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| SUBJECT: | Replacement of theatre floor at Beacon Centre |
| REPORT OF: | Cllr Paul Kelly – Healthy Communities Portfolio Holder |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER | Martin Holt – Head of Healthy Communities |
| REPORT AUTHOR | Claire Speirs – Leisure & Community Officer. Claire.Speirs@southbucks.gov.uk 01895 837306 |
| WARD/S AFFECTED | Beaconsfield |

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the options for replacement of the Beacon Centre theatre floor and seating.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Subject to the advice of the Policy Advisory Group the Portfolio Holder is recommended to agree that the Beacon Centre theatre floor be replaced with a semi-sprung floor from Ryan Leisure and the tiered bleacher seating from the Centre is removed and destroyed.
- To agree that GLL provide hired chairs for events held in the theatre enabling greater flexibility of the space for activity use.

2. Reasons for Recommendations

The theatre is used as a multifunctional space used for theatre hire, event hire and aerobic activities. The main use of the room is for aerobic activities involving several clubs and activity sessions per week. Theatre use is limited to 11 events per year and hired to nine organisations.

Over many years the current bleacher style seating has caused point of impact damage to the floor, which has been repaired but is no longer repairable and requires replacement with a semi sprung floor to enable gym activities. Current advice is that the repaired floor could fail when a full load is applied to the bleacher seating. The bleacher seating has also become bowed in the middle and has been taken out of use to comply with the health and safety risk assessment.

Suppliers of seating have advised that bleacher seating is not compatible with the semi sprung floor required for gym use. The cost of removing and replacing the bleacher seating is between £40K and £54K. Hired seating would be provided when required for theatrical performances and productions. The cost of hired chairs would be borne by the hirer via GLL.

3. Content of Report

3.1. The Beacon Sports Centre and Theatre is owned by South Bucks District Council and operated by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) under the Leisure Management

Contract until 20th October 2021. The centre consists of a sports hall, 40+ station gym, outdoor football pitches and a 209 seat theatre.

- 3.2. The theatre has bleacher style seating for 209 guests. This is rolled out for each theatrical performance, approximately 39 times in a year over 11 events.
- 3.3. The theatre floor is a semi-sprung 'Gransprung' floor which has a 6mm gap between the top layer and the concrete base.
- 3.4. The floor has suffered substantial point of impact damage in the area of the tracks of the bleacher seating unit. The damage is in the form of cracked and broken Granwood tiles, track marks and depressions etc. There are now also a number of sharp edges currently present and these may be a possible risk of injury to users particularly if barefoot (there are currently no activities where users would be barefoot at the centre).
- 3.5. The damage is being sustained both when the unit is opened and when additional stresses are being placed on the floor when the seating is populated by over 200 people. The 'sprung' nature of the floor does provide sufficient strength and flexibility to accommodate the weight and movement of the bleacher unit. A competent person inspection has advised 'it is reasonable to accept that the current floor is not fit for purpose and further damage or total collapse are inevitable'. Should this occur when the seats are out and members of the public are in the seats or walking up the stairs there is a significant risk of injury.
- 3.6. A joint risk assessment by SBDC and GLL has resulted in the seats being taken out of use and not being deployed until remedial action is undertaken.
- 3.7. The theatre seats are currently used by 9 theatre groups and in the last year the seats have been used 39 times over 11 bookings. Customer feedback is that 8 of the 9 groups are happy to use flat seating in the future. One group has requested the raised seating and this group uses the raised seating twice a year for their productions.
- 3.8. A variety of fitness classes, including judo, circuits, dance, kickboxing, karate, body conditioning, children's rugby and the rock choir use the theatre space but without the seats. When the theatre seats are in use these classes have to move to the sports hall. If the sports hall is also occupied the classes are often cancelled. Cancelled classes have cost GLL a loss of income of £1,545 per annum.
- 3.9. Income generated from the theatre is £5,736. The cost to manage the theatre per year is £ 7,312, the breakdown of these costs is below:

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| Income | |
| Theatre hire | £5,136.00 |
| Bar sales | £600 |
| Total income | £5,736 |
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| Expenditure | |
| Staffing | £1,344 |
| Class cancellation | £1,545 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | £4,423.36 |
| Total | £7,312.36 |
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| Total Profit/loss | -£1,576.36 |

3.10 An options appraisal of the flooring has been undertaken by GLL. This recommends replacement with a sprung floor which enables aerobic activities to be undertaken, a short installation period of up to a week and a cost to the Council of £21,980.

3.11 The alternative of replacing the Bleacher seating would cost £50,070 and would also require installation of a Granwood floor costing £18,415 making a total cost to the council of £68,485. A Granwood floor would take 6 weeks to install with a consequential impact on the service delivery.

3.12 GLL has advised that removal of the bleacher seating would enable the creation of a permanent fitness class studio with improved decoration that could still be used by theatre groups but with hired seating. Such a facility would increase footfall and income to GLL but also enable more participation in aerobic activities and support healthier lifestyles.

3.13 GLL would provide hired chairs for all productions as raised seats would not be possible with a semi sprung floor. GLL are currently able to provide 166 seats (non-tiered) in the theatre, if the bleacher seats are to be removed this will increase to 206 a decrease of 3 seats from the original 209 bleacher seats. GLL have 100 seats at the centre, they will be purchasing the additional seats in January, until then GLL will hire the additional seats needed for each performance.

3.14 There is currently £44,000 allocated in the capital budget to replace the floor. Therefore a decision to replace the bleacher seating and install the necessary Granwood Floor would require Cabinet approval for an increase in the 2016/17 capital budget.

4. Options

The options available, together with estimated costs are as follows:-

4.1. Remove bleacher style seating at a cost of £5,000

Install semi spring floor at a cost of £21,980.

Enable GLL to expand current programme in theatre

Total cost of works £26,980

4.2. Install new bleacher style seating at a cost of £50,070

Install new Granwood floor at cost of £18,415.

Total cost of works £68,485.

4.3 There is £44,000 in the budget for the replacement of the floor. Option 1 will offer a saving of £17,020. Option 2 will require allocation of an additional £24,485 from the capital budget. Option 1 will enable the works to be carried out within the current financial year, Option 2 will require approval from Cabinet to increase the 2016/17 Capital Budget.

7. Corporate Implications

Financial – As referred to above there are sufficient funds in the capital budget to carry out option 1. Any additional funds will need to be sought from 2016/17 budget in order to carry out option 2

7.1 Legal – Under the contractual arrangements with GLL the council is responsible for the repair of plant and structure in the centre.

7.2 Health & Safety – the floor is not currently fit for purpose.

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

The improvement of facilities at the Beacon Centre will assist in promoting healthier communities

9. Next Steps

If option 1 is chosen GLL will be able to commence the works shortly. If option 2 is selected a request for additional budget allocation will be made to Cabinet and Full Council.

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| <p>Background</p> <p>Papers:</p> | <p>Seating and flooring quotes. Seating/flooring report</p> |
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