


CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Finance & Policy Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	14th November 2024 7.00pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Serena Van Schepdael- R.F.O/Mark Worthington		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	18 Splash Pad Feasibility Study		
Background	<p>Congleton paddling pool is an extremely popular asset within the community offering users a cost-free leisure activity. Despite the amenity's popularity it does suffer from several inherent inconveniences. The chief amongst these are ease and convenience of access, user control and operating costs. The current location of the facility does result in traffic congestion and inconvenience to residents in the adjacent street during periods of good weather and school holidays. This is due to the shortage, location, and nature of parking facilities near to the pool. Due to the popularity of the facility, user management measures have needed to be put in place to control access in the interests of safety and enjoyment of the users. These measures have led to significant operating costs and some user inconvenience.</p> <p>The operating costs, location and lease arrangement of the paddling pool facility have been an area of discussion for a number of years. For this reason CTC Officers have previously contacted local authorities who have replaced their existing paddling pools with modern Splash Pads, these included Amber Valley Borough Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council. Both authorities reported the installation of a Splash Pad made a financial saving on operating costs but also created a safer, more environmentally friendly water facility.</p> <p>To determine if previous discussions relating to replacement/relocation of the paddling pool are viable/possible, would a feasibility study into the options be a positive move forward. As 'doing nothing' is also an option, it is important that we appoint an independent consultant to objectively review the economic and technical feasibility rather than just requesting prices from constructors for an, as yet, ill-defined project.</p>		
Update	<p>A local company with over 50 years of experience in process engineering design has been approached to provide details into the feasibility of improving/relocating the paddling pool. This company is an independent consultancy which specialises in the design of aquatic leisure applications including swimming pools, water features, aquatic leisure facilities and plant. Initial discussion indicates that, a number of options are available to us which include redesign of the existing facility, reuse of some equipment and</p>		

	<p>relocation or a completely new facility, such as a Splash Pad on a new site, tentatively suggested within Congleton Park.</p> <p>The proposed study for the improvement of the paddling pool facility would centre on and around the following possible major considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in the location for the paddling pool (ideally to Congleton Park) • Adaptation of the existing facility • A change in the design of the facility from a paddling pool to a modern “splash pad” • A combination of the above options to optimise user enjoyment and convenience, capital expenditure and operating costs. <p>The product of the proposed study would generally be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine, identify and quantify the operating environment of the existing facility. • To identify, quantify and examine the benefits and disadvantages of the existing facility, both from the viewpoint of the user and the operator. • To establish and examine the possible effects on user enjoyment and operator capital and running costs of possible changes to the location, design and operation of the existing facility. • Preparation of a written report and verbal presentation of the completed study to interested parties in the Council. • Suggestions and recommendations. <p>A lump sum fee for carrying out the feasibility study as described in this proposal would be £5,000.00 +VAT. The expenditure would be covered by using the Legal & professional EMR.</p> 
<p>Financial</p>	<p>To be in accordance with allocated budgets and financial regulations. Three individual feasibility study quotes required. Officers to investigate potential grants available for water leisure facilities. Purchases and Orders over £5,000 require Committee approval.</p>

Environmental	It is generally found that Splash Pads are more environmentally friendly as they minimise water, energy and chemical usage by comparison with traditional paddling pools. The feasibility study will assess environmental impact and benefits.
Equality	A key feature of Splash Pads are their inclusive design specification which minimises barriers and steps and provides level access to those with mobility and visibility limitations. The feasibility study will seek to assess these benefits.
Decision Request	To receive the report relating to Splash Pad Feasibility Study and for Committee to agree to the proposed expenditure and route to appointing a suitable company to undertake the feasibility study.