

# CABINET

## Swimming Pool Support Fund: Capital Funding ICMD Report of Chief Officer - Planning and Climate Change

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the council to accept capital funding to deliver energy savings at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre, should an offer be forthcoming, and support Lune Valley Swimming Pool in achieving the same goal by acting as Accountable Body.

Key Decision

X

Non-Key Decision

Referral from Cabinet  
Member

Date of notice of forthcoming  
key decision

28/09/23

This report is public

### RECOMMENDATION

- (1) To accept up to £1m of capital funding from the [Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund](#) (SPSF), should an offer be made, to investigate and deliver a further energy saving project at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre.
- (2) To provide delegated authority to award the contract to the Chief Officer for Planning and Climate Change.
- (3) To take on the role of 'Accountable Body' and support Lune Valley Swimming Pool (Hornby) to apply for SPSF funding and deliver energy saving interventions.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The government's Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) provides a total of £60M to Local Authorities in England as a support package for public leisure facilities with swimming pools that face increased cost pressures, leaving them vulnerable in the medium to long-term.
- 1.2 Two phases of funding are available. Phase 1: Offers a one-off revenue contribution to support swimming pools. Phase 2: Offers capital funding to support with energy saving interventions and reduce CO2 emissions.
- 1.3 Officers have submitted a £300k revenue bid for Salt Ayre Leisure Centre (SALC) and £25k for Lune Valley Swimming Pool (LVSP).

- 1.4 The application portal for capital funding will open from 3 October until noon on 17 October 2023.

## 2.0 **Proposal Details**

- 2.1 Officers intend to submit a capital bid for a battery storage project at SALC to enhance the current measures.
- 2.2 Technical barriers are expected (i.e., *grid*), but in principle, the provision of large battery would capture surplus energy generated from the solar and reduce consumption the grid.

Further options to optimise may be available. This could include charging the battery on an off-peak tariff and discharging it to the centre during the day. This may be particularly useful during autumn and winter months.

Another option may be to use the battery to access grid ancillary services to generate further revenue streams. A mixture of the above may be possible using a smart management system. It is expected that the provision of a suitably sized battery may save the council over £50k p/a.

- 2.3 In order to review feasibility, assess energy savings, and demonstrate deliverability to support an application, officers intend to commission specialist consultants [Syzygy Consulting Ltd](#). The project would be delivered by the Climate Change Project Team.
- 2.4 Lune Valley Swimming Pool would like to apply for funding for several interventions and have requested support from the council. Interventions include heat recovery, VSD pumps, LED lighting, solar PV a pool cover and insulation.
- 2.5 In line with the funding criteria, the council would need to submit the application for both sites and act as Accountable Body for LVSP. This would involve a) Receiving and distributing funds; b) Working with LVSP to ensure work is delivered in line with funding criteria.

The General Manager at SALC will coordinate and oversee these activities, should funding be successful.

- 2.6 The council would not be required to provide any financial contributions to deliver either project.

## 3.0 **Details of Consultation**

- 3.1 Consultation has taken place between SALC, LVSP and the Climate Change Project Team.

#### 4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	<b>Option 1: Accept funding and act as AB</b>	<b>Option 2: Accept funding for SALC only and do not act as AB</b>
Advantages	Helps fulfil the council's ambition of supporting businesses, organisations and the wider district to reduce CO2 emissions.  Supports LVSP in reducing operational costs and risk of future closure due to financial pressures	Minimises resource requirement and reduces risk to the council
Disadvantages	Officer resource required to submit the bid and support the wider project, although will largely be delivered by LVSP	The funding for LVSP will help reduce costs and future risk of closure.
Risks	Delivering the project in line with funding criteria. Interventions are relatively standard, so this isn't expected to be an issue. Firm prices from local suppliers will be obtained prior to submission.	Technical barriers, however, this will be understood after preliminary work is completed.

#### 5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 Option 1: Accept funding should an offer be made and act as Accountable Body for Lune Valley Swimming Pool.

#### 6.0 Conclusion

The Swimming Pool Support Fund provides a potential opportunity to improve an existing decarbonisation scheme at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre and support a community pool in Hornby to deliver significant energy savings.

Whilst the battery storage project at SALC may be more complex, the interventions proposed by Lune Valley Simming Pool are relatively standard and not expected to be challenging.

#### RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The project links to the following priorities and cross-cutting themes:

- Net zero carbon by 2030 while supporting other individuals, businesses, and organisations across the district to reach the same goal.
- Increasing the amount of sustainable energy produced in the district and decreasing the district's energy use.

#### CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

Climate – As set out in the report

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

s1 Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence, the Council therefore has the power to receive grant funding and enter into a grant agreement should the bid be successful. Legal Services will be able to advise upon the terms and conditions of any grant agreement if required. The funding sought for the Lune Valley Swimming Pool will be assessed as to whether there is any subsidy being granted and if so, that the subsidy is granted in compliance with the rules around Minimum Financial Assistance under the Subsidy Control Act 2022

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council intends to make an application to the Swimming Pool Support Fund to secure £1M funding for battery storage. There will be no further cost to the authority should the application be successful, however, some feasibility work to support the funding application will be necessary requiring a contribution of up to £10k from reserves.

There may be some level of risk around securing planning consent and some technical challenges around the grid but, provided that these are successfully overcome, there will be an opportunity to achieve a level of revenue savings by utilising the excess energy from the existing solar to reduce the costs of using the grid. Provided that a suitably sized battery is installed there may be potential to generate an initial estimate of savings of up to £50K although further work will be required to firm this up should the funding bid be successful.

Some officer resource will be required to support the bid for funding in respect of LVSP and in receiving and distributing of funds and in adhering to specified delivery criteria. This is not expected to be unduly onerous and should be possible within existing budgets.

### **OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

A feasibility study for battery storage at SALC will be required to support the application. It is expected that this will cost <£10k and a reserves application may be required to fund the work.

### **SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add to those already provided within the Financial Implications, and by the Monitoring Officer

### **MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

Chief Officers have authority to submit expressions of interest for external funding of this amount subject to consultation with the Section151 Officer and the relevant Portfolio holder. As there is no further costs to the Council (other than a small reserves ask for feasibility) then acceptance, if successful, is a function of Cabinet and not delegated to officers. It is therefore prudent to obtain this permission for acceptance now as timescales between award and acceptance can be short. Separately, where a proposal involves the Council acting as the "accountable body" approval is also a Cabinet function.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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