

Subject:	Whitworth Leisure Centre	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	4 th March 2020
Report of:	Neil Shaw	Portfolio Holder:	Resources
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
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1.	RECOMMENDATIONS
1.1	Up to £110k of capital funding is released to replace the boilers and air handling unit at Whitworth Leisure Centre.
1.2	Approval of the exact scheme to be implemented at the leisure centre to be delegated to the s.151 officer and a Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder up to the maximum value of £110k.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval for a budget of up to £110k be allocated from capital resources for the replacement of the boilers and air handling unit at Whitworth Leisure Centre.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Whitworth Leisure Centre was reopened in 2002 by the Community Leisure Association of Whitworth (CLAW), which has managed the building with a small annual management grant from the council.

3.2 In 2012 the Landgate sale re Coronation Power yielded £110k and these funds were earmarked for Whitworth and are currently being held in the capital reserves.

3.3 In autumn 2019 it was brought to the attention of the council that the air heating system at Whitworth Leisure Centre had failed, resulting in a cold air temperature that had led to a few customer complaints. Third party engineers also raised concerns about the lifespan of the boilers which heat the pool water, showers and central heating system following an annual maintenance check.

3.4 CLAW began to explore options to replace the air heating system and were advised that an air handling unit would both heat the air but also extract the humidity that would preserve the integrity of the building structure.

3.5 In February 2020, the two boilers failed. The engineers managed to get them working but reported that if they failed again, they would not be repairable and needed to be replaced. Boiler failure would result in closure of the pool until they were replaced.

3.6 CLAW has received initial quotes for the boilers (approximately £25k) and the air handling unit (£75k-£85k) and are working with the suppliers and the council's Facilities Manager to finalise the scheme.

4. RISK

4.1 If the boilers and air handling unit are not replaced Whitworth swimming pool will

inevitably close. If only the boilers are replaced, the pool could remain open, but the customer experience would be poor, and the fabric of the building would rapidly deteriorate due to the humidity in the air. A delay in the replacement of the boilers and unit may lead to failure of the plant and a period of pool closure.

5. FINANCE

5.1 Capital resources have been ringfenced for use in Whitworth and therefore this investment is a practical use of those ringfenced resources. If the investment is not made, there could be significant financial impact either in terms of a building closure, or in deterioration of the fabric of the building. This investment will use up the whole ringfenced amount of £110k.

6. LEGAL

6.1 Whitworth Leisure Centre is leased to CLAW on a full repairing basis for 25 years. This expenditure is however necessary to protect a Council asset and to ensure the facility stays open to the public. There is however no further funding available and any future calls for assistance must be backed with an appropriate plan for contributing towards and/or paying back any financial assistance given. Best value must be obtained to mitigate expenditure on the boiler and air handling unit through competitive quotations based on all agreed specifications.

7. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no policy or equalities implications.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 There is an urgent need for the replacement of the boilers and air handling unit at Whitworth Leisure Centre due to their current condition. Funding is available within existing capital reserves ringfenced for works on Whitworth Leisure Centre.