

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

meeting date: 23 AUGUST 2022
title: RIBBLESDALE POOL FILTERS
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide Committee with an update on the capital project to replace the pool filters at Ribblesdale Pool and suggest a proposed amendment to the scheme.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives - In contributing to making lives safer and healthier
- Corporate Priorities - To ensure a well-managed council providing efficient services through identifying customer need and maximising use of resources.
- Other Considerations – to help to reduce future maintenance issues with the tiling and pool filters at the facility.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council has £44k allocated within the capital programme for the replacement of the three pool filters at Ribblesdale Pool, two provide water filtration for the main pool and one for the teaching pool. However, since that was submitted several years ago, the cost of replacement has risen to over £80k from the verbal estimates officers have received from suppliers recently.

2.2 The rationale for either seeking such an increase over the budget or carrying out this major piece of work on building that is 50 years old no longer makes economic sense.

2.3 The Council have had the filters inspected, with the idea of refurbishing them, which involves shot blasting them and relining them, but this is not viable, because the inspection assessed the thickness of the metal in the filters and although suitable for the purpose of filtering water, it is not recommended that they could withstand shot blasting and relining without risking damaging the metal shells of the filters and consequently filter failure.

2.4 An alternative proposal would be to replace the filter media. This comprises the layers of sand and stone in the filters which together with the chemicals used help to ensure the water quality meets the levels for safe bathing.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The pool facility is 50 years old and if the necessary funding were available to replace the filters, they would need to be cut up and removed from the plant room, because they are too big to remove in one piece. However new filters would not be a straight replacement it would require substantial amendment to the pipe work to accommodate a new design. All of which would take in the region of 2 months or more to complete, which even with available funding would make this year's window of opportunity impossible to achieve allowing for tenders to be drawn up and the time

to go to the market. (The work would be programmed for Nov/Dec) which historically is the quietest period for the pool.

- 3.2 Spending so much to replace an important aspect of the pool plant would not guarantee that a failure with another aspect of the building would not require an enforced closure of the building. Given the age of the facility, much of the work done in the past few years has been to replace failing equipment and plant needed to keep the building running.
- 3.3 The tiling in the pool was repaired some years ago, however some have had to be repaired in the intervening period and although these have been carried out using special waterproof compounds that can be applied underwater. The best and most cost-effective way to carry out this maintenance is with the pool closed and empty of water. Thereby allowing a thorough inspection of the pool tiling and a replacement programme to be carried out as needed. It also ensures work on the filters is not reliant on the valves alone to hold the water back from the pool reaching the plant room.
- 3.4 There is no guarantee that even if the necessary approval is granted for the change to the capital programme, the Council will be able to find a suitable firm to do the work as they are becoming booked for this historically busy time of the year for pool maintenance work. Therefore, the work may need to be moved to next year, which will inevitably see an overall rise in the budget needed to complete the work in a further 12 months time.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the capital funding allocated to new filters is split between replacement of the filter media (the sand and pebbles which are used to filter the water from the pool) and repairing pool tiles.
- 3.6 Estimates have been received for the media replacement, they range from £21k - £28k, although only 3 quotes have been obtained so far, simply because there is limited number of companies who will do the work and not everyone is available to do it the window the Council want it completed in. No quotes have yet been obtained for the tiling though it is expected that whatever balance remains from the filter contract would be spent on addressing the worst of the tiling issues. It is estimated that it will take two weeks to change the filter media, thus allowing the pool to be drained and the tiling work to be carried out at the same time

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The work on the pool should be carried out to use the allocated capital budget as outlined in the report. The proposal although not guaranteeing that the life of the building itself will extend, for up to 5 years the filters themselves, barring any other failure with the actual filter shells themselves, should be in good working order.
- 4.2 The tile work will help reduce the risk of cut feet which can occur if the tiles become worn and damaged.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources - There is £44k currently in the Council's capital budget allocated for the replacement of pool filters. Quotes will need to be secured for both the replacement of filter media and any tiling repairs if Policy and Finance approve an amendment to the scheme. The average income per week in December is around £650. Swimming lessons will have ended by the start of the schedule work period.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – These issues have been outlined in the report.
- Political – None Identified
- Reputation – The Council has only Ribblesdale Pool to meet the needs of the Borough's swimmers, any closure has an impact on their chosen activity. Without constant maintenance work the risk for the Council with a building over 50 years old, is that a complete failure of the fabric or equipment is heightened.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Approve the proposed amendment to the capital programme outlined.
- 5.2 Ask Policy and Finance to amend the capital programme to enable the filter and tiling work to be completed as proposed.

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