

*Background Papers, if any, are specified at the end of the Report*

## **CHILTERN POOLS LEISURE CENTRE NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet approve the appointment of a specialist leisure consultant to undertake a needs assessment on the future of Chiltern Pools Leisure Centre.**

**That up to £20,000 be transferred from the provisional capital sum to the approved and committed capital programme.**

### **Relationship to Council Objectives**

*Objective 1 – Efficient & effective customer focused services*

*A – To achieve the levels of savings necessary to maintain the Council's sound financial position and service delivery in the medium term*

*B – Ensure the best use of resources to secure value for money and to minimise the cost to council tax payers*

*C – Continue to transform the Council to deliver improved services at a reduced cost*

*Objective 2 – Safe, healthy and cohesive community*

*B - Work closely with Parish and Town Councils and local neighbourhoods*

*J - Promote healthy living, well-being and address health inequalities*

*K - Support the local economy*

*Objective 3 – Conserve the environment & promote sustainability*

*A – Protect the Green Belt, conserve the areas of outstanding natural beauty (ANOB) and enhance the environment*

*F – Provide & safer and cleaner environment*

### **Implications**

*(i) This is a key decision within the forward plan.*

*(ii) It is within the policy and budgetary framework.*

### **Financial Implications**

*Funding of up to £20,000 will be required to undertake the proposed 'Needs Assessment' which will be sourced from Capital Projects Reserve funding. The consultancy report will reveal the future requirements of leisure centre provision in Amersham and potential funding models available to enable such a facility to be constructed. This approach will allow Cabinet to make an informed decision as to the future of Chiltern Pools Leisure Centre and the most appropriate way to fund a replacement facility if deemed appropriate.*

### **Risk Implications**

*Greenwich Leisure Limited contract with Chiltern District Council comes to an end in 2020. Given the age of the facility and the high maintenance and operational costs, Chiltern Pools is becoming less economically viable to operate. Consequently, there is a clear need to agree the best way forward in providing leisure centre provision in Amersham. Not having a clear and coherent action plan will lead to Amersham not having public leisure centre impacting negatively on several key council objectives in relation to health and well-being, supporting the local economy and providing facilities that meet the needs of the local community.*

### **Equalities Implications**

*Chiltern Pools currently offers a wide range of accessible activities for the whole community including older people, young people, residents in receipt of benefits, disabled residents and residents from BME communities.*

### **Sustainability Implications**

*Chiltern Pools currently accounts for over 50% of the Council's total energy usage. Since the contract commenced in 2005, energy costs have increased significantly, accounting for a large percentage of the overall operational costs. The development of a modern leisure centre facility would incorporate a wide range of new energy efficiency technology, significantly reducing the levels of energy use for the Council, making the contract more attractive to companies/leisure trusts bidding to operate the facility.*

### **Background**

- 1 In accordance with the Leisure Capital report presented to Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2012 it was agreed that the Corporate Asset Management Group would undertake an option appraisal report regarding the future of Chiltern Pools in advance of the leisure tender process due to commence in 2019. To support this approach the report outlines the next steps in relation to commissioning an independent leisure specialist to undertake a needs assessment, detailed in Section 4.
- 2 Chiltern Pools Leisure Centre in Amersham will be fifty two years old when the existing leisure centre contract with Greenwich Leisure

Limited comes to an end in April 2020. The centre is owned by the Council and has no formal sub lease agreement with any local school as is the case with the other two centres at Chesham and Chalfont St Peter. Currently the centre comprises of three pools (six lane x 25 metre, a leisure pool and a teaching pool with movable floor and diving facility), a fifty six station fitness studio, dance studio and climbing wall. (There is currently no sports hall). The centre is a well-used facility attracting in excess of 350,000 customer visits per annum and plays an important role in helping maintain and improve the health and well-being of local residents.

- 3 Given the age and condition of the leisure centre along with the existing leisure management contract finishing in 2020, there is a clear need to review future requirements and long term options for leisure centre provision in Amersham. It also provides an ideal opportunity to look at the adjacent community buildings, car parks etc to ensure any redevelopment takes place in a holistic fashion and best meets the Council's strategic vision for the area.

### **Scope of the Proposed Needs Assessment**

- 4 To consider future options for upgrading/replacing Chiltern Pools, it is proposed, (following a formal tender process) to appoint a specialist independent leisure consultant. The successful company will be required to undertake a needs analysis incorporating the questions detailed below in order to advise as to the best way forward, :
  - What will be the estimated cost to the council if the contract is re-tended covering the period 2020-2035 utilising the same terms and conditions as the existing contract
  - Utilising appropriate and up to date district, county and regional data including, : demographic, transport infrastructure, socio-economic, existing facility provision, indices of multiple deprivation and local health analysis confirm if there is a need to have a leisure facility in Amersham?
  - If a need is identified, what facility will be required to meet future needs, including incorporating the initial considerations of community partners. (Amersham Town Council, Bucks County Council and Amersham Action Group)
  - Having considered future running/maintenance and client monitoring costs, is there is a viable case to build a new facility?
  - What financial models could be used to minimise the cost to the Council in terms of revenue/capital expenditure in developing and operating a new facility

## **Next Steps**

5. It is proposed that Cabinet release funding of up to £20,000 from the 'Capital Projects Reserves' fund to tender for a specialist leisure consultant to undertake a needs assessment of Chiltern Pools as detailed in Section 4. On completion of the assessment a formal presentation will be made to Members outlining the key findings and key considerations in deciding the best way forward.

## **Conclusion**

6. The proposed 'Needs Assessment' for Chiltern Pools will provide clear and independent evidence as to the future needs of leisure centre facilities in Amersham as well as offer potential options as to how the construction of such a facility can be funded. It will also be key in the consideration of a potential redevelopment of the site as a whole.

### ***Background papers:***

***Cabinet Report – Leisure Capital Report 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2012***

***Appendix 1 – Chiltern Pools Implementation Plan***

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