

## CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

### COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>Town Hall, Assets &amp; Services Committee Meeting</b>		
<b>MEETING DATE AND TIME</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Congleton Town Hall</b>
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	<b>Town Hall Manager – Mark Worthington</b>		
<b>AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>10 Paddling Pool</b>		
<b>Background</b>	<p>A full review of Health &amp; Safety and Pool Operations were carried out by a specialist pool company during 2021. Following this review the pool facility was restricted to a capacity of 140 people and an online booking system was implemented to allow users to check and book available spaces with a limit of 140. The booking system has been modified over the last three seasons to suit the needs of paddling pool users. The system is ‘live’ and gives people the option to book in advance or at the gate if spaces are available, as well as giving the option to cancel bookings which are then added back to the booking system. The booking system has successfully regulated access to the pool, however, an ongoing issue has been the number of ‘no-shows’, users who book an available space but then fail to turn up and cancel their booking. This has been a regular complaint from users as spaces wasted by ‘no-shows’ do not go back onto the system to allow others to book. There have been sessions where the pool has only 50% capacity despite being fully booked, this has been down to ‘no-shows’.</p>		
<b>Update</b>	<p>During the 2023 season an independent Health and Safety assessment of the Paddling Pool area was undertaken by the Health and Safety Manager for Ansa / Alliance Environmental Services. This was mainly to assess how users of the pool gained access and queued on the pavement along the perimeter fence of the paddling pool. Due to the width of the pavement being less than three metres wide we were advised this was not a safe area to allow a queue to form due to limited pavement access. Improvements to the paddling pool for the 2024 season are already being investigated. As queuing outside the perimeter of the pool is not an ideal, Officers feel that queuing inside of the perimeter is an option worth pursuing and have contacted a company to provide an initial quote for these works. An initial quote of £9,870 + vat has been received to create a fenced pathway within the pool area to allow users to queue away from the footpath while accessing the pool.</p> <p>To resolve the issue of ‘no-shows’ it is proposed to have a trial period where the pool operates with a clicker system on the gate rather than the online booking system. An existing member of pool staff would count 140 people into the pool using a clicker at the start of each session. People would queue in the proposed queuing area inside the pool perimeter. If people were to</p>		

	<p>leave before the end of the session, staff would then admit the next person in the queue to the pool. Once again, proposed queuing area inside the pool would accommodate anyone waiting to gain access. This system would maximise use of the pool facility on days when the weather wasn't so good and the pool wasn't operating at full capacity. On busier days, when people arrive early to guarantee a space, the proposed internal queuing area would accommodate users waiting to gain access.</p>
<b>Financial</b>	<p>Reduced cost as no booking system is required.</p>
<b>Environmental</b>	<p>To assess via the procurement process environmental impact and benefits</p>
<b>Equality</b>	<p>Clicker system will remove the 'no show' factor from pool attendance and give more people the option to use the pool facilities. Users with specific requirements or disabilities will have the option to reserve spaces via the Congleton Information Centre who will then update pool staff of these individual bookings.</p>
<b>Decision Request</b>	<p>On receipt of three like for like quotes to comply with financial regulations, Committee to approve a spend from Capitol Contingency of up to £9,870 for works to create a fenced queuing area within the pool perimeter and trial the clicker system to replace the existing online booking system. If agreed, there would be an additional cost of up to £3,000 from Capital Contingency for a replacement shed to accommodate staff at the new queuing area.</p>