



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

**to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
6 JANUARY 2022**

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE – SPLASH PARK

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider a supplementary Estimate for the cost of essential work to replace the surface of the Splash Park, and for essential electrical work within the associated Pump room totalling up to £150,000.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That a Supplementary Revenue Estimate of £10,000 for the cost of the electrical work to the Splash Park is approved;
- (ii) That a Supplementary Capital Estimate of £140,000 for the cost of the resurfacing work to the Splash Park is approved.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council received external funding in around 2004 to install a new Splash Park in the Promenade which opened in 2006.
- 3.2 The Splash Park generally opens for around 100-130 days per year between May to September – weather permitting.
- 3.3 The Splash Park is well loved attraction, used by local residents as well as visitors to the District and has always had a high level of use.
- 3.4 The facility has been well maintained, and repairs have been undertaken to maximise its use, but due to the age of the facility it has reached a point where the whole surface of the Splash Park would need to be replaced.
- 3.5 The lifespan of a surface of this type would generally be 10 years so it has lasted one and a half times as long as would normally be expected.
- 3.6 Quotes obtained last year, and market testing has indicated that the cost of replacement of the surface would be in the region of £120,000 to £140,000, with essential electrical work costing a further £10,000.
- 3.7 Repairs to the surface were undertaken in 2020 / 21 however these have only lasted for the 2021 season, and the surface has continued to deteriorate.

- 3.8 Recent inspections by a Consultant appointed by the Council highlighted the poor condition of the surface and identified the health and safety risk of both trip hazards as well as the risk of encouraging bacterial growth.
- 3.9 The Splash Park budget has historically shown a net profit of around, £38,000 but this only takes into account direct costs of running and maintaining the facility (such as temporary staff, chemicals etc). It does not include the cost of our own permanent staff time working to run the Splashpark.
- 3.10 Including all staff costs as well as the additional staffing requirements for 2022 / 23 identified through a recent external review means that the Splash Park would be close to a breakeven position during 2022 / 23
- 3.11 However, our review has also highlighted opportunities to increase the income generation for the season, for example through changes to our admissions policy.
- 3.12 A summary of the estimated income and expenditure for 2022 / 23 (excluding any changes to our charging and admissions policy) is shown at **APPENDIX 1**.
- 3.13 Whilst current estimates are based on historic information what the budget does not take into account is the:
- Additional carparking income that is generated from visitors to the Prom who are using the Splash Park,
 - Current operating model does not maximise the income potential of the facility,
 - Splash Park is run an integral part of Promenade Park and has a much wider benefit to making the Prom as a Tourist attraction and visitor destination.
 - Financial benefit to other businesses on the Prom, and the visitor economy.
- 3.14 Without the investment in a new surface the Splash Park will be unable to operate during 2022 / 23 and would remain closed indefinitely. The closure would be a significant loss to the Districts Tourism offer, as well as to local residents.
- 3.15 The Supplementary budget is required in the current financial year to enable the work to be commenced in the spring to reduce risks of a significantly delayed opening of the facility.
- 3.16 We are currently looking to work in partnership to deliver the Splash Park for 2022 / 23 should Members agree the recommendations in this report. A partnership would offer a range of benefits which include:
- increased operating resilience;
 - opportunity to minimise risk of operating losses;
 - maximising potential income;
 - potential to offer wider benefits to Splashpark users through partnership working.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Splash Park is an iconic part of Prom Park and our Tourist Offer. It is well loved and well used with the daily sessions frequently running at maximum capacity.

- 4.2 To operate the Splash Park for 2022 / 23 it is necessary to replace the current Splash Park surface during the spring and undertake essential electrical work at an estimated cost of £150,000.
- 4.3 We are working to deliver the Splash Park in partnership for 2022 / 23 to minimise operational risks, increase resilience and maximise the potential of the asset.

5. **IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES**

- 5.1 Operating the Splash Park supports the Councils Corporate Priorities by enhancing and promoting the Districts visitor economy.

6. **IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The Splash Park is a much-loved attraction for residents and visitors alike. Failure to open the Splash Park would result in customer disappointment and is likely to impact upon visitor numbers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Reputational risk if Splash Park did not open.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Additional budget is required to fund essential work to enable the Splash Park to open in 2022 / 23. Failure to open Splash Park would impact upon Car Park income and may affect visitor numbers to the District.
- (v) **Impact of Resources (human)** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to Sue Green, Customers, Community and Casework Manager.