

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS & LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 MARCH 2017	AGENDA ITEM:	14
TITLE:	DEMOUNTABLE POOL AT RIVERMEAD LEISURE COMPLEX		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	PAUL GITTINGS	PORTFOLIO:	CUTLURE, SPORT & CONSUMER SERVICES
SERVICE:	LEISURE & RECREATION	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Policy Committee at its meeting on the 30th November 2015 approved the proposal to develop a demountable swimming pool at Rivermead; delegated the finalisation of procurement arrangements and the negotiations with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) and gave delegated authority to enter into any necessary contracts that are required to deliver a demountable pool at Rivermead to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Sport, Culture & Consumer Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services. This report seeks Committee's endorsement of the actions to date and the intention to enter into a Development Agreement for Lease and a Lease with Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) to enable the installation and operation of a demountable swimming pool. The report also seeks detailed scheme approval for the capital costs of constructing the demountable pool.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Committee notes and endorses the intention to enter into a Development Agreement for Lease and a Lease with Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) to enable the installation and operation of a demountable swimming pool at Rivermead.
- 2.2 That Committee gives scheme approval for the demountable pool of up to £2.4m of capital expenditure, as per the approved capital programme.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Reading has a range of leisure facilities that are of mixed quality and the Council has identified the need for investment to modernise the leisure estate. The Council recognises that the provision of suitable and readily accessible sports facilities

underpins participation in sports and physical activity and supports the delivery of the social and economic benefits that can be attributed to an active community.

- 3.2 The Council's Corporate Plan specifically identifies a review of the current leisure offer as a priority in order to deliver key objectives regarding improving quality of life and health and well-being, especially as regards reducing inequality and poor outcomes for some of our residents.
- 3.3 Policy Committee in November 2015 endorsed the key findings of the Leisure Review and the recommended way forward. The findings of the facilities needs assessment were that whilst there is sufficient pool space in the Borough the quality of provision needed upgrading. The options appraisal recommended the replacement of the most outdated facilities with more modern cost-effective leisure facilities that would also offer a much better service to residents and users. This included a planned closure of Central Pool and the development of a demountable pool at Rivermead to provide continuity of provision.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Current Position:

As reported to Policy Committee in November 2015, a range of urgent works were required at Central Pool to address health and safety issues and to prevent further deterioration and reduce the likelihood of building or plant failure. These works were completed in January 2016 with the aim of enabling the pool to remain operational until a planned closure in December 2017. To extend the operational life span of central pool further, significant structural works would be required necessitating a closure for a number of months. The condition of the building and plant is being closely and regularly monitored and Central Pool continues to be well used.

In parallel work has continued to secure the delivery of a demountable pool at Rivermead. The Council has been working co-operatively with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) and their design consultants to deliver a temporary pool at Rivermead to enable the planned closure of Central Pool. GLL have agreed in principle to manage the demountable pool and Heads of Terms for a management agreement has been agreed. A final design has been agreed and planning permission was granted by Planning Committee on 8th February 2017.

GLL have procured a preferred contractor who has developed a costed design proposal and are looking to finalise the contract sum and enter into a contract shortly. Construction work aims to start on site early May and complete by December ready for opening in January 2018. The total project value is circa £2.4m including all build costs and professional fees (section 9 of this report identifies the reasons for this higher cost than the £1.8m estimated in the report to Policy Committee in November 2015). The building housing the demountable pool is a permanent structure and has an expected lifespan well beyond the current anticipate use. Subject to appropriate permissions it may subsequently be used for alternative activities should the Council wish and the building will therefore potentially have future value beyond the use as a swimming pool.

4.2 Options Proposed

It is proposed that the Council enter into a Development Agreement for Lease and a Lease with Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) to enable the installation and operation of a demountable swimming pool extension incorporating a permanent building structure with a view to enabling a planned closure of Central Pool in December 2017.

4.3 Other Options Considered

Do nothing is not considered to be a tenable option as the current state of facilities would mean that the Council would be forced into a position of either closing facilities or investing large amounts of money to refurbish and keep them open. This would not provide security over future provision or deliver the quality of facilities that Reading and service users require into the future.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The proposals set-out in this report for a major enhancement in the quality of the leisure estate and in the attractiveness of local facilities for residents, employees and visitors in Reading contribute to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- Providing the best start in life through education, early help and healthy living;
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active;
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy.

5.2 A key driver for the provision of high quality leisure facilities is to promote the health and well-being of the population. New facilities generally result in increased level of use and participation in the communities they are located. In turn this provides more opportunities to target specific initiatives to increase engagement and participation from those on low incomes or who have a range of health conditions that can be ameliorated through exercise and well-being programmes.

5.3 Replacing ageing and outdated facilities with modern ones will also have significant benefits in reducing levels of energy use, contributing to both sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Consultation with key stakeholders was carried out as part of the work to develop the indoor sports facilities strategy, including a range of sports clubs and operators. Consultation has also involved the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and Sport England to ensure that lead governing bodies for a variety of sports have been able to directly influence the strategy and are confident that it reflects their interests and input.

6.2 The demountable pool at Rivermead required planning permission and was subject to statutory public consultation. Information on the proposed demountable pool, including design and related images, was displayed at both Rivermead Leisure Centre and Central Pool to inform local people and to encourage responses to the public consultation.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is relevant to the decision at this stage. It is anticipated that an EIA will be relevant to the future decisions required regarding the provision and location of permanent new leisure facilities and this will be undertaken in parallel with the development of more detailed proposals.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The provision of a demountable swimming pool is classified as a 'Works' contract and the cost falls well below the threshold which would require an OJEU advertisement for a 'Works' contract. The procurement of a demountable pool will be conducted in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Policy Committee on the 30th November 2015 delegated the finalisation of the procurement arrangements, the negotiation with GLL on specification and management arrangements and authority to enter into the necessary contract/s for the demountable pool to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Sport, Culture & Consumer Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services.

8.2 At its meeting of 14 February 2005 (Minute 148 refers) The Chief Valuer was given Delegated Authority to enter in to lease agreements with a rental value of less than £50,000 pa

8.2 The Council provides its leisure facilities under the provision of Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1976.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The approved capital programme includes an allocation of £2.4m for the cost of delivering the demountable pool at Rivermead. The projected cost is higher than the initial outline budget estimate made in November 2015, which was based on indicative costs from other locations. Unfavourable ground conditions have required a specific piling solution and as a consequence a more permanent building structure. This in turn increased the requirements for BREEAM compliance as part of the planning process; all of which has increased professional fees and build costs.

9.2 The financial implications relating to the delivery of a demountable pool at Rivermead are set out below:-

Revenue Implications

	2016/17 £'000s	2017/18 £'000s	2018/19 £'000s
Net saving (-) from Central Pool operating costs	0	0	-67

The potential revenue savings identified above relate to the savings from the operating costs at Central Pool once it closes from January 2018.

Capital Implications

Capital Programme reference from budget book: see page B164	2016/17 £'000s	2017/18 £'000s	2018/19 £'000s
Proposed Capital Expenditure: (See February 2017 Cabinet: Capital Programme Appendix10: Cultural & Leisure Facilities)	160	2,180	60
Total scheme funding	160	2,180	60

In addition, the closure of Central Pool will remove a significant on-going property liability in terms of future repairs and maintenance.

Value for Money (VFM)

The proposal to build a demountable pool at Rivermead is a key stage in a strategic programme to replace old and costly facilities with fit for purpose and affordable water space.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 'Review of Leisure Facilities and Future Provision' - Update report to Policy Committee 31st October 2016.

'Review of Leisure Facilities and Future Provision' - Report to Policy Committee 30th November 2015.