



Portfolio Holder Decisions

Procurement of new swimming pool covers and Support funding for George Williams House, Fleetwood

1. **Procurement of New Swimming Pool Covers** (Pages 3 - 6)
Report of the Corporate Director Communities.
2. **Support Funding for George Williams House, Fleetwood** (Pages 7 - 10)
Report of the Corporate Director Communities.

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Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Councillor David Henderson, Resources Portfolio Holder	9 February 2023

Procurement of new swimming pool covers

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To approve the procurement of new swimming pool covers funded from the Leisure Management Reserve and to seek approval for an exemption from the contract procedure rules.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 We will deliver cost effective, quality services.
- 2.2 We will improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.
- 2.3 We will work towards reducing the council's and wider borough's emissions by at least 78% by 2035.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That approval is given to fund new swimming pool covers from the Leisure Management Reserve costing £55,184.
- 3.2 That approval is given by the Resources Portfolio Holder to allow the procurement under exemptions to contract procedures, contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules on the grounds that: "the goods, works or services are of a specialised nature carried out by only one or a limited number of firms with no reasonably satisfactory alternatives available."

4. Background

- 4.1** The council is focussed on reducing the carbon footprint of its operations and estate. This report is intended to make the district's swimming pools more energy efficient and reduce costs during the current period of high energy prices. It also contributes to the council's target to reduce carbon emissions by 78 per cent by 2035 and its aspiration to become net zero by 2050.
- 4.2** The council is working closely with Fylde Coast YMCA, our leisure centre operators, with the aim of reducing the operational subsidy. It is vital that we are able to support Fylde Coast YMCA to maintain their operations in order to reduce costs, reduce carbon generation, to improve customer satisfaction and ultimately increase income generation.
- 4.3** Energy efficiency across the leisure centre estate has been reviewed recently in light of increasing energy costs and the Council's carbon saving agenda. The provision of new swimming pool covers is seen as a priority and will help reduce the carbon footprint of swimming pool operations by helping to retain the heat in the pools when they are not in use.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** Over recent years the council and Fylde Coast YMCA have carried out a considerable amount of work to reduce energy consumption within the leisure centres and swimming pools. The provision of new swimming pool covers are seen as the next priority.
- 5.2** Swimming pool covers can result in considerable cost savings by retaining heat in pools when they are not in use. None of the pools have effective pool covers currently and the fitting of pool covers is considered a priority given the carbon savings that will result and the short payback periods given recent increases in energy costs. The return on investment is expected to be realised within two years.
- 5.3** The cost of installing pool covers based on the preferred quote obtained by the YMCA, is £55,184. All costs exclude VAT and include fitting costs and the removal of any redundant covers. 8mm thickness covers have been selected as they are the most robust and will have the greatest longevity, they also have a slightly improved energy insulation quality. If 5mm covers were installed instead, the cost would be £53,153.
- 5.4** The Fylde Coast YMCA's procurement process is to contact three suppliers to secure best value. Occasionally they reduce from three suppliers to two when there is a particular reason such as the ability to source three specialist quotes. In the case of pool covers for commercial operations these are specialised products with limited suppliers in the market. The YMCA contacted three suppliers asking for prices and just two responded. Forge Leisure (UK) being chosen by the YMCA as the successful contractor.

6. Delegated functions

- 6.1** The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive function delegated to the Resources Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the council's constitution): "To consider the management, repair, maintenance and use of the Council's land and buildings".
- 6.2** They also come under the following Executive Function delegated to the Resources Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3.03 of the Council's Constitution): "To consider departures from the Rules relating to financial and contractual matters if appropriate".

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	The cost of the installation of pool covers totalling £55,184 should reduce energy consumption and energy bills. Returns on investment should be realised within two years. This will help to mitigate the impact of energy price rises over recent months and assist in reducing the subsidy to Fylde Coast YMCA. The Leisure Management Reserve will fund the investment. As reported to Cabinet in October 2022, the forecast closing balance on this reserve as at 31/03/2023 is £410,778. This expenditure will reduce that balance to an estimated £355,594.
Legal	The procurement complies with the Council's Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules on Contract Procedures. A contract with the supplier will be entered into.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x	
community safety	X	
equality and diversity	X	
sustainability	X	
health and safety	X	

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	✓
climate change	✓
ICT	X
data protection	X

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

None



Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	9 February 2023

Support Funding for George Williams House, Fleetwood

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval to contribute £25,000 per year for two years from the Homelessness Reserve to maintain the provision of George Williams House. The contribution would form part of the scheme's contract with Lancashire County Council.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 To maintain the current provision of nine family units at George Williams House, Fleetwood.
- 2.2 To ensure two units of family accommodation are available exclusively for Wyre Council as interim/temporary accommodation.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That a contribution of £25,000 in 2022/23 and 2023/24 to George Williams House is agreed to maintain the provision of the current nine family units and to ensure exclusive use of two units for Wyre Council. The contribution would form part of the scheme's contract with Lancashire County Council and would be paid to Lancashire County Council from the Homelessness Reserve.

4. Background

- 4.1 George Williams House, Broomfield Road, Fleetwood is a housing scheme owned by the Regenda Group and currently leased to The

Salvation Army. The scheme has been operating since 2004. The building is effectively split in two and provides six single units of accommodation for young people and nine family units of accommodation. The scheme is funded by Lancashire County Council.

- 4.2** The scheme is an invaluable resource and provides temporary accommodation to a wide range of service users who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Wyre Council has established an excellent relationship with Salvation Army. In addition to the accommodation provision, George Williams House is regularly used by Wyre's Housing Options Team as a neutral venue to conduct homeless interviews with local service users who may not easily be able to attend the Civic Centre.
- 4.3** The Salvation Army are also currently running a tenancy training and accommodation finding service funded by Wyre Council, as well as providing casework support for the Refugee Resettlement Programme with both programmes operating out of George Williams House.
- 4.4** Whilst service users are staying at George Williams House the caseworkers ensure that adequate support is in place, including maximising benefits, registrations with GPs/dentists, identifying and arranging additional support needs (e.g. substance misuse services). The caseworker's role ultimately provides the skills necessary for service users to maintain their own tenancy. Following successful transition from the scheme the caseworkers also provide floating support to former service users to ensure necessary support needs are still met.
- 4.5** Supporting families fleeing domestic violence has also become a significant part of the caseworker's role with the scheme regularly used to support victims of domestic abuse, as local women's refuge provision is very limited.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** Lancashire County Council's Supporting People budget was reviewed in 2017 and this led to a reduction in the funding of George Williams House. A staffing review was conducted by The Salvation Army and adjustments made but there remained a shortfall of £25,000 per year.
- 5.2** A report was approved in April 2018 to agree to contribute £25,000 per year for two years using funding from the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. A further report was approved in March 2020 to continue this funding for a further two years. This two year period has now come to an end and there remains a shortfall of £25,000 per year.
- 5.3** A further staffing review has been undertaken by The Salvation Army but it is felt that it would not be possible to operate the scheme safely if any additional staffing cuts had to be made.

- 5.4** Wyre relies heavily on the family units at George Williams House as it is the only supported housing scheme for families in the area. The Homelessness Act 2017 was introduced on 1 April 2018 and placed additional duties on local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness. This has resulted in further demand for suitable temporary accommodation for those people homeless/threatened with homelessness, and at most times there is a significant waiting list to place families in George Williams House to ensure they receive appropriate support.
- 5.5** Over the past two years there have been 42 households placed in George Williams House. 16 have secured tenancies with social housing providers, 17 have tenancies in the private rented sector, and 3 have moved in with their family/partner. It is clear from presentations that many of the families who are homeless/at risk of homelessness have a range of complex needs. These can include significant rent arrears, debts, offending behaviours, domestic violence, social care involvement, teenage parents, ASB, young people at risk, mental health, substance misuse, learning difficulties, self-harm/suicide attempts and children not attending school.
- 5.6** The team at George Williams House have evidenced their ability to work with the families to provide tenancy training, money management skills, life skills, shopping and cooking on a budget, anger management, gambling support, confidence and self-esteem building, benefits advice, parenting support and employment guidance. Without the support provided by the team at George Williams House it is quite likely that many of these families would not have been able to sustain tenancies.

6. Delegated functions

- 6.1** The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive function delegated to the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the council's constitution): "To consider matters relating to homeless people and vulnerable people in the Borough."

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	Homelessness Prevention Grant of £258,512 plus £7,936 Domestic Abuse New Burdens Funding plus a recently awarded Homelessness Prevention Grant Top Up of £41,695 have been awarded for 2022/23. Homelessness Prevention Grant has been confirmed at £274,934 for 2023/24 and at £287,741 for 2024/25. The £50,000 contribution can be met from the Homelessness Reserve (estimated balance as at 31/03/2023 reported to Cabinet in October £319,479). Utilising some of this grant would ensure continued supported housing provision in Wyre for

	family units in particular and reduce the potential for increased Bed and Breakfast costs.
Legal	The availability of the supported housing scheme assists with the Council's legal duties under homelessness legislation, including the additional relief duties required under the Homelessness Act 2017

Other risks/implications: checklist

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community safety	✓
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and Safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
N/A		

Appendices

None