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## Meeting of the Executive

12 June, 2007

Report of the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning and Culture) and the Head of Property Services

## Leisure Facilities Strategy Update: Yearsley Swimming Pool

### Summary

1. This report asks the Executive to approve a scheme to undertake repairs at Yearsley Swimming Pool.

### Background

2. In February 2006 the Executive agreed a leisure facilities strategy using all of the capital to be received from the sale of the Barbican site to modernise swimming facilities in the city. An indicative sum of £0.5m was allocated to undertake repair and maintenance work at Yearsley Pool in order to prolong its life till at least 2012, at which point a more comprehensive refurbishment scheme will be considered.

### The Scheme

3. It was originally envisaged that the repair work would be carried out over a five-year period. However, the study that Property Services subsequently carried out identified that a number of issues need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Furthermore, many of these issues will require closure of the pool in order to be able to address them. Property Services therefore recommend that all the work is carried out in a single scheme in order to keep the cost of the work to a minimum and to eliminate the need for repeated closures which would be both costly and disruptive to customers.
4. The key issues that must be addressed are:
  - o **Roof and walls** - The existing roof covering was installed in the early 1960's. It is a sandwich of asbestos cement sheets with glass fibre insulation in between. There are also plastic laylights fitted. The materials are fixed with steel hook bolts which have corroded and some have already dropped out. The roof is draughty and offers a poor thermal resistance especially as the materials have deteriorated. The failure of the fixings renders the roof vulnerable to wind uplift which would pose a safety risk. The roof has been netted above and below for the last 2 years to reduce the risk of debris from the roof causing injury. (This was recommended in The Health and Safety Schedule of Risk prepared by Atkins in November 2004 (SORHS)). The walls are a single skin of steel with minimal insulation which has a very poor

thermal resistance This allows an unacceptable heat loss and condensation to both the walls and the structural steelwork. The structural steelwork has suffered corrosion as a result and needs repainting. The roof purlins have corroded beyond repair and require replacement. The proposal is to repair/repaint the steelwork and replace the roof and wall cladding with a material of a high thermal resistivity which exceeds the requirements of current Building Regulations.

- o **Ventilation** - The existing fresh air intake is heated with steam. The incoming air is heated from the external ambient temperature and is often inadequate to maintain the required pool hall temperature. Energy is not recovered from the exhaust air, which at the moment passes through roof-mounted fans. The new roofing and cladding will provide a much-improved thermal envelope with fewer air gaps, so the air handling plant (AHP) needs to be improved. The Construction Design and Management Regulations require a safe system of work for maintenance of equipment so the fans need to be brought to a low level. If a new AHP is being provided it will offer the opportunity of fitting a heat recovery system. This type of recovery unit will recuperate up to 70% of the heat from the exhaust air.
  - o **Plant and filters** - The existing filters were installed in the early 1950's. They are becoming corroded and frequently leak with another leak occurring last Friday afternoon. The filtration system has come to a point where a major failure could occur at any time resulting in closure of the pool whilst the equipment is replaced. The proposal includes a new pool chemical dosing system which will be safer to use and occupy less space in the plant room.
  - o **Pool side top bank floors** - The SOHRS required the poolside channels to be made flush to alleviate the trip hazard. This created ponding on the surface due to the shape of the poolside walkways. Last year a section of steel drainage channel was fitted as a trial and has demonstrated that it would be a suitable material.
  - o **Showers** - The shower areas have kerbed trip hazards beside the shower roses. The adjacent floors are generally laid flat so ponding occurs. This poses a slip hazard and allows water to stagnate. The proposal is to relay the floors to the showers with new tiles, channels to improve the drainage and remove the kerbs.
  - o **Pool grouting** - There have been complaints about the grout coming out from around the glazed bricks on the pool bottom. We propose to rake out the loose material and regrout the joints to the pool bottom.
5. In the light of these issues a shortlist of essential works has been drawn up. Those works which are required on either structural, operational, or health and safety grounds, in order to extend the life of the pool to 2012. This list is attached in Annex A.
6. At the same time there is an option to undertake some work to improve the front of the building in order to provide disabled parking spaces. This would be funded in part from the council's Disability Discrimination Act related budget. Nestlé has kindly agreed to allow access through their adjacent car park for these disabled spaces.

7. The work will take approximately 16 weeks starting on 9 July 2007. This time estimate has been tested with potential contractors and is considered prudent. There is no option to carry out a scheme of this magnitude in a shorter timeframe. It is important to carry out the work over the summer period in order to minimise disruption to SWIM YORK (our swimming lesson programme), clubs and courses.
8. A communications strategy has been drawn up to provide appropriate messages to key users and the public before and during the closure. Initiatives are in place to welcome back current users as quickly as possible on reopening. A mixture of communication methods will be used including the CYC website, letters, direct mail, phone calls, press, council publications and communication boards.
9. The scheme has now been tendered and the actual tender price will be known by the time of the meeting and will be reported to members then. The estimated cost of the work is shown in Annex B (confidential until tenders close on 4 June). A decision to proceed needs to be given to the successful contractor by Friday 15 June so that the work may commence on time.

### **Consultation**

10. The Yearsley Action Group have been consulted about the programme of works and are fully supportive of the proposed scheme.

### **Options**

11. The works identified in Annex A are considered to be the minimum that could sensibly be carried out in order to ensure safe operation of the pool to 2012. The main options for members therefore are to:
  - Undertake the scheme as identified
  - Not to undertake the scheme
  - Conduct a more comprehensive scheme

### **Analysis**

12. Carrying out the proposed scheme will extend the life of the pool to at least 2012. It will also have the benefit of:
  - o **Energy choice** - At the moment Nestle are supplying us with steam at cost price. The new AHP and filter system will allow easy conversion to alternative heating. We have already put together a feasibility for new boilers, although the trends are changing towards biomass as a fuel source. This makes us much more adaptable in future if steam is not the preferred energy fuel.
  - o **Quality of provision** – The proposed works will have a positive impact for the pool user. As a customer there are many benefits, from a pleasant and comfortable pool hall temperature to safe and modern showering facilities with improved access. This will assist the site in the promotion and marketing of the facility to encourage new users.

13. If the scheme is not undertaken this would be likely to result in the need to take a management decision to close the pool on health and safety grounds within 12 months.
14. Conducting a more comprehensive scheme would require taking capital from one of the other two schemes to fund it, and would result in a longer lead time and a longer closure period. Therefore the project would be delayed until at least summer 2008.
15. Within the proposed scheme it would be possible to take out the improvements to the front of the building as these are not essential on health and safety grounds. This would save around £25k. The work is, however, recommended as it will enable us to create parking facilities for people with disabilities and meet DDA requirements.

### **Implications of the Closure**

16. **Customer relocation** – It is not possible to offer residents a doorstep solution due to the infrastructure of other school and community pools. For example, they cannot handle public turning up on a pay and play basis. Therefore we are better placed to encourage residents to use Edmund Wilson Pool or Water World. The programming of the swimming pool timetable at Edmund Wilson has been changed to offer much more open and family swim times during the summer holidays.

### **Corporate Priorities**

17. This project contributes to a number of corporate objectives including:
  - Work with others to improve the health, well-being and independence of York residents
  - Work with others to develop opportunities for residents and visitors to experience York as a vibrant and eventful city.

### **Financial Implications**

#### **Capital:**

18. The strategy set out in February 2006 allowed an indicative sum of £500k plus fees for repairs to Yearsley. The estimates in Annex B show that the proposed scheme will cost more than this. The additional monies required, estimated to be £458k, can be funded from the contingency built into the overall programme as shown in the following table:

<b>Funding</b>	<b>£,000s</b>
Barbican site receipt	6,385
Legal fees	12
Kent Street site receipt	1,000
Auditorium receipt	765
Barbican claims provision	148
less Leisure Section 106 contribution	-170

<b>Total available funding</b>	<b>8,140</b>
<b>Budget Breakdown</b>	<b>£,000s</b>
Pre-2006/7 spend	249
Oaklands Pool	4,000
University Pool contribution	2,000
Yearsley original allocation	500
Procurement costs	330
Legal fees	47
Community building	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,326</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	<b>814</b>

19. The risk factors for the contingency are:

- £1m of the receipt, which is available for expenditure, is dependent on the sale of Kent Street Coach Park which is also subject to planning approval
- The provision of sports and swimming facilities has been earmarked within the Policy Prospectus, agreed by group leaders, for a review. The outcome of that review may impact upon the available budget for swimming pool provision. Having committed to this project, any shortfall in funding would then impact upon those other elements of planned expenditure highlighted in the table above.
- The demolition cost in respect of Edmund Wilson (around £400k) is to be funded from the eventual sale of that site. Should there be any difficulty around this then this cost could be a call on the pools capital programme

**Revenue:**

20. The closure period will result in an estimated one-off cost of £80k. This covers the loss of income (less running cost savings), savings from redeploying staff to other sites to replace casual employees and the estimated impact of additional income at Edmund Wilson from displaced users. Any overrun is estimated to cost around £5k per week.

21. As the original strategy agreed by the Executive in February 2006 did not envisage any significant closure of Yearsley Pool during 2007/08, no provision has been made in the Leisure & Culture budget for these one-off costs. Consequently if the works are to proceed as recommended in this report additional revenue funding of £80k will be required in 2007/08. The following options are available to fund the £80k:

a) Venture Fund Loan

22. The works to the pool include upgrading of the heating and ventilation systems to extend their useful life. This work will also improve the efficiency of the

systems resulting in savings on future energy costs. Although it is difficult to be precise about the exact level of financial saving that could result from this, it is felt that a prudent estimate would be an annual saving of around £10k.

- 23 A saving at this level would be sufficient to support a Venture Fund loan of £40k, repayable over the five years additional pool life that the capital scheme is designed to achieve.

b) Fund from Corporate Contingency

- 24 In setting the 2007/08 budget council assumed that up to £500k could be required from the general reserve to support a number of potential one-off contingency events in 2007/08. A closure of this nature was not included on that list and the usual policy is that contingency items are only supported when identified as part of the budget process. This does not, however, prevent the Executive from releasing funding where they feel the problem could not have been predicted and that the cost implications are out of the immediate control of the directorate concerned, which appears to be the case in this instance.

- 25 Reserve projections provided to the Council when the budget was set, indicated headroom of £809k between the level of anticipated reserves at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 and the minimum level of reserves deemed advisable by the Director of Resources (£6,010k and £5,201k respectively). At this stage there is no reason to believe that the levels of reserves held on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 will be below this figure. It should be noted, however, that this excluded any potential one-off calls for contingency items. Were all one-off contingency events to occur then the degree of headroom would reduce to £309k, or £269k (assuming a £40k Venture Fund loan) should funding be released to cover the revenue implications of closure. On this basis sufficient resources are available to support the application but any release will have an impact on the availability of funding should other significant cost pressures arise during the year.

c) Savings in Other Leisure & Culture Services

- 26 The Executive could choose not to provide corporate funding in support of the revenue implications of the closure of the pool. If this were to be the case then the directorate would need to identify in-year savings of £40k to £80k, the delivery of which would impact on the level of provision provided to users across a number of service areas.

**Other Implications**

27. **Human Resources (HR)** – All permanent staff have been relocated across other Sport and Active Leisure venues in the city and are in agreement with alternative places of work. Casual employees have already received communications regarding the closure period and work has been identified for them on the reopening.
28. There are no equalities, legal, crime and disorder, or Information Technology implications.

## Risk Management

29. The key risks are:

- Delay in reopening the pool due to unforeseeable building works, which is common with projects to existing buildings.
- If the work is not done then there is a significant risk of the building having to close on health and safety grounds within the next 12 months.

## Recommendations

30. The Executive is asked to

- agree the programme of repairs at Yearsley Swimming Pool as set out in Annex B, including a virement of £10k from the Property Services DDA scheme.
- agree to the use of contingencies, from within the swimming pools programme, to fund the additional costs of this project.
- agree to a Venture Fund loan of £40k repaid from future energy savings and a non-recurring supplementary estimate of £40k to cover the net revenue costs associated with the pool closure period.

Reason: To extend the life of Yearsley Pool to 2012.

## Contact Details

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**Report Approved** ✓ **Date** 31/5/07

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## Specialist Implications Officers

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**Wards Affected:**

**All** ✓

For further information please contact the author of the report

## Background Papers:

*Leisure Facilities Strategy*: Report to the Executive, 7 February, 2006

## **Annexes**

A. Essential Works

B. Estimated costs (**Confidential Annex**)

worddoc/reports/exec/yearsley.doc