the design proposals and estimated costs.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 On 16 March 2021, Leadership Panel agreed to establish a short-term Member/ Officer Working Group (MOWG) to consider the Council's proposed Golf Strategy. Four Councillors were appointed to this group on a cross party basis.
- 3.2 At the Leadership Panel in June 2021, Members agreed that officers should enter consultation with season ticket holders, golf clubs who play on Council courses and the wider public on the proposals for a future operating model for golf.
- 3.3 On the 11 November, the MOWG approved the Golf strategy and requested officers present the strategy to full Council on 9 December 2021.
- 3.4 The 10-year Golf Strategy was presented to Council on 9 December 2021 and approved. The enabling works identified as be required most urgently were approved as part of the 2021/22 Capital budget.

- 3.5 The implementation of the strategy commenced, and a full business case prepared for each golf course taking into consideration all the principles outlined in the golf strategy ensuring that golf is affordable and accessible to all. The appraisals considered all aspects of the golf courses including:
- Course layout;
  - Enhance playability and reputation;
  - Health and Safety;
  - Resilience to climate change; and
  - Reduce long-term operational/maintenance costs.
- 3.6 The Golf Strategy 2022-2032 is based on 6 Strategic Objectives:
- i. Achieve Golfing Excellence;
  - ii. Evaluate and Remove Obstacles;
  - iii. Create Environment;
  - iv. Health and Wellbeing;
  - v. Environmental Sustainability; and
  - vi. Management Control.
- 3.7 The first Strategic Objective (Achieve Golfing Excellence) aims to:
- a) Provide golf courses with a year-round playing experience that is equal to, or better than, any comparable course in the region.
  - b) Establish a high-quality development programme and practice facilities which support all standards of golfers and to increase participation, particularly by female golfers, families and young people.
  - c) Invest in golf courses to ensure they are compliant with modern safety standards, reflect advances in technology and meet the needs of members, visitors and other users.
- 3.8 Approval of £5,019,998 capital investment was approved by Council on 1 March 2023 for Golf Course Infrastructure over three years (£1,519,998 in 2024-25, £2,500,000 in 2025- 26 and £1,000,000 in 2026-27) for investment in golf course infrastructure. This funding does not include provision for an enhanced practice area.
- 3.9 The Development Plan for Belleisle Park Golf Course, prepared by Golf Course Architects Kimber and Glen in 2019, identified the current practice facilities as a weakness. The report states: 'The current practice area is detached from the hub of the facility and is too short and unsafe to be used as a regular practice facility. In order to be able to host larger events a better practice facility that is located near to the core of the facility is required. Until this is resolved it will be difficult to persuade Golf's Governing Bodies to bring higher profile tournaments to the course'.

## **4. Proposals**

- 4.1 Officers will develop proposals for the provision of an enhanced practice facility at Belleisle Golf Course. This facility would be delivered in conjunction with the already approved golf course improvement works.
- 4.2 The enhanced practice facility would be located close to the clubhouse and positioned to ensure maximum safety. This facility would allow larger, high-profile events to be held at Belleisle.
- 4.3 The enhanced practice facility cannot be designed and executed in isolation. The training facility would impact on several holes and the reconfiguration of other holes would be required to retain a quality 18-hole course.
- 4.4 If the proposal within this paper is approved, this facility would form part of the proposals which will be taken to public consultation as part of the planned course redevelopment works.
- 4.5 The enhanced practice facility will make an already popular, and historic, course even more attractive to the golfing community.
- 4.6 Officers will develop a business case based on latent demand, opportunity and competitor analysis to inform the potential return on investment.

## **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 While there are no financial implications to develop proposals for an enhanced training facility, if these works were to proceed, a capital bid would require to be submitted to the Budget Working Group for consideration.
- 6.2 Any revenue implications would also be considered as part of a capital bid submission.

## **7. Human Resources Implications**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

## **8. Risk**

### ***8.1 Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***

- 8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

### ***8.2 Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***

- 8.2.1 The risk associated with rejecting the recommendations is that an opportunity will be missed to develop a training facility along-with the planned course redevelopment works.

## 9. Equalities

- 9.1 The proposals in this report have been assessed through the Equality Impact Assessment Scoping process. There are no significant potential positive or negative equality impacts of agreeing the recommendations and therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. A copy of the Equalities Scoping Assessment is attached as [Appendix 1](#).

## 10. Sustainable Development Implications

- 10.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

## 11. Options Appraisal

- 11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

## 12. Link to Council Plan

- 12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority 1 of the Council Plan: Spaces & Places.

## 13. Results of Consultation

- 13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.
- 13.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Brian Connolly, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

## 14. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

- 14.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Strategic Change and Communities will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

Implementation	Due date	Managed by
Provide Cabinet with design and cost proposals for an enhanced practice area at Belleisle Golf Course	March 2024	Acting Service Lead – Destination South Ayrshire

Background Papers    **Report to South Ayrshire Council of 9 December 2021 – [Golf Strategy 2022-2032](#)**

**Report to South Ayrshire Council of 1 March 2023 – [Golf Strategy 2022-2032](#)**

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**Date: 4 January 2024**

**South Ayrshire Council  
Equality Impact Assessment  
Scoping Template**

Equality Impact Assessment is a legal requirement under the Public Sector Duty to promote equality of the Equality Act 2010. Separate guidance has been developed on Equality Impact Assessment's which will guide you through the process and is available to view here: <https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/equalities/impact-assessment.aspx>

Further guidance is available here: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/assessing-impact-and-public-sector-equality-duty-guide-public-authorities/>

The Fairer Scotland Duty ('the Duty'), Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010, came into force in Scotland from 1 April 2018. It places a legal responsibility on Councils to actively consider ('pay due regard to') how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. [FSD Guidance for Public Bodies](#) in respect of the Duty, was published by the Scottish Government in March 2018 and revised in October 2021. See information here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-duty-guidance-public-bodies/>

## 1. Policy details

Policy Title	Enhanced Practice Area – Belleisle Golf Course
Lead Officer (Name/Position/Email)	Ali Mutch Acting Service Lead <a href="mailto:alistair.mutch@south-ayrshire.gov.uk">alistair.mutch@south-ayrshire.gov.uk</a>

**2. Which communities, groups of people, employees or thematic groups do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this policy? Please indicate whether these would be positive or negative impacts**

Community or Groups of People	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
Age – men and women, girls & boys	-	New facilities will provide opportunity for all to participate
Disability	-	Plans will be accessible
Gender Reassignment (Trans/Transgender Identity)	-	-
Marriage or Civil Partnership	-	-
Pregnancy and Maternity	-	-
Race – people from different racial groups, (BME) ethnic minorities and Gypsy/Travellers	-	-
Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)	-	-
Sex – (issues specific to women & men or girls & boys)	-	Facilities will address barriers experienced

Community or Groups of People	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
		by women or girls accessing golf
Sexual Orientation – person’s sexual orientation i.e. LGBT+, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, heterosexual/straight	-	-
Thematic Groups: Health, Human Rights & Children’s Rights	-	-

**3. What likely impact will this policy have on people experiencing different kinds of social disadvantage i.e. The Fairer Scotland Duty (This section to be completed for any Strategic Decisions). Consideration must be given particularly to children and families.**


Socio-Economic Disadvantage	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
Low Income/Income Poverty – cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing	-	Facilities will be used to deliver affordable initiatives to encourage more uptake of golf
Low and/or no wealth – enough money to meet Basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future	-	Facilities will be used to deliver affordable initiatives to encourage more uptake of golf
Material Deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure/hobbies	-	Consideration will be given to provide equipment that can be borrowed
Area Deprivation – where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of transport)	-	-
Socio-economic Background – social class i.e. parent’s education, employment and income	-	-

**4. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that the policy will support the Council to:**

General Duty and other Equality Themes Consider the ‘Three Key Needs’ of the Equality Duty	Level of Negative and/or Positive Impact (High, Medium or Low)
<b>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b>	Low
<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	Low
<b>Foster good relations</b> between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. (Does it tackle prejudice and promote a better understanding of equality issues?)	Low
Increase participation of particular communities or groups in public life	Low
Improve the health and wellbeing of particular communities or groups	Low
Promote the human rights of particular communities or groups	Low

General Duty and other Equality Themes Consider the 'Three Key Needs' of the Equality Duty	Level of Negative and/or Positive Impact (High, Medium or Low)
Tackle deprivation faced by particular communities or groups	Low

### 5. Summary Assessment

<b>Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required?</b> (A full Equality Impact Assessment must be carried out if impacts identified as <b>Medium and/or High</b> )	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>YES</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b>
<b>Rationale for decision:</b>  <b>Members' decision on this has no specific equality implications</b>	
<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p><b>Signed :</b></p> <p><b>Acting Service Lead</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 28/11/2023</p>	