

To: **COUNCIL**
12 JULY 2023

Part Refurbishment of Bracknell Leisure Centre
Executive Director of Delivery

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval for invest to save funding as a supplementary capital approval to make significant improvements at Bracknell Leisure Centre (BLC).

2 Recommendations

That Council:

- 2.1 Supports additional investment in the Bracknell Leisure Centre that will secure significant enhancements to the facility to benefit residents and visitors, and to enable this;**
- 2.3 Recommends that Council approves a Supplementary Capital Approval of up to £0.358m with the associated borrowing costs already accounted for within the figures in the confidential annex.**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 BLC is at the core of providing sporting and leisure opportunities for the Borough's residents and visitors. It remains a strategic Council asset following the outsourcing of the day-to-day management of leisure facilities to Everyone Active (EA) in 2018. Investment into the service offer is critical if it is to remain relevant, up to date and attractive to existing and potential visitors. An opportunity to invest has been bought forward which will enhance the leisure offer while offering a positive financial return to the Council.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 To not invest in the facility and for the service to remain as currently offered. This is likely to have a detrimental impact on customers of the current service and put off potential users. In a crowded market of leisure provision, the centre requires investment to remain competitive and to continue to offer a wide range of activities for residents and visitors.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 Bracknell Leisure Centre was built in 1966 and was completely refurbished in 1990. In 2018 at the start of the contractual relationship with Everyone Active a refurbishment of £2.8m was agreed by the Council. The changes in 2018 significantly enhanced the site in terms of appearance as well as offering a better environment for customers along with increased opportunities for participation. Additionally, these improvements provided an increased annual management fee for the Council.

- 5.2 A further opportunity for investment of £1.6m is now presented which will address many of the areas left untouched by the previous scheme. Again, these works will further enhance the services being offered at BLC to the public, to ensure the centre is able to compete with other local centres and allow increased access to leisure options within the Borough. With the proposed investment by the Council providing the capital funding required, there will be an increase in the management fee paid back to the Council as shown in the confidential annex. This meets the council's "invest to save" criteria which means not only will the proposals greatly increase the quality of offering at Bracknell Leisure Centre, but the Council will be in a beneficial revenue position once all capital costs have been accounted for.
- 5.3 As contractual payment for the management of the three Council leisure sites in the Borough the Council currently receives annual income from EA as a management fee. Prior to outsourcing the Leisure service was subsidised by the Council.
- 5.4 The Council's officers and Everyone Active have worked together to identify the proposed works that would improve the facilities and help generate additional usage and income. The works would include -
- Refurbished spa and redecoration
 - Children's play zone
 - Relocating squash courts with 2 new glass backed courts
 - Additional fitness studio
- 5.5 In terms of funding the enhancements a combination of s106 (already approved by the Executive) and supplementary capital (via this paper) covers the £1.6m required. The capital amount meets the Council's invest to save criteria.
- 5.6 This investment is in addition to the ongoing maintenance costs and capital schemes that have been approved by Council as part of the 2023/24 budget.
- 5.7 The investment project could commence as early as July 2023 with the aspiration to be completed around the end of the calendar year with potential opening in January 2024. Areas not impacted by the refurbishment would remain open although there may well be some local disruption due to the works, but this is hoped to be kept to a minimum.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The proposed supplementary capital approval is a function reserved to Council

Financial Advice

- 6.2 The financial implications of the proposals are set out in detail in the confidential Appendix and are advantageous to the Council.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 This change will have a positive impact on users of BLC which will allow an increased number of residents and visitors to use the centre. The refurbishment combined with the drive to increase the local offer and to focus the services to increase participation in the harder to reach groups will see significant progress.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 The works will be overseen by the Property team in order to minimise risk.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.6 The part refurbishment of BLC will improve energy efficiency in some areas of the centre through better lighting and air circulation. However, some parts of the centre date back to the 1960's and as such there are limited efficiency gains to be made in the existing structure.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 There are positive gains in relation to health and wellbeing. Increasing the amount of leisure and exercise by adding new and upgrading existing facilities will allow more involvement and combined with the work on harder to reach groups this refurbishment should see an overall increase in participation.

Background Papers

Capital schemes that have been approved by Council as part of the 2023/24 budget at BLC:

BLC and Coral Reef Air Handling Units
New Pumps at BLC and Coral Reef

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