

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 provide 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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