



**Report of: Active Leeds**

**Report to: Chief Officer Operations**

**Date: 22 January 2021**

**Subject: Service Review Active Leeds – Chippendale Swimming Pool**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Otley and Yeadon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

- A report to the Council's Executive Board in October 2020 highlighted a budget gap in 2021/22 of £118.8 million, of which £59.1 million is due to the ongoing financial impact of Covid-19. In response, a number of proposals were put forward for Active Leeds, which included the proposal to withdraw from the current shared use agreement with Prince Henry's Grammar School to operate Chippendale Pool which Executive Board agreed for the proposal to be consulted on.
- An agreement dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 (Appendix 1) is currently in place for Active Leeds to operate the swimming pool which provides a facility to the local community, primary schools, private swimming lessons and clubs. This proposal would contribute a saving of £37k (plus £50k within consequent Asset Management proposals). Either party may end this agreement at any time by giving twelve months written notice. This is referenced in point 6 of the agreement.
- The school have confirmed they cannot continue to operate this facility without the support and financial contribution from Leeds City Council. However, discussions have been had with a third party and the school to support the agreement and more time is required to confirm their interest and opportunity.
- There are c5.6 full time equivalent posts at Chippendale. Active Leeds currently has in excess of 20 vacancies across the service and it is anticipated that alternative roles can be offered to any displaced staff, even without taking the current programme of voluntary measure into considerations.

- Consultation on the proposal began on the Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November and concluded on the Monday 04 January 2021, with 640 responses obtained from the survey. Key concerns raised were that 90% of people responding highlighted the proposal would have a negative impact on their physical activity levels and therefore both physical and mental health. Concerns around travel in particular the costs (Schools swimming) and complexities involved in accessing another facility with limited options available if relying on public transport.

## 2. Best Council Plan implications (see the [latest version of the Best Council Plan](#))

Chippendale swimming pool contributes to the Councils vision for Leeds to be the best City in the UK and the following Best Council Plan priorities:

- Health & Wellbeing; supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles. Reducing health & inequalities
- Child Friendly City; Improving social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- Age Friendly Leeds; Promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included and respected

This facility contributes to wider plans such as Get Set Leeds (Get Set Leeds is a partnership of people from all over the city who want to play a part in making Leeds more active). Thousands of people across of the City have told us that that an Active Environment which includes access to facilities and activities would encourage activity levels.

It also contributes to the Leeds Health & Wellbeing Board priorities which is 'More people more physically active, more often'

It links to a council Key Performance Indicator of reducing the number of people who are inactive which currently Leeds has 21% of the adults population doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week.

The facility also supports the provision of school swimming within the locality. School swimming is an integral part of the National Curriculum with all children being able to swim 25m unaided by the time they leave primary school.

## 3. Resource implications

- The proposal was to achieve savings of £37k (plus £50k from Asset Management) Further discussions with the school and potential third party will likely result in achieving these savings but mid-way through the year.
- The service will find a replacement savings initially to allow for 2021/22 slippage while these discussions taken place and a new agreement is developed.
- This change as a priority will aim to protect jobs and full time employees from the likelihood of redundancy and therefore no additional costs required to be covered.
- Asset management have confirmed that £50k saving for 2021/22 can be met through other proposals.

## Recommendations

The Chief Officer Operations is recommended to approve:

- a) providing notice to terminate the existing shared use agreement
- b) to allow for extra time to hold discussions to take place with the school and the potential third party to develop a new shared use agreement which delivers the financial saving of 37k.
- c) the service to find the replacement savings to allow for the 2021/22 slippage while these options outlined at b) are explored.

### 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the consultation undertaken on the proposal to withdraw from the shared use agreement with Price Henrys Grammar School to operate Chippendale Pool and the outcomes of the consultation and recommend the potential proposal for Chippendale Pool in order to achieve savings of £37k.

### 2. Background information

- 2.1 A shared use agreement is in place with the current agreement being in place since 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 with Otley Prince Henrys Grammar School for Active Leeds to operate the swimming pool which provides a facility for school swimming, swimming lessons, and club and community activity. The schedule in the Shared use agreement makes reference to how the costs are currently shared between both parties. This can be found in appendix 1. In summary LCC is responsible for all routine pool plant maintenance, pool chemicals, pool hall decoration and pool equipment. Prince Henrys Grammar School are responsible for non-domestic rates, fixed electrical inspections, legionnaires monitoring, gas safety certification and the promise housing he swimming pool.
- 2.2 The swimming pool was originally constructed with the fundraising support of local people. It is unique in the portfolio of Leisure Centres across Leeds because it's not Council owned.
- 2.3 The current pool programme supports school swimming provision for all local primary schools, of which there are six; Ashfield Primary School; Otley All Saints C of E Primary School; Otley St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Academy); Otley The Wharton's Primary School; Pool-in-Wharfedale C of E Voluntary Controlled Primary School and Westgate Primary School.
- 2.4 There are approximately 300 children on the learn to swim programme and approximately 13,000 visits per year to the public swimming.
- 2.5 There are also two clubs which operate from Chippendale Swimming Pool; Otley Swimming Club and Leeds Bradford Triathlon Club. The triathlon club is an accessible club of which a number of para athletes attend.
- 2.6 There are c5.6 full time equivalent posts at Chippendale and Active Leeds currently has in excess of 20 vacancies across the service and it is anticipated that alternative roles can be offered to any displaced staff, even without taking the current programme of voluntary measure into considerations.

### **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 The shared use agreement in place requires a notice period of twelve months. If notice was served now the financial savings of 37k would not be achieved until halfway through the year 2021/22.
- 3.2 The service will need to find replacement savings to allow for financial slippage in 2021/22 because of the twelve month notice period.
- 3.3 The school have confirmed that withdrawal from this agreement will mean that they can no longer operate the facility. This will have significant impact on the Schools, Clubs and the community who use this facility. However they have agreed that no matter what the outcome the shared use agreement needs to be reviewed and a new one put in place to reflect the changes taken place since 2012.
- 3.4 The nearest facilities are Aireborough Leisure Centre (approx. 4 miles), Holt Park Active (approx,6 miles) and Ilkley Pool and Lido (6 miles).
- 3.5 The local primary schools have raised concerns about the financial impact of transport. Loss of this facility will mean that three of the six schools would have to pay for transport. All schools have raised concerns about the additional travel time and the impact this could potentially have on the curriculum.
- 3.6 The public consultation has raised concerns around travel in particular the costs, time, environmental impact and complexities involved in accessing another facility with limited options available if relying on public transport. It also raised the concerns over less opportunities for children to learn to swim which is vital life skill especially with the River Wharfe running through Otley. The public feel that Otley is already poorly-served for sports and other community facilities and losing the pool would particularly hit the children of Otley and future growth of population in Otley through new housing developments will add additional pressure and need for water space in the area.
- 3.7 Consultation has taken place with a potential third party operator and preliminary talks have been had with the schools in terms of their potential support. However, further discussions are required to ascertain their involvement and any potential service operation moving forward. Therefore time is required to give full due diligence and if agreement can be made a new agreement will need to be put in place.

### **4. Corporate considerations**

#### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 Consultation started on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November and concluded on the Monday 04 January 2021. The methods used to consult included an online survey which was on the main Council website, Active Leeds website and Prince Henry's website. Paper copies were also available at all of our leisure centres. Information on the consultation and how to get involved was also published on the Otley-our town Facebook which has over 10000 followers.

- Active Leeds members (Active Leeds cards, memberships and learn to swim members) were directly contacted about the consultation through social media and email.

- Virtual conversations have taken place with a number of users, including the two clubs and the local primary schools.
- Virtual public meetings were also held between December and January 2021.
- Staff have been consulted on the proposal and feedback has been captured as part of the consultation process.
- Further consultation and conversations have also taken place with local ward members and Otley Town Council.
- In addition the service has also received a number of emails, comments and direct letters on this proposal which has also fed into this process.

4.1.2 The survey itself returned 640 responses. A full summary report of the responses is included as appendix 2 with some key highlights noted as follows:

- 449 of those who responded access the facility on a weekly basis.
- 267 of those who responded attend the public sessions; 152 attend a club session and 93 of those attend as part of Education provision (school swimming).
- 575 (90%) respondents have indicated that losing this facility would have a negative impact on their physical activity levels.

4.1.3 From the open comments there are number of key themes which include:

- Concerns around travel in particular the costs and complexities involved in accessing another facility with limited options available if relying on public transport.
- The river wharfe runs through Otley and concerns have been raised about making sure children have access to safe water space and have the option to learn how to swim which is a lifesaving skill.
- Concerns raised that Otley is already poorly-served for sports and other community facilities and losing the pool would particularly hit the children of Otley hard.
- The population is growing in Otley with a recent development of over 500+ houses so local sports provision should be retain not removed.
- Any reduction in the available facilities will affect clubs and individual athletes negatively. Swimmers have been badly hit by the lockdown of pools for two lengthy periods this year. Local clubs are suffering already.
- Environmental impact of travelling to an alternative facility either by private vehicle or public transport, which could be detrimental to the carbon footprints in Leeds.
- Negative impact this would have on people's mental health & wellbeing and on people's activity levels.

- The Chippindale Pool is a fantastic accessible facility serving the community of Otley and should be maintained for public health and well-being purposes

4.1.4 Further open comments have been captured from the public consultation groups and through emails and telephone conversations. In addition to the above themes the following has also been captured:

- The impact of traveling, in a congested area, further is additional barriers to keep active
- Closure of the pool would impact mental health and it would mean not being able to socialise with the local community.
- Improved marketing and profile of the site. A lot of people are not aware of the facility so raising the profile would increase usage

4.1.5 It is clearly evident through this consultation exercise that the users and the local people feel quite strongly about the proposal to withdraw from the current shared used agreement with Prince Henrys Grammar School. The School have also confirmed that without this shared agreement they would struggle to operate this facility. Although the notice to terminate this agreement could still be issued to achieve this financial savings this report outlines an alternative option. The consultation exercise has created some encouraging and positive conversations with users, groups and clubs and the recommendations in this report will certainly have a positive impact for the local people of Otley and more importantly on their physical activity levels.

#### 4.2 **Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment has been completed for the original proposal to withdraw from the shared use agreement. This is attached with the report.

#### 4.3 **Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

Chippendale swimming pool contributes to the Councils vision for Leeds to be the best City in the UK and the following Best Councils plan priorities:

- Health & Wellbeing; supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles. Reducing health & inequalities
- Child Friendly City; Improving social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- Age Friendly Leeds; Promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included and respected

#### Climate Emergency

- Leeds City Council's Best Council Plan includes ambitions for '*improving air quality, reducing pollution and noise*'. Accessible and local facilities will reduce the need to travel outside the local area which will contribute to reducing the carbon footprint across the City. The vast majority of uses walk to the facility, however if the facility is withdraw, this will require people to travel further and due to limited public

transport, the vast majority may drive. However green travel to another facility would be encouraged.

#### **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

- The proposal was to achieve savings of £37k (plus £50k from Asset Management) Further discussions with the school and potential third party will result in financial achieving these savings but mid-way through the year.
- The service will find a replacement savings initially to allow for 2021/22 slippage while these discussions taken place and a new agreement is developed.
- This change as a priority will aim to protect jobs and full time employees from the likelihood of redundancy and therefore no additional costs required to be covered.
- Asset management have confirmed that £50k saving for 2021/22 can be met through other proposals.

#### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- There are no legal implications arising from this decision to continue further work on options.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

- There is no risk in proceeding with the alternative service delivery model other than budgetary pressures should there be a short fall in the identified savings target.

### **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 This report provides detail on an option to continue the work with Prince Henrys Grammar School and the potential third party to identify options to deliver a more cost effective service. This would ensure the facility remains accessible to all existing users groups and provides further opportunities for the residents in Otley to partake in physical activity. This would also protect jobs and employees from a threat of compulsory redundancy. However, until an agreement can be confirmed Active Leeds will cover the £37k saving from staffing vacancies, ELI and energy management savings.

### **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Chief Officer Operations is recommended to approve:
- a) providing notice to terminate the existing shared use agreement
  - b) to allow for extra time to hold discussions to take place with the school and the potential third party to develop a new shared use agreement which delivers the financial saving of 37k.
  - c) the service to find the replacement savings to allow for the 2021/22 slippage while these options outlined at b) are explored.

## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.