

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of Meeting:	29 September 2015
Report of:	Peter Bates, Chief Operating Officer
Subject/Title:	Peter Mason Leisure Centre (formerly Congleton Leisure Centre)
Portfolio Holders:	Cllr Clowes, Cllr Brown

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report outlines the steps that are currently being taken to progress the redevelopment of the leisure centre in Congleton and picks up on the previous Cabinet report of 21st April 2015.
- 1.2. Members are asked to note the change in name of this leisure centre, which will now be known as, the Peter Mason Leisure Centre.
- 1.3. Cheshire East Council remains fully committed to improving the leisure facilities in Congleton as part of its strategic approach to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. This will be the second in a programme of leisure related improvements and follows the significant investment in new facilities in Crewe and reaffirms the council's commitment to providing modern leisure facilities.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to

- 2.1. Note the renaming of the facility to, Peter Mason Leisure Centre and that the appropriate signage is being arranged.
- 2.2. Approve the appropriate works to assess the viability of refurbishing the existing swimming pool in order to achieve best value for money, and to maximise both the wet and dry leisure offer for Congleton.
- 2.3. Cabinet to receive a report by December 2015 on the outcome of the work outlined in 2.2 above (primarily a full pool condition survey) and form the proposal for the redevelopment of the Peter Mason Leisure Centre.
- 2.4. Note the progress in terms of the 'work packages' currently being undertaken and the timeliness for their completion which are all due to be completed during the month of October 2015. This will then inform the programme for the full feasibility and options appraisal as outlined in 2.3.

There are a range of works and surveys that are currently being undertaken in support of a future planning application; these include:

- Ground surveys (desktop and intrusive)
- Flood risk assessment and Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS)
- Topographical survey
- Existing measured building survey
- Ecological habitat survey (bats etc.)
- Up to date asbestos survey of existing building
- Up to date conditions survey of existing building
- Transport assessment and travel plan (Jacobs)

- 2.5. Note that Cabinet will be asked to endorse the most effective financial model identified and the detailed business case.

3. Other Options Considered

- 3.1. Given the two options being reviewed and in line with the decision of 21st April, the Council will be looking for a focused enhancement of the leisure provision will deliver much improved facilities and opportunities, meeting the needs of existing and future customers and residents for many years to come.
- 3.2. It should be noted however this development will make a significant contribution to the councils Health and Wellbeing agenda and support the wider Lifestyle Policy.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1. Following approval at Cabinet 21st April 2015 the project team has commenced development of the various work packages required to bring forward a fully costed feasibility study. This study will recommend the best option for the redevelopment of the leisure centre site to deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for the residents of Congleton.
- 4.2. The previous Cabinet report indicated two possible options for consideration in taking this work forward:
1. Redevelopment of dry side facilities and creation of a brand new pool.
 2. Redevelopment of both dry side facilities and retention and improvement of the existing pool

The second option was put forward following recent discussions with architects working for the Council who have previously refurbished an existing leisure centre pool in Uttoxeter. As a result of these initial discussions a site visit to Uttoxeter recently took place and **Appendix 1** shows a number of photographs including a fully rebuilt and refurbished

pool plus poolside seating (120+), structural walls and roof, the two latter being completely replaced.

- 4.3. In order to ascertain if this second option is viable (or not) for the Leisure Centre a tender will need to be put out for specialist contractors to review the condition of the pool, pool hall and infrastructure fabric to conclude if this a cost efficient option. Should this be the case it may lead to more funding being available for a greatly enhanced dry side area. As such both options are currently being explored and if applicable both will be brought forward as part of the feasibility.
- 4.4. In renaming the leisure centre to the Peter Mason Leisure Centre, the council is recognising the contribution and service provided by the late member for Congleton East. Furthermore, the redevelopment and enhancement of the facility will be a fitting tribute and legacy to commemorate his tireless support for the betterment of Congleton residents.
- 4.5. A further key element of the work now commenced is the exploration of the most effective financial model to deliver the maximum improvements within the allocated budget envelope.
- 4.6. The project will be looking to work to a tight timeline but this will very much depend on the outcome of the work outlined in sections 2.2 and 2.4, providing a decision on the preferred option. An indicative timeline is set out below.

• Condition Surveys Received	Late October 2015
• Confirmation of Preferred Option and the procurement route	End of November 2015
• Internal review, Cabinet decision	December 2015
• Detailed design stage	December 2015 – May 2016
• Planning application submitted	Early Summer 2016
• Internal review, Cabinet updated	Summer 2016
• Construction commences	Late Summer 2016
• Facility opens	Late 2017

5. Background/Chronology

- 5.1. As previously reported, the Leisure Centre comprises of two distinct elements built at different times with a number of separate power plants running different parts of the building.

- 5.2. The plant is nearing 40 years old, so suffers from poor energy efficiency. The current layout does not comply with current design standards (Sport England, Equality Act) which makes it an extremely inefficient building and presents construction challenges for some design options.
- 5.3. Subject to the outcome of the investigations on the refurbishment of the existing pool and should this not be achievable the final design may need to include additional land use in order to deliver the objectives above. There are also constraints on the site in terms of access and existing footprint and the ability to temporarily house plant equipment to facilitate the refurbishment/redevelopment of the centre. This could include the potential to utilise elements of the surrounding open space but this would be subject to an agreement with the requisite statutory agencies including Sport England as appropriate. Discussions are also ongoing with users of the adjacent Hankinson's Field including Congleton Rugby Club.

6. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 6.1. Primarily it affects residents using the existing facilities in Congleton, though users could be resident in any area of the Borough.

- 6.2. The local wards in Congleton East. The Councillors are:

Cllr David Brown

Cllr Glen Williams

Further Councillor to be elected (following the October By-election)

- 6.3. The local wards in Congleton West. The Councillors are:

Cllr Paul Bates

Cllr George Baxendale

Cllr George Hayes

7. Implications of Recommendation

7.1. Policy Implications

- 7.1.1. As an early part of the regeneration plan for Congleton, this refurbishment project will provide a much needed and visible investment in Congleton. This will contribute directly to the regeneration of the town and improve participation in active leisure and sport activities.

- 7.1.2. The Leisure Centre is already established as a well-used and important community facility, with a specific focus on the provision of wet and dry leisure facilities for the local and wider population. The existing land footprint has the potential for some expansion to provide an improved leisure facility and the potential for some multi use community space designed to a high standard. Facility improvements invariably bring

increased income and usage benefiting improved health outcomes for local residents.

7.1.3. Any refurbishment options will impact in the short term on service provision while upgrades are taking place. If the pool is refurbished rather than replaced, it may require a period of time where the pool is not available while refurbishment takes place. This process would be dealt with as part of the detailed business case, including detailed discussions with ESAR regarding financial implications.

7.1.4. Any form of refurbishment or redevelopment of the site will need the consideration of a number of 'key dependencies'. These include and may not be limited to the Rugby Club, Scout Hut (next to the leisure centre) and users of the public open spaces in particular users of the skate park and the local 'friends' group.

7.1.5. This project will also have dependencies on the following strategies underway in the council:

- a) Regeneration plan for Congleton - The Council is developing a Masterplan for Congleton. The benefits from this project will be fed into the wider master-planning activity.
- b) Community hub – A pilot scheme is underway which is shaping the 'hub' of community services in the town. Some of those may be provided as part of the leisure centre upgrade.
- c) If new or improved community space was provided in the final design, it could benefit both these existing council operated services and the wider community where good quality community space is demonstrated to be in short demand.
- d) Indoor Facilities Strategy. A new strategy is currently being developed in support of the emerging Local Plan.
- e) Congleton Neighbourhood Plan, this is an emerging plan being developed with the Local Partnership and will also feed into the Community Hubs project.

7.2. Legal Implications

7.2.1. A contractor to undertake the refurbishment works can be procured by a mini competition under the North West Construction Hub High Value Framework or other Framework, procurement via this route could select a company in four months. Alternatively the Council can undertake an EU compliant procurement that will take between six to nine months.

7.2.2. The Consultation with local stakeholders will be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the scope of the scheme.

7.2.3. The Leisure Centre is managed on behalf of the Council by Everybody Sports and Recreation Ltd (ESAR) and is subject to a lease to ESAR for this purpose. The Council may be liable to compensate ESAR for loss in earnings during the refurbishment and a variation to ESAR's current lease may be required if the leased area changes.

7.2.4. A report on title has already been produced in relation to the various legal interests in the Congleton Leisure Centre site and the Council will be required to investigate the remaining interests and if required reach an agreement with those existing at the refurbishment date or terminate any arrangements to enable the refurbishment to proceed.

7.3. Financial Implications

7.3.1. The project currently has a budget of £8.8m within the Capital Programme for 2015/16 to support and enhance the facility. The scheme will reduce the expected maintenance liability though this would not result in a direct 'saving' towards the business case of a redeveloped asset.

7.3.2. Alternative funding models might deliver wider opportunities for redesign and these should be explored before a final determination of options is made.

7.3.3. The design stage will look at maximising the efficiency of the asset to reduce the existing running costs.

7.4. Equality Implications

7.4.1. Any refurbishment or new build on the leisure centre site will ensure that the site becomes fully accessible to all residents. In addition a range of programmes and facilities will be developed to attract a wide range of user groups.

7.5. Rural Community Implications

7.5.1. None

7.6. Human Resources Implications

7.6.1. None

7.7. Public Health Implications

7.7.1. The provision of improved leisure facilities will enable the Council to continue to make a significant contribution to Outcome 5 of the Corporate Plan " People Live Well and For Longer".

7.8. Other Implications (Please Specify)

7.8.1. None

8. Risk Management

8.1. There are still significant risks with the delivery of this project which will be mitigated in detailed design and subsequent planning stage. These are highlighted below:

- a) Highways – There is a need to undertake local highway modelling based on the demand data to understand the highway impact of any new scheme. This will determine its viability and identify any possible highway improvements for inclusion in the overall cost.
- b) Pre planning responses – An initial consultation has been had with Sport England. More detailed discussions will be required should the only option be for a replacement pool as the proposal will need to be compliant with current local and national policies in relation to public open space.
- c) Demand modelling has been carried out, which has identified and validated the facilities in terms of size and number which will inform costs and provide base data for highway modelling. In addition initial discussions have been held with ESAR regarding future and innovative leisure provision that could be introduced with the dry side in addition to that already existing.
- d) The site sits within a Zone 2 flood plain, early engagement with the Environment Agency has confirmed that any refurbishment or new construction would require sufficient defence mechanisms to lessen the impact of any flooding should this occur. This may have some impact on scope and budget.
- e) Subject to the outcome of the condition surveys and the structural integrity of the pool, it cannot be assumed that the existing pool facility could remain open during any construction phase or refurbishment.

9. Access to Information/Bibliography

9.1. The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the project team.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Uttoxeter Leisure Centre Refurbishment (pool side)

10. Contact Information

Contact details for this report are as follows:-

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