

Slippage of leisure capital schemes

The delivery of a number of leisure capital schemes was delayed during 2015/16. These are as follows:

1. White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre capital investment – £1,940,000

This was agreed as part of the award of the joint leisure management contract in May 2014. This budget is made up of:

- £1,328,235 towards the extension of the gym at White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre - this project is currently being delivered and the new facility is due to open at the end of 2016 which is to programme
- £136,500 towards additional fitness equipment to service the new extension – this will be delivered for when the new extension opens
- £246,250 towards replacement gym equipment – some replacement has already been delivered and the remaining items will be provided in time for when the gym re-opens
- £248,687 – spend to save – new air handling unit has been installed August 2016 at a cost of £117,000. The remaining £131,687 is to be allocated towards a range of smaller projects which are being prioritised and is anticipated to be spent during 2016/17.

The GLL bid was extremely ambitious regarding the timescales in which large capital projects could be delivered and that is why we have seen some slippage.

2. Faringdon Leisure Centre capital investment - £983,000

Again, this was agreed as part of the award of the joint leisure management contract in May 2014. This budget is made up of:

- £765,000 towards the new full size 3G pitch – costs for this project were provided by GLL as part of their submission for the joint contract. Prices have been market tested during summer 2016 and have come in significantly higher than anticipated. These current costs are being challenged before a decision is taken on the future of this project. The reason for the initial delay to the project was due to the land for the proposed artificial pitch being on Oxfordshire County Council owned land which is under lease to Faringdon Community College and the work that has been required to move these two parties to a position where they will support the project.
- £75,366 towards a moveable squash court wall to form flexible studio space – GLL are currently reviewing this proposal which formed part of their contract submission. The budget may well be utilised for an alternative capital project in the Faringdon facility.
- £127,000 towards replacement gym equipment – equipment replaced and budget spent.
- £38,473 towards spend to save / CO₂ investments – new lighting installed in the sports hall and swimming pool. Budget now spent.

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3. Wantage / Grove leisure facility - £50,000

This budget relates to the new leisure centre for Gove / Wantage which is now referred to by its working title 'The Wessex Leisure Centre'. The initial budget for this was approved by full Council in February 2015. Despite the land already belonging to the Vale Council, there have been a number of legal matters that have had to be resolved prior to the Council being in a position to appoint a design team. These are now being finalised. From the appointment of the design team, we expect the design and build process for the new centre to take 156 weeks. Budgets will be updated to reflect changes in spend profile as they occur.

4. Abbey Meadow and garden improvement - £500,000

Funding approved by full council February 2015.

The results of the public consultation exercise that determined how this budget were to be spent were not known until July 2015. Officers then worked to appoint a project manager for the works which took longer than anticipated.

- procurement process for the new play equipment has been undertaken and the successful contractor recently appointed. Works will continue on this project throughout the winter and weather permitting, the new play area will be available for use from April 2017. This element of the project is budgeted to cost £295,000.
- work has also been underway to deliver much needed replacement toilets and new inclusive access and fencing to the splash pad area at Abbey Meadow. A design team is currently working up a scheme and officers are working to deliver this for spring / summer 2017. The estimated cost of this element of the project is £275,000 (costs include picnic benches, professional fees and surveys)
- the remainder of the budget will contribute towards the refurbishment of the swimming pool changing rooms. Again, officers are working to deliver this project for summer 2017.

5. Leisure centre essential works - £190,000

This budget is in place to allow planned essential works to take place at the Vale's leisure centres. Each year, a growth bid is submitted for the future in order to fund anticipated works. £190,000 of the 2015/16 budget was carried forward to the current financial year to contribute towards the essential pool tank works that were required at the swimming pool at the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre. The carry forward meant we were able to meet the cost of the work from within existing budgets and works were planned. These works are now complete and the indoor pool re-opened to the public on 12 September 2016. The balance of this budget will be spent within 16/17.

6. Wantage leisure facilities - £46,000

This is a section 106 contribution which will contribute towards improved car parking at the existing Wantage Leisure Centre which was added to the capital budget by full council in February 2014. The scheme is being developed by King Alfred's Academy and Wantage Town Football Club and has not progressed as quickly as initially anticipated. This project is still 'live' and officers are working to confirm a delivery date as the benefits of the scheme apply to users of the leisure centre as well as the academy and football club.

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