



# Executive Committee

Batchley and Brockhill Ward

1 July 2009

## HEWELL ROAD SWIMMING POOL - REALLOCATION OF APPROVED CAPITAL FUNDING

(Report of the Head of Leisure and Arts)

### 1. Summary of Proposals

Members are asked to approve the reallocation of approved capital funding at Hewell Road Swimming Pool from refurbishment of filters to the upgrade of electrical equipment to ensure that the building remains insured by Zurich Municipal.

### 2. Recommendations

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that**

**approval be given for the reallocation of the previously approved sum of £44,000 for filter refurbishment to the more urgent priority of electrical upgrade at Hewell Road Swimming Pool within the Capital Programme; and**

**to RESOLVE that, if approved,**

**approval be given to incur up to the expenditure detailed above, in accordance with Standing Order 41.**

### 3. Financial, Legal, Policy, Risk and Sustainability Implications

#### Financial

- 3.1 The sum asked to be reallocated has existing approval for another capital scheme. The Council approves the overall Capital Programme.

#### Legal

- 3.2 Under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council has the power to provide such recreational facilities as it thinks fit.

#### Policy

- 3.3 No policy implications have been identified.

### Risk

- 3.4 Should approval not be given to the requested reallocation, then the Council's insurer will not provide the appropriate insurance cover and as such the swimming pool will have to close and staff will have to be made redundant. This Council could not leave itself open to potential major claims and the resultant loss of reputation associated with a major incident should it occur.

### Sustainability / Environmental / Climate Change

- 3.5 The requested reallocation of capital budget will ensure sustainability for the facility in the short term while other options are prepared for Members' consideration in view of the Executive Committee decision of 28 January 2009 to defer the Abbey Stadium redevelopment for a period of up to one year.

### Report

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 Following the decision by the Executive Committee on 28 January 2009 to defer the redevelopment of the Abbey Stadium until such time as the assets disposal programme can deliver the required capital funding, Members requested a further report on remedial action on Hewell Road pool and the Abbey Stadium to sustain the facilities for the short, medium and long term.

- 4.2 Whilst this report is being progressed for presentation, work by Officers has highlighted an issue that needs more urgent attention, details of which are provided below.

#### **5. Key Issues**

- 5.1 A report was commissioned by Asset Maintenance Officers in January of this year to identify the current state of electrical provision throughout the Hewell Road building in line with short term sustainability.
- 5.2 The report has highlighted a number of areas that need urgent attention which include the plant room and main office at the site.
- 5.3 Arising from the report, Officers contacted the Council's insurer, Zurich Municipal, to ascertain the Council's position with regard to this situation.
- 5.4 Zurich have stated that, as long as the Council gives a commitment to carry out the work within the next 3 months to make the building

operate to safe codes of practice, they will continue to provide the necessary insurance cover.

- 5.5 Zurich will make contact during August of this year to discuss the position at that time with regards to the work needed to be undertaken, nearing completion or completed.
- 5.6 In view of the position, Officers have ascertained from an independent consultant that an initial budget to undertake the work arising from the report amounts to approximately £38,000.
- 5.7 An existing capital budget of £44,000 is already approved for filter refurbishment, but Officers will progress the work only at such time as expenditure is essential. Officers will try to maintain the filters until environmental health checks show they are breaking down and this is not the current position.
- 5.8 Members have requested that Hewell Road pool is sustained until an alternative facility can be provided, unless a major breakdown occurs that is too uneconomical to repair. Officers do not deem the electrical position as detailed to be at this stage.
- 5.9 Officers request the reallocation to rectify the electrical situation and will submit a further capital bid should the filters break down in the future.
- 5.10 Should approval be given to progress this work, Officers will make the necessary contact with Zurich Municipal to confirm their request.

### 6. **Other Implications**

- |                  |   |  |
|------------------|---|--|
| Asset Management | - | Required to sustain the operation of the facility to safe standards required by Health and Safety Legislation.   |
| Community Safety | - | To ensure that insurance is in place to protect both customers and this Council. A reduction in school and young peoples' swimming lessons provided by this Council. |
| Human Resources  | - | Should the facility be closed then a large number of potential staff redundancies will result.   |
| Social Exclusion | - | A number of community groups and clubs will no longer have a facility as a home base and will cease to operate.  |

Schools key stage skill swimming lessons will also be affected. The Government's free swimming initiative that is in operation will be severely restricted. The Council's reputation could be questioned.

7. **Lessons Learnt**

N/A In this case

8. **Background Papers**

Committee report 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009;  
Electrical report;  
Zurich Municipal correspondence.

9. **Consultation**

This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant Borough Council Officers within the Asset Management Team and Leisure and Arts Service.

10. **Author of Report**

The author of this report is Ken Watkins (Head of Leisure and Arts), who can be contacted on extension 3384 (e-mail: [ken.watkins@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:ken.watkins@redditchbc.gov.uk)) for more information.

11. **Appendices**

There are none.