

General Exception Procedure Notice Pursuant to Standing Order 17 and reg 10(1) and 10(3) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangement) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Directorate:

Communities

Confidential or Exempt *[please state category of exempt information]*

No

Decision Taker: Member Body or Officer *[if officer please give name and title]*

Leader

Proposed Date for Decision/ Time Period

No earlier than 19 July 2021

Summary of Matter

In January, as part of a wider capital funding package, Cabinet approved £205k for repair and renewal of the hydrotherapy pool at the former Pears RNIB Centre. The stated intention was to pass the facility to a neighbouring school for use, by moving an adjoining fence.

Since the submission of the Capital Funding paper, three factors have led to reconsideration of the business case for this part of the site.

First, the estimated cost for repair and renewal of the facility to ensure its compliance with the necessary regulations has increased from £205k to £300k (excluding professional fees), following further design and feasibility work. The revised quotes include repair works to the facility as well as mechanical and electrical works to ensure the facility is fit for purpose. The quotes are subject to a value engineering exercise, however the full difference between original and current estimates is unlikely to be bridged without significant reduction in scope

Second, the running costs for the facility have now been confirmed at approximately £30k per year. This was not known at the time of purchase. Confirmation of the level of running costs has led the neighbouring school to confirm that taking on the site would not be financially sustainable. The costs are also considered likely to be unpalatable for any incoming Trust running The Warwickshire Academy.

Third, the proposed re-location of the fence (which would be required to add the facility to the neighbouring school demise) restricts access to the secondary car park at the top of the site. Consultation with highways and planning has identified a requirement for additional car parking elsewhere on the site with significant financial implications (estimated at £430k) if the plan was implemented.

The Warwickshire Academy is due to open in January 2022. Works to the main building are expected to start in earnest in the next month in order for the school to be able to open on time. The decision as to the hydrotherapy pool has a knock-on effect on the scope of works to the main building, the programme and consequently the date by which the main building can be occupied.

A decision is required now on the future use of the hydrotherapy facility as WCC needs to commence works as soon as possible in August to achieve a January opening of the School.

The matter is appropriate for a general exception notice pursuant to Standing Order 17 on the basis that it is impracticable for the decision to be deferred until included in the next forward plan given the impact on the project timescale and the need for the works to be undertaken so as to enable school opening to be maintained. (SO 17a)

Proposed Decision

That the Leader approves the change in the originally agreed project from upgrading the hydrotherapy pool and leasing it to a neighbouring school, to repurposing the site as a sports facility

The Leader approves the proposal to re-purpose the existing hydrotherapy pool on the RNIB Pears Centre site for use by The Warwickshire Academy as an addition to their sports facilities, and delegates to the Strategic Director for Communities the power to enter into or amend any contracts or other documentation necessary to give effect to this decision.

The Cabinet decision of January 2021 is amended insofar as necessary to give effect to the change to the previously approved project, and the necessary reallocation of previously agreed funds to give effect to this decision is approved.

If the proposed decision is made, would it be contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the policy framework or budget?

No

List of documents/reports provided

This General Exception Notice
Draft Leader report

List of Background Papers

Is consultation proposed Yes/ No [if yes, say who and how]

Will follow usual publication process

Members of the public wishing to make comments on this matter should write to:

Monitoring Officer
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall
Warwick
CV34 4RL

monitoringofficer@warwickshire.gov.uk

Comments should be made by

21 September 2020

Office Use only

Directorate Contact *[please give name and number]*

Sarah Duxbury, Assistant Director Governance and Policy

To be completed by Member Services

| Copy Notice served | Date |
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| Councillor Adrian Warwick, Chair of Resources and Fire & Resecue Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 9 July 2021 |
| Copy Notice published on website and available at the offices of the Council ¹ | 9 July 2021 |

¹ At the time of issue of this notice, access to the offices of the Council are restricted due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic measures. Availability on the website is considered sufficient in light of government guidance and the provisions of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulation 2020. Paper copies can be posted on request