

EXECUTIVE

Date: Tuesday 12 June 2018
Time: 5.30 pm
Venue: Rennes Room - Civic Centre

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business.

If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Manager (Committees) on 01392 265275.

Entry to the Civic Centre can be gained through the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

Membership -

Councillors Edwards (Chair), Bialyk, Denham, Harvey, Leadbetter, Morse, Packham, Pearson and Sutton

Agenda

Part I: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public present

1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence from Committee members.

2 Minutes

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2018.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests that relate to business on the agenda and which have not already been included in the register of interests, before any discussion takes place on the item. Unless the interest is sensitive, you must also disclose the nature of the interest. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, you must then leave the room and must not participate in any further discussion of the item. Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

4 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of items 9, 10, 11 and 12 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Part I, Schedule 12A of the Act.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5 **Financial Assistance Policy for the Better Care Fund**

To consider the report of Environmental Health and Licensing Manager. (Pages 5 - 30)

People Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 7 June 2018 and its comments will be reported.

6 **Additional Funding for Bridge Replacement and Repair**

To consider the report of the Service Manager, Community Safety & Enforcement. (Pages 31 - 36)

7 **Transformational Budget - First tranche of proposed projects**

To consider the report of the Strategic Management Board. (Pages 37 - 44)

8 **The Build Sport and Leisure Facilities**

To consider the report of the Director (JY). (Pages 45 - 58)

Part II: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public excluded

No representations have been received in respect of the following items in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

9 **The Build Sport and Leisure Facilities**

To consider the report of the Director (JY). (Pages 59 - 76)

10 **MRF staff structure**

To consider the report of the Director (DB). (Pages 77 - 80)

11 **Communications, Tourism and Culture Restructure**

To consider the report of the Director of Communications and Marketing. (Pages 81 - 114)

12 **Additional Resources - Finance**

To consider the report of the Chief Finance Officer. (Pages 115 - 178)

Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Executive will be held on **Tuesday 10 July 2018** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

A statement of the executive decisions taken at this meeting will be produced and published on the Council website as soon as reasonably practicable.

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REPORT TO: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING: 7 JUNE 2018

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE
DATE OF MEETING: 12 JUNE 2018

REPORT TO: COUNCIL
DATE OF MEETING: 24 JULY 2018

REPORT OF: Environmental Health and Licensing Manager
TITLE: Financial Assistance Policy for the Better Care Fund

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 The report presents a revised Financial Assistance Policy under Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 to ensure policies are in place to maximise grant spending of the Council's Better Care Fund Allocation. The policy has been developed by both the County and district Councils to ensure a consistent approach across Devon.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 People Scrutiny Committee supports the recommendation to approve the proposed Financial Assistance Policy in order to ensure increased funding provided via the Better Care Fund is delivered to those who have not previously been able to obtain financial assistance.
- 2.2 Executive supports the recommendation to Council to approve the proposed Financial Assistance Policy in order to ensure increased funding provided via the Better Care Fund is delivered to those who have not previously been able to obtain financial assistance.
- 2.3 Council adopts the Financial Assistance Policy.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 Funding for Disabled Facilities Grants, which is administered through the Better Care Fund, has been increased by central government to ensure that vulnerable individuals can remain safe and healthy in their homes.
- 3.2 This policy allows the Council to broaden its ability to provide financial assistance to those disabled persons who do not qualify for the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant system, provide financial assistance to undertake preventive measures reducing hospital admissions and demand for social care and reduce delayed hospital discharges by working in collaboration with health services to provide funding to remove housing related obstacles preventing discharge.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

- 4.1 The assistance detailed in the policy will be fully funded by the Council's national allocation received through the Better Care Fund managed by Devon County Council.
- 4.2 Exeter City Council is not expected to provide its own capital towards the delivery of the assistance as the national allocation through the Better Care Fund is currently sufficient to cover existing demand.
- 4.3 Future allocations of the Better Care Fund for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants from Devon County Council will be made to each District Council on a demand basis. This is to ensure that mandatory demand for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) is met throughout the County before any remaining funding is distributed to the district councils for the other forms of assistance.
- 4.4 There is an ability for the Council to suspend all or parts of the discretionary elements of the policy if funding is not adequate within any given year to meet statutory demand for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

- 5.1 The funding and financial assistance is allocated from Better Care Funding. Exeter City Council is awarded funding from Devon County Council and presently provides no additional top up funds. Any recovered funds under the policy would be used to provide additional grants or assistance and as such there are no financial implications affecting the Council to consider.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1 In formulating this policy reference has been made to The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 and Better Care Fund guidance.
- 6.2 The impact of the proposed Financial Assistance Policy is one of providing a greater level of financial and other interventions by the Council for those with a disability, are vulnerable or have a specific health condition. The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 makes it clear assistance is primarily based on need of the individual, although the health and safety concerns of carers and other family members are also considered.
- 6.3 Procedures have been put in place in an attempt to avoid fraud and misappropriation of funds.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

- 7.1 This report raises no issues to concern the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report details:

- 8.1 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 [the RRO] came into force on the 18 July 2003 giving local authorities discretion to tailor the financial assistance that they make available to householders to suit local needs. The Regulatory Reform Order also encourages local authorities to move away from

awarding grants for assisting with the maintenance of the private sector stock to either awarding loans directly or enabling home owners to take up loans through a third party.

- 8.2 Since 2010 Exeter City Council has been offering home improvement loans through a partnership with Wessex Reinvestment Trust, and have awarded 131 loans with a value of over £900,000 which has been recycled to fund further loans. Following a recent independent review which highlighted the potential for more households to benefit from this loan offer, improved branding and marketing of the scheme is underway.
- 8.3 The Council continues to have a mandatory duty to award Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to applicants who need to adapt their homes due to a disability. The purposes for which grants can be awarded and the method of delivery are proscribed in legislation.
- 8.4 In addition to mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants, the Regulatory Reform Order allows local authorities to develop their own discretionary grants to assist householders with flexibility on the method of their delivery
- 8.5 In 2015 the Government changed the way in which Disabled Facilities Grants are funded by introducing the Better Care Fund (BCF) in an attempt to bring health and social care together in an integrated way. The fund is a combination of government funding from the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government and includes the grant allocation for disabled facilities grants.
- 8.6 The Better Care Fund allocation for all second tier councils in the county is paid directly to Devon County Council who are obliged to passport the entire allocation granted to each district. Unlike the previous method of allocation the funding is not ring fenced for Disabled Facilities Grants but can be used flexibly to meet the Better Care Fund objectives. The 2017/18 allocation for the City Council was £660,128 with the 2018/19 allocation likely to be more.
- 8.7 The 2017-19 Integration and Better Care Fund policy framework document sets out the objectives for which Better Care Fund monies can be used. These objectives include:

Objective 1 - Assist disabled residents to remain in their own homes through supporting the provision of adaptations (so far as this is necessary, appropriate and reasonably practicable) to prevent admissions to care and to assist with delayed transfers where possible.

Objective 2 – Safeguard the health and well-being of vulnerable residents by removing unnecessary hazards to health and safety in the home to reduce avoidable emergency admissions

Objective 3 – Provide adaptations that are suitable for the future by ensuring the scheme of works is dementia aware.

Objective 4 – assist vulnerable people to afford to heat their homes through appropriate energy efficiency and heating measures.
- 8.8 The Better Care Fund currently provides more funding than is required to meet the demand for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants. A recent independent review highlighted that for Exeter, the demand is lower than expected and plans are underway

to provide more accessible information and marketing to provide better information to residents and health and care workers to increase the number and success of applications. In addition a flexible policy allowing assistance to a wider range of households, beyond the scope of Disabled Facilities Grants, which meets the Better Care Fund objectives will allow the City Council to fully utilise the Better Care Fund allocation.

- 8.10 The proposed new policy can be found in Appendix A to this report. The policy will provide the flexibility and discretion for the council to provide appropriate assistance to residents who could benefit and meet the objectives of the Better Care Fund.

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

- 8.11 The Disabled Facilities Grant programme is mandatory and a statutory function of the local housing authority undertaken by the Private Sector Housing Team within Environmental Health and Licensing.
- 8.12 Disabled Facilities Grants will continue to be operated in line with the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, with a maximum of £30,000 being available and means testing being undertaken on all applicants except for child applications. Conditions will also be placed on all grants over £5,000 requiring repayment in certain specific circumstances. Given their mandatory status funding Disabled Facilities Grants will take precedence over any discretionary funding, so if in the future allocations are reduced then certain discretionary funding would, as a necessity, reduce or cease.

Accessible Homes Grant

- 8.13 The Accessible Homes Grant enables an enhanced offer in addition to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant subject to available funding. This grant is available in the following circumstances:
- To top up a mandatory grant where the cost of the work exceeds £30,000 (in certain circumstances)
 - To fund works beyond the scope of a Disabled Facilities Grant to make a property safe for the disabled occupant.
 - To fund a Disabled Facilities Grant clients contribution (in certain circumstances) identified as a result of the means test.
 - To fund the cost of moving house where moving is more appropriate than adapting the existing property.

Healthy Homes Grant

- 8.14 The Healthy Homes Grant will provide urgent/essential repairs to the home to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the occupier. The grant is only available where a Home Improvement Loan is unavailable.

Home Improvement Loans

- 8.15 Wessex Resolutions Community Interest Company currently administers loans within the requirements of this policy and the local policies of each district council within Devon. The Home Improvement Loan is a flexible product that can be used for the following purposes:

- Home repairs and improvements
- Adaptation works where a grant is not available
- To cover a client contribution to a grant
- To cover the cost of the work over the grant maximum.
- To bring empty homes back into use
- For landlords to carry out repairs or improvement to rented accommodation
- For energy efficiency improvements

Warm Up Grants

- 8.16 Warm Up Grants aim to provide top up funding for energy efficiency measures, e.g. loft and cavity wall insulation or boiler replacement, where funding from energy companies under their Energy Company Obligation (ECO) have been awarded but the available funding does not cover the full cost of the work.
- 8.17 Funding will also be given for energy efficiency measures not currently funded through Energy Company Obligation, for example insulating mobile homes, fuel switching (from electricity to gas) and first time central heating installations

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

- 9.1 The Financial Assistance Policy relates to the key actions of 'Help me find somewhere suitable to live' and contributes to 'a healthy and safe city.' Addressing housing conditions contributes not only to the objective within the Council Corporate Plan but also more widely as:-

- Good quality housing attracts companies and workers - leading to an economically prosperous city
- Children and young people are better able to benefit from education if they are well housed – leading to a city of excellence in learning
- Good quality housing promotes community safety – leading to a safer place in which to live, work and visit
- High quality, affordable, warm homes promote health and wellbeing – leading to a healthy city

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- 10.1 There are no major risks associated with the policy which only slightly amends the existing policy which has been fully funded by the Better Care Fund. Not having a policy could mean that the Council would be unable to utilise the Better Care Fund for anything other than the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants.

12. Are there any other options?

- 12.1 It could be decided not to adopt the new policy, however given the current policy does not reflect the current situation and solutions for the demands placed upon Private Sector Housing Team by the Better Care Fund, this option would prevent assisting vulnerable customers.

Originating Officer: Simon Lane, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

- The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002
- Technical Guidance Annex 4: Better Care Fund Planning Requirements for 2016/17
<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/technical-guidanceannex--bf0.pdf>

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Financial Assistance Policy for the Better Care Fund

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This policy is required under Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. The Order provides councils with the discretion to develop schemes to provide financial assistance to deal with a range of housing issues.
- 1.1.2 This policy sets out the areas on which The City Council will focus Better Care Fund resources in order to improve housing conditions across the district whilst contributing to the delivery of the Better Care Fund, Health and Wellbeing Board and local priorities.
- 1.1.3 This policy provides Exeter City Council with the flexibility and discretion to provide appropriate assistance to meet the aims and priorities set out in section 3 below and had been developed in association with Devon County Council and all the district councils in the county.

1.2 Funding

- 1.2.1 The assistance contained within this policy is only available subject to the availability of funding. Where funding is limited priority for spend will be given to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant.

SECTION 2 - CONTEXT

2.1 Housing and Health

- 2.1.1 Housing is a key determinant of health, and by promoting good quality housing this policy can contribute to reducing health inequalities for the residents of Exeter.
- 2.1.2 In 2002, flexibilities were introduced enabling councils to use government grant that has been allocated for disabled facilities grants to be used more intelligently to deliver adaptations for disabled people outside of the mandatory grant regime.
- 2.1.3 Research has shown that there is a direct impact on the health and well-being of residents resulting from the homes in which they live; therefore, poor housing can contribute to poor health.
- 2.1.4 Each year hazards in the home result in unnecessary injuries, episodes of ill-health, and harm to mental health and in many cases the occupiers do not link the poor condition of their homes with a potential negative impact on their health. The poorest housing stock can be found in the private sector, and in some cases residents who own their own home are not able to maintain them and as a result hazards can develop.
- 2.1.5 An estimated 34,400 excess winter deaths were recorded in England and Wales in 2016/17 as reported by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in their document Excess Winter Mortality in England and Wales 2016-17. Many of these people die unnecessarily as a result of living in cold homes

2.2 Better Care Fund

- 2.2.1 In 2015 the government introduced the Better Care Fund in an attempt to bring health and social care together in an integrated way. The fund is a combination of government funding from the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government and includes the grant allocation for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG). The 2017-19 Integration and Better Care Fund policy framework document lists the conditions that the better care fund must be used to address.
- 2.2.2 These are:

Condition 1: *Plans to be jointly agreed* – The plan to use the Better Care Fund allocation must be jointly agreed and signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board, and constituent councils and clinical commissioning groups. The local housing authority must also be involved due to the inclusion of the Disabled Facilities Grants allocation, which forms part of the fund

Condition 2: *NHS contribution to social care is maintained in line with inflation.* - The funding must be used to contribute to the maintenance of adult social care services in each local authority, which also has a health benefit. However, beyond this broad condition, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) wants to provide flexibility for local areas to determine how this investment in adult social care services is best used.

Condition 3: *Agreement to invest in NHS commissioned out of hospital services, which may include 7 day services and adult social care.* This should be achieved by funding NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, which may also include 7-day services and adult social care, as part of the agreed Better Care Fund plan.

Condition 4: *Managing Transfers of Care* - Plans should set out how local partners will work together to fund and implement transfers of care effectively.

2.2.3 More detail can be found in the 2017-19 Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework.

2.2.4 Based on these broad conditions, Devon County Council and the District Councils have identified an opportunity to provide additional grant and loan products to meet these conditions and deliver against the Health and Wellbeing Board priorities.

SECTION 3 - PRIORITIES

3.1 General

3.1.1 In Devon, the Better Care Fund priorities aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- Reduced admissions to residential and nursing care homes
- Reduce delayed transfers of care
- Reduce avoidable emergency admissions
- Increase dementia diagnosis rates

3.1.2 To meet these priorities this policy aims to focus on the following areas:

Objective 1 - Assist disabled residents to remain in their own homes through supporting the provision of adaptations (so far as this is necessary, appropriate and reasonably practicable) to prevent admissions to care and to assist with delayed transfers where possible.

Objective 2 – Safeguard the health and well-being of vulnerable residents by removing unnecessary hazards to health and safety in the home to reduce avoidable emergency admissions

Objective 3 – Provide adaptations that are suitable for the future by ensuring the scheme of works is dementia aware.

Objective 4 – Assist vulnerable people to afford to heat their homes through appropriate energy efficiency and heating measures.

SECTION 4 – MANDATORY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFGs)

4.1 Background

4.1.1 The delivery of the disabled facilities grant programme is mandatory and a statutory function of the local housing authority. The delivery of this function is governed by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

4.2 Eligibility

4.2.1 Any disabled householder seeking financial assistance with the cost of adaptations to their home must be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT) working on behalf of, or approved by Devon County Council.

4.2.2 A person aged eighteen or over shall be considered disabled if:

- they are registered under section 29(1) of the National Assistance Act 1948 (disabled persons' welfare), or
- they are a person for whose welfare arrangements have been made under that provision or, in the opinion of the social services authority, might be made under it.

4.2.3 A person under the age of eighteen shall be considered disabled if:

- they are on a register of disabled children maintained under paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989, or
- they are in the opinion of the social services authority a disabled child as defined for the purposes of Part III of the Children Act 1989 (local authority support for children and their families).

4.2.4 All owner-occupiers, tenants, licensees or occupiers who meet the above criteria are eligible to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

4.3 Conditions

4.3.1 All grants other than those for children are subject to a test of financial resources, which is prescribed by The Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996.

4.3.2 The grant maximum is £30,000 and the disabled person must intend to occupy the property as their only or main residence for a period of five years after the works are complete (or such shorter period as the person's health or other relevant circumstances permit).

4.3.3 In order to make an application the client must supply the following:

- A completed and signed application form
- Evidence of financial situation
- Evidence of ownership of the property or the right to reside at the property
- Permission for the works to be carried out

- A detailed schedule of works and plans for complex works that must be agreed by the council
 - Any planning or building regulation approvals
 - Tenders for the works unless using an agreed procurement framework.
- 4.3.4 Only the works agreed by the council will be covered by the grant.
- 4.3.5 If the grant is approved there are 12 months to complete the works.
- 4.3.6 The works must be completed by the contractor stated on the approval document
- 4.3.7 No grant works should proceed until the grant application has been processed and all relevant planning, Building Regulation or landlord approval has been obtained.
- 4.3.8 If the applicant has a contribution to pay they must ensure they have funds in place to cover their share of the costs before the work begins on site.
- 4.3.9 Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid for where they are necessary to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the council before they are undertaken.
- 4.3.10 Any increase in the grant may have an impact on the charge placed against the property.
- 4.3.11 Applicants who are successful in their application for assistance will be required to maintain the adaptation.
- 4.3.12 The contract for the works is the responsibility of the applicant.
- 4.3.13 The grant will normally be paid direct to contractors in all but the most exceptional cases.
- 4.3.14 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Council.
- 4.3.15 Only works falling within the mandatory elements will be covered by the grant, these are works to:
- Facilitating access
 - Make a dwelling safe for the disabled occupier or persons residing with him/her
 - Provide rooms useable for sleeping
 - Provide bathrooms
 - Facilitate the provision for cooking of food
 - Provide heating, lighting and power
 - Adapt a property to enable a disabled occupier care for a dependant
 - Adapt the common parts
 - Provide access to garden
- 4.3.16 Where the grant is in excess of £5,000 a local land charge will be placed on the property for the amount over £5,000 up to a maximum of £10,000, requiring repayment of the grant becomes repayable (e.g. if the property is sold within a period of 10 years or a breach of conditions).
- 4.3.17 Where the cost of the work exceeds the mandatory grant limit of £30,000 the applicant may be eligible to an Accessible Homes Grant, subject to available funds.

SECTION 5 – ACCESSIBLE HOME GRANTS

5.1 Background

5.1.1 The Accessible Homes Grant enables an enhanced offer in addition to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant subject to available funding and can be used for, amongst other things

- the provision of safe play areas;
- adapting or providing a room in order for the disabled occupier to work from home;
- the installation of domestic automatic sprinkler systems into the homes of the most vulnerable;
- the installation of hard-wired interlinked smoke detectors in the hall and landing areas.

5.1.2 This grant is available in the following circumstances:

- Where a mandatory grant has been approved but the cost of the work exceeds £30,000
- Where there are works that may not be covered by the Disabled Facilities Grant in relation to adapting the home and making it safe.
- Where the means test identifies that a contribution is required.

5.2 Eligibility

5.2.1 To be eligible for this grant the applicant must meet the following:

- The applicant must be eligible to apply for a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant
- All applicants are subject to a means test including the parents and/or guardians of a disabled child.
- An applicant will only be eligible to apply for a grant to cover their assessed contribution in respect of a mandatory Disabled Facility Grant where the contribution is a third or more of the applicant's savings.

5.3 Conditions

5.3.1 The grant maximum is £20,000. Anything over £20,000 will not attract any further public grant.

5.3.2 Where additional funding is required to cover either a contribution or the cost of works over £50,000 (£30,000 from the Disabled Facilities Grant and £20,000 from the Accessible Homes Grant), then a Home Improvement Loan application can be made.

5.3.3 The Disabled Facility Grant paperwork will be used to assist the applicant in making an application for this grant.

- 5.3.4 A local land charge will be placed on the property for the full value of the grant which will be repayable if the property is sold, assigned or transferred within 25 years of the grant being completed.
- 5.3.5 Only the works agreed by the council will be covered by the grant
- 5.3.6 If the grant is approved there are 12 months to complete the works
- 5.3.7 The works must be completed by the contractor stated on the approval document
- 5.3.8 No grant works should proceed until the grant application has been processed and all relevant planning, Building Regulation or landlord approval has been obtained.
- 5.3.9 Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid for where they are necessary to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the council before they are undertaken.
- 5.3.10 Any increase in the grant may have an impact on the charge placed against the property.
- 5.3.11 Applicants who are successful in their application for assistance will be required to maintain the adaptation.
- 5.3.12 The contract for the works is the responsibility of the applicant.
- 5.3.13 The grant will normally be paid direct to contractors in all but the most exceptional cases.
- 5.3.14 The council will only offer grant for those works that are considered mandatory to meet the needs of the disabled person.
- 5.3.15 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Council.

SECTION 6 – ACCESSIBLE HOME GRANTS – MOVING APPLICATION

6.1 Background

6.1.1 This grant may be available to assist a disabled person to move to more suitable accommodation subject to available funding.

6.2 Eligibility

6.2.1 An applicant will be eligible for this grant where:

- The applicant meets the eligibility criteria for a Disabled Facility Grant.
- Where the Occupational Therapist and/or Exeter City Council consider re-housing to be more appropriate than adapting the existing accommodation.
- To be eligible for this grant the total cost incurred in the eligible 'moving on' expenses and any estimated eligible adaptation costs at the 'new' property should not be greater than the cost of adapting the applicant's current home.
- The 'new' property shall in the opinion of Exeter City Council provide a long term, sustainable home for the person for whose benefit the works are required.
- If the property is within a neighbouring authority the new authority will need to ensure the new property is suitable. This should also be agreed with the occupational therapist. The applicant must ensure that Exeter City Council's Private Sector Housing Team and Occupational Therapist have been consulted.

6.2.2 In determining the 'reasonable expenses' regard shall be had to the following criteria:

- The cost of the eligible works at the applicants existing property are not deemed reasonable, or;
- The eligible works at the applicants existing home are not technically feasible, or;
- The adaptation of the applicants existing property does not provide a sustainable, long term solution for their housing needs.

6.3 Eligibility

6.3.1 **Owner Occupier** - The expenses that can attract grant under this section may include the cost of:

- Any fees associated with obtaining a mortgage.
- Conveyancing fees.
- Land Registry Fee
- Local Authority Searches
- Stamp Duty
- Valuation, Homebuyers or Full Structural Survey
- Professional or other removal costs
- Estate Agent Commission.

6.3.2 The maximum grant payable for eligible expenses under this heading for an owner occupier is £10,000.

6.3.3 **For a tenant** - the expenses that can attract grant under this section may include the cost of:

- Letting agent fees
- Rent deposit
- Professional or other removal fees

6.3.4 The maximum grant payable for eligible expenses under this heading for a tenant is £5,000.

6.4 Conditions

6.4.1 Grant assistance is only payable to an owner occupier upon the successful completion of the purchase of the 'new' property and the disabled person then occupying that property as their only and main residence.

6.4.2 When moving to rented accommodation the applicant must obtain permission from the landlord for any adaptations to be carried out before the grant will be paid.

6.4.3 To qualify for this grant, the applicant must have been resident in their current property for at least 2 years prior to making an application to move.

6.4.4 The applicant must agree to live in the property as their only or main residence for a period of 5 years (or such shorter period as the person's health or other relevant circumstances permit).

6.4.5 For owner occupiers a local land charge or a charge against the deeds will be placed against the property for a period of 5 years.

SECTION 7 – HEALTHY HOMES GRANTS

7.1 Background

7.1.1 The Healthy Homes grant is a flexible grant to provide urgent/essential repairs to the home to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the occupier.

7.2 Eligibility

7.2.1 An applicant must apply for a Wessex loan first and will only be eligible to apply for this grant if a loan is refused.

7.2.2 Where the client is not eligible for a Wessex loan then they may apply for this grant.

7.2.3 To qualify for this grant the applicant must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Housing Benefit
- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independent Payment with the daily living component
- Attendance Allowance
- Guarantee Pension Credit
- Income support
- Council tax support (not the single person discount)
- Universal Credit – universal credit replaces the following means tested benefits – Housing Benefit, income related ESA, Income based JSA, Child tax credit, working tax credit and income support.

7.3 Conditions

7.3.1 The maximum grant available is £5,000 over a rolling two year period.

7.3.2 The grant is only available for owner occupiers and will have no repayment conditions attached.

SECTION 8 – HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS

8.1 Background

- 8.1.1 Wessex Resolutions Community Interest Company (WRCIC) is a not-for-profit company contracted by Exeter City Council to deliver loans to residents in the city.
- 8.1.2 Wessex Resolutions Community Interest Company administer loans within the requirements of this policy. Home Improvement Loans are flexible and can be used for the following purposes:
- Home repairs and improvements
 - Adaptation works where grant is not available
 - To cover a client contribution to a grant
 - To cover the cost of the work over the Disabled Facilities Grant or Accessible Homes Grant maximum.
 - To bring empty homes back into use
 - For landlords to carry out repairs or improvement to rented accommodation
 - For energy efficiency improvements

8.2 Eligibility

- 8.2.1 This will vary and is based on the individual circumstances of each client. Loan advisors will carry out an assessment and provide independent advice on ethical and responsible lending the most appropriate product to suit their needs.

8.3 Conditions

- 8.3.1 Conditions may vary depending on the loan product selected and the individual circumstances of each applicant.
- 8.3.2 Typical 4.2% APR, loans are subject to status. Wessex Resolutions Community Interest Company may insist on loans being protected at the Land Registry by a Title Restriction. Missing payments could affect your credit rating and ability to obtain credit in the future.

SECTION 9 – WARM UP GRANTS

9.1 Background

9.1.1 These grants, up to a maximum £2,000 per property, provide top up funding for energy efficiency measures where energy providers are part funding energy efficiency measures under their Energy Company Obligation (ECO) or to fund energy efficiency measures which do not attract Energy Company Obligation, for example insulation to mobile homes and the installation of central heating for the first time.

9.1.2 Works will generally include:

- Mains gas boiler replacement,
- Loft insulation,
- Cavity wall insulation,
- Non-gas boiler replacements,
- Replacement storage heaters,
- Internal or external wall insulation,
- Room in roof insulation,
- Flat roof insulation

9.2 Eligibility

9.2.1 Applicants must have been identified through the Council's Energy Company Obligation flexible eligibility Statement of Intent which can be found on the council's website.

9.2.2 To qualify for the top up a survey must be carried out by the energy provider, a local installer, or an agent and qualifying works identified. Provisions will be in place to ensure value for money.

9.2.3 For owner occupiers and private landlords a maximum of up to £2,000 is available.

9.2.4 If more than £2,000 is needed then the client should apply for a Wessex loan subject to availability and eligibility

9.3 Conditions

9.3.1 The contract for the works is the responsibility of the applicant.

9.3.2 The grant will normally be paid direct to contractors in all but the most exceptional cases.

9.3.3 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the client and Council.

SECTION 10 – MISCELLANEOUS

10.1 Exceptions to this Policy

- 10.1.1 Exeter City Council accept that applications may be received for adaptations not covered by the circumstances listed above which will need to be formally determined. Any such application will be referred through the appropriate process of the council managing the application.

10.2 Appeals and Complaints

- 10.2.1 Where the applicant has a complaint about the manner in which Exeter City Council is applying this policy, then they should follow the Council's formal complaints process.
- 10.2.2 Where the complaint is in respect of works, the complaint should be made to the contractor in the first instance, if this does not resolve the problem then the Exeter City Council should be contacted for advice.

APPENDIX A – ELIGIBLE WORKS

A1. Disabled Facilities Grant and Accessible Homes Grant

A1.1 An assessment by an agreed Occupational Therapist must be carried out that recommends the type of adaptation required. Minor works are assessed by the Occupational Therapist and may be dealt with outside of the grant process.

A.2 Facilitating access

A2.1 Facilitating access by the disabled occupant

- to and from the dwelling
- to a room used or usable as the principle family room
- to a room used for or usable for sleeping
- to a room in which there is a lavatory
- to a room in which there is a bath or shower
- to a room with a wash hand basin

A2.2 Such works may include:

- Ramping and/or handrails to the main external door. This could instead be a rear door in the case of a rear access. Only one access point will be allowed for each dwelling. External lifts will be considered if reasonably practicable and they are not prone to vandalism.
- Widening the main entrance door and the doorways to the bedroom, bathroom and living room to facilitate wheelchair access. Automatic door opening to main entrance doors will only be allowed for persons who are otherwise unable to open the door. Door entry systems will be considered where the person has severe mobility problems.
- Access to other rooms may be considered where the disabled person is also a carer.
- Other adaptations that are necessary to facilitate access to any of the relevant rooms by the disabled person, for example, stair lifts or vertical lifts in some cases. Where a stair lift breaks down and it is 5-10 years old, a manufacturers report is needed before it can be replaced. If it is over 10 years, a report may not be required.
- Provision of hard standings (3.6 m x 4.8 m max unless exceptional circumstances) and associated crossover for vehicle access where the disabled person is in a wheelchair or has difficulty walking to the house. This will only be given where existing on-street parking is considered unsatisfactory and a marked disabled parking bay is not possible or where it affords a more economical solution than providing additional paths/ramping from the roadside. Provision of off-street parking on its own is not eligible. (Please note: Being a holder of a blue badge is not an eligibility criterion for this item).
- Washing facilities Facilitating the use of washing facilities by the disabled occupant
- Adaptation of the facilities in the bathroom and toilet, including the provision of level access showers, lever taps and specialist automated WCs. The adaptation

or provision of more than one bathroom to a house e.g. additional ground floor wc, will only be considered if evidenced by functional need.

A3 Kitchen Facilities Facilitating the preparation and cooking of food

A3.1 Where someone other than the disabled person does and will continue to do the cooking and preparation of meals, normally it will not be necessary to carry out full adaptations.

However, it may be possible to carry out minor adaptations to allow the disabled person to prepare light meals or hot drinks, typically this may include a low-level worktop with power points for a kettle/microwave.

A3.2 Full adaptations can be considered where the disabled person is the only or main user of the kitchen. The following adaptations can be considered:

- a. Kitchen sink, including alteration to its height or position or the type of taps fitted to it. Powered, adjustable-height sinks will not generally be allowed, as the provision of a second sink is a more economical solution.
- b. Cooker point and oven-housing unit ensuring its height and position is in a safe location and the provision of worktops on either side.
- c. Work surfaces located beside the sink and on each side of the cooker having a total length of approximately 1.5m, all at a suitable height for the disabled person.
- d. Food storage in an accessible position, usually space for a refrigerator with power supply.
- e. Wheelchair access, if necessary, including wider doors, rearrangement of facilities etc.
- f. Alterations to the kitchen door, light switches and power points, but only if it is necessary.
- g. Extensions or enlargement to kitchens can only be agreed where they are absolutely necessary in order to provide turning space for a wheelchair and if suitable space cannot be achieved by rearrangement of the existing facilities.
- h. The provision of cupboard and storage units on an "essential" basis. (2x1m base units and baskets or equivalent).
- i. Mechanical ventilation where kitchen schemes require Building Regulation approval.

A4 Electrical work

A4.1 Alterations to the height and/or position of light switches and power points to make them accessible to the disabled person.

A4.2 Upgrading of electrical installation where the current installation is considered unsafe.

A5 Heating

A5.1 Heating the rooms that are in everyday use by the disabled person where a medical need can be demonstrated. Changes to the type of heating system will only be allowed if evidenced by medical need (e.g. change from solid fuel to gas where applicant can no longer carry fuel) and the applicant is not eligible for other types of grant such as Eco Flex

A5.2 Upgrading/replacing of boilers/radiators where the property has been extended as part of the adaptation.

A6 Guarding

A6.1 Provision of laminate glass or specialist lighting or guards to fires and around radiators where disabled children with violent behavioural problems may harm themselves.

A6.2 Restrictors or works to windows for the safety of the disabled person.

A7 Alarms

A7.1 Provision of enhanced fire alarm systems for those with hearing difficulties.

A8 Structural alterations

A8.1 Carrying out structural alterations where necessary to provide fixings for disabled equipment provided by Social Services e.g. fixing for tracking /overhead hoists.

A8.2 Storage or space for essential medical equipment as part of the adaptation works but not as a standalone item.

A8.3 Where an adaptation is required to a listed building and additional works are required to comply with requirements.

A8.4 Where an adaptation cannot be carried out due to disrepair issues those repairs, within reason, may be carried out. Such works may include replacement of rotted flooring or strengthening of the floor as part of a flush floor shower installation, electrical repairs to enable works to be carried out safely, and dealing with low water pressure. More substantial repairs that are not directly affecting the adaptation will need to be referred to a home improvement loan or healthy homes grant.

A8.5 Additional bathrooms or bedrooms may be allowed where they are specifically for the disabled person and it can be demonstrated that adaptation of other rooms or space or access to those rooms in the property is unsuitable. Extensions will only be allowed following a detailed cost/benefit analysis of alternative options.

A8.6 Requests are sometimes received to provide separate bedrooms where disabled children with behavioural difficulties share a room with other siblings and disturb their sleep. This will only be considered where it can be demonstrated the child is prone to violent outbursts and there is risk of physical harm to the child or to the other siblings. Families will first be expected to re-arrange the sleeping arrangements in their home to try to eliminate the need for extra bedrooms. If there is more than one reception room the family will be expected to use the extra room(s) for sleeping purposes.

A9 Garden and external access

A9.1 In cases of small terraced properties with narrow passageways or very difficult access, effective adaptation can only proceed where it can be reasonably and practicably carried out without having a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties.

A9.2 Access to the garden may be given to improve an existing access to make it safe for the disabled occupant to use. It does not include extending an existing access e.g. creating a side access so a person can also go around the side of a house. Generally, the most modest solution for providing access to both the house and the garden will be considered and this can mean that one access may be sufficient to access both the house and the garden. Where homes have communal gardens, e.g., blocks of flats served by a single access, grants will not normally be provided for an individual access to the garden unless it can be demonstrated that because of the

disabled persons condition the travel distance to the garden would be excessive and unreasonable.

- A9.3 The grant will only be for providing immediate access to the garden and does not include landscaping gardens to make them more suitable for the disabled person to access. However, to assist a disabled person to live independently, an allowance of 4m² of pathway, (which may include a turning circle for a wheelchair user), will be considered to assist access to any specific areas enjoyed by the disabled person. □ Provision of fencing or guarding for the safety of the disabled person when in the garden.

A10 Healthy Homes grant

- A10.1 An assessment of the property may be necessary to determine the scope of the work and does not cover the full renovation of a property. It is intended that the grant is sufficient to make safe a defect that is considered to pose a risk to the health, safety or welfare of the occupier.

A10.2 This could include but is not limited to the following:

- Electrical safety- where the condition of the electrical wiring could lead to imminent risk of electrocution or fire or accidents as a result of inadequate lighting.
- Falls – where the condition of the stairs or floors are in such a state as to provide an imminent risk of a fall in the home.
- Cold – where the heating is inadequate or lacking, and the condition of the doors and windows are contributing to the home being cold in the winter and there is a risk of falls or other ill effect from cold temperatures.
- Dampness – damp conditions so significant that a roof is failing and water is visibly entering the property. Rising damp, condensation or minor leaks may not be covered by this grant.
- Structural collapse- where a structural part of the building is in such a state as to constitute an imminent risk.
- Amenities – the lack of a functioning basic amenity such as a toilet, bath, wash hand basin or kitchen sink.
- Hot water – where there is no hot water available for the occupier due to a fault with a boiler or hot water tank.

- A10.3 This list is not exhaustive and each case will be assessed based on its individual circumstances.

A11 Home Improvement Loan

- A11.1 The loan will cover those works covered by this policy and any other works specified by Exeter City Council.

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: Executive 12 June and Council 24 July 2018

Report of: Service Manager Community Safety & Enforcement

Title: Additional Funding for Bridge Replacement and Repair

Is this a Key Decision?

No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | What is the report about? |
| | |
| 1.1 | To seek approval for additional funding for the replacement of the Exeter City Council owned Kings Arms Bridge. |
| | |
| 2. | Recommendations: |
| | |
| 2.1 | That Executive support the recommendation for Council to approve an additional budget of £250K to fabricate and install a replacement of the Kings Arms Bridge to meet all current safety standards. |
| | |
| 3. | Reasons for the recommendation: |
| | |
| 3.1 | The bridge was inspected in early 2016 and was found to be showing signs of structural fatigue & ageing. Regular monitoring revealed a rapid decline in the condition of the structure. The County Council's Bridge Engineers conducted a detailed survey later in the year and concluded its defects were irreparable and removal or replacement was recommended. |
| | |
| 3.2 | The bridge forms part of what has become a popular and established cycle and route for walkers. It also serves as a quiet route between St Leonards and St Thomas |
| | |
| 3.3 | Council approved a £160k budget for this work on 25 July 2017. However, the initial estimate provided by Devon County Council Bridge Engineers to inform that report has proven to be vast under-estimate owing to many factors / requirements. |
| | |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 4. | What are the resource implications including non-financial resources. |
| | |
| 4.1 | The revised cost of replacement will be £410k as re-calculated by the County Council Bridge Design Engineers. In addition there will be a considerable investment of officer time required to project manage the installation. |
| | |
| 5. | Section 151 Officer comments: |
| 5.1 | The additional cost, if approved, will be funded by borrowing and add approximately £11,000 a year to the savings target for 2018-19. |
| 6. | What are the legal aspects? |
| | Please see Monitoring officer comments below. |
| 7. | Monitoring Officer's comments: |
| | Whilst the recommendation to replace the bridge raises no issues for the monitoring officer, the substantial increase in cost does raise the importance of having clarity of contract in terms of cost and scope of the work to be completed. As a result, a formal contract needs to be agreed and completed by Legal Services before the works are commenced. |
| 8. | Report details: |
| | |
| 8.1 | The initial estimate provided by Devon County Council was originally based on a 'like for like' replacement basis, but failed to fully recognise all the technical aspects which would need consideration and the necessary change in the way the swing bridge is supported. |
| | |
| 8.2 | It has now become apparent that a 'like for like' replacement is not possible due to changes in safety factors affecting both design standards and unknown weight bearing capacity thresholds since the construction and installation of the current bridge in 1972. The existing bridge is a wooden structure (laminated construction) which is not ideal in such a watery location. Therefore the new replacement bridge will be of metal construction having a far longer sustainable lifespan and less demand on maintenance. Its appearance will however be similar with some timber cladding & historic ironwork retained in acknowledgement of the Canal's Heritage. |
| | |
| 8.3 | Revised costs for the project are:- Bridge fabrication and installation £290k Ground investigations, piles and foundations £47k Design, supervision and project management £43k Contingency sum £20k Providing temporary bridge £10k |

| | |
|------------|---|
| | |
| 8.4 | If approval is given for the additional funding then it is anticipated that the pre-fabricated bridge will be installed over 4 days during April 2019. Other preparatory works such as piling and concreting, masonry works would however need to precede beforehand. |
| | |
| 9. | How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan? |
| | |
| 9.1 | The use of the bridge contributes to a valuable recreational asset and enhances health and wellbeing. It is vital link into the Riverside Valley Park from the Basin area and is part of a busy cycle commuter route into the City. |
| | |
| 10. | What risks are there and how can they be reduced? |
| | |
| 10.1 | There is a reputational risk in us closing a popular recreational walking and cycling facility. There would also be an impact upon those local traders whose customers utilise this asset. |
| | |
| 11. | What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment? |
| | |
| 11.1 | Health & Wellbeing: the bridge forms an important link to the walking and cycling route around the Canal and Quay. |
| | |

| | |
|------------|---|
| 12. | Are there any other options? |
| | |
| 12.1 | Closure. The nearest crossing downstream of the Basin would then be Salmonpool Bridge which allows vehicular access, adding approx. 2.5km to the circuit. A temporary static bridge is due to be installed for at least 6 months whilst the old one is removed. This could be retained but would restrict navigational access into the Quayside from the Canal. This would result in the cruise businesses having to utilise the Canal Basin in the future. The cost of purchasing this bridge is estimated to cost £60-£70k. The permanent narrowing of public access would however create more congestion & conflict of users, leading to criticism & potential loss of reputation. |
| | |

Steve Carnell
Service Manager Community Safety & Enforcement

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)
 Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 12 June 2018 (Executive Committee)
13 June (Extraordinary Council)

Report of: Strategic Management Board

Title: Transformational Budget – First tranche of proposed projects

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

The report examines the first tranche of proposed project to be funded by the transformation budget and seeks approval to assign funding to the projects and commence their delivery.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 Executive Committee recommends and Council approves the allocation of funding from the Transformation Reserve.
- 2.2 Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive & Growth Director, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Leader of the Council, to allocate resources up to £1.5 million funded by an Earmarked Reserve, to support transformation and other projects that will support the Council in delivering £2.75 million in savings over the next two years.
- 2.3 Executive recommends and Council approves a capital Budget of up to £10 million to enable commercial opportunities to be progressed.
- 2.4 Council delegates authority to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Director for Place, the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Place and Commercialisation to award funds against the Commercialisation capital budget of £10 million.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 The proposed projects are all designed to transform the way we work and either offer budget savings from more efficient working or enable increased income generation. These types of projects will be essential as we manage the impacts of reducing budgets in the future.
- 3.2 The Commercialisation capital budget will enable the Council to act quickly if opportunities arise in the commercial market. All successful bids will be subject to a rigorous business case approval process.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

- 4.1 The financial and non-financial implications are listed on a project by project basis in section 9. The overall aim will be to reduce drain on resources by introducing more efficient working practices and improving income generation by grasping commercial opportunities.
- 4.2 The aim of both funds is to provide either ongoing reductions in service budgets or future long term income streams that will enable the Council to address the shortfall in funding of £2.75 million over the next two years.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

- 5.1 The two budgets requested are considered essential to the Council's need to make £2.75 million savings over the next two years. In order to protect against significant cuts to services, these funds will support the introduction of new income streams and measured savings across the Council.
- 5.2 The Council has set aside in an earmarked reserve, £1.5 million, to support one-off expenditure in order to deliver a balanced budget going forward. Council is required to approve all budgets for expenditure regardless of how they are funded.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1 To be reported at the meeting.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

To be reported at the meeting.

8. Background

- 8.1 The impact of budget cuts arising from reductions in central government funding has put increased pressure on our budgets and our ability to deliver services. In line with many other local authorities Exeter City Council must either drive greater efficiency, cut services or seek extra income to balance budgets.
- 8.2 The Authority needs to look at the resources at its disposal and examine the potential for changing the way we do things to be more efficient and how we can become more commercial to generate income. Projects to achieve these aims are likely to require some initial funding from the transformation fund.
- 8.3 Across the organisation there are a wide variety of services which have varying limited commercial activity such as Trade / Garden Waste and our Corporate Property Unit has operated commercially for many years. It is proposed to utilise these existing commercial services and develop them over the shorter term to produce some quick wins and then develop other services for a longer term gain
- 8.4 In order to avoid having to wait for the Committee cycle, it is proposed that Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive & Growth Director, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Leader of the Council, to allocate up to £1.5 million, which will be funded by an Earmarked Reserve, to support transformation and other projects

that will support the Council in delivering £2.75 million in savings over the next two years.

9 Proposed Projects for tranche 1

9.1 The table below summarises the projects and their costs with further detail given in paragraphs 9.2 to 9.9 below. Any further projects that are funded will be reported to Council through the usual budget monitoring reports.

Table 1: Summary of Proposed Transformation Projects

| | Project Summary | Budget Requested |
|-----|---|---|
| 9.2 | Commercial Development Manager, to develop commercially targeted opportunities through the business case stage and into operation. | £50k / year including salary on costs for two years |
| 9.3 | Commercialisation Audit, to look at which of our services have the most potential for commercialisation and to then work up business cases for selected early wins. | £20k quoted for reviews of 2 services and 2 business plans. |
| 9.4 | Canal Commercial Strategy, to develop a vision for a more economically sustainable asset looking at investment and commercial opportunities. | £40k Asset Survey £40k Canal Masterplan |
| 9.5 | CCTV modernisation, to improve income generation and reduce maintenance costs. | £30k for review |
| 9.6 | Corporate Asset Challenge, to review all of the Council's assets to determine whether they are being put to best use and whether there are alternative or better solutions to deliver the same outcome. | £60k for comprehensive asset review and challenge. |
| 9.7 | Street Cleansing resource and route optimisation. | £15k for asset mapping and route optimisation |
| 9.8 | Panacea Dynamic Purchasing System to automate competitive quoting and tendering. | £17k first year including set up. £12k thereafter. |
| 9.9 | Project management expertise to support the project to deliver the £2.75 million. | £110k |
| | Total requested for first tranche of projects | £432k |

9.2 Commercial Development Manager.

9.2.1 In line with the authorities emerging commercialisation strategy, a need for a Commercial Manager has been identified. The post will initially focus on Place based services, where some commercial activity already exists and develop them further for quick wins. The lessons learned will be used to shape and inform the development of wider commercialisation opportunities throughout the Authority.

9.2.2 Comparison with other local authorities indicates salaries for similar posts are in the Grade 10-11 range (£32,486 - £38,237) plus employment on-costs. This post will be subject to a Job Evaluation exercise. In order to reflect the challenges of the post and to attract a candidate with appropriate commercial marketing experience and skills, it is recommended that a sum of up to the equivalent of a Grade 11 salary be approved.

9.3 Commercialisation Audit.

9.3.1 An audit of potentially commercial activities (initially across the Place Directorate) to look at...

- Our existing services and establish what we're good at and what we have potential to be good at
- What our unique selling point and market advantage is
- What is the local market potential for our services
- Developing our existing outline commercial strategy into a full blown corporate strategy and action plan.
- Building on the work of the audit and strategy to establish some early targets and prepare a full business case for development
- Commercial training for the authority to develop the commercial culture.

9.3.2 Commercialisation specialists at APSE have quoted £15k for audits and business plans for two services.

9.4 Canal Commercial Strategy

9.4.1 The aim of the Canal Commercial Strategy is to create a more economically sustainable asset where the income generated would go some way to offset maintenance and operational costs.

9.4.2 There are two main elements an asset inventory, condition assessment and maintenance plan to establish the size of the future maintenance burden and a masterplan for the canal area focusing on the commercial opportunities. The two projects would need to be externally let to consultants with extensive experience of similar projects for the Canal and Rivers Trust or other navigation authorities. We are fortunate to have more than one of these companies in the Devon area which will provide competition.

9.4.3 The asset inventory survey should capture all information in enough detail to allow scenarios models and maintenance schedules to be developed. Expected cost circa £40k.

9.4.4 The commercial master planning exercise should be two stage process identifying opportunities and constraints and then looking at individual options for increased income with high level costs estimates and investment appraisals. Estimated cost of £40k for the two phases in total.

9.5 CCTV modernisation

9.5.1 Much of our CCTV infrastructure is becoming obsolete and the unique software protocol means that realistically only the current provider can maintain it. To reduce maintenance costs and to attract additional funding, a review of how we provide the service and the technology available is required.

9.5.2 The proposed plan for review is to employ an independent consultant to come up with a tender specification for a more generic CCTV system that can potentially be maintained by a wider range of companies. Ensuring compatibility with Police requirements to facilitate up to £40K capital investment from Police and Crime Commissioners Office which in turn will allow us to monitor cameras from other areas and bring in income.

Include upfront annual maintenance costs for the duration of the capital replacement contract. This will enable the removal of the £60k annual maintenance budget by investing capital upfront.

If the new technology allows review the costs and benefits of relocating Control Centre away from current location to the Civic Centre.

9.6 Corporate Asset Challenge

9.6.1 Corporate Property intend to start a review of all of the Council's assets to determine usage and whether assets are being put to best use and whether there are alternative and better solutions to deliver the same outcome.

9.6.2 As part of the emerging Asset Management Strategy, it is clear that Council's property portfolio needs to be evaluated against a common set of criteria to provide baseline information to identify the condition and suitability of its assets. This is known as the "Asset Challenge". The purpose of this is challenge perceptions and modernise the way the Council delivers services by:

Establishing the financial performance of buildings;
Transforming cultures and working practices – encouraging shared use of space;
Implementing new ways of working, including flexible and home working;
Reducing the Council's corporate footprint;
Highlighting assets that require investment;
Reducing carbon emissions;
Improving data management and daily collection of new and retained assets.

9.6.3 Ultimately the implementation of Asset Challenge will reduce Council costs and identify properties that should be retained for use and/or investment together with those that are surplus to requirements.

9.6.4 Through the strategic use of its property assets, the Council aims to achieve value for money from cost-effectiveness and efficiency leading to improved customer and stakeholder satisfaction, improved affordability, compliance with statutory and regulatory codes, improved corporate management, environmental improvements and enhanced joint and partnership working arrangements. In this way we would look to optimise the contribution our property assets make to the Council's strategic and service objectives. The process should allow us to prioritise investment in our assets to meet current and future service delivery needs and provide a cohesive rationale for the ownership, occupation and management of the Council's assets.

9.6.5 It should also ensure the maximum return from our commercial portfolio and landholdings as well as reducing the environmental impact of our operational property assets.

9.6.6 Finally, opportunities will be identified to use our assets to encourage new developments, redevelopments and urban regeneration.

9.6.7 In order to commence this work, the Council would need to engage the services of external consultants to provide an independent overview and resource level not currently in place in-house. It is felt that a comprehensive Asset Challenge process will cost in the region of £50,000-£60,000.

9.7 Street Cleansing route and resource optimisation

9.7.1 The key for optimising routes and resources within services like Street Cleansing is to accurately map where all the assets are and establish what frequency they need attention. This then allows full route and resource optimisation. In most modern services this is done by software programs. Our asset information is improving but it is still paper based and optimisation is done by hand. This is time consuming and inefficient. Rather than purchasing a full optimisation software package we are proposing that we commission a small piece of consultancy work which will map and georeferenced all of our street cleansing assets and sweeper routes and then fully optimise them. When twinned with greater use of mechanisation we anticipate that this will free up resource capacity.

9.8 Panacea Dynamic Purchasing System

9.8.1 Panacea is a dynamic purchasing system which enables large scale automation of procurement functions. Mainly focused around the communications and marketing function, case studies show that it has saved authorities between 35% and 72% of their marketing budgets. Even taking the conservative end of that estimate of 35% we would estimate savings of £140k against an initial investment of £17k and ongoing costs of £12k. On a spend to save basis this stacks up favourably.

9.8.2 Initially focussed on marketing and communications spend this could be rolled out across the authority to automate many of our procurement functions and drive best value from our suppliers. It will also give much greater central control and compliance over the whole process from supplier selection to evaluation and review.

9.9 Project Management

9.9.1 The transformation programme required to deliver the savings identified is a significant task for the Council. The savings required cannot be delivered by a piecemeal approach. The transformation programme will impact different services and functional areas across the Council, with different approaches, solutions and implications required to deliver the significant outcomes needed.

In order to successfully deliver the changes required, we will need professional project management expertise to lead the service / functional specialists in a controlled and managed way.

9.9.2 A professional project management approach will enable :

- a) Clarity of outcomes required from each affected service / function.
- b) The production of clear Responsibility Matrices for each project in the programme, so that task owners are identified and communicated.
- c) The creation of clear decision points and milestone gateways, to ensure effective control of the evolving solutions and the ability to constantly measure progress.

- d) Identification of clear delivery timescales and the establishment of deadlines for the decision points.
- e) Ongoing proactive risk management
- f) Effective Stakeholder engagement, including identification of key stakeholders and management of interaction with them.
- g) Clarity of focus and objective. The service / function leads will still need to do the 'day job' during the transformation programme. The dedicated project manager will enable the service / function leads to largely continue their normal duties. The delivery of the transformation programme projects is the 'day job' of the project manager.
- h) As the project manager is solely focused on the successful delivery of the project objectives (delivering the outcomes, on time and within budget), personal interests or 'protectionism' within service / functional areas are less likely to impact on progress and overall success.
- i) The project manager should promote and provide transparent, open and honest communication across the projects within the programme – looking for any synergies or conflicts which may arise across the strands.

9.9.3 It is important that the project management expertise is suitably experienced working in Local Authority / Central Government environments to appreciate the challenges pertinent to the Council. Additionally we should seek expertise which is suitably qualified, with recognised Cabinet Office qualifications such as 'Prince 2' and 'MSP – Managing Successful Programmes'.

9.10 Commercialisation Capital Budget (£10 million)

9.10.1 In addition to the revenue budget, it is proposed to provide for a capital budget to allow the Council to consider any commercial opportunities that may arise. This may include the purchase of commercial property within Exeter, where opportunities arise, but also will allow further opportunities for energy savings schemes, as well as capital investment to support commercial opportunities in all services.

9.10.2 As with the revenue fund, it is proposed that Council delegates authority (in this case) to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Director for Place, the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Place and Commercialisation to award funds against the Commercialisation capital budget of £10 million. Each project will require a business case, which will be considered to ensure that the benefits outweigh any costs of borrowing. Each scheme will be financed in the most appropriate way to maximise the benefit to the Council's revenue account going forward.

10. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

10.1 None identified.

11. Are there any other options?

11.1 The Council has to save £2.75 million a year. A traditional savings exercise could be run, but these tend to mean that all services are reduced. The size of the saving required means that a more measured approach is required.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Strategic Management Board

Contact for enquires:
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Room 2.3
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REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 12th June 2018

Report of: Jo Yelland, Director

Title: Built Sports and Leisure Facilities

Is this a Key Decision?

No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council & Executive

1. What is the report about?

This report recommends the permanent closure of Clifton Hill Sports Centre and requests a total budget of £3,000,000 to fund an interim plan for consolidating and investing in existing built sports and leisure facilities to improve and update the current offer to citizens.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 Executive recommends to Council to agree the following proposals:

- (a) A budget up to £2,000,000 for essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems at Exeter Arena, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre.
- (b) A budget of £880,000 for additional enhancements to the interiors and facilities at Exeter Arena, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre to improve customer experience and mitigate loss of facilities at Clifton Hill Sports Centre.
- (c) A budget of up to £150,000 to demolish Clifton Hill Sports Centre to secure the site and avoid incurring Business Rates and other unbudgeted revenue costs.
- (d) Delegate authority to the relevant Director to negotiate and agree the contractual compensation payment to be paid to the Leisure Operator as a result of the closure of Clifton Hill, to be funded from a Leisure earmarked reserve

2.2 The Executive RESOLVES to:

- (a) Permanently close Clifton Hill Sports Centre on cost /best value grounds.
- (b) Sell the Clifton Hill Sport Centre to generate a capital receipt to offset compensation costs and provide investment for other Council priorities including the development and improvement of other leisure sites.
- (c) Delegate authority to the City Surveyor to include the sale of the adjacent driving range, ski slope and Exeter Small Bore Rifle Club areas of the Clifton Hill site as a single development site if this offers the best value to the Council.

- (d) Delegate authority to the City Surveyor to take necessary steps to ensure the land is used for residential accommodation and not used for purpose built student accommodation.
- (e) Note an estimated budgeted loss of revenue income and VAT £100,000.
- (f) Support the operator with their proposal to repackage and reframe the city wide leisure offer reducing the price for a cross city offer which provides access to all facilities built at a proposed monthly membership fee of £25.00. (Currently at £35.65 per month).
- (g) Agree to the development of Physical Activity and Built Facilities strategies setting out the longer term sustainability and development plans for Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre, Wonford Sports Centre; Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre; Northbrook Swimming Pool and Northbrook Golf Course.

3. Reasons for the recommendations:

- 3.1 Clifton Hill Sports Centre is a dry side sports centre which is now 34 years old, nearly ten years passed its expected lifespan, it has already been proving difficult to maintain to acceptable standards. This has impacted on the quality of offer for customers and together with the recent influx of private, modern budget gyms, the operator is running the centre at a significant loss.
- 3.2 In order to manage the reductions in grant from central government, made in response to austerity measures, the Council policy has been to maintain service delivery and avoid cut backs that would impact on essential services by limiting spend in other areas such as building maintenance, other than for essential health & safety reasons, in non-statutory areas such as the leisure estate. The impact of this approach has been successful in that unlike many other areas, Exeter has seen no cuts to essential services but this has resulted in a backlog of routine maintenance schedules in some facilities, including those in the leisure portfolio.
- 3.3 During March 2018 Clifton Hill Sports Centre suffered significant damage following the highly unusual severe weather (first ever RED weather warning for England). Unprecedented amounts of snow resulted in damage of such severity that the operator closed the facility due to concerns about the overall safety of the building. This decision was fully supported by Council Officers.
- 3.4 The cost of repairing the building, which now includes a full replacement of the roof is estimated to be in the region of £700,000. A replacement and repair could take up to a year to complete which would further impact on overall profitability of the leisure contract and will not significantly extend the lifespan of the building and many of its facilities will be replaced by the St Sidwell's Point Swimming Pool and Leisure complex scheduled for opening in December 2020.
- 3.5 Therefore officers are recommending permanent closure of Clifton Hill Sports Centre and the sale of the site for development to generate a capital receipt to offset compensation costs and provide investment for other Council priorities including the development and improvement of other leisure sites. It is further recommended that the Council seeks to restrict development of the site to exclude purpose built student accommodation.

- 3.6 Behind the centre, on the old brickworks quarry, is the 60metre ski slope which also opened in the 1970's. There is also a golf driving range and Exeter Small Bore Rifle Club building: these areas are leased to the private operators on an annual basis: both also require investment to bring the facilities up to modern standards. Whilst some of this land is unsuitable for development due to contamination, it is recommended that the City Surveyor is permitted to consider the benefits of the sale of this as a single site if this offers the best value for the Council but securing restrictions on the site to promote its development for residential accommodation and to exclude purpose built student accommodation.
- 3.7 The Council is contractually obliged to compensate the operator for the removal of the site from the contract, loss of membership income and for the goodwill payment holiday agreed for April 2018 and will therefore will need to negotiate a one off payment to the operator. There will also be a reduction in income to the Council from the cessation of the annual management fee the operator pays for the site.
- 3.8 Despite the decline in usage at the Clifton Hill Sports Centre, it is recognised that the loss of this facility now will have a negative impact on people who do use the centre and may compound the impact of the temporary loss of facilities at Riverside Pool and Leisure Centre. The investment agreed in November 2017 for the refurbishment of Pyramids Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre will ensure that it is able to function until planned closure in 2020, but will not provide any increase in facilities to customers.
- 3.9 To reduce the risk of further loss of facilities from the Councils remaining facilities at Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre, investment is needed for essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems. This investment will enable the Council to meet its contractual obligations and ensure that the facilities are brought up to required standards to remain operational facilities for the remainder of the current contract term and to allow for strategic plans for the development/investment into the facilities to be put in place.
- 3.10 The combination of a number of factors, including the age and deterioration of the estate, fire at Riverside, the delays with the construction of the new centre, the recent influx of budget gyms (offering modern facilities at discounted fees) and now the damage to Clifton Hill Sports Centre has, and may continue to have, a negative impact on the quality and value of membership at Council facilities. This may have a longer term impact on the future viability of the Council's leisure contract which is due for retendering in 2020.
- 3.11 In mitigation, in partnership with the current operator, officers have developed an investment plan that will reduce the monthly membership fee, upgrade and modernise facilities at Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre. This will provide an increase in capacity and services and enable the operator to more effectively compete with budget gyms creating a higher quality more cost effective city-wide offer to residents. These improvements will go some way to mitigate the loss of the facilities currently provided at Clifton Hill Sports Centre although they will not mitigate against the loss of the sprung floor sports hall. However officers will work with partners across the city to identify opportunities to access to sports hall facilities currently not available to the general public.
- 4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources.**

- 4.1 This proposal requires additional funding of £150,000 for the demolition of Clifton Hill and other unbudgeted revenue costs, in addition to a further sum for a compensation payment and a loss of budgeted revenue income and VAT in the region of £100,000.
- 4.2 The proposals require additional funding of an estimated £2 million for essential enhancements and upgrades to the fabric of the buildings at Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre.
- 4.3 The additional proposals for enhancements to the interiors and facilities are estimated to be in the region of £880,000 with additional operator investments to upgrade fixtures and fittings including new gym equipment to be negotiated, but estimated to be in the region of £150,000.
- 4.5 The total financial impact of this package of proposals is a £3.3 million investment which will enhance Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre and mitigate against further deterioration of the Councils' leisure offer whilst strategic investment plans for these sites are developed.
- 4.4 Officer time to implement the proposals will be incorporated into business as usual.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

- 5.1 The section 151 Officer notes the contents of the report and will support the Director in the negotiations with Legacy Leisure, where required. Whilst a specified earmarked reserve for Leisure will be used for the compensation payment initially, that reserve will require replenishing once the final outcome is known. There are, however, sufficient resources in the General Fund Balance to address both the demolition costs and any agreed compensation payment, whilst maintaining balances well above the minimum recommended level. Any supplementary budget that is required will be included in a future budget monitoring report when the final outcome is known.
- 5.2 The loss of income as a result of the termination is also noted and a further supplementary budget request will be included in the quarter one budget monitoring reports to address this. Again this will be funded from the General Fund working Balance
- 5.3 The capital funds, if approved, will be added to the capital programme and funded in the most financially efficient way, in order to minimise the impact of the General Fund in the future.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1 Compensation payments arrangements for removal of Clifton Hill Sports Centre are set out in the formal contract between the Council and the leisure operator alongside landlord requirement to maintain the fabric of the buildings and replacement of the mechanical and electrical systems.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

- 7.1 When reaching a decision as to what to do with Clifton Hill Sports Centre, the Council is under a general duty to act fairly.
- 7.2 In some areas, legislation expressly imposes a duty to consult before a decision is made. In this matter, there is no specific statutory requirement obliging formal consultation with those who may be impacted by the closure of the centre. I am not aware that Exeter City Council had previously promised to consult regarding its leisure offer (or any changes thereto). I am not aware that there has been a past practice of consultation which would legitimately give those who might be impacted an expectation that a consultation exercise should take place.
- 7.3 Obviously the more serious the impact of a decision on affected individuals, the more important it is that the right decision is reached and that those affected feel that their concerns have been considered by the decision-maker. There is a risk that someone will challenge the Council's decision to close Clifton Hill Sports Centre. Any such challenge would be by way of Judicial Review. The remedy if successful could be:
- a. A decision quashing the council's decision to close Clifton Hill Sports Centre pending a consultation process;
 - b. An injunction preventing the demolition and subsequent sale of the site.
- 7.3 Clearly there is an impact on those users who currently use Clifton Hill Sports Centre. It could be argued that the proposed closure is such that fairness requires a formal consultation with them. However, given that the Council continues to offer alternative facilities of the same type in its other centres, it seems to me that the impact on individuals affected is low. Whilst a formal consultation has not been undertaken, the general public have been made aware of the problems at Clifton Hill Sports Centre and have been able to put their case forward.

8. Report details:

- 8.1 Clifton Hill Sports Centre, is a dry side sports centre; it is a Standard Approach to Sports Halls (SASH) model, built in 1984 with a life expectancy of 25 years; it is one of only two such facilities left in the country as all others have been closed down. It was built on the site of the 19th century Workhouse Works brick site, one of four in the Newtown area of Exeter. The area was used as an athletic running track during the 1970's, before the Exeter Arena was opened. Behind the centre, on the old brickworks quarry, is the 60metre ski slope which also opened in the 1970's. There is also a golf driving range and Exeter Small Bore Rifle Club building; these areas are leased to the private operators on an annual basis.
- 8.2 In order to manage the reductions in grant income from central government due to austerity measures, Council policy has been to maintain service delivery and avoid cut backs that would impact on essential services by limiting spend in other areas such as building maintenance, other than for essential health & safety reasons, in non-statutory areas such and the leisure estate. Since 2008 the council has reduced its senior management by over half along with a third of its staff. It has achieved £12.5 million savings since 2010 and seen a 30% reduction in its budget. The impact of this approach has been successful in that unlike many other areas, Exeter has seen no cuts to essential services but this has resulted in a backlog of routine maintenance schedules in some facilities, including those in the leisure portfolio.

- 8.3 A survey of the backlog maintenance costs of the leisure facilities has been completed as part of future financial planning and this identified around £500,000 of routine landlord and tenant works due for the Clifton Hill Sports Centre, this included some repairs to the roof which had begun to leak. However, during March 2018 Clifton Hill Sports Centre suffered significant damage following the highly unusual severe weather (first ever RED weather warning for England). Unprecedented amounts of snow resulted in water ingress into the building in a number of areas leaving damage of such severity that the operator only re-opened the studio areas of the facility following the snow melt. However the operator very quickly closed the whole facility due to concerns about the overall safety of the building structure. This decision was fully supported by Council Officers including the City Surveyor.
- 8.4 The on-going maintenance of the facility has also been hindered by the contractual split of responsibilities between the Council as landlord and Legacy Leisure/Parkwood Leisure as the facility operator, and the time taken to negotiate whose responsibility repair and other works are. The damage caused by the significant water ingress into the building infrastructure has now further compromised the facility. Insurance loss adjusters of both parties have raised doubts over the validity of insurance policies given these complex historic maintenance and repair issues. The Council policy also has a relatively high excess requirement and the assessment has concluded that it is not cost effective to commence a process to replace the roof, repair the building and re-open it for public use.
- 8.5 The cost to the Council of repairing the building, (which now includes a full replacement of the roof as opposed to repair) is estimated to be in the region of £700,000. The roof will require replacement with a structure that meets current building regulation standards and there is an additional risk that further costs may be incurred if the original building structure is unable to support these requirements. Despite this anticipated cost, the lifespan or general condition of the building will not be significantly extended. A replacement roof and building repair could take up to a year to complete and will not significantly extend the lifespan of the building and many of its facilities will be replaced by the St Sidwell's Point Swimming Pool and Leisure complex scheduled for opening in December 2020
- 8.6 Given the complexities and cost of the works it is anticipated the centre would remain closed for 9-12 months which could impact negatively on a declining membership situation and may render the centre, and the wider leisure offer totally economically unviable. Membership numbers and income from facilities at Clifton Hill Sports Centre have been declining over recent years with a 20% reduction in members from 2016 to 2017. Average occupancy levels of the four court sports hall is between 25% and 27% which is significantly below industry standards: sports halls are expected to be averaging 60-70% during peak times. Likewise the two squash courts operate below industry benchmark which is noted as being relatively low income and usage for the space. Up until 2016/17 the forty station gym area was performing within the industry benchmark for usage and income however this has recently declined which may, in part, be due to the increase in low budget gyms in the City in the last 18 months. There is very little secondary income generated at Clifton Hill Sports Centre (no café, meeting rooms or formal retail space) all of which resulted in the operators 2016/17 audited accounts showing a loss from this centre.
- 8.7 This combination of factors -age and deterioration of the estate; fire at Riverside; delays with the construction of the new St Sidwell's Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre; recent influx of budget gyms (offering modern facilities at discounted fees) and

now the weather damage to Clifton Hill Sports Centre - has, and will continue to have, a negative impact on the quality and value of membership at Council facilities. This may have a longer term impact on the future viability of the Council's leisure contract which is due for retendering in 2020.

8.8 In partnership with the current operator, officers have developed an investment plan that aims to secure the remaining facilities at Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre and minimise the risk of any further loss of facility, whilst longer term plans are made for the development of leisure provision across the City. This will upgrade facilities, provide an increase in capacity and services and enable the operator to more effectively compete with budget gyms creating a higher quality, more cost effective city-wide offer to residents. These investments will go some way to providing improved facilities to offset the loss of Clifton Hill Sports Centre and the extended partial closure of the Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre following the fire in February 2017.

8.9 **Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre** will remain central to the future leisure offer for the City and will complement the new St Sidwell's Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre when it opens in December 2020. This plan will enhance the fitness facilities at Riverside ahead of the re-opening of the pool in September 2018 to enable the relaunch of this site with new and relevant facilities supported by the newly replaced Health Suite and operational swimming pool. This includes:

Enhancements to the interiors and facilities:

- Refurbishment of the changing area and showers
- Conversion of the current café area into a new spin studio with virtual technology¹
- Extension of the reception area to relocate the café with seating area outside the pool access doors and enhancements post completion of works in the pool area.
- Conversion of soft play area to a new studio with virtual technology
- Extension to the gym

Essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems will include:

- Replacement air handling units
- Replace roofs 1 & 2

8.10 **The ISCA Centre and Exeter Arena** has potential for extensive future development but in the immediate term, as the Bridge Club have chosen to vacate the centre this creates an opportunity to provider a wider fitness offer from this facility, this includes:

Enhancements to the interiors and facilities:

- Conversion of the Blackmore Suite into a gym
- Refurbishment to update the changing areas and include showers
- Conversion of current gym (Arena) to a studio/spin studio with virtual technology

Essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems will include:

¹ *The introduction of virtual technology means people can access classes at any time as there is no need for an instructor: this is very much the trend at the moment and will complement the instructor led classes already programmed.*

ISCA Centre

- Removal of graffiti and replacement of damaged cladding on the external fabric of the building
- Resurfacing the fascia to front of the building
- Resurfacing the bowling green
- Resurfacing the asphalt road and footpaths

Exeter Arena

- Replacement of metal sheet cladding to front elevation
- Repair and re-cladding of the timber framed buildings
- Resurfacing asphalt car park and remarking spaces
- Replacement water heater and boilers
- Demolition of the sheds (Dairy) and re-provide storage with container

8.11 **Wonford Sports Centre** also has the potential for extensive future development but in the immediate term the poorly utilised crèche (used on average by 3 children a day) could be better used to offer new facilities on this site: the proposal includes:

Enhancements to the interiors and facilities:

- Conversion of the crèche into a new studio with virtual technology
- Refurbishment of the weights room
- Refurbishment of the gym

Essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems will include:

- Replacement of the Astroturf all weather pitch
- Repairing brickwork to rear elevation
- Replacing broken roof tiles as a result of vandalism
- Replacement air conditioning units and boilers

8.12 Table 1 below sets out the investment required to complete the essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems by site

| Table 1: Essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems by site | |
|--|-------------------|
| Exeter Arena | £277,490 |
| ISCA Centre | £152,257 |
| Riverside Leisure Centre | £1,241,453 |
| Wonford Sports Centre | £335,492 |
| Total | £2,006,692 |

Table 2 below sets out the both the overall costs of essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings, replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems by site and enhancements to interiors and facilities and shows the estimated contribution of around £150,000 anticipated from the operator to provide new equipment including virtual technology systems.

| |
|---|
| Table 2: Overall costs of essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings, replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems by site and enhancements to interiors and facilities |
|---|

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems | £2,006,692 |
| Enhancements to the interiors and facilities | £880,000 |
| New equipment (estimated & to be operator provided) | £150,000 |
| Total | £3,036,692 |

8.13 The operator has also proposed to repackage and reframe the city wide leisure offer, reducing the price for a cross city offer which provides access to all facilities at a proposed membership fee of £25.00 a month (Currently at £35.65). In conjunction with the improved facilities this would give excellent value for money enabling the operator to present a quality offer, competing with budget companies entering the city, whilst making these facilities relevant to the local communities.

8.14 Together with the proposed facilities development the operator is developing plans to put in place a community based outreach programme of activities working with partners to re-position Wonford Sports Centre as a community hub where sport and physical activity can be used to develop community health and wellbeing opportunities. Improvements to the look and feel of the centre, and the development of affordable and accessible activities, will contribute to the priorities set out in the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot programme.

8.15 Table 3 below summarises the current provision provided in the existing built facilities and table 4 summarises the impact of the proposed provision and shows how this plan mitigates against the loss of the facility at Clifton Hill and improves the overall offer.

| | Riverside | Pyramids | Wonford | Exeter Arena & ISCA Centre | Clifton Hill | Total |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------|--|---|--------------|-------|
| Gym Stations | 100 | 40 | 33 | 20 | 40 | 233 |
| Swimming Pool | 25 m | 25m | No | No | No | 2 |
| Sports Hall | 1 | No | 1 | No | 1 | 3 |
| Squash Courts | 2 | No | No | No | 2 | 4 |
| Dance Studio | 2 | No | No | No | 1 | 3 |
| Sauna | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | 4 |
| Health Suite | Yes | No | No | No | No | 1 |
| Other | Soft Play Room Cafe | | Free Weights Room Derelict 5 a side pitch | Athletics Track Field Physiotherapy Room | | |

| Table 4: Provision Following Consolidation and Investment Plan | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|---|--|--------------|---------------|
| | Riverside | Pyramids | Wonford | Exeter Arena & ISCA Centre | Total | Change |
| Gym Stations | 130 | 40 | 33 | 50 | 253 | +20 |
| Swimming Pool | 25m | 25m | No | No | 2 | 0 |
| Sports Hall | 1 | No | 1 | No | 2 | -1 |
| Squash Courts | 2 | No | No | No | 2 | -2 |
| Dance Studio | 3 | No | 1 | 1 | 5 | +2 |
| Sauna | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 4 | 0 |
| Health Suite | Yes | No | No | No | 1 | 0 |
| Spin Studio | 40 bikes | No | 6-8 bikes | 16 bikes | 60-62 | +60-62 |
| Virtual Tech | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | 3 | +3 |
| Other | New café Refurbished changing area and showers | | Refurbished Free Weights Room Reinstated 5 a side pitch | New Gym & showers Athletics Track Field Physiotherapy Room | | |

8.15 The total package of investments is intended to improve the overall offer from the Council and reverse the current downward trend in membership as set out in Table 5.

| Table 5 Projected impact on Membership Numbers of investment package | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 2016 Membership Numbers | 2017 Membership Numbers | Projected 2019 Membership Numbers assuming CHSC closes and no other changes take place | Projected 2019 Membership Numbers assuming CHSC closes and investment proposals delivered |
| 5,043 | 3,493 | 2,746 | 5,680 |
| | 30% reduction on 2016 membership numbers | 55% reduction on 2016 membership numbers | 12% increase on 2016 membership numbers |

8.16 Efforts have been made to provide residents with as much information as possible regarding the reason for the temporary closure. The operator, Legacy Leisure and the Council have worked together to ensure that information is available on websites and social media platforms. Officers have responded to on-line and social media queries and letters to individuals and club/group representatives.

8.17 As soon as possible officers announced to staff, the media and the public that a recommendation of permanent closure was a likely outcome of the assessment process. This has allowed residents to express their concerns and for elected

members to actively engage with their constituents to hear their views and concerns. This level of openness has given time for people to organise themselves: the council has received a number of standard letters from people expressing their concerns about the impact permanent closure could have on themselves, their families and other people. Officers have actively engaged in listening to individuals and groups and petition organisers have been invited to talk to officers about their concerns. Information has been shared as openly as commercial confidentiality allows.

- 8.18 Legacy Leisure has worked with Clifton Hill Sport Centre users to offer alternative facilities at other City sites. This has included re-scheduling programmes at Riverside to accommodate activities and classes that previously took place in the Sports Hall at Clifton Hill and the majority of these have now been transferred to the studios at Riverside or the Sports Hall at Wonford. Discounts and reductions in hire and other fees have been agreed on a parity with the fees previously charged at Clifton.
- 8.19 However not every single individual user has transferred to another site and not every group activity has been re-provided for at other sites, but both legacy Leisure and the Council will continue to work with any affected party to assist in finding appropriate alternative provision.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

- 9.1 This plan will contribute to the Council priorities of Exeter being the most active city in England, a healthy and active place with great things to see and do and a well-run Council with efficient and effective person centred services.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- 10.1 The rationale underpinning the proposal to permanently close Clifton Hill Sports Centre at short notice may not be accepted or properly understood by residents and other stakeholders. Investment in early and pro-active engagement processes to determine the priorities of the Councils Physical Activity and Built Facilities strategies (and hence the future of Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre) will systematically engage people in developing plans and prioritising future investments.
- 10.2 Closure without investment in the remaining facilities could place the overall leisure offer in jeopardy and result in loss of opportunity for residents to take part in sports and physical activity and serious reputational damage for the Council. This is why there is a supportive package of investment proposals which will go some way to mitigate from the loss of provision at Clifton Hill and secure the remaining facilities whilst future plans are developed.

11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

- 11.1 The closure of any facility will be a loss for regular users and, whilst the investment plan goes some way to mitigate the overall loss of facilities they will not be replaced in the same location. There will also be a loss overall of a sprung sports hall facility in the area, whilst there is actually an oversupply of sports halls in the city, (schools, colleges, university, private etc.) these are often unavailable to the public at peak times

or not in locations deemed accessible. This will need to be addressed in the Councils' future Physical Activity and Built Facilities strategy to be developed during 2018/9.

- 11.2 The proposals include the conversion of soft play areas (Bumper Backyard at Riverside) and crèche facilities. The operator reports that usage of these facilities is very low: for example the crèche at Wonford is used on average by 3 children a day (which can mean 1 parent/guardian a day using the facility) and on average 6 a day at Riverside. To mitigate from the loss of crèche facilities the operator is increasing the already popular parent/guardian and child sessions (Jump and Jiggle) at Riverside and will introduce these into Wonford.
- 11.3 These proposals will improve the quality of the built environment at Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre.
- 11.4 The proposed community outreach programme from Wonford Sports Centre is in an area where health inequalities can be higher than other wards and so this programme will contribute to the strategic aspiration to tackle entrenched health inequality across the city through community development approaches.
- 11.5 The proposed reduction in the monthly membership fee and the improved offer aim to increase affordability and accessibility of council leisure centres.

12. Are there any other options?

- 12.1 There is an option to repair the Clifton Hill Sports Centre. However this would cost an estimated £700,000 to replace the roof and repair the building with a further £250,000 of essential enhancements to bring the building up to contractual operating standards. This would not significantly extend the life of the building or provide for any additional facilities or services. A replacement and repair could take up to a year to complete and will not significantly extend the lifespan of the building and many of its facilities will be replaced by the St Sidwell's Point Swimming Pool and Leisure complex scheduled for opening in December 2020.
- 12.2 In addition the Council would still need to find an estimated £2 million for essential enhancements to the fabric of the buildings and replacement of essential plant and mechanical systems at at Exeter Arena and ISCA Centre, Wonford Sports Centre and Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre. The sale of the Clifton Hill site will generate a capital receipt to offset compensation costs and provide investment for other Council priorities including the development and improvement of the other leisure sites.

Director

Jo Yelland

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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Room 2.3
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