

**COMMUNITY POOLS UPDATE
14 DECEMBER 2016**

Report of Chief Officer (Health and Housing)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members as requested on progress with the potential asset transfer of the community pools.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the report be noted.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At budget Council on 2nd March 2016, Members resolved:-

That Full council recognises the health and wellbeing benefits of maintaining operation of the community pools in Heysham, Carnforth and Hornby and the value of those pools as recreation hubs in their local communities. Accordingly, full council mandates officers to engage with users of the pools, Lancashire county council officials, county councillors for the respective divisions, city ward councillors, local schools and community organisations over a period of 6 months to ascertain whether realistic plans for transition of the individual pool assets to community ownership are feasible and to report back to full council on or before 9th November 2016.

2.0 Progress to date

2.1 Officers from both city and county council have met with representatives from Heysham and Carnforth pool to explore possible transfer and to share information about our costs, income and staffing structures.

2.2 Each of the 3 schools (Heysham, Carnforth and Hornby) has registered their interest with county council as part of the community asset transfer opportunity. Officers have also contacted Sport England, Lancashire Sport and the Amateur Swimming Association for further support and advice.

2.3 Sport England have agreed to fund a piece of work in conjunction with each school to assist with business plan preparation and provide advice with

regard to asset transfer.

- 2.4 A meeting was held on 29th November with representatives from the schools, City Council, County Council, Consultants, Sport England, Lancashire Sport and the Amateur Swimming Association. The basis of the discussion was to agree scoping of the work and timescales.
- 2.5 There is, at this stage, a strong commitment and willingness from all partners to try and secure the future of the pools although achieving this outcome won't be easy and cannot be guaranteed. In terms of community interest in asset transfer, only the schools have expressed an interest in potentially taking over the pools.
- 2.6 Therefore, should the asset transfer not go ahead, discussions will be required in due course between County and City Council officers with regard to handover procedures and responsibilities.
- 2.7 It is anticipated that on completion of the work funded by Sport England, the schools should be in a much better position to assess whether they will be able to take over the pools. That piece of work should be completed by the end of January. Should the schools want to progress with asset transfer, it is unlikely however that they would be ready by April 2017, due to the necessary legal, financial and staffing issues they would need to undertake. If the schools are committed to taking on the pools but need more time, an option would be for the council to continue to operate the pools beyond April 2017 for a limited period.
- 2.8 The position is being monitored, in light of the council's ongoing 2017/18 budget process. If need be, officers will undertake further analysis of the financial and staffing implications and present relevant options for Cabinet's initial consideration as appropriate.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 Discussions have been held with the schools, Sport England, Amateur Swimming Association, county council and Lancashire Sport. The Sport England study will include interviews with users.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 This report is to note the current position in relation to possible asset transfer of the community pools.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p>

<p>Enabling the continued operation of the pools for community benefit would mean greater access to leisure facilities for as many residents as possible.</p>

<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>At this stage none in relation to this report</p>
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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is currently no budget provision for the pools beyond 1 April 2017. Should Members ultimately decide to continue to operate the pools for a further limited period in order to facilitate any transfer to the schools, e.g. up to end of September 2017, then indicative running costs could be in the region of £80K, based on current income performance. Detailed costs would be worked up as part of the budget process, if necessary, and officers would also look to discuss further with County in order to seek a financial contribution towards ongoing costs in an attempt to reduce the additional financial implications arising for the City Council with the caveat that securing a contribution is by no means guaranteed.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

There will be staffing implications which will be addressed as part of any asset transfer.

Information Services:

None directly arising from this report.

Property:

The pools are owned by Lancashire County Council and operated by the city council. The property implications of a potential asset transfer are being progressed.

Open Spaces:

None directly arising from this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The S151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Contact Officer: Suzanne Lodge
Telephone: 01524 582701
E-mail: slodge@lancaster.gov.uk
Ref: CL5