

CABINET

8 JUNE 2021

SPLASHES LEISURE CENTRE

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Howard Doe, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive

Author: Robert Banks, Capital Programme Manager
Bob Dimond, Head of Sport Leisure, Tourism and Heritage

Summary

This report requests Cabinet approval for the demolition of the existing Splashes Leisure Centre building to allow for a future Leisure facility on that site. The report also requests that part of the existing capital budget allocated to Splashes be used to fund this demolition.

1. Budget and policy framework

- 1.1. The provision of Leisure Services is a matter for Cabinet and so Cabinet is asked to approve the demolition of the existing building. As this will be funded from within existing budget, this is a matter for Cabinet.

2. Background

- 2.1. After extensive structural surveys were carried out at Splashes Leisure Centre to ascertain the condition of the building with the intention to refurbish, the building was found to have major structural faults beyond economic repair. It was advised the building should be taken out of use immediately. The building had already been closed to the Public since March 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19.
- 2.2. Members have tasked officers with developing a business case for the replacement of Splashes. Should approval be given for the demolition of the existing facility, a further report to Cabinet will follow on this business case and any further capital addition required.

3. Options

3.1. The range of options considered include:

- Option 1 - Do nothing; or
- Option 2 - Proceed with demolition of the building.

3.2. Option 1 would mean that the building would remain boarded up and “mothballed” until further decisions and progress are made on a new Leisure facility. As such, there would be no initial expenditure, as the demolition costs would form part of a future development plan. Risks associated with Option 1 include:

- Risk of partial or full collapse of the building;
- Ongoing costs of business rates for an empty building;
- Vulnerability to break-ins and anti-social behaviour;
- Ongoing costs associated with maintaining security for the building; and
- An empty building will deteriorate more quickly and become an eye-sore.

3.3. Option 2 would mean that there would be costs to the Council of procuring contractors to demolish the building safely and make the site safe. This option would mean that the risks as set out for Option 1 are avoided. However, there would be an initial expenditure for the demolition of the building, as this would be commissioned separately to any future development plan.

4. Advice and analysis

4.1. Having considered the two options, together with the knowledge that the existing Splashes building is no longer a useable facility in its current form, or financially viable to repair, the preferred option is option 2.

5. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Risk of partial or full building collapse	The building cannot be used in its current condition. It will further deteriorate. Attempting to maintain a building that is at risk of full or partial collapse can result in reputational damage to the LA, particularly if	Demolition of the building would remove this risk.	C2

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
	injuries are sustained.		
Risk of Vandalism and anti-social behaviour	An empty building is vulnerable to vandalism and anti-social behaviour.	The building is currently boarded up. Security and CCTV is in operation. Demolition of the building would remove this risk.	A2
Financial risk	Maintenance of the building will incur costs associated with business rates, security and insurance	Demolition of the building will remove these ongoing costs	B2

6. Consultation

- 6.1. Soft Market testing and pre-tender estimates were sought to estimate the cost of demolition.

7. Climate change implications

- 7.1. In order to comply with the Council's climate change aspiration, the tender for the demolition of the building will require compliance with all legislation in regard to the re-use and recycling of existing salvageable materials on the site. All salvageable Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment have already been removed from the site for use at other Council Leisure facilities, such as Medway Park.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. The current capital programme includes £5million for the refurbishment of Splashes. As this report sets out, for a new facility to be delivered, the existing building will need to be demolished, therefore Cabinet is asked to fund the costs of this demolition of £343,000 from the existing approval [full Council minute number 96/2020 refers] and rename the Splashes Refurbishment 2020/21 scheme as Splashes Replacement.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. If this project is approved, the Capital Projects team will follow the Council's financial procedure rules supported by the Category Management team in the

appointment of contractors to complete the various elements of works proposed.

10. Recommendations

10.1. The Cabinet is asked to:

- 10.1.1. Approve the demolition of the existing Splashes Leisure Centre building, Option 2 of the report, to allow for a future Leisure facility on that site.
- 10.1.2. Agree that the demolition costs of £343,000, inclusive of professional fees, are funded from the existing £5 million capital scheme, Splashes Refurbishment 2020/21, to enable the demolition of the existing Splashes Leisure Centre building for future development on that site.
- 10.1.3. Agree that the existing Splashes scheme, Splashes Refurbishment 2020/21, be renamed Splashes Replacement.

11. Suggested reasons for decisions

- 11.1. To enable the demolition of Splashes Leisure Centre and remove the risks of building collapse, vandalism / anti-social behaviour and ongoing maintenance costs.

Lead officer contact

Robert Banks, Capital Programme Manager, Regeneration, Gun Wharf
Tel: 01634 331711 Email: robert.banks@medway.gov.uk

Bob Dimond, Head of Sport Leisure, Tourism and Heritage, Medway Park,
Tel: 01634 338238 Email: bob.dimond@medway.gov.uk

Appendices

None

Background papers

None