

Council



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

(Extraordinary Meeting)



Thursday, 11 January 2024
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's
Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

This meeting is scheduled to commence at 2:30pm or at the close of the extraordinary meeting of Full Council scheduled to be held at 1:00pm, whichever is the later.

Members: Councillor Gloria Johnson, Chairman of the Council
Councillor Paul Fellows, Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillor Matthew Bailey
Councillor Emma Baker
Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor David Bellamy
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Pam Byrd
Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor Steven Cunnington
Councillor James Denniston
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Patsy Ellis
Councillor Phil Gadd
Councillor Ben Green

Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Anna Kelly
Councillor Jane Kingman
Councillor Gareth Knight
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Zoe Lane
Councillor Robert Leadenham
Councillor Bridget Ley
Councillor Nikki Manterfield
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Penny Milnes
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Chris Noon
Councillor Habibur Rahman
Councillor Rhea Rayside
Councillor Nick Robins

Councillor Penny Robins
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Rob Shorrocks
Councillor Vanessa Smith
Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Paul Stokes
Councillor Elvis Stooke
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Murray Turner
Councillor Mark Whittington
Councillor Jane Wood
Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor Sue Woolley

Agenda

This meeting can be watched as a live stream, or at a later date, [via the SKDC Public-I Channel](#)

For those Councillors who wish to attend, prayers will be held at 2:25pm before the commencement of the meeting, or at the close of the extraordinary meeting of Full Council scheduled to be held at 1:00pm, whichever is the later.

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Disclosure of Interests

Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.

3. Public Open Forum

The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register at least 3 working days before the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk.

4. Deepings Leisure Centre - Request for a Financial Contribution

(Pages 3 - 185)

To consider a recommendation from the Joint meeting of the Finance & Economic and Culture & Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committees with regard to a request for one-off funding which has been received from Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC in the sum of £850,000.

The report and appendices included within this agenda are those submitted for consideration at the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, scheduled to be held on 9 January 2024, which is after this agenda was published. Any recommendations or additional information arising from that meeting will be reported to this meeting of Full Council.



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Joint Finance and Economic and Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 January 2024

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter,
Deputy Leader of the Council and
Councillor Paul Stokes, Portfolio Holder
for Culture and Leisure

Deepings Leisure Centre – Request for a Financial Contribution

Report Author

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)

 Karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide a recommendation to Council on a request for one-off funding which has been received from Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC in the sum of £850,000.

Recommendations

The joint meeting of the Finance and Economic and Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committees is asked to:

- 1. Review the Business Plan submitted by Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC**
- 2. Review the level of the capital costs projected relating to the refurbishment of Deepings Leisure Centre**
- 3. Review the income and expenditure projections for Deepings Leisure Centre**
- 4. Give consideration to a level of funding subject to all the following conditions:**

- a. Any funds would only be released after the statutory period for a potential challenge in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 has expired.
- b. Confirmation that the other major funding contributions set out in the Business Plan have been committed and approved by those contributors.
- c. A satisfactory undertaking of due diligence of the Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC including a review of their Financial Regulations.
- d. Evidence that proposed refurbishment works will comply with Building Regulations.
- e. Completion of transfer of lease or freehold ownership of the site from LCC to the Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC.

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	<p>Appendices 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 are not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act – financial information</p> <p>Appendices 1 and 2 are not for publication by virtue of paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act – legal information</p>
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	<p>Healthy and strong communities</p> <p>High performing Council</p>
Which wards are impacted?	All Deepings Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 A request has been received for the Council to consider making a one-off financial contribution to the Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC as a contribution towards the refurbishment costs of re-opening the Leisure Centre. As this is currently an unbudgeted sum the Council would be required to use its Local Priorities Reserve to make the funding available if this request is supported.
- 1.2 Meetings have taken place with representatives from the CIC to provide the opportunity for Council Officers to raise clarification questions with respect to the financial information and underpinning assumptions that have been provided to

assess the financial accuracy of the proposals. These discussions have enabled the CIC to provide further information and a higher level of clarity and understanding of the underlying assumptions and information within the Business Plan and cashflow forecast.

- 1.3 There are a high number of underpinning assumptions that have been used in building the cashflow that rely on an immediate and positive customer response to the Centre. This is contradictory to the current demand in the leisure market, and therefore the Business Plan is built on income projections that if not realised, have a detrimental impact on the financial viability of the proposal.
- 1.4 A further observation is the potential for a financially detrimental impact that any customer migration from the neighbouring centres (that are operated by the 100% wholly owned company Leisure SK Ltd) will have on their operating viability. Any customer and resulting income reduction from these centres could in turn result in an increased management fee request from Leisure SK Ltd in order to fund any increase in the operating deficit.
- 1.5 There are concerns that the operating expenditure is understated in several key areas such as staffing costs, ongoing repairs and maintenance, fixed overheads and utility costs. A combination of overstated income projections and understated expenditure projections could lead to continued operating deficits with no obvious solution to how this can be recovered. This scenario would lead to the Centre operation not being viable as a trading entity. These concerns are shared by the independent external assessment undertaken by SLC which is shown at **Exempt Appendix Eight**.
- 1.6 There appears to be financial differences between the projected costs of the refurbishment works previously provided to the Council as set out in paragraph 2.24. Some of the differences are significant (as shown in paragraph 11 of **Exempt Appendix Seven**). If the higher costs are reflective of the actual costs incurred this has the potential to expose that there would be insufficient funds available to ensure a full reopening. Whilst discussions have taken place regarding potential partial refurbishment if there was a funding shortfall (and the subsequent impact this would have on the forecasted cashflow) this has subsequently been ruled out by the CIC.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.7 To consider whether the granting of the amount of funding requested from the Council can be made under the subsidy control rules, the Council commissioned Bevan Brittan LLP to provide legal advice. As there were commonalities with the request for funding being received by Lincolnshire County Council, the two Councils

agreed to jointly commission the legal advice which is attached to this report at **Exempt Appendix One.**

- 1.8 In addition, the Council also commissioned Bevan Brittan to provide comment on the general public law considerations which should be taken into account when considering the request for funding.

Subsidy Control Advice

- 1.9 The advice provided in relation to subsidy control has confirmed that the provision of funding to the CIC, in accordance with the proposal set out in its business case appended to this report, will qualify as a subsidy as it meets the four conditions that this is assessed against, namely:

- The subsidy is given directly or indirectly from public resources by a public authority
- It confers an economic advantage on one or more enterprises
- Benefit is gained by the enterprise receiving the grant over one or more other enterprises with respect to the provision of goods or services
- The subsidy has or is capable of having an effect on competition or investment within the UK.

- 1.10 The Subsidy Control Act 2022 imposes requirements on a Local Authority when it intends to provide a third party with a subsidy. If these requirements are not complied with then the subsidy will be unlawful and can be challenged in the Competition Appeal Tribunal. It is therefore necessary for the Council to assess the funding request received from the Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC against the subsidy control principles in Schedule 1 to the Subsidy Control Act. A grant must not be provided if it is inconsistent with these principles.

- 1.11 Furthermore, as the provision of community leisure activity is typically viewed as an important health and wellbeing benefit for the community, the legal advice indicates that the proposed funding may be considered to be a Subsidy for Services of Public Economic Interest (SPEI). For the Council to designate a service as a SPEI it must be satisfied that:

- The service is provided for the benefit of the public; and
- The service would not be provided, or would not be provided on the terms required by an enterprise under normal market conditions

- 1.12 In line with the legal advice, it is considered that it would be prudent to treat the funding as a subsidy for SPEI. This places additional requirements on the Council which must be complied with should the request for funding be granted as detailed in Section 29 of the SCA. The Council will need to:

- Satisfy itself that the amount of the grant is limited to what is necessary for the CIC to deliver the SPEI services, having regard to the income and costs

plus no more than a reasonable profit. Reasonable profits should be assessed through a benchmarking exercise comparing the profits achieved by similar public service contracts which have been awarded under competitive conditions.

- Ensure that the funding is given in a transparent manner which would necessitate a written contract or grant funding agreement which clearly sets out the terms of the subsidy and provides the following information:
 - The SPEI services in respect of which the subsidy is given
 - Details of the CIC as the enterprise which is tasked with providing the services
 - The period for which the services are to be provided
 - The facility itself or geographical location
 - How the amount of subsidy has been determined
 - The arrangements in respect of reviews and steps which may be taken for recovery, for example where the funding is found to be more generous than permitted and part or all of it has to be clawed back.

- 1.13 Should a grant be provided, the Council will need to keep the grant under review, at the beginning and end of the subsidy period, and at least every three years in the intervening period, and take steps to recover the grant to the extent that the maximum permitted subsidy is exceeded. If a decision is taken to provide the grant, this would require the Council to have appropriate contract management arrangements in place.
- 1.14 There is an exemption which can be used to provide SPEI grants up to a maximum total of £725,000 but the funding requested from the Council exceeds that amount meaning that the steps outlined in this report for ensuring compliance with the subsidy control rules would need to be taken in relation to any balance of the funding in any event. For this reason, it may be more appropriate to preserve any entitlement which CIC may have remaining under this exemption so that it can be used to provide cover for the smaller grants which are being sought from other contributors as part of the business case.
- 1.15 Under Section 33 of the SCA the Council would be required to publish details of the grant on the UK's Subsidy Database within three months of the formal decision to provide it, and to maintain this record for six years or the duration of the subsidy if this is longer.
- 1.16 Under Section 70 of the SCA, any interested party who is aggrieved by the making of a subsidy decision may apply to the Competition Appeal Tribunal for a review of the decision. The challenge can be in relation to the Council not complying with the subsidy control requirements in the SCA, or on more general public law grounds, for example that the Council did not behave reasonably or rationally when deciding to provide the grant. If such a challenge was successful the Competition Appeal

- Tribunal could impose remedies under usual judicial review principles, including an order for the recovery of the unlawful subsidy with interest.
- 1.17 The period in which a challenge can be made in relation to the provision of a subsidy is typically one month from the publication.
- 1.18 To determine whether a subsidy can be lawfully given the Government has produced an assessment template which outlines the recommended advice to support the provision of a subsidy in terms of:
- Whether it supports a policy objective
 - Whether a subsidy is the most appropriate way to address the policy objective
 - What would happen if the subsidy is not provided
 - How the subsidy will change the economic behaviour of the beneficiary and achieve something which would not have occurred without it
 - Whether the subsidy is proportionate and designed to minimise any negative impact on competition
 - Whether any negative effects are outweighed by the positive impact of providing the subsidy
- 1.19 For any decision to provide the funding to be lawful, the Council will need to satisfy itself that the funding is consistent with the subsidy control principles. Whilst there is some limited scope to relax the subsidy control principles to the extent necessary to ensure that they do not obstruct the delivery of services of public economic interest, there may be a risk in relaxing the application of the subsidy control principles.
- 1.20 The proposal to provide funding to the Deepings Community Leisure CIC has been assessed against the Government template and the assessment is attached at **Exempt Appendix Two** to this report. The Council will need to satisfy itself that the Business Plan represents a sustainable model to ensure that such a subsidy granted by the Council will be able to deliver the policy objective of improving leisure provision within the district.

General Public Law Considerations

- 1.21 The Council has power under section 19(3)(i) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (LGMPA) to contribute, by way of grant or loan, towards the expenses incurred or to be incurred by any voluntary organisation in providing recreational facilities which the Council has power to provide under section 19(1) of the LGMPA (which gives the Council power to provide, amongst other things, indoor facilities consisting of sports centres and swimming pools).
- 1.22 “Voluntary Organisation” is defined at section 19(3) of the LGMPA as being “any person carrying on or proposing to carry on an undertaking otherwise than for profit”. On the basis that the CIC is a company limited by guarantee, it would be considered

to be a “not for profit” company in the sense that any profit generated is used to grow and develop the business, which is benefitting the identified community, or goes directly to the benefit of that community.

- 1.23 However, in exercising any power or duty local authorities must act for proper purposes, in good faith and must exercise their powers properly, following proper procedures in a “Wednesbury reasonable” manner. In other words, the Council must act for proper motives, take into account all relevant considerations, and ignore irrelevant matters. It must not act irrationally and must balance the risks against the potential rewards. Additionally, local authorities must consider the usual fiduciary, best value, crime and disorder reduction, equalities, health and wellbeing, and other relevant overarching duties when making decisions, as well as any explicit requirements.
- 1.24 Of particular importance to the matter in hand is the Council’s fiduciary duty to taxpayers to ensure that Council funds are used in their best interests. In other words, the Council must ensure that any decision to commit Council funds is an appropriate use of those funds, is done in a commercial manner and provides genuine and tangible benefits for the community.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.25 Statutory Officers have identified a number of legal and financial issues as detailed in the body of this report. In recommending that a funding contribution should be made to the Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC Members will need to assure themselves that the level of risks identified are acceptable.
- 1.26 The Business Plan submitted by the Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC contains a table which has identified a limited number of risks and mitigating actions. As detailed within the comments made by the s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, further substantial risks have been identified which will need to be considered and addressed.
- 1.27 Appropriate insurance arrangements will be required to cover the operation of a reopened Deepings Leisure Centre including Public Liability and Public Indemnity Insurance.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance and Risk Officer

Health and Safety

- 1.28 Health and safety of leisure facilities is covered under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. As such leisure facility operators have a legal responsibility to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that in the course of carrying out their business the health and safety of members of the public, employees, contractors and volunteers, is not put at risk.
- 1.29 Under the Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998 South Kesteven District Council would be the enforcing authority for a reopened Deepings Leisure Centre.
- 1.30 During the course of conversations, the Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC have confirmed that contractors working on Deepings Leisure Centre would be required to provide their own health and safety procedures, including risk assessments and method statements, and would be required to work to these arrangements under supervision of the Project Management Team. Furthermore, they have confirmed if volunteers are used then the Project Manager will ensure that suitable health and safety measures are enforced. The Project Management Team are yet to be appointed and therefore no details have been provided to the Council on the level of experience and qualifications which will be required as part of the appointment process.
- 1.31 The Council has robust arrangements in place to ensure that any works which are undertaken on its behalf are carried out by competent persons or contractors. If funding is provided to a third party to undertake renovation works to Deepings Leisure Centre, Members may wish to consider the impact of reputational damage should these works not be carried out by competent persons or contractors, and a resulting injury, loss, or damage occurs.
- 1.32 Deepings Leisure Centre contains a significant amount of asbestos within the structure of the building. During 2021 the Council commissioned a contractor to remove the asbestos where possible, the remaining asbestos being encapsulated. If structural modifications are to be made to the building care will need to be taken not to disturb the asbestos. The first element of the hierarchy of controls for Health and Safety is to eliminate the risk. The removal of the remaining asbestos would remove the risk this material being left in situ poses and would remove the need and cost of future management arrangements, particularly if further modifications to the building were planned. There are costs identified within the Business Plan in relation to the removal of asbestos.

Completed by: Phil Swinton, Emergency Planning and Health and Safety Manager

Safeguarding

- 1.33 Whilst there are no safeguarding concerns for the Council in relation to the request for funding, Deepings Leisure Centre adjoins Deepings School which is managed by the Anthem Trust. The business plan does not provide details on any safeguarding arrangements to be adopted, and it will be for the Anthem Trust and Lincolnshire County Council to satisfy themselves that arrangements are appropriate.

Completed by: Jodie Archer, Head of Housing Services and Safeguarding Lead

Building Control

- 1.33 The Building Control Regulations help ensure that new buildings, conversions, renovations and extensions (domestic or commercial) are going to be safe, healthy and high performing. Detailed regulations cover specific topics including structural integrity, fire protection, accessibility, energy performance, acoustic performance, protection against falls, electrical and gas safety. They also lay standards for drains, ventilation, protection against the ingress of water and protection against contamination, including methane and radon gas. The building control regulations are defined by the English and Welsh Governments.
- 1.34 General building control requirements are covered under Schedule 1 of the Building Act 1984, and any modifications to the building would require building control approval with an application, supported by full plans and working drawings, checked for compliance. Advice has been provided to the CIC that an architect will be required to develop suitable working drawings and to oversee the design phase of the project.
- 1.35 A fire risk assessment will need to be carried out for Deepings Leisure Centre, which takes account of any proposed changes or modifications to the building. It is also a requirement that details of the building control application, including the working drawings, are provided to the Lincolnshire Fire Service, who may require additional measures to ensure the safety of users in the event of a fire.
- 1.36 The plans provided by Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC include provision that existing roof layers will be removed, and a lightweight aluminium roof constructed inside the building. It is further proposed that solar panels will be installed on the original roof. Building Control Regulation 23 (1) provides that if more than 50% of a thermal element is to be replaced (ie. the roof) then the whole of the thermal element must be replaced to ensure that it complies in so far as is technically, functionally and economically feasible. The CIC have confirmed that their plans for the roof will include the appropriate levels of insulation required.

- 1.37 The plans detailed in paragraph 1.36 rely on the existing roof structure being sound. The roof survey undertaken on behalf of the Council by Siddle Grimley Hage Limited in May 2021 is attached at **Appendix Three** to this report. Whilst the report confirmed that the visual and intrusive investigations undertaken at that time did not reveal any damage to the roof structure which would render the building unsafe, it was recommended that the roof members should be checked if the current roof was to remain over the winter period when there could be additional snow loads. No further structural roof survey information has been provided to the Council and therefore no assurance can be provided that the structure is safe, particularly given the significant water ingress which has occurred since May 2021.
- 1.38 In addition, the costs provided in the Business Plan propose a change of heating status, moving away from the oil-fired boilers currently in situ to an air source heat pump and solar panels. Building Control Regulation 22 provides that if there is a change of energy status then the whole of the building would be required to be brought up to current building standards, provision for this level of upgrade is not currently built into the costs which would increase significantly.

Completed by: Jeremy Barlow, East Midlands Building Control Manager

Climate Change

- 1.39 The previous operation of the centre relied on the heating source of oil-fired boilers, resulting in significant carbon emissions from the centre compared with gas or electrically powered systems.
- 1.40 The proposals to refurbish Deepings Leisure Centre include the provision of solar panels to generate electricity. The ability to produce clean renewable energy on site will reduce the reliance on fossil fuel generated power, nevertheless electricity generated would only offset the carbon emissions from the main heating system by a small percentage.
- 1.41 Currently local residents who previously used Deepings Leisure Centre are having to travel further afield to access leisure provision. The reintroduction of a local leisure centre would negate the necessity for these journeys. However, the carbon saving in relation to this would in all likelihood be offset by the reintroduction of a leisure facility to the district.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Officer

Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.42 The Council has been requested to provide funding to a community group to reopen the Deepings Leisure Centre. As the Council would not be the direct provider of the services going forward an Equality Impact Assessment is not

required as the re-opening and operation of the Leisure Centre will be the responsibility of the CIC.

- 1.43 If the Council was considering removing funding, or removing service provision, an Equality Impact Assessment would be necessary. The Council's involvement in this matter is simply as a funder, not an operator.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2020 – 2023) contains a key priority of building 'Healthy and Strong Communities' which includes an ambition to invest in the health of our district by improving leisure provision. This ambition runs parallel to the Council's other key priority of being a 'High Performing Council' thereby ensuring that the Council's finances are managed appropriately.
- 2.2 Deepings Leisure Centre is owned by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and was previously operated by South Kesteven District Council (the Council) under a tenancy at will arrangement. The Anthem Trust currently manages Deepings School. Prior to the closure of Deepings Leisure Centre, the school had exclusive use of the swimming pool and sports hall during the school day under a chance to share arrangement.
- 2.3 The Council ceased operating Deepings Leisure Centre in July 2021 when the centre was closed for health and safety reasons. During the period July 2021 and November 2022, the Council attempted to obtain security of tenure over the leisure centre and carried out detailed feasibility work, accompanied by operational business plans, before agreeing a scheme of refurbishment to bring the centre back into use should a lease be secured.
- 2.4 On 24 November 2022 the Council considered a report (**See Background Papers**) and decided that the previously agreed refurbishment of Deepings Leisure Centre would not proceed as this was no longer an affordable proposition for the Council.
- 2.5 Subsequently Deepings Leisure Centre was handed back to LCC on 16 January 2023.
- 2.6 The closure of the leisure centre has had a detrimental impact on the local community who relied on the facility for a wide range of sports and leisure activity, including the learn to swim programme and the provision of school swimming. This has also had an impact on the Deepings School who used the sports hall for physical education lessons and as a venue for examinations. As a short term measure the school have erected a temporary sports hall within the school grounds.

Expressions of Interest

- 2.7 On 4 July 2023 LCC's Executive agreed that they would seek expressions of interest from organisations to purchase the freehold title of Deepings Leisure Centre. Any interested organisation would be required to demonstrate a sustainable and viable business case for the refurbishment and operation of Deepings Leisure Centre and ensure that their plans would not interfere with the running of Deepings School. They were also encouraged to consider shared use with the school which has a requirement for a permanent sports hall.
- 2.8 LCC has confirmed that any transfer of the freehold interest of Deepings Leisure Centre to an independent organisation is subject to the final agreement of the Anthem Trust and ultimately a decision for the Department for Education.
- 2.9 As LCC is not in a position to take on the responsibility for the running of Deepings Leisure Centre, especially given the level of repairs required, their Executive further stated that should a third-party operator not be found then the building would be demolished, and the land transferred to the Anthem Trust.
- 2.10 Details on the expressions of interest received by LCC have not been shared with the Council, nor has the Council been involved in the evaluation process in relation to any bids which have been submitted. Therefore, the outcome of this process is currently unknown.

The Deepings Community Leisure Centre Business Plan

- 2.11 The Deepings Leisure Centre Community Group (DLCCG) is a working group which was established as an unincorporated association to shape a project to reopen Deepings Leisure Centre. Subsequently a separate Community Interest Company named Deepings Community Leisure Centre CIC (CIC) has also been established to manage the refurbishment of Deepings Leisure Centre and engage an experienced third-party leisure provider to run it.
- 2.12 Representatives of the CIC have confirmed that they have submitted an expression of interest to LCC accompanied by the Deepings Community Leisure Centre Business Plan (Business Plan). The Business Plan contains details of the capital investment and modifications which are proposed to be made to the centre together with income and expenditure projections.

Funding Request to South Kesteven District Council

- 2.13 The CIC also submitted the Business Plan, which is appended to this report at **Exempt Appendix Four**, to the Council for consideration alongside a funding request for £850,000. **Exempt Appendix Five** contains a 15-year cashflow projection and cashflow summary which accompanied the Business Plan and details the income and expenditure projections.

- 2.14 **Appendix Six** contains supporting information which was submitted to the Council to accompany the Business Plan titled 'Dear Councillor'. This provides details on the level of support in the local community for a reopened Deepings Leisure Centre.

Assessment of Business Plan

- 2.15 It is clear that there is significant local support for the reopening of Deepings Leisure Centre. A refurbished centre would improve leisure provision in the district and provide increased opportunities for local residents to undertake exercise. The reopening of Deepings Leisure Centre may therefore positively impact levels of fitness and health and wellbeing outcomes in the local area. The Business Plan also includes provision of SEN services such as assisted pool time, including the provision of an accessible pool-lift system, and the ability to offer health and wellbeing services such as sports massage, physiotherapy and holistic therapies.
- 2.16 However, following a review of the Business Plan, Officers identified a number of concerns and issues. Therefore, further information has been sought from the CIC during a series of meetings to provide clarification and further information.
- 2.17 The remainder of Paragraph 2 of this report provides information on the analysis of the Business Plan which has been undertaken, in addition information is provided on a revised Business Plan and income and expenditure projections which were subsequently received following ongoing dialogue. For ease of reading the information has been split into the following subsections:
- A) Timeline of Actions
 - B) Analysis of Original Business Plan
 - C) Capital Costs and Refurbishment Plans
 - D) Sources of Funding
 - E) Review of Business Plan by Sport and Leisure Consultancy
 - F) Leisure Management Provider
 - G) Revised Business Plan and Income and Expenditure Projections
 - H) Proposed Timeline for Re-opening

A) Timeline of Actions

- 2.18 **Table One** below details the timeline of the receipt of the CIC Business Plan and details a series of meetings which has taken place between Council Officers and the CIC together with the receipt of additional information.

Table One – Timeline in relation to the submission of the Business Plan, clarification meetings, and the receipt of additional information	
Date	Action
31st August 2023	Initial meeting with Richard Wyles, S151 Officer and Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer to discuss the level of information which would be required to accompany a request for funding
20 September 2023	Receipt of Business Plan and formal request for Council funding
3 October 2023	Clarification meeting with CIC resulting in a series of questions submitted for response
16 October 2023	Written responses to the clarification questions received from CIC
17 October 2023	Revised cashflow information received from CIC
18 October 2023	Clarification meeting with CIC
30 October 2023	Revised cashflow information received from the CIC
1 December 2023	Clarification meeting with the CIC
10 December 2023	Receipt of revised Business Plan

B) Analysis of Original Business Plan

- 2.19 During early discussions, Officers provided an initial series of questions to the CIC to clarify some of the information contained within the Business Plan. Details of these questions, together with the accompanying responses received, are attached at **Exempt Appendix Seven** to this report.
- 2.20 To provide an independent expert opinion Sports and Leisure Consultancy (SLC) were commissioned to provide an analysis of the information provided in the Business Plan, specifically in relation to the income and expenditure projections. SLC are leading strategic advisers in enabling inclusive, healthy and active communities, and offer specialist advice to a wide range of organisations including Sport England and local authorities. They also have an in-depth knowledge of Deepings Leisure Centre as they previously supported the Council to review the feasibility options and develop business plans for the replacement and refurbishment options for Deepings Leisure Centre which were previously considered.
- 2.21 The report provided by SLC on their findings is attached to this report at **Exempt Appendix Eight**. The income and expenditure projections have been assessed, and a series a key risks identified which could impact the overall viability of Deepings Leisure Centre.

- 2.22 Furthermore, SLC had sight of the initial questions Officers had raised in relation to the Business Plan and the subsequent responses received (**Exempt Appendix Seven**). Comments on the responses provided by the CIC are included in the report by SLC in italics for ease of identification.

C) Capital Costs and Refurbishment Plans

- 2.23 A total capital requirement of £1.935 million was originally identified by the CIC as the amount required to re-open Deepings Leisure Centre and provide a swimming pool, sports hall and gym.
- 2.24 The costs identified within the Business Plan are low compared to the previous refurbishment costs developed by the Council. In 2021 the cost of a basic refurbishment with no modification to the building was identified to be £5.28 million including contingency, fees and inflation. It is widely recognised that construction costs have increased since 2021 as a result of market volatility caused by Brexit and the war in Ukraine.
- 2.25 The costed interventions in the Business Plan do not represent a full refurbishment of the leisure centre and there is a reliance on discounts being offered by local suppliers with some works being undertaken free of charge.
- 2.26 The costs identified also rely on the existing roof structure being structurally sound. The structural roof survey previously undertaken by the Council, which is provided at **Appendix Three**, recommended that the roof members should be checked if the current roof was to remain over the winter period when there could be additional snow loads. No further structural roof survey has been undertaken and therefore no assurance can be provided that the structure is safe, particularly given the significant water ingress which has occurred since May 2021.
- 2.27 A cost of £106,638 was identified by the CIC within the Business Plan to cover the installation of an air source heat pump. The Council has recently worked with Leisure Energy Ltd, who are a leading energy saving consultancy and specialise in supporting organisations to submit funding bids to improve the energy efficiency of leisure centres. With their support, a bid has recently been submitted to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) to install an air source heat pump at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, the total cost of the project being assessed at £4.08 million. The project not only covers the cost of the air source heat pump and its installation, but also covers the costs associated with ensuring all mechanical and electrical plant is improved, and the pipework modified to ensure these are compatible with the new heating source.
- 2.28 As there was a significant difference in the costs identified in relation to air source heat pumps Officers requested the CIC provide a copy of the quote they had received so that Leisure Energy could review this. This is attached at **Exempt Appendix Nine**, with the cost identified being increased to £148,054. Leisure

Energy have subsequently confirmed that the quote relates to wall mounted air conditioning/heating units rather than air source heat pumps.

- 2.29 They have further observed that no installation costs have been identified within the quote and it is not known whether the heating units could work with the existing air conditioning system or whether further upgrades would be required. In addition, they have commented that the heating outputs appear to be low and that, although this system would heat the air in the pool hall, it appears no provision has been made to heat the pool water.
- 2.30 Information has been received from the CIC that the pool water heating has a separate specification and is included within the pool refurbishment costs. Furthermore, their supplier is confident that the specification suggested, together with the newly installed insulated roof, will deliver the level of heat output required.
- 2.31 The quote received from the CIC in relation to the pool refurbishment is attached at **Exempt Appendix Ten** to this report. The costs for providing a separate pool water heating system are provided within the quote but this sum has not been included in the capital costings within the Business Plan. The costs of refurbishing the learner pool have not been included in the quote or the costs identified.
- 2.32 The Business Plan provides that some modifications will be made to the leisure centre building, in particular the squash courts will be reconfigured to contain a gym within two of the courts and a soft play facility and exercise area in the other two squash courts. Capital costs for providing a mezzanine floor over the proposed gym area have been included but no costs have been identified to undertake the necessary works to form the two separate areas from the original four squash courts. This issue was raised during a meeting with the CIC who provided a response that these works were included in the amount set aside for contingency.
- 2.33 An amount of £424,000 has been set aside within the Business Plan for project management contingency including scaffolding and cranes. As this amount has not been itemised it has not been possible to assess whether the amount is appropriate and whether any additional works identified within the clarification responses provided by CIC can be accommodated within this sum.
- 2.34 The costs identified to improve the swimming change areas are very low compared to the previous costs identified. Prior to the closure of Deepings Leisure Centre, the condition of the swim change areas was identified to be very poor and requiring an upgrade. As swimming income forms a significant part of the income projections, there is a risk that the centre would be unattractive to users should this area not be improved to an acceptable standard, including appropriate showering facilities.

- 2.35 Within the clarification responses provided in **Exempt Appendix Seven** the CIC have stated that converting the changing rooms to a changing village is 'not a must for opening'. Should insufficient funds not be available this may also impact on the attractiveness of the offer for families, schools and clubs.
- 2.36 No capital costs were included within the Business Plan to bring the climbing wall back into service, however income from climbing wall activity was originally included in the income and expenditure projections. The climbing wall at Deepings Leisure Centre had been out of commission for some time prior to the closure of the leisure centre as it was deemed unsafe. This income has since been removed from the updated income projections.
- 2.37 There is no provision within the Business Plan costings to upgrade, resurface or re-line the car park. These works were previously identified by the Anthem Trust to be necessary for the Council to secure a lease of Deepings Leisure Centre. The CIC have provided information within their clarification responses that they will be gifted a section of the car park, and no resurfacing works are necessary, however the costs for re-lining have been included in the contingency sum. At a subsequent meeting they advised that expenses in relation to the shared driveway will be dealt with by way of negotiation once ownership of the building has been agreed with LCC, and therefore these costs do not currently factor within the identified capital costings.
- 2.38 The Council were previously advised that all fire doors within Deepings Leisure Centre would be required to be replaced and brought up to current standards. As the amount set aside for this in the Business Plan was considered to be low at £2,014 concern was raised as part of the clarification questions. The response received was that the CIC had inspected the doors and only two required replacing, the remainder required a rubber seal to bring them up to standards.
- 2.39 In the revised Business Plan received (**Exempt Appendix Twelve**) the costs associated with fire doors has subsequently been increased to £21,565. As included in the advice of the Building Control Manager in paragraph 1.35, a fire risk assessment will need to be undertaken and the plans will need to be approved by Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue.
- 2.40 The Business Plan and clarification responses provided by the CIC appear to contain conflicting information. Assurance has been provided within the clarification responses that all costs have been confirmed, are backed up by written quotations and will be honoured. The Business Plan contains information on a local company who are willing to tender, however the clarification response confirms that costs have not yet been confirmed with the company.
- 2.41 In addition to this the CIC confirmed in a meeting with Council Officers that two main contractors were visiting Deepings Leisure Centre during week commencing 4 December 2023 to provide a quote for their services. These costs, together with

the costs associated with securing an architect, do not currently feature in the costs identified in the Business Plan.

D) Sources of Funding

- 2.42 The Council has been requested to provide £850,000 of funding as part of the total amount of capital funding identified in the Business Plan which totals £2.262 million. The Council's requested contribution represents 37.5% of the total amount identified, the remaining funding is proposed to come from LCC (who have requested that their proposed amount is not disclosed), local Parish Councils, Deepings St James United Charities, a private contractor, and the Community Ownership Fund.
- 2.43 The CIC are currently working on the application to the Community Ownership Fund and have reported they are confident of receiving funding as they have been assigned a case officer to assist with the application. They have also reported that the case officer will be assisting them in sense checking the costs which have been identified.
- 2.44 The CIC are also in the process of visiting Parish Councils to agree the funding contributions attributed to them via a precept arrangement and have provided further comment that they will explore crowd funding and sponsorship arrangements once the leisure centre has been signed over to them.
- 2.45 Although the Council and LCC have jointly commissioned legal advice on subsidy control, LCC has not yet provided any information on their evaluation of the CIC expression of interest and Business Plan including whether this has been approved or whether they intend to provide the funding requested of them. Therefore, there is a risk that, should the Council agree the funding request in the sum of £850,000, the remaining funds may not be secured.
- 2.46 During conversations with the CIC they have confirmed that should the main funders not agree their contributions (ie. the Council and LCC), the project will not be able to progress as no further funding sources are available.

E) Review of Business Plan by Sport and Leisure Consultancy

- 2.47 Attached to this report at **Exempt Appendix Eight** is a report provided by SLC following their assessment of the Business Plan. Whilst the focus of their review has been to assess the income and expenditure projections, they have also provided comment within the report that the capital costs identified are substantially lower than the cost estimates previously produced.
- 2.48 Furthermore they have highlighted that there is a lack of detail on plans and associated costs which could present a significant risk, especially as development costs have increased over the last 12 to 18 months.

- 2.49 The report produced by SLC in **Exempt Appendix Eight** includes a table at paragraph 2.1.5 which provides a summary of the risks identified which have then given a red or amber rating depending on the potential impact on the viability of the leisure centre.

Income Projections

- 2.50 The review undertaken by SLC has identified that most of the income projections contained within the Business Plan fail to take account of a period of income growth whilst a customer base is established following the extended period of closure. Leisure operators typically build in growth over a two to three year period for a refurbishment even when a centre is already operational. SLC consider this to be a major risk as income in the early years is likely to have been significantly overstated.
- 2.51 SLC has further identified that it is unlikely that the facility would be able to generate a surplus in the early years of operation and it is unclear how the CIC would manage a deficit position, particularly as they are unlikely to have reserves to manage cashflow pressures.
- 2.52 Sports hall income has been projected in the Business Plan at £58,000 per year which is comparable with the £55,000 the facility took in the year pre-Covid. However, this income projection still carries a risk that this level of income may not be achieved in the short-term as previous users will have found alternative provision.
- 2.53 The Business Plan also includes an income of £130,000 per year from the Anthem Trust for the use of sports hall. The CIC has confirmed that no agreement can be reached with the Anthem Trust around this income until they have the freehold of the leisure centre. There is therefore a significant risk over this income assumption, especially as this far exceeds the level of income previously received by the Council which was circa £38,000 per year for the use of the sports hall, swimming pool and the Linchfield Road Playing Fields during the day term-time.
- 2.54 A significant proportion of the predicted income comes from school swimming and swimming lessons. As detailed within their report SLC identified an error in how the swimming lesson income has been calculated which significantly reduced the income projections.
- 2.55 This information was subsequently provided to the CIC who were given the opportunity to recalculate their swimming lesson income projection. Subsequently this has been revised and the number of hours for swimming lessons increased from the original 11.5 to 21.5 hours per week to get them back to the same level of income as originally projected. The revised information is attached to this report at **Exempt Appendix Eleven**.

- 2.56 This information has been shared with SLC who have provided comment that these figures represent circa 1,700 pupils in swimming lessons which is far in advance of pre-Covid levels at Deepings Leisure Centre and 132 pupils more than are currently enrolled at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre. The CIC have provided comment that this level can be achieved due to the lack of provision in the current area which has been exacerbated by the closure of the Regional Pool in Peterborough. However, SLC remain of the view that these figures carry a high level of risk especially as they are not supported by any market research.
- 2.57 Whilst the number of swim hours for swimming lessons has been increased no information has been provided on how this will impact the remainder of the pool programme and the impact that this may have on the income attributed to general swimming and swimming club use.
- 2.58 The increase in the number of swimming lessons would also incur additional payroll costs for swim teaching. The CIC have provided clarification when submitting the revised swimming lesson figures that they are confident that any increase in swim school times requiring additional swim teachers will be covered as the gross margin per swim teacher is circa 50% depending on class size.
- 2.59 Overall, excluding swim memberships, a total of £705,000 to £725,000 per year was originally projected from swimming activities. This represents between 63% and 68% of annual revenue and is higher than pre-Covid levels of swimming income at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, which has three pools.

Expenditure Projections

- 2.60 Included within the Business Plan is an allocation of £75,000 per year for maintenance in years one to four which reduced to £50,000 per year from year five. SLC consider that this projection was low especially given the age and condition of the leisure centre. Sport England's Affordable Sports Centre guidance recommends that an allowance of circa £130,000 per year is made for repairs and maintenance of new leisure centres. SLC has identified this as a significant risk as unforeseen repair and maintenance costs could have a significant impact on the viability of the centre, and no provision appears to have been made to establish a sinking fund to cover these eventualities.
- 2.61 This issue has been discussed with the CIC who have subsequently increased the amount projected for maintenance from years one onwards in the revised income and expenditure projections included at **Exempt Appendix Thirteen**. They have also confirmed that there will be very little requirement for replacement equipment and fixtures and fittings in the short to medium term due to the refurbishment of the building. For example, the pool filtration is expected to last 20 to 30 years and once the leisure centre is operational, and they have also stated they will be able to apply for other grants to support the operation of the leisure centre. They have also said

they will investigate securing an insurance policy to deal with any significant issues which may affect the operation of the leisure centre.

- 2.62 Energy costs within the original Business Plan were originally estimated at circa £65,000 per annum. Pre-Covid energy costs for Deepings Leisure Centre were £154,000, which would be based on lower tariffs than are currently available. SLC has reported that based on benchmarked consumption rates, for a centre with good energy performance, energy costs should be expected in the region of £200,000 based on current tariffs. In the revised income and expenditure projections detailed at **Exempt Appendix Thirteen** the costs for electricity have been reduced further.
- 2.63 Representatives of the CIC were asked to comment on this and responded that, as they will be utilising solar power and battery storage, the running costs will be lower. In addition, as the cost of solar panels has reduced recently, they may be able to increase the number of panels on the roof.
- 2.64 The staffing model detailed within the Business Plan has identified costs in this regard to be £501,000 per annum which SLC consider to be lean. In addition, they identified there is no provision within the staffing model for maintenance, administration, sales, group exercise classes or coach/instructor led activity.
- 2.65 Within the clarification responses provided the CIC has advised that fitness and gym instructors will be employed on zero hours contracts and receive commissions and referrals which suggests that the staff could be employed at no cost to the operator. SLC consider that this is not a viable model given that the projected membership base could not sustain personal training commissions at a sufficient level for instructors to receive no salary. Furthermore, although the clarification responses make reference to exercise classes, no provision for class instructors has been included.
- 2.66 This was discussed with representatives of the CIC who advised Officers that they were considering a different model and would look to hire parts of the leisure centre out for these activities. Therefore, they would receive a guaranteed hire income and the instructor would then retain the income generated from the class.
- 2.67 SLC have made a general observation that the staffing model presents a risk in terms of the level of service that can be provided may not meet customer expectations. Furthermore, this may pose health and safety risks, and nationally there are recruitment challenges in the leisure industry. Therefore, the inability to attract and retain staff may increase the costs which have been identified.
- 2.68 SLC has identified that the original costs identified to provide teachers for swimming lessons had been understated by an estimated £11,200 on without the additional swim lesson hours being added as detailed in paragraph 2.55. There are currently significant issues in the leisure industry around the recruitment of suitably qualified

swim teachers, and if these positions cannot be filled then income levels will be impacted.

- 2.69 The expenditure projections in the Business Plan do not include any provision for the central costs of a leisure management company, nor is any profit or contributions to reserves identified. SLC has advised that, typically a leisure management company would retain 10% to 12% of income to cover these costs which would equate to an additional £114,000 to £137,000 based on the current income and expenditure costs provided.
- 2.70 In addition a leisure management company may also require the payment of a management fee. This issue was raised with the CIC who have confirmed that their current view was that they would engage in a profit share arrangement with a provider, and they are confident that this can be accommodated within the income and expenditure projections. In addition, they are confident that an experienced provider would add value and therefore additional income would be generated in line with their industry knowledge and experience which would cover any management fee.
- 2.71 SLC has advised that there are some areas of expenditure which have been omitted from the business plan or have been understated. These include:
- Marketing costs which are significantly below expected levels.
 - The costs associated with irrecoverable VAT.

Until these costs have been fully accounted for there, SLC is of the view that there remains a risk that operational costs will be higher than currently identified, which may impact on the viability of the facility.

General Observations from SLC

- 2.72 The CIC Business Plan is built upon a feasibility study which was undertaken by the Council in January 2020, specifically in relation to the market assessment and ideal facility mix. This information is now over three years old and fails to take account of the impact of Covid in the intervening period.
- 2.73 The Business Plan details that local swim schools are over-subscribed and the recent closure of the Peterborough Regional Pool further supports their assumptions on swimming lesson income. It is SLC's view that the projected swim school numbers significantly exceed pre-Covid levels, and there are established alternative facilities to the Regional Pool which the leisure operator will seek to direct displaced demand into.
- 2.74 Officers have contacted their counterparts in Peterborough who have advised that aquatic services have been relocated across other pools in the area. The swimming

lesson programme has been reallocated to the Jack Hunt and Stanground Pools, these facilities also accommodating the City of Peterborough Swimming Club together with the Peterborough Lido. All three facilities continue to offer public swimming sessions.

F) Leisure Management Provider

- 2.75 Assurance has been provided by the CIC that the Business Plan has been reviewed by more than one experienced third-party leisure provider who have provided feedback that the income projections are 'conservative'. However, none of these providers have modelled their own income and expenditure projections should they be successfully appointed.
- 2.76 As detailed within this report LCC has stipulated that, should the expression of interest submitted by the CIC be accepted, there is a requirement for them to secure an experienced provider to run the leisure centre. To secure a provider the CIC would need to run a procurement process, as part of which bidders would be required to provide their own income and expenditure projections which would then be evaluated. It is therefore unknown at this stage to what extent the income and expenditure projections will change under this arrangement, what level of contribution to company overheads will be required and whether a provider would require a management fee payment.

G) Revised Business Plan and Income and Expenditure Projections

- 2.77 As a result of ongoing dialogue with the CIC a revised Business Plan has been received which includes updated capital costs. This is attached to this report at **Exempt Appendix Twelve**, the total amount of capital funding required has been revised to be £1,966,325.
- 2.78 The income and expenditure projections have also been updated within the Business Plan, for ease of reading these are provided at **Exempt Appendix Thirteen**.
- 2.79 The CIC have confirmed that their income figures have been changed to accommodate the updated swimming lesson figures, and the remainder of their projected income has been compared against other providers. However, where SLC have pointed out that their costs have been overstated these have been reduced, for example the costs associated with chemicals.

H) Proposed Timeline for Re-opening

- 2.80 The timeline for reopening Deepings Leisure Centre has been confirmed within the revised Business Plan as August 2024, with the milestone actions being updated to reflect the amended actions. These are detailed in **Table Two** below:

Table Two – CIC Business Plan, Key Milestones and Timeline	
Milestone	Timeframe for Completion
Secure agreement in principle on freehold transfer with LCC.	January 2024
Agree funding with SKDC	
Apply for Community Ownership grant and formalise application for funding with Town and Parish Councils	January – April 2024
Progress contractual arrangements with Third Party Leisure Provider	December 2023 to February 2024
Appoint Project Management Company	March 2024
Refurbishment work commences	April 2024
Phase 1 Opening – sports hall, pool and gym	August 2024

- 2.81 Assurance has been sought from the CIC whether the timeline identified is achievable. They have subsequently confirmed that it is still their intention to be on site as soon as possible and the most important task will be to replace the roof. The roofing contractor who has provided a quote has stated they would require one months' notice to commence works.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 Following ongoing discussion with the CIC floor plan drawings have been received, no technical drawings have been submitted to the Council to fully demonstrate the level of capital works to be undertaken. However, from the information that has been provided it is clear that not all elements of the building are proposed to be improved prior to it being reopened.
- 3.2 Prior to the closure of Deepings Leisure Centre it was widely acknowledged that the leisure centre was in need of significant uplift and improvement due to its age and condition. Therefore, with limited intervention there is a risk that a re-opened Deepings Leisure Centre will not be attractive to users and deliver the projected income levels.
- 3.3 When the Council were negotiating the terms of a Service Level Agreement with the Anthem Trust prior to November 2022, there were additional specific requirements from the Anthem Trust which have not been included in the CIC refurbishment costings. These included the installation of monitored CCTV cameras in the corridor which adjoins the leisure centre and school, and a fenced evacuation area to alleviate safeguarding concerns and allow for separation of leisure centre users and pupils from a shared fire exit.

- 3.4 The CIC have confirmed that they are unable to negotiate the terms of a Service Level Agreement with the Anthem Trust until they are informed that their expression of interest has been successful, and therefore it is currently unknown whether the Anthem Trust will insist on the same level of works previously requested, although safeguarding of the pupils will undoubtedly be of paramount importance to them. Should further works be required to secure agreement for the freehold transfer by the Anthem Trust and the Department for Education, this will result in additional cost pressures.
- 3.5 Financial projections received from the Council's previous leisure management company for January 2020 to December 2020 demonstrated that Deepings Leisure Centre was expected to deliver a small profit of £8.4k during this period. The anticipated cost to the Council for the same period was assessed as part of the decision making process to establish LeisureSK Ltd and identified to be £215k when the costs associated with business rates, central costs and repairs and maintenance were accounted for. A breakdown is provided in **Table Three** below:

Table Three – Anticipated Operating Deficit for Deepings Leisure Centre January 2020 to December 2020						
Centre Operating Surplus	Contract Staffing Costs	Central Support	Business Rates	Deficit	SKDC Maintenance Liability	Total Anticipated Cost to the Council
(£8,347)	£44,756	£89,695	£20,517	£146,531	£68,850	£215,381

- 3.6 LeisureSK Ltd currently manage three centres on behalf of the Council, these being Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, Bourne Leisure Centre and Stamford Leisure Pool. The contract with LeisureSK Ltd provides that the Council pays a management fee which represents the difference in expenditure and the income the company has been able to generate. Originally the company was not predicted to require a management fee payment for the current financial year however, due to the higher costs of utilities, staffing and pool chemicals it was necessary to include a budget allocation of £500,000 to support the operation of the company in 2023/2024. These are all established leisure facilities which currently rely on a subsidy.
- 3.7 Work has been undertaken to assess the management fee required for LeisureSK Ltd for financial year 2024/2025, the final amount identified will be presented to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny before being considered by Council as part of the annual budget setting process.
- 3.8 LeisureSK Ltd's budget for 2024/2025 is being developed on the basis of the existing performance of the three leisure centres. Should Deepings Leisure Centre re-open this would have an impact on the financial performance of LeisureSK Ltd, resulting in additional financial support being required by the Council. It is difficult to assess the impact that this would have on memberships as this income stream has not returned to pre-Covid levels. However, both Bourne Leisure Centre and

Stamford Leisure Pool have experienced significant growth in Swim School numbers and associated income since the closure of Deepings Leisure Centre.

- 3.9 **Exempt Appendix Fourteen** contains information on the level of Swim School growth and the amount of associated income which could be lost if Swim School pupils return to Deepings Leisure Centre.
- 3.10 On average nationally, leisure centres are around 79% recovery when compared to pre-Covid attendance levels. Moving Communities was launched by Sport England in March 2021 to support the National Leisure Recovery Fund which provided £100 million of public funding to support the leisure sector recover from the impact of COVID-19. This is the largest data set ever gathered for the local leisure sector.
- 3.11 An analysis of Moving Communities demonstrates that the level of recovery varies significantly across areas of activity. Attendance at the gym has recovered the strongest and is now back to pre-pandemic levels, whilst swimming lessons is currently at 80% recovery. Group exercise classes, sports hall use, and outdoor activities are all sitting at about 69% recovery.
- 3.12 As identified in the report produced by SLC some elements of income in the CIC Business Plan are predicted to be significantly above pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.13 Furthermore, it has been recognised nationally that the costs of operating swimming pools have risen significantly. In recognition of this central government launched the Swimming Pool Support Fund in April 2023 to help organisations operating publicly accessible pools with the increased costs. As reported to a meeting of Cabinet held on 7 November 2023 (**See Background Papers**), the Council made a successful application and were awarded £344,659 to support the operation of Grantham Meres Leisure Centre and Stamford Leisure Pool, which will be used to offset the management fee provided to LeisureSK Ltd for the current financial year.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council has been provided with a Business Plan and request for funding from an external organisation which has been assessed as detailed within this report. Therefore, no further options have been identified or explored.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 A request for funding has been received from a community group. Members are requested to review and comment on the proposals.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The CIC has undertaken a consultation with members of the local community, the results of which have been included within the updated Business Plan. A total of

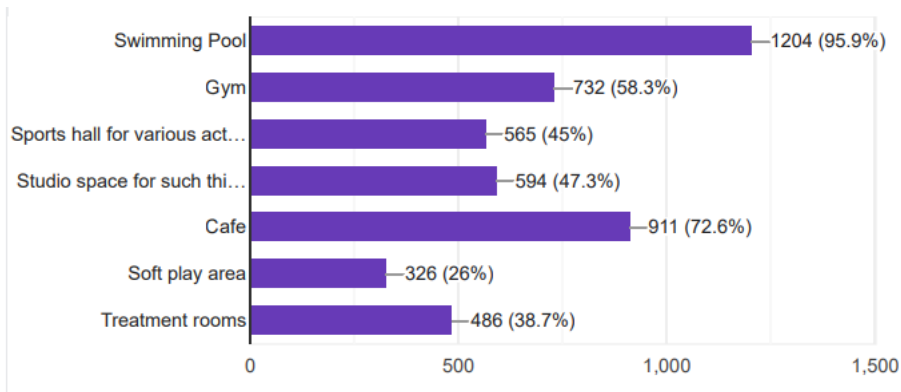
1258 responses were received, the questions which were asked and the associated results are summarised below:

Question One:

In the newly refurbished leisure centre which of the following would you be likely to use if they were available

Result:

1255 responses

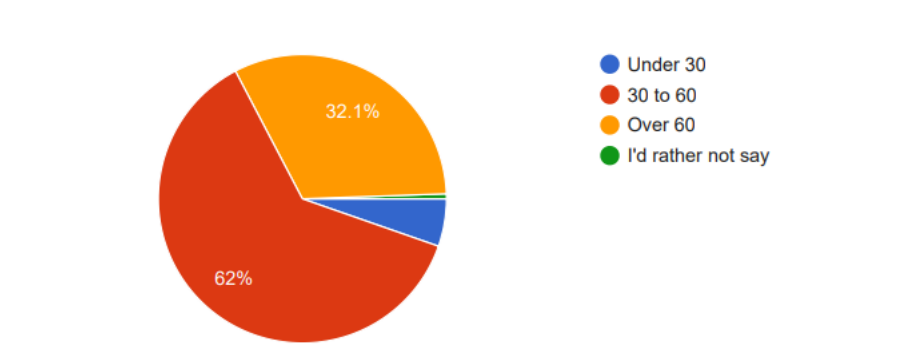


Question Two:

Please indicate which age range you fall into

Result:

1257 responses

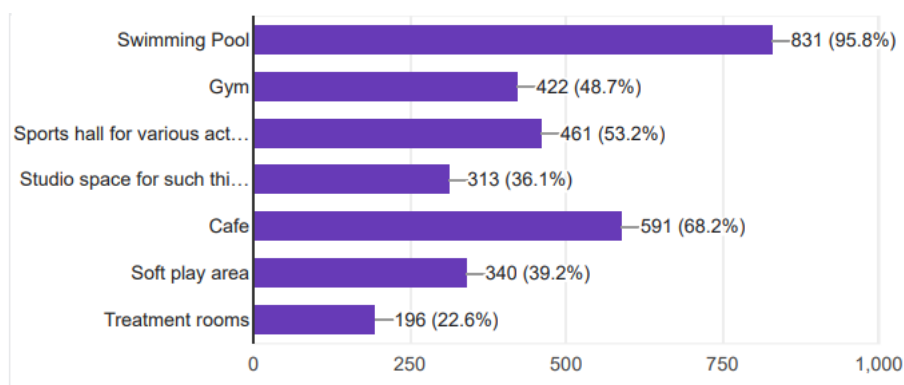


Question Three:

Ideally every member of your household that has an email address should complete this survey independently. However, if you have family members who do not have an email address (ie. younger children) you can answer on their behalf below

Result:

867 responses

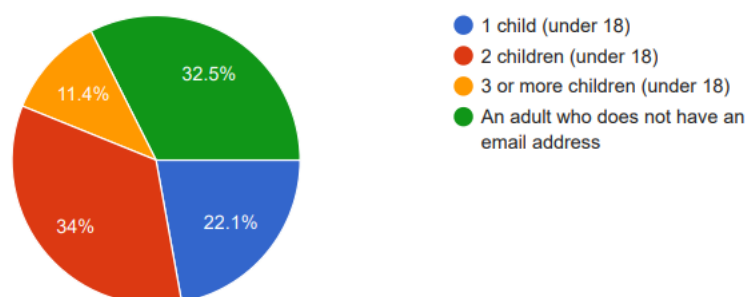


Question Four:

If you have completed the section above for another person in your household, please help us understand who else you are answering for

Result:

804 responses

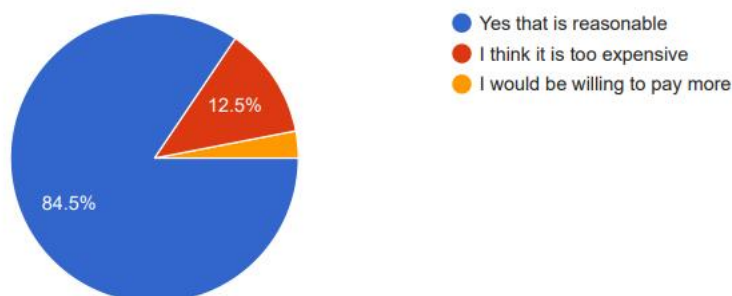


Question Five:

Do you think £30 a month membership for unlimited use of the gym and pool is reasonable. There will be pay as you go options

Result:

1258 responses

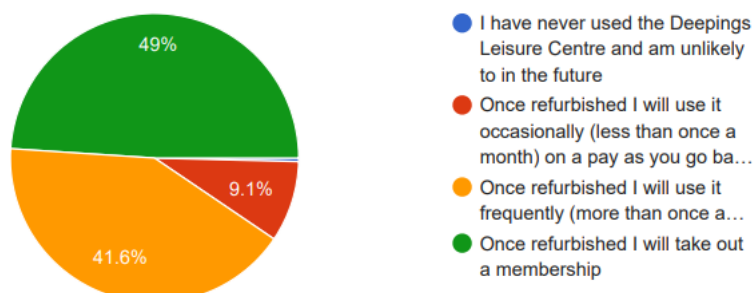


Question Six:

Which of the following describes you best

Result:

1258 responses



7. Background Papers

7.1 Report to Council 24 November 2022 on Deepings Leisure Centre

7.2 Report to Cabinet 9 November 2023

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s39436/SPSF.pdf>

8. Appendices

8.1 **Exempt Appendix One** – Legal Advice provided by Bevan Brittan on subsidy control.

8.2 **Exempt Appendix Two** – Assessment of funding request against Government subsidy control template.

- 8.3 **Appendix Three** – Deepings Leisure Centre, Inspection of roof coverings and assessment undertaken by Siddle Grimley Hage Limited in May 2021.
- 8.4 **Exempt Appendix Four** – The Deepings Community Leisure Centre Business Plan.
- 8.5 **Exempt Appendix Five** – Income and Expenditure Projections to accompany the CIC Business Plan
- 8.6 **Appendix Six** - Communication to South Kesteven District Councillors
- 8.7 **Exempt Appendix Seven** - Questions and Responses in relation to the Deepings Community Leisure Centre Business Plan
- 8.8 **Exempt Appendix Eight** – Review of Business Plan for Deepings Leisure Centre conducted by SLC.
- 8.9 **Exempt Appendix Nine** – Quote provided to support installation of heat pumps.
- 8.10 **Exempt Appendix Ten** – Pool Refurbishment Quote
- 8.11 **Exempt Appendix Eleven** - Revised Swim lesson projections.
- 8.12 **Exempt Appendix Twelve** – Revised CIC Business Plan Nov 23
- 8.13 **Exempt Appendix Thirteen** – Revised income and expenditure projections received from CIC Dec 23
- 8.14 **Exempt Appendix Fourteen** – Impact of Reopening on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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South Kesteven District Council

Deeping Leisure Centre

Pool Hall, Sports Hall and
Squash Court

**Inspection of roof coverings and
assessment.**

Report No: **5452 / 01**

Issue: **01**

Survey Date: **13 May 2021**

By: **P Hage**

CEng MICE MIStructE

On behalf of

Siddle Grimley Hage Limited
Consulting Engineers

Swan House, Exchange Road,
Lincoln LN6 3JZ

Tel: +44 (0) 1522 697111



1. Introduction

- 1.1. Siddle Grimley Hage (SGH) was contacted by Mr Kevin Munford of South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) as they had experienced roof leaks at the Deeping Leisure Centre (DLC) and there were concerns that these may have caused structural damage to the building making it unsafe to use.
- 1.2. Siddle Grimley Hage prepared an initial proposal for investigation works. This included the opening up of roof sections in order to examine the roof construction and to determine if the water ingress had led to any damage to the building structure.
- 1.3. SGH was instructed by SKDC to undertake the initial site visit and investigation.
- 1.4. The initial inspection was carried out by SGH on 13 May 2021 with assistance provided by the SKDC appointed contractor. Kevin Munford was also in attendance.
- 1.5. This report has been prepared exclusively for SKDC. It should not be relied upon by any other person / company, nor should it be used for any other purpose.

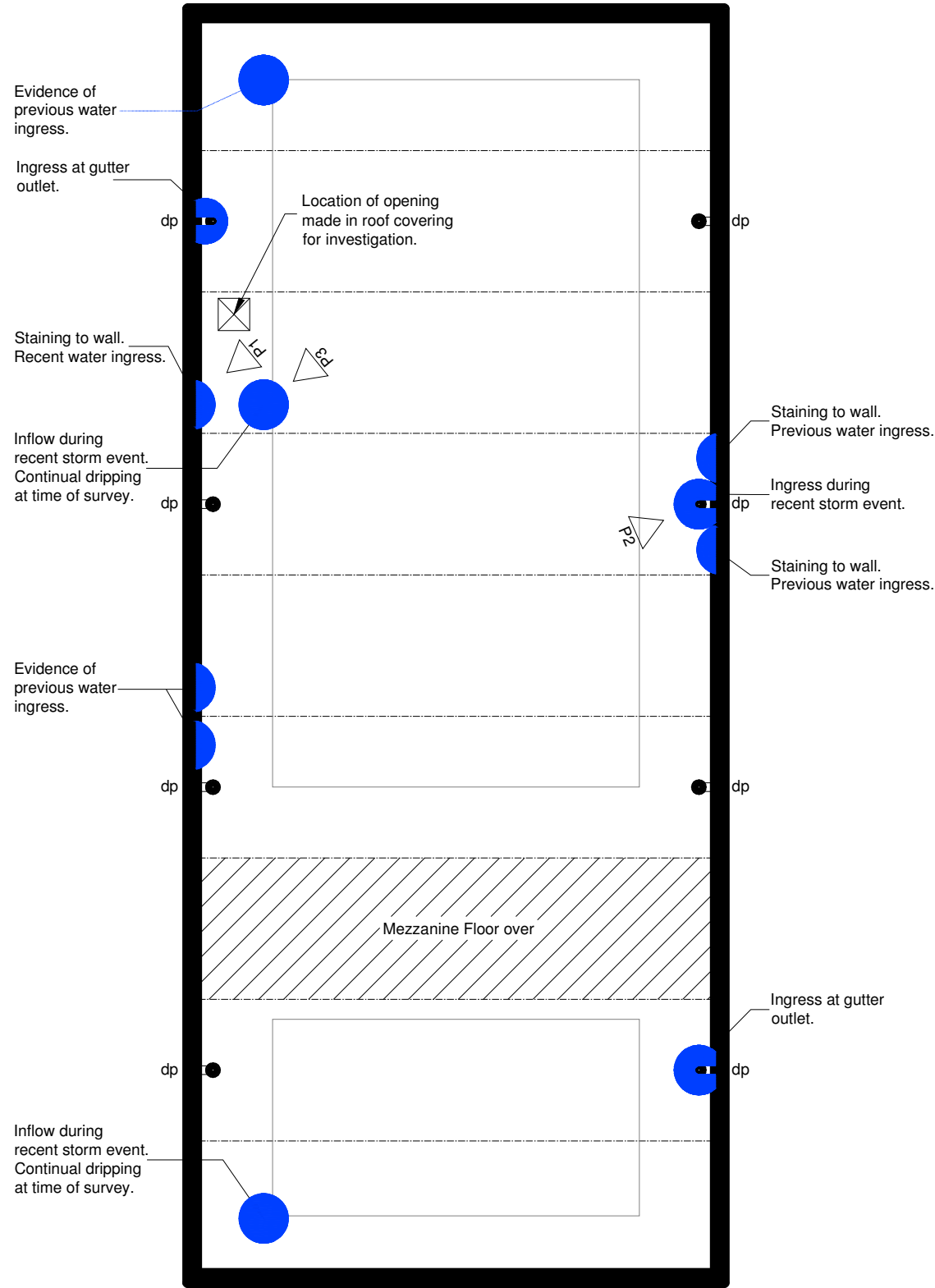
2. Background

- 2.1. We were advised by SKDC and the Leisure Centre Duty Manager that there has been some water ingress through the Swimming Pool and Sports Hall roofs on a number of occasions for a significant number of years and works had been undertaken by SKDC to resolve these issues. Unfortunately, they have often reoccurred or occurred in new locations.
- 2.2. During a recent heavy rainfall event on the weekend of the 8th and 9th May 2021 significant water ingress was observed and recorded by the Leisure Centre staff to both the swimming pool and sports hall roofs. During our inspection a small amount of water ingress (continuous drips) were recorded in the areas identified by the Leisure Centre staff.
- 2.3. It is understood that the Leisure Centre was constructed in the mid 1960's. We were advised by SKDC that since then the roofs of both the swimming pool and sports hall have been recovered on two occasions.
- 2.4. There are no records of the original structure details or of the recovering and remedial works. We were advised by SKDC that the roof finishes had been added to on each occasion.
- 2.5. The last roof covering (Sika-Trocal single ply) is believed to have been added pre 2000. Recently patching of the joints and alterations to the gutter outlets have been carried out by SKDC in an effort to prevent water ingress.

3. Swimming Pool Roof

3.1. *Locations of water ingress internally*

- 3.1.1. The locations of water ingress through the swimming pool building roof are shown on Figure 1. Record photograph locations are also referenced.
- 3.1.2. Water ingress during the recent heavy rainfall event was identified to us by the Leisure centre Duty Manager. Evidence of staining within the locations identified would confirm this.
- 3.1.3. In other areas we noted staining to the ceiling and perimeter walls suggesting previous water ingress. SKDC advised that repairs had been made to the roof covering after previous leaks.
- 3.1.4. The visual evidence would indicate that the majority of the water ingress in to the pool building occurs adjacent to the side walls (Plate 1) and around the gutter outlets (Plate 2).
- 3.1.5. In two locations water ingress (continuous dripping) continued at the time of our survey despite it not having rained for at least 4 days (Plate 3).



Swimming Pool Roof
Locations of water Ingress

Figure 1

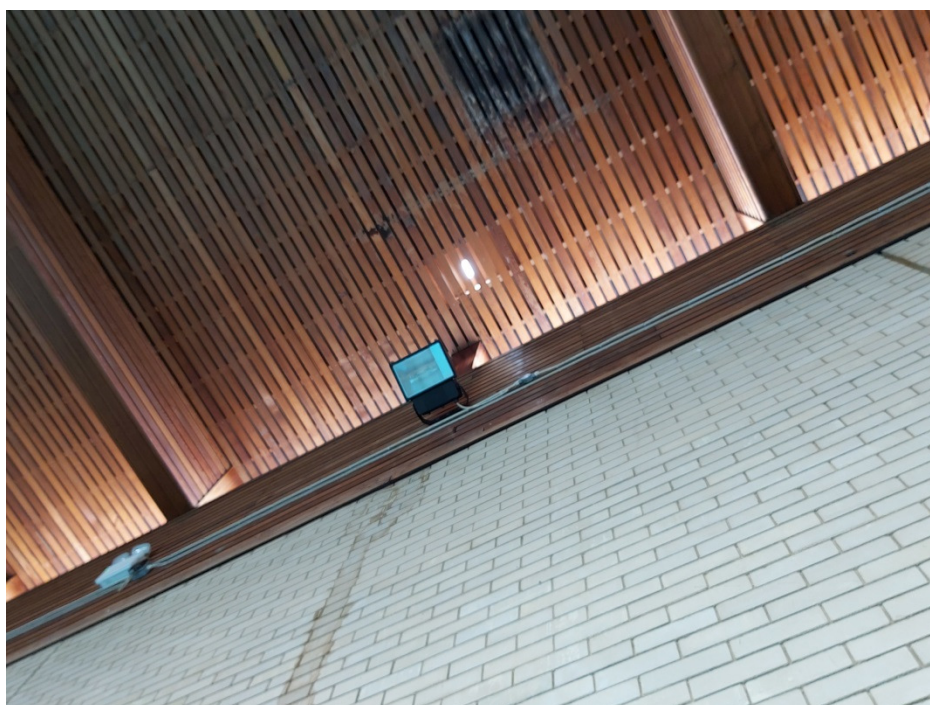


Plate 1

Evidence of water staining to perimeter wall between downpipes

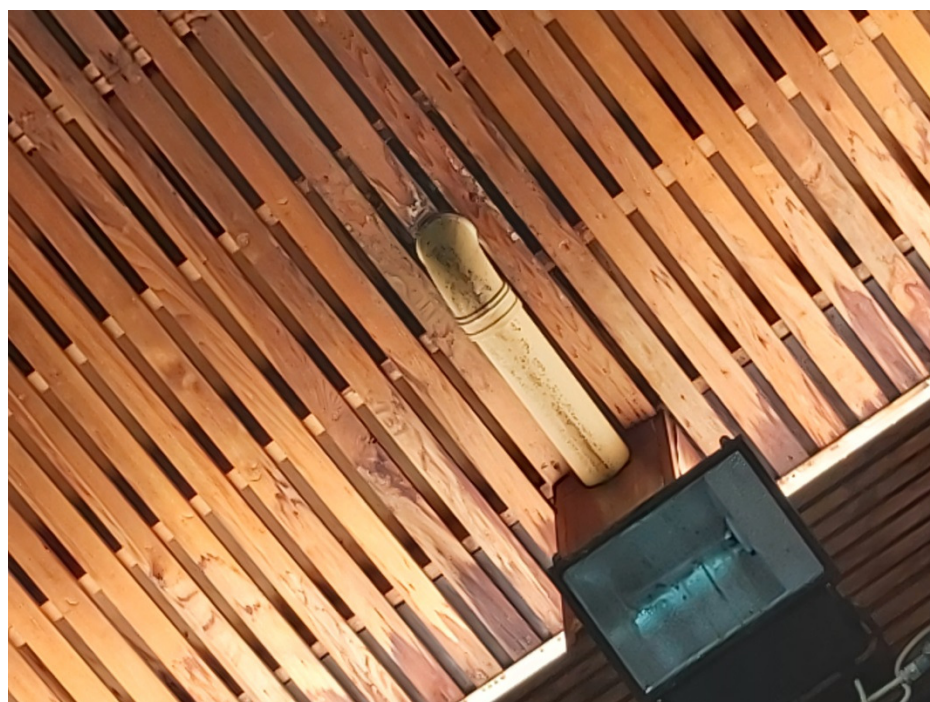


Plate 2

Evidence of water staining to ceiling at gutter outlet penetration



Plate 3

Water ingress at the time of survey

3.2. *Visual Inspection of roof covering*

- 3.2.1. The current roof covering is a single ply membrane understood to be Trocal by Sika.
- 3.2.2. The covering was seen to slope upwards along the perimeter of the roof where it meets the small upstand. This has resulted in there being a void between the membrane and the roof insulation. The unsupported membrane is prone to stretch and failure. There is evidence of significant repair to the membrane in these locations (Plate 4).



Plate 4

Single ply membrane lifted at perimeter of roof – Evidence of repair.

- 3.2.3. The roof covering is secured in position by screws glued to the underside of the membrane. In many locations the screw heads could be seen to have lifted with the membrane stretched over the top (Plate 5). In numerous locations there is evidence of a bituminous repair over the screw head where it has punctured the membrane.
- 3.2.4. From the investigation it appears that the screws have become partially withdrawn from the roof deck (most likely due to wind suction on the roof). Many of the screws will not push back down into the deck and so they create local high points where the membrane is prone to fail (Plate 6).



Plate 5

Stretching of single ply over withdrawn screw.



Plate 6

Exposed screw partially withdrawn.

3.2.5. Previous repairs have been made to the gutter outlets using a rubber membrane material. The inspection found that the joints between the membrane and the gutter outlet had failed to at least three outlets (Plates 7, 8 and 9). This is allowing roof water to track back between the roof deck and the membrane or directly to the outside of the downpipe.

3.2.6. One gully outlet seen appeared to be undersized (Plate 10).



Plate 7

Failed joint between roof covering and outlet.



Plate 8

Failed joint between roof covering and outlet.



Plate 9

Failed joint between roof covering and outlet.



Plate 10

Undersized gutter outlet

3.3. *Intrusive inspection of roof build-up.*

- 3.3.1. With the assistance of the SKDC appointed contractor a section of the roof covering (location shown on figure 1) was removed.
- 3.3.2. A cross section of the current roof construction is given in Figure 2 and photograph Plate 11.
- 3.3.3. The original roof comprised of a bituminous top coat laid over a ply board, supported by timber joists spanning between the primary roof beams. The pool ceiling is under drawn with slatted timbers. The original roof did not appear to have been insulated.
- 3.3.4. The first roof overlay comprises of polystyrene insulation covered with 3 layer roofing felt and chippings.
- 3.3.5. The second roof overlay comprises a foil backed insulation board with single ply roof membrane over. The membrane being fixed with screws into the deck.

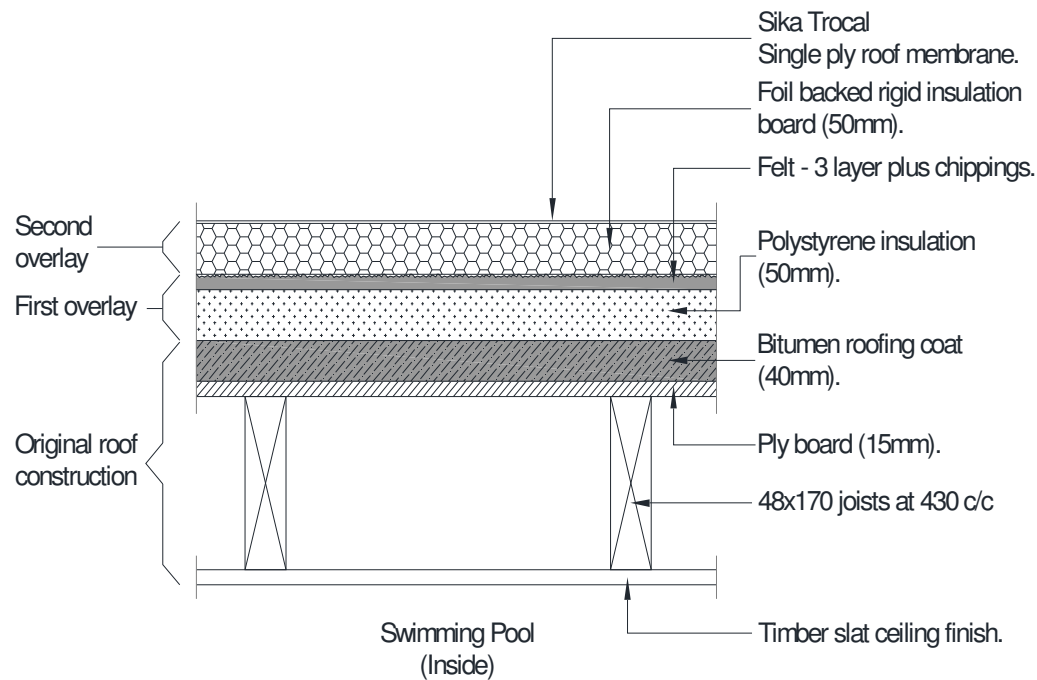


Figure 2



Plate 11

Roof build-up exposed

- 3.3.6. In the location exposed, a significant amount of standing water was seen between the polystyrene insulation and the original bitumen roof finish. (Plate 11).
- 3.3.7. This finding would confirm that roof water is breaching both of the overlays.
- 3.3.8. Water ingress has extended through the lower bituminous layer onto the supporting ply board. The moisture has caused delamination to the top ply of the board, but had not extended beyond this at the inspection point. (Plate 12).



Plate 12

Evidence of damage to top laminate of ply board roof deck.

- 3.3.9. Significant corrosion was visible to the removed screw fixings (Plate 13).



Plate 13

Corrosion to screw fixings including thread failure

3.4. *Structural member checks*

- 3.4.1. Given that the roof has been over laid on two occasions since it was originally constructed an assessment has been made to check for member capacity and serviceability of the timber joist spanning between the primary beams.
- 3.4.2. The structural checks were undertaken in accordance with BS5268-2 with imposed loadings taken from BS 6399-3 and gravity loads based on the site investigation.
- 3.4.3. Structural calculations are included with Appendix A. A summary of our findings is:
 - The timber joists when checked for the original roof load meet the requirements for stress. Deflection was reported to be higher than the code recommends, but is deemed acceptable.
 - The current roof construction (with the additional roof weight) was found to cause 13% overstress in the joist. Deflection under dead and imposed load increased to 33mm (Span / 150).
- 3.4.4. An assessment of the primary roof members could not be undertaken as the investigation did not enable us to expose these members to ascertain their section properties. There was however no visual evidence which would suggest that these members are being overstressed by the current roof loading arrangements which has been in place for a significant time.
- 3.4.5. We would not advise loading the roof further and would recommend the roof beams are checked if the roof load is not reduced.

3.5. *Discussion from findings*

- 3.5.1. The water ingress would appear to occur mostly at the roof perimeter. The current membrane has lifted and there have been significant attempts to repair this area of the roof including the creation of channels to direct the roof water to the gutter outlets.
- 3.5.2. Inspection found that the seal of the roof membrane to the gutter outlet had failed which is allowing the roof water to track into the roof below or pass around the outside of the downpipes directly into the building.
- 3.5.3. The significant amount of standing water discovered beneath the lower insulation layer would confirm that the first overlay is also failing to prevent water ingress.
- 3.5.4. The original bitumen roof finish would appear to be preventing significant water ingress hence the extent of standing water seen above it. However there are clearly locations which are allowing the trapped water to pass into the pool area. A likely breach point will be where screws securing the single ply membrane to the board have withdrawn creating a hole through all of the roof layers.
- 3.5.5. The trapped water may be moved by the normal deformation of the roof due to environmental conditions to breach points where it enters the building. This could occur days after the water entered the roof (as noted during our site inspection) and may not be near to the waters original entry point.
- 3.5.6. The ply board at the location inspected was seen to be in fair condition. Damage had occurred to the outer lamination but this is not seen to be significantly affecting its structural performance.
- 3.5.7. Our calculation checks have shown that the additional loading from the two further roof covering have resulted in a 13% overstress to the timber roof joists. Based on this finding alone we do not recommend loading the roof further.
- 3.5.8. Checks on the primary beams for the current loading are recommended.

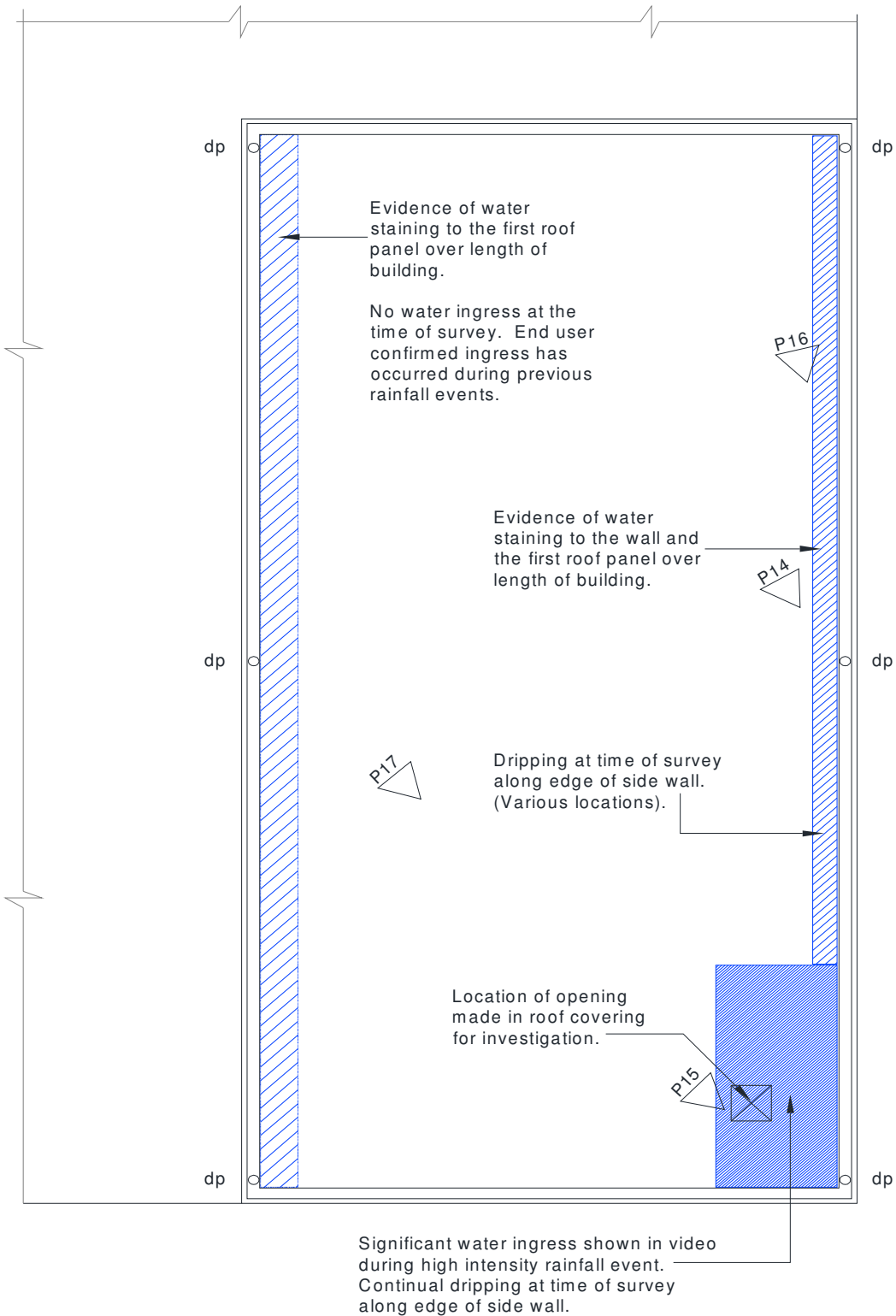
3.6. *Conclusions and recommendations*

- 3.6.1. The existing single ply membrane roof cover has failed. The joints around the gutter outlets and upstands have failed in many locations. The screws holding the membrane down have been pulled out, stretching the membrane and causing holes.
- 3.6.2. The single ply membrane is believed to be over 25 years old. A well maintained covering has a design life of 30 years but in this instance it has suffered significant design failures. In our opinion the roof covering is beyond repair which would extend its useful life.
- 3.6.3. Immediate repairs around the gutters and where joints have failed may be able to offer a short term improvement. However we do not have confidence that all defects could be addressed and such repair may only lead to water ingress in other locations.
- 3.6.4. We would recommend that the roof overlays are removed due to the existing water ingress and overloading of the timber joists.
- 3.6.5. Covering over is NOT a viable option based on our findings.
- 3.6.6. Specialist advice should be sought from a roofing contractor on retaining the existing bitumen as removal of this would also likely need the replacement of the ply board.
- 3.6.7. The screw fixings used to secure the single ply membrane to the ply wood roof sheet are inadequate to resist the wind suction forces. Any replacement roof covering fixings would need to address this issue.
- 3.6.8. Whilst the ingress of water is unsatisfactory, the visual and intrusive investigations to date did not reveal any damage to the roof structure which would render the building unsafe.
- 3.6.9. Whilst the primary beams appears to have performed adequately with the additional roof loading over a number of years, we would still recommend that these members are checked if the current roof is to remain over the winter period when there can be additional snow loads.

4. Sport Hall Roof

4.1. *Locations of water ingress internally*

- 4.1.1. The locations of water ingress through the sports hall building roof are shown on Figure 3. Record photograph locations are also referenced.
- 4.1.2. Water ingress during the recent heavy rainfall event was identified to us by the Leisure Centre Duty Manager who also showed a video. The majority of the ingress occurred adjacent to the long wall on the open side of the building (Plate14), with the greatest ingress near to the right hand corner (Plate 15).
- 4.1.3. In a number of location along the side wall water ingress (dripping) continued at the time of our survey despite it not having rained for at least 4 days requiring the area to be cordoned off and buckets left in place (Plates 16 and 17).
- 4.1.4. Staining to the underside of the roof was seen to the opposite side of the building adjacent to the long wall. In one location water ingress (dripping) continued at the time of our survey.
- 4.1.5. SKDC advised that repairs had been made to the roof covering after previous leaks.
- 4.1.6. Gutter outlets and the down pipes are believed to have been set within the wall cavity as they are not visible to the open side wall.



Sports Hall Roof
Locations of water Ingress

Figure 3



Plate 14

Evidence of water staining to the long wall (open side)



Plate 15

Evidence of water staining to the corner of the roof extending into the hall



Plate 16

Area cordoned off due to continuing water ingress



Plate 17

Area cordoned off due to continuing water ingress

4.2. *Visual Inspection of roof covering*

- 4.2.1. The current roof covering is a single ply membrane understood to be Trocal by Sika.
- 4.2.2. There were substantial areas of standing water and further areas of staining from previous standing water on the roof where it dips lower than the level of the gully outlet. (Plates 18 and 19).



Plate 18

Standing water and staining due to standing water on single ply membrane.



Plate 19

Dip in roof finish below outlet level.

- 4.2.3. The roof covering is secured in position by screws glued to the underside of the membrane. In many locations the screw heads could be seen to have lifted with the membrane, causing it to puncture the membrane. A bituminous repair had been applied over the screw heads. (Plate 20).
- 4.2.4. From the investigation it appears that the screws have become partially withdrawn from the roof deck (most likely due to wind suction on the roof). Many of the screws will not push back down into the deck and so they create local high points where the membrane is prone to fail.



Plate 20

Stretching of single ply over withdrawn screw and bitumnet repair.

- 4.2.5. Sections of the roof covering along the long side, was seen to slope upwards along the perimeter of the roof where it meets the small upstand. This has resulted in their being a void between the membrane and the roof insulation. The unsupported membrane is prone to stretch and failure. There is evidence of significant repair to the membrane in these locations (Plate 21 and 22).



Plate 20

Single ply membrane lifted at perimeter of roof – Evidence of repair.



Plate 21

Single ply membrane lifted at perimeter of roof – Evidence of repair.

- 4.2.6. Previous repairs have been made to the gutter outlets using a rubber membrane material. The inspection found that the joints between the membrane and the gutter outlet had failed at the two outlets where the most significant water ingress had been recorder internally. (Plates 22 and 23). This is allowing roof water to track back between the roof deck and the membrane or directly to the outside of the downpipe.
- 4.2.7. The gutter outlets are not fitted with leaf guards.



Plate 22

Rubber membrane has become detached from the gutter outlet.



Plate 23

Rubber membrane has become detached from the gutter outlet and the original roof membrane.

4.3. *Intrusive inspection of roof build-up.*

- 4.3.1. With the assistance of the SKDC appointed contractor a section of the roof covering (location shown on figure 3) was removed.
- 4.3.2. A cross section of the current roof construction is given in Figure 4 and photograph Plate 24.
- 4.3.3. The original roof comprised of a bituminous top coat laid over what appears to be a thin layer of hardboard (disintegrated by opening up works and moisture) onto 'Stramit' board.
- 4.3.4. The first roof overlay comprises of polystyrene insulation board covered with 3 layers roofing felt and chippings.
- 4.3.5. The second roof overlay comprises rigid insulation board with single ply roof membrane over. The membrane being fixed with screws into the 'Stramit' board below.

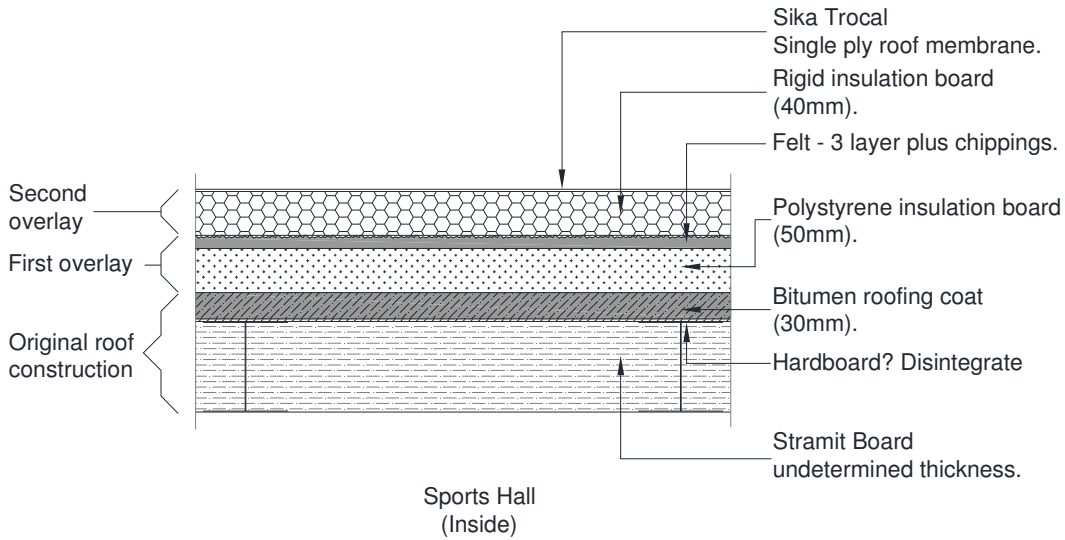


Figure 4



Plate 24

Roof build-up exposed

- 4.3.6. The 'Stramit' board is a matrix of compressed fibres which are impregnated with cement to form boards. It was mainly used in the 1960's and 70's. In this instance the boards are set within a pair of steel channels forming a cassette which spans between roof beams. An example of the Stramit board cassette and a comparison of the sport hall cassette where the underside has a finished sheet is shown in Figure 5.



Example
Stramit board cassette
(Viewed from below)



Sport Hall
Stramit board cassette with liner
(Viewed from below)

Figure 5

- 4.3.7. In the location exposed, trapped standing water was seen between the lower polystyrene insulation and the original bitumen roof finish. (Plate 25 and video).
- 4.3.8. Cutting through the bitumen layer exposed a brown fibrous material (believed to be hardboard). This was found to be saturated and had disintegrated (Plate 26).
- 4.3.9. In order to maintain the integrity of the Stramit board the investigation terminated at the top surface.
- 4.3.10. The investigation confirmed that roof water is breaching all of the roof coverings.



20210513_121537.mp4

Plate 25

Trapped water below insulation



Plate 26

Top of Stramit Board

4.4. *Structural member checks*

- 4.4.1. There are no design guides for assessing the structural performance of the Stramit board. No checks have been undertaken.
- 4.4.2. The roof cassette construction could not to be determined during our investigation as this would have damaged the element beyond repair (requiring it to be replaced).
- 4.4.3. The primary roof beams were not accessed during the investigation and therefore were unable to be checked.
- 4.4.4. Although design checks have not been made, our visual inspection did not identify and signs of excessive deflection of damage which would indicate overstress of the roof cassettes or the primary beams.
- 4.4.5. We would not advise loading the roof further and would recommend the roof beams are checked if the roof load is not reduced.

4.5. *Discussion from findings*

- 4.5.1. The water ingress would appear to occur mostly at the roof perimeter and at the gutter outlets. Significant attempts to repair the membrane along the edges of the roof have been made, but there was evidence of failed joints (Plates 20 and 21).
- 4.5.2. The gutter outlet joints with the roof membrane have been patched, but again these had failed (Plates 22 and 23). The most significant failures being to the gutters above the areas suffering for the greatest water ingress during the recent rainfall event.
- 4.5.3. Dips were seen in the roof covering creating low spots and stopping water reaching the gutter outlets (Plate 21). Puncturing of the roof membrane caused by the protruding bolts creates a clear path for water to pass through the entire roof construction in these locations.
- 4.5.4. Each of the roofing layers appear to have breach points which allow water to pass into the building. Other than at screw positions these points of failure may not align and so water passes into each layer and then flows laterally to the next breach point in the layer below. This explains why our investigation discovered trapped water above the bitumen layer, but also found water below it.
- 4.5.5. The trapped water may be moved by the normal deformation of the roof due to environmental conditions to lower breach points where it enters the building. This could occur days after the water entered the roof (as noted during our site inspection) and may not be near to the water's original entry point.
- 4.5.6. The junction of the roof covering and the perimeter wall is likely to be prone to failure and would explain why the most significant water ingress occurs at the internal wall face.

4.6. *Conclusions and recommendations*

- 4.6.1. The existing single ply membrane roof cover has failed. The joints around the gutter outlets and upstands have failed. In many locations the screws holding the membrane down have been pulled out, stretching the membrane and causing holes.
- 4.6.2. In our opinion the roof covering is beyond repair which would extend its life.
- 4.6.3. Immediate repairs around the gutters and where joints have failed may be able to offer a short term improvement. However we do not have confidence that all defects could be addressed and such repair may only lead to water ingress in other locations.
- 4.6.4. In order to investigate the condition of the Stramit board and to make design checks a section of the cassette unit would have to be removed. This was not practical as part of this inspection.
- 4.6.5. At present the Stramit board cassettes appear to be performing adequately particularly in locations where there has been significant water ingress. However, as design checks could not be made we would not advise increasing the roof loads by covering over
- 4.6.6. Whilst the primary beams also appear to have performed adequately with the additional roof loading over a number of years, we would still recommend that these members are checked if the current roof is to remain over the winter period when there can be additional snow loads.
- 4.6.7. Given our finding we recommend that the roof is stripped back to the top of the Stramit board and a new insulated roof covering is fitted. The bitumen layer may be bonded to the Stramit and it may be necessary to retain part of this material. A large scale investigation would be necessary to confirm this and the advice of the specialist roofing contractor sought.
- 4.6.8. Removing the existing insulation layers is critical to allow all of the trapped water within the roof to be drained and the roof dried out before covering.
- 4.6.9. The screw fixings used to secure the single ply membrane to the Stramit board roof sheet are inadequate to resist the wind suction forces. Any replacement roof covering fixings would need to address this issue.
- 4.6.10. Whilst the ingress of water is unsatisfactory, the visual and intrusive investigations to date did not reveal any damage to the roof structure which would render the building unsafe.

5. Squash Court Roofs

5.1. Walk over visual inspection

- 5.1.1. The roofs to both the original squash courts and those added later (now used as a gym) are covered with a single ply membrane.
- 5.1.2. Our visual inspection of the roof top surface found many of the same defects seen to the swimming pool and sports hall roofs, including:
 - i. Withdrawn screws stretching the membrane.
 - ii. Withdrawn screws puncturing the membrane, with local bitumen repairs.
 - iii. Lifting of the membrane at roof edges and upstands leaving it unsupported.
 - iv. Evidence of localised repairs to the membrane at the upstands.
- 5.1.3. Intrusive investigations were not undertaken due to the known presence of asbestos.
- 5.1.4. The original squash courts roof was inspected from inside, which showed it to be constructed from Stramit board cassettes as the sports hall.
- 5.1.5. The ingress of water is understood to occur on the junction line between the original and extended roof at the upstand where the roof membrane has stretched.

5.2. *Conclusions and recommendations*

- 5.2.1. At present the water ingress is understood to be limited to a single location and is resulting from a failure in the membrane.
- 5.2.2. Repair to the membrane by a specialist roofing contractor using welded joints may be sufficient to resolve the water ingress in the short term.
- 5.2.3. The withdrawal of the screws cannot be resolved without replacing the single ply membrane. It is therefore likely that further puncturing and subsequent water ingress will occur to the current membrane.
- 5.2.4. Consideration should be given to replacing the roof covering within the next five years.
- 5.2.5. The screw fixings into the 'Stramit' board do not appear to be adequate to resist wind uplift. Any proposal for the installation of a replacement roof membrane would need to consider alternative methods of restraint.

APPENDIX A

Swimming pool roof – Structural calculation checks

Siddle Grimley Hage Ltd.

Civil & Structural Consulting Engineers

Tel: (01522) 697111 Email: design@sghconsulting.co.uk



Project SKDC - DEEPINGS LEISURE CENTRE.			
Made by Pon	Date 5/21	Checked by	Job number / Sheet number 5452 / SPR / 1.

SWIMMILL POOL ROOF.

SINGLE PLY 0.07

RIGID INSULATION BOARD (50mm) 0.05

LAYER 3 0.12 KJ/m^2

3 LAYERS REEFER FELT + CHIPPINGS 0.35

INSULATION - POLYSTYRENE (50mm) 0.04

LAYER 2. 0.39 KJ/m^2

BITUMEN REEF FINISHES (40mm) 0.45

PLY BOARD (15mm) 0.10

JOISTS 60x220 @ 400 c/c. 0.13 * EXCLUDED FROM JAST CHECK.

CELING - TIMBER SLATS. 0.08


ORIGINAL ROOF. 0.76 KJ/m^2 0.63 KJ/m^2 *

IMPOSED LOADS.

SERVICES 0.15.

ROOF IMPOSED 0.60

TOTAL IMPOSED 0.75 KJ/m^2

 <p>Siddle Grimley Hage Swan House, Exchange Road Lincoln, LN6 3JZ e. design@sghconsulting.co.uk</p>	Project SKDC - Deepings Leisure Centre				Job no. 5452	
	Calcs for Swimming Pool Roof - Original Loading				Start page no./Revision / SPR / 2	
	Calcs by PAH	Calcs date 02/06/2021	Checked by	Checked date	Approved by	Approved date

TIMBER JOIST DESIGN (BS5268-2:2002)

Tedds calculation version 1.1.04

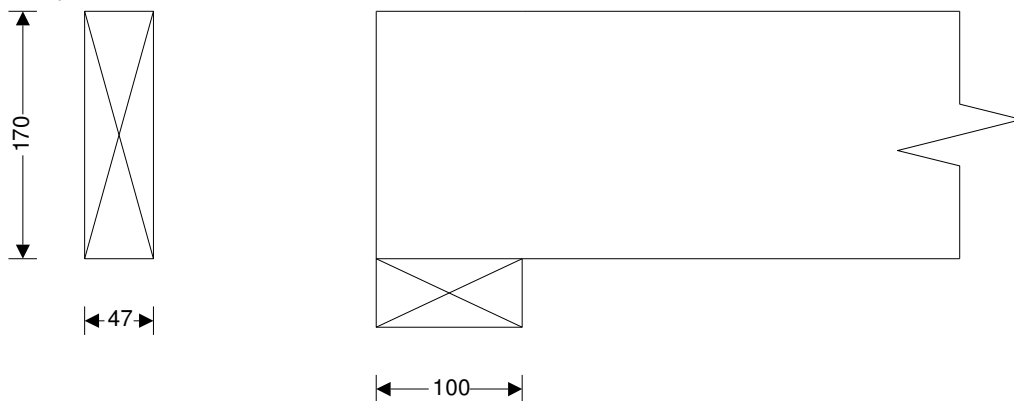
Joist details

Joist breadth	$b = 47 \text{ mm}$	Joist depth	$h = 170 \text{ mm}$
Joist spacing	$s = 400 \text{ mm}$	Service class of timber	3
Timber strength class	C24		



Span details

Number of spans	$N_{\text{span}} = 1$	Length of bearing	$L_b = 100 \text{ mm}$
Clear length of span	$L_{s1} = 4800 \text{ mm}$		



Section properties

Second moment of area	$I = 19242583 \text{ mm}^4$	Section modulus	$Z = 226383 \text{ mm}^3$
-----------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------	---------------------------

Loading details

Joist self weight	$F_{\text{swt}} = 0.03 \text{ kN/m}$	Dead load	$F_{\text{d_udl}} = 0.63 \text{ kN/m}^2$
Imposed UDL(Medium term)	$F_{\text{i_udl}} = 0.75 \text{ kN/m}^2$		
Imposed point load (Short)	$F_{\text{i_pt}} = 0.90 \text{ kN}$		

Consider medium term loads


Design bending moment	$M = 1.669 \text{ kNm}$	Design shear force	$V = 1.391 \text{ kN}$
Design support reaction	$R = 1.391 \text{ kN}$	Design deflection	$\delta = 24.461 \text{ mm}$

Check bending stress

Permissible bending stress	$\sigma_{\text{m_adm}} = 8.782 \text{ N/mm}^2$	Applied bending stress	$\sigma_{\text{m_max}} = 7.371 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied bending stress within permissible limits			

Check shear stress

Permissible shear stress	$\tau_{\text{adm}} = 0.879 \text{ N/mm}^2$	Applied shear stress	$\tau_{\text{max}} = 0.261 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied shear stress within permissible limits			

 Siddle Grimley Hage Swan House, Exchange Road Lincoln, LN6 3JZ e. design@sghconsulting.co.uk	Project SKDC - Deepings Leisure Centre			Job no. 5452	
	Calcs for Swimming Pool Roof - Original Loading			Start page no./Revision / SPR / 3	
	Calcs by PAH	Calcs date 02/06/2021	Checked by	Checked date	Approved by Approved date

Check bearing stress

Permissible bearing stress $\sigma_{c_adm} = 1.980 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied bearing stress $\sigma_{c_max} = 0.296 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied bearing stress within permissible limits

Check deflection

Permissible deflection $\delta_{adm} = 14.000 \text{ mm}$ Actual deflection $\delta = 24.461 \text{ mm}$
FAIL - Actual deflection exceeds permissible deflection

Consider short term loads

Design bending moment $M = 1.885 \text{ kNm}$ Design shear force $V = 1.571 \text{ kN}$
Design support reaction $R = 1.571 \text{ kN}$ Design deflection $\delta = 24.509 \text{ mm}$

Check bending stress

Permissible bending stress $\sigma_{m_adm} = 10.538 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied bending stress $\sigma_{m_max} = 8.325 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied bending stress within permissible limits

Check shear stress


Permissible shear stress $\tau_{adm} = 1.054 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied shear stress $\tau_{max} = 0.295 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied shear stress within permissible limits

Check bearing stress

Permissible bearing stress $\sigma_{c_adm} = 2.376 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied bearing stress $\sigma_{c_max} = 0.334 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied bearing stress within permissible limits

Check deflection

Permissible deflection $\delta_{adm} = 14.000 \text{ mm}$ Actual deflection $\delta = 24.509 \text{ mm}$
FAIL - Actual deflection exceeds permissible deflection

 <p>Siddle Grimley Hage Swan House, Exchange Road Lincoln, LN6 3JZ e. design@sghconsulting.co.uk</p>	Project SKDC - Deepings Leisure Centre				Job no. 5452	
	Calcs for Swimming Pool Roof - Current Loading				Start page no./Revision / SPR / 4	
	Calcs by PAH	Calcs date 02/06/2021	Checked by	Checked date	Approved by	Approved date

TIMBER JOIST DESIGN (BS5268-2:2002)

Tedds calculation version 1.1.04

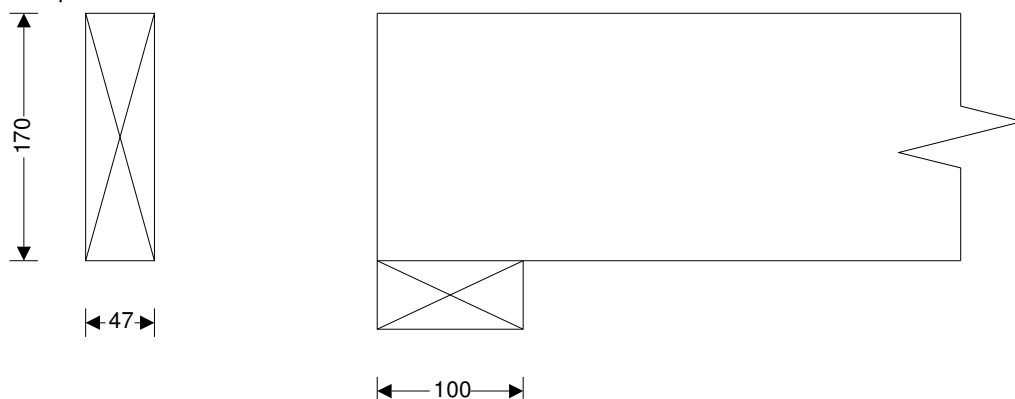
Joist details

Joist breadth	$b = 47 \text{ mm}$	Joist depth	$h = 170 \text{ mm}$
Joist spacing	$s = 400 \text{ mm}$	Service class of timber	3
Timber strength class	C24		



Span details

Number of spans	$N_{\text{span}} = 1$	Length of bearing	$L_b = 100 \text{ mm}$
Clear length of span	$L_{s1} = 4800 \text{ mm}$		



Section properties

Second moment of area	$I = 19242583 \text{ mm}^4$	Section modulus	$Z = 226383 \text{ mm}^3$
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Loading details

Joist self weight	$F_{\text{swt}} = 0.03 \text{ kN/m}$	Dead load	$F_{\text{d_udl}} = 1.14 \text{ kN/m}^2$
Imposed UDL(Medium term)	$F_{\text{i_udl}} = 0.75 \text{ kN/m}^2$		
Imposed point load (Short)	$F_{\text{i_pt}} = 0.90 \text{ kN}$		

Consider medium term loads

Design bending moment	$M = 2.256 \text{ kNm}$	Design shear force	$V = 1.880 \text{ kN}$
Design support reaction	$R = 1.880 \text{ kN}$	Design deflection	$\delta = 33.072 \text{ mm}$

Check bending stress


Permissible bending stress	$\sigma_{\text{m_adm}} = 8.782 \text{ N/mm}^2$	Applied bending stress	$\sigma_{\text{m_max}} = 9.967 \text{ N/mm}^2$
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FAIL - Applied bending stress exceeds permissible bending stress

Check shear stress

Permissible shear stress	$\tau_{\text{adm}} = 0.879 \text{ N/mm}^2$	Applied shear stress	$\tau_{\text{max}} = 0.353 \text{ N/mm}^2$
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PASS - Applied shear stress within permissible limits

 Siddle Grimley Hage Swan House, Exchange Road Lincoln, LN6 3JZ e. design@sghconsulting.co.uk	Project SKDC - Deepings Leisure Centre				Job no. 5452	
	Calcs for Swimming Pool Roof - Current Loading				Start page no./Revision / SPR / 5	
	Calcs by PAH	Calcs date 02/06/2021	Checked by	Checked date	Approved by	Approved date

Check bearing stress

Permissible bearing stress $\sigma_{c_adm} = 1.980 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied bearing stress $\sigma_{c_max} = 0.400 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied bearing stress within permissible limits

Check deflection

Permissible deflection $\delta_{adm} = 14.000 \text{ mm}$ Actual deflection $\delta = 33.072 \text{ mm}$
FAIL - Actual deflection exceeds permissible deflection

Consider short term loads

Design bending moment $M = 2.472 \text{ kNm}$ Design shear force $V = 2.060 \text{ kN}$
Design support reaction $R = 2.060 \text{ kN}$ Design deflection $\delta = 33.121 \text{ mm}$

Check bending stress

Permissible bending stress $\sigma_{m_adm} = 10.538 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied bending stress $\sigma_{m_max} = 10.921 \text{ N/mm}^2$
FAIL - Applied bending stress exceeds permissible bending stress

Check shear stress

Permissible shear stress $\tau_{adm} = 1.054 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied shear stress $\tau_{max} = 0.387 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied shear stress within permissible limits

Check bearing stress

Permissible bearing stress $\sigma_{c_adm} = 2.376 \text{ N/mm}^2$ Applied bearing stress $\sigma_{c_max} = 0.438 \text{ N/mm}^2$
PASS - Applied bearing stress within permissible limits

Check deflection

Permissible deflection $\delta_{adm} = 14.000 \text{ mm}$ Actual deflection $\delta = 33.121 \text{ mm}$
FAIL - Actual deflection exceeds permissible deflection

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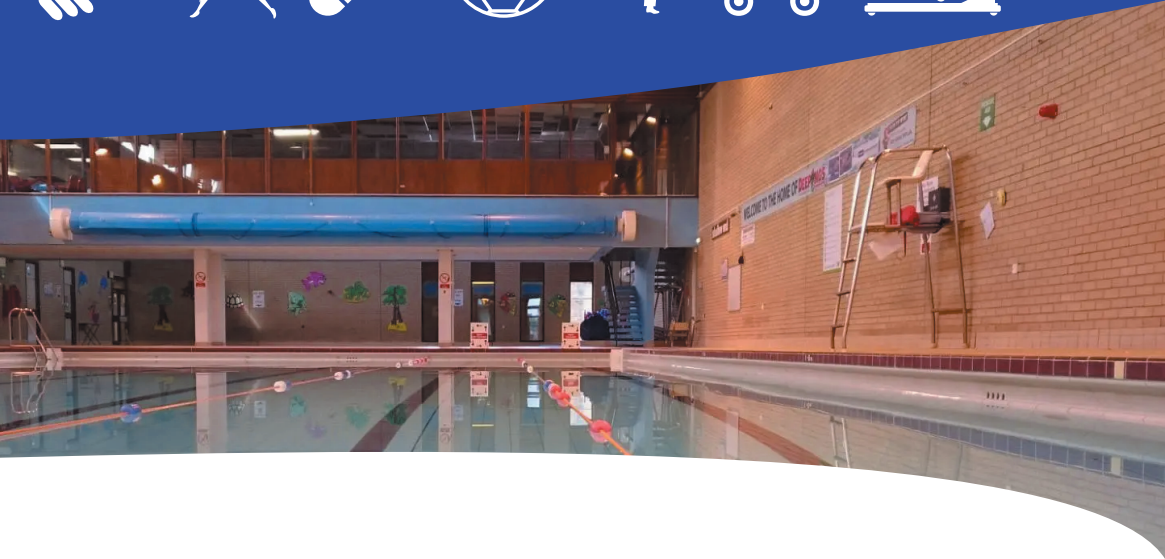
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SAVE DEEPINGS LEISURE CENTRE!



Dear Councillor...

My eldest child has been swimming at Deeping since she was 3 years old. She has had and attended parties there, and now it's to be taken away. My youngest was about to start swimming lessons, which is a big thing when you have special needs (Deeping did special sessions for children with additional needs). It has sadly been snatched away and I fear he shall never learn to swim.

A journey to a different pool twice a week after school is just not practical if you work. I thought inclusion for all, mental health and physical activity is what is upmost at the moment ... not crushing dreams and leaving so many of us disadvantaged.

My name is [REDACTED], and my son [REDACTED] swims for Deeping Swimming Club. The club has been excellent for [REDACTED], as his main outlet for sport and fitness has been his swimming. He loves the club, the competing, the support from coaches and the strong friendships he has developed and continues to do so as he progresses through the different skills groups. When I informed [REDACTED] of the situation, he was devastated and we had tears.

The club have some stop-gap sessions in place for the time being, but [REDACTED] has said that if it's not Deeping Club, then he doesn't really want to swim for any other club. The permanent closure will have this impact for many youngsters who are just developing their goals and ambitions for their future, of which sport will play a big part, is incalculable. The centre is much more than pounds and pence.

When we looked at areas to move to, the provision of leisure facilities was important to us, and the leisure centre was an important factor in selecting the Deepings. We are just one family amongst the very many which have used the centre, as it is not just a facility for sports but is at the centre of the community. An area with an ever-increasing young population cannot afford to be without such a centre for an indefinite period. [REDACTED].

My name is [REDACTED], and I have lived in the Deepings all my life. I have always been very active but last year I was diagnosed with epilepsy, which was totally life changing. I have been unable to drive since, so using the local swimming pool has been vitally important to me physically – but more importantly mentally. I can walk to the pool and enjoy 45 mins of losing myself in the water and not thinking about my disability for a while.

Without the pool I have been devastated, as I can't access other pools and already my mental health has been affected. I also help coach at the Swimming club which my two children attend, so as a family the closure has had a massive negative impact on our lives.

Many thanks for listening.

I am 76 years old and have used the facilities at Deeping St James Leisure Centre ever since the complex opened. In particular I have used the pool for swimming every week, apart from illness and holidays. For the past ten years, apart from COVID restricting me, I swam every week day.

I taught my son to swim in the pool and then my granddaughters.

I do not want to drive to other centres, particularly when it will get cold and dark in winter.

Only those who enjoy swimming can truly appreciate the devastating sense of loss that we feel at being deprived of this facility. [REDACTED].

My name is [REDACTED]; I have recently moved to Deeping St James (2019) and I am absolutely gutted about the potential closure of the Deepings Leisure Centre. I myself work remotely in IT management and my wife is a secondary school science teacher, previously having worked as a research scientist. We are what some might call a 'young professional couple'. We are currently pregnant with our first child, and my wife is due to give birth in September. We moved to Deeping St James because it suited everything we were after to start our family. The leisure centre was a big part in us choosing to move where we did (Linchfield Road).

I have been using the leisure centre in the past for its gym, badminton courts, squash courts and swimming pool, and have really loved having the centre in walking distance to be able to enjoy all these activities. With the news of the closure of the leisure centre and no guarantee of actually getting a new one built (which even if it were guaranteed would still take many years to complete), it has made us start to question if this is where we really want to start our family.

I am confident we are not going to be alone in this thinking; many new families considering where they would like to move will see this news and will be thinking twice about moving to the Deepings. I have seen a lot of discussion about the impacts this is going to have on our

My name is [REDACTED].
I have lived in or near the Deepings for all of my 38 years; the leisure centre has been a fixture of health and well-being all that time. Recently I have frequented the swimming pool as a way of exercising and relaxing to aid my post-natal health, and depression, with low-impact exercise necessary after a c-section. This is just one of the many ways the centre has been an important part of my life.

Leaving the town without a leisure centre will negatively impact me, my children, and the whole community.

local schools and community, but there is another side I do not think people are considering. People are far less likely to move to an area that does not have facilities for their families, and let's face it, we know this is going to have an impact on the surrounding schools that used the leisure centre as part of their curriculum.

I really hope something can be done and the leisure centre can be repaired.

My name is [REDACTED]; we live in the Deepings and have 4 children aged 3 to 13, who since a young age have used the leisure centre. My 3-year-old son was due to start his swim lessons soon as his older sisters did at a similar age; all three learned to swim at the Deepings Leisure Centre, he himself had his very first swim there as a newborn baby. Driving to and from Bourne/Stamford in the week is not viable, due to our work commitments and a busy family life.

Our ten-year-old daughter was due to complete swimming again with her local primary school this year, after missing it in years 4 and 5 due to COVID; she is now unlikely to be able to do so, or if she does, at a much greater cost to parents to cover transport. Our two eldest daughters attend the Deepings School, and we are concerned with regards to the facilities they will now have available to them for their PE lessons and extracurricular activities.

As a family we have made use of the leisure centre for swimming lessons for our children, family swimming, birthday parties, roller skating on Sundays and our own health and leisure needs over many many years; we feel extremely let down by the closure of our local leisure centre and urge the council to invest in the maintenance they should have done over the last decade.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a widowed parent who takes my child swimming weekly, and it's one of the few things she enjoys doing out of school. We moved here not long before the pandemic started, and swimming is a great way for me to meet other parents and for my child to meet new friends outside school; this is a real lifeline when you are in my situation. As I also work and have sole caring responsibilities for my child, any extra hours spent travelling, petrol costs etc., that are added to my week can make my life even more logistically difficult, and it will also mean that one of the wonderful local links I have to the community has been lost.

We moved the Deepings in 1993 with 3 young children. They learned to swim at the centre; they have been to – and we have held for them – children's parties in the pool and in the gym. I taught them to play badminton there and they have pursued martial arts training there. I have also attended the gym and played pool there, plus other sports. My children have been to discos and other events as well. As scouts they attended swimming galas there. My wife and I have attended the Christmas concerts arranged by the Rotary Club, and as a Rotarian myself I have been involved in organising them. The centre has been the starting point for the carnival, and I recall attending remembrance celebrations. I also attended a meeting held by our MP regarding the traveller community.

My name is [REDACTED],
I've lived in Deeping all my life.
The leisure centre has been a huge part of our community. It would be devastating to lose this facility, for so many reasons. As a local teaching assistant, I know how many children will miss out on vital swimming lessons if our centre is closed. It's a life skill that is part of the national curriculum. The centre is vital for our community's well-being and mental health; with the recent pandemic I believe it's a necessity and it would be criminal to lose it!

My son [REDACTED] has been using the Leisure centre for over 6 years; he learnt to swim there with the swim school, he has been making fantastic progress especially in the last year (COVID excluded). He really gets a buzz from swimming, and the last two coaches he has had ([REDACTED] [REDACTED]) have brought the best out in him and pushed him to do and want more. He has taken part in a distance swim challenge night, and has now made it onto the Deeping Swimming Team. He was so excited to make the team, and watching the Olympics this summer he talked and dreamed about making Team GB in the future. Being part of the swim school and now the Deepings Swimming Team had been brilliant for his confidence and independence. It is a time where he is totally responsible for himself and it has been the making of him. He has made many friends outside of his school group which I think is brilliant, and this he will sadly miss if the centre remains closed.

He has used the centre with his school (Baston Primary) too, and took part in a schools swimming gala – and more importantly tried new sports such as golf and hockey. All I want as a parent is to give my son as many opportunities as possible, and closing the centre for no matter how long takes these opportunities away from not only my son but everyone in the community and surrounding area.

My name is [REDACTED], a 46-year-old mum of 3 children who all use the Deepings Leisure Centre. Two of my sons attend swim school; one of them is doing well but the other had very little confidence in the water, but thanks to the swim school is gaining week in week. He still cannot 'swim' which is a safety concern, and we cannot get him to other swim schools in the area.

As well as swim school we attend the centre for sports classes too; my husband uses the gym and my daughter goes to the Deepings School, which will also be affected by this closure. Please don't close our leisure centre: it will have huge implications for our family.

I am a grandparent and have memories of my children and their children (my grandchildren) attending various events and clubs at the Deepings Leisure Centre. I was also a head teacher and know the headaches caused to the school timetable, trying to implement the sporting activities prescribed by the National Curriculum. These include the use of a swimming pool to teach children how to swim! (Many families cannot afford private lessons.) The National Curriculum requires sports to be delivered regardless of the facilities of the individual school. Schools in Deeping rely on the Leisure Centre to assist with this when needed. I have

I live in Deeping St James with my husband and my two daughters, aged 7 and 9. Both of my girls have been using the pool every week (apart from in lockdown) to learn to swim. This is an ongoing challenge for them which has been interrupted for the last 18 months by lockdowns. It is frustrating that only months after resuming their lessons they have now been stopped in their tracks by the closure of the pool. They have both also missed out on visiting the pool with their class in the school Easter term, due to COVID for 2 years in a row, and now this will continue for years to come. The girls have also attended roller skating parties at the centre, and have friends who attend many other classes and activities.

I swim at least twice a week at the pool myself, and have done so for the past 4 years. I have found swimming particularly therapeutic between lockdowns, as I have found it hard having to work from home (which I have had to do for the last 18 months) due to increased mental fatigue, reduced physical exercise and isolation from colleagues caused by working from home.

I don't understand how the closure of the pool can be justified in a time where mental and physical fitness for adults and children alike has been so badly affected by COVID. It feels more important than ever to have local facilities that can serve the local community. How are we supposed to manage with just Bourne and Stamford centres, which have their own populations to serve?

watched the local schoolchildren walk in all weathers to our swimming pool, to sports days and concerts that used the centre as their base. I took my grandchildren to some of these events and also to martial arts lessons in the evenings along with, yes, you've guessed it, the Swimming Club. (When it first opened there were indoor cricket nets, badminton and squash, to name just a few sports. The café held birthday parties. Small rooms had baby and toddler groups. It was a hive of activity. There was an active gym, adult keep fit, and roller skating on Sunday afternoons.)

I have neighbours who take their girls to the pool to train at 5.30 in a morning, no matter what the weather is like outside. This takes determination to a higher level.

The centre has been neglected. There is no doubt about that. There is nothing to replace it on the horizon. It requires attention, money, and – like the two girls who live near me – DETERMINATION to get it fixed.

From [REDACTED].

I recently retired and decided to join LeisureSK, as I want to keep fit and also have somewhere I can go to meet other people. I have been most dismayed at the recent closure of this facility. I feel that a local sports facility is an important part of any town, as the health and welfare of people of all generations is important and should be encouraged. I for one know that having to travel to another facility is not easy, and any obstacles to accessing the gym easily just puts me off going. It adds at least 30 minutes each way to what was previously a quick workout. Added to that, the additional fuel costs for such journeys have to be considered when on a limited income.

I would also like to mention that at no time have LeisureSK contacted me to inform me of the current closure and ascertained what I wish to do with my current membership.

I wholly support the effort to ensure that the Deepings Leisure Centre is reopened as soon as possible.

I have lived in Deeping St James my whole life; I am a married mother of 2 aged 10 and 14 years. I can honestly say I have used The Deepings Leisure Centre my entire life for a wide variety of reasons, the most important being learning to swim: in my opinion one of the most essential life skills to learn. Swimming for health (both physical and mental) and as a family, roller skating, squash, socialising, and have held many private functions in the halls available, as well as attending a great many private and public functions, occasions, and some fetes.

My daughters are currently learning to swim at the leisure centre, with excellent teaching from the many swim teachers employed here.

I do not drive, and work full-time; my girls have missed out on our family trips to the pool this summer holiday, as travelling to and from our next nearest pool on the bus now takes us approximately 1 hour 50 mins to do a round trip, severely cutting our pool time by half (our nearest bus stop is approximately 25 minutes away walking), not to mention the cost of the bus – walking to the pool in Deeping is both monetary and environmentally FREE!

The Deepings Leisure Centre is a valuable asset for the community, and should be restored as such.

Yours sincerely, [REDACTED]

I have been using the leisure centre to play badminton since 2018. It boosts my mental health as well as my physical health, and I get to socialise with my friends. We laugh (a lot!), we play, and we compete. We walk to the centre, picking each other up along the way from various spots in Deeping.

The likelihood is that sadly, if access to sport is limited, then it becomes less attractive for people like us who have limited time, money and ability to travel. This will damage the health and relationships for the people of the Deepings, and I, as well as many others, am devastated that this precious community resource could be taken from us.

I retired 3 years ago and then started going to the gym at Deeping Leisure Centre. I became fitter and it also had social benefits, as I live in a small village and rarely see people from day to day. During the COVID lockdowns I put on a stone in weight, and, like most people, lived a very isolated life.

Since the gym reopened, I started to lose weight, felt better physically and mentally, and looked forward to going again ... now it's been closed. Other gyms in Deeping cost twice the price, and market themselves at younger people who want the 'perfect body' ... the Leisure Centre gym is a place where people of all ages and sizes can feel comfortable doing whatever exercise they can.

Hello, I live in Deeping St James, I am writing to express how disappointed my family would be if our leisure centre doesn't reopen soon.

My daughter is 12; she loves to go swimming and roller skating with her friends, it is beneficial for her health and mental health, especially after the past year etc. It is a place she can go and I know she will be safe and have fun with her friends. My son is 15; he uses the sports hall to play basketball, he's not very confident but he has found a sport that he can play and interact with other people from The Deepings School in an after-school club.

I also work at DSJ Primary School; the children all use the swimming pool for their swimming lessons – I'm sure you would agree it is extremely important that they learn how to swim. It would be very sad for us to lose this facility; I think the people of The Deepings deserve to have this building fixed up at least until the new one is built. It is such a shame the building has been allowed to get into this state.

I have 3 children, all that have been part of the Deepings Swimming Club at some point over the past 9 years. My youngest is 14 and is still an active member, swimming 5-6 times a week at the pool. Not only is it vital for her fitness in keeping her body strong and healthy, but also for her mental welfare and social interaction.

She doesn't find it easy to meet friends outside of school, and lacks confidence sometimes with her schoolwork, but when she's at the pool with her club, with her friends, with her coaches, she's a positive, happy individual, so I see how this has an impact on her in so many ways.

Yes, you might say that it doesn't have to stop – that she could continue at another pool/club and carry on – but the reality of that isn't the case, as an alternative would either be Boston (a 55-minute drive each way) or Grantham (a 45-minute drive each way), and yes, if it was only once a week it would be OK to take her the extra distance, but in order for her to compete as she has done in the past, she needs to train 5-6 times a week or more. She swims before school, getting up at 5am three times a

My eldest son has been going to the swim school for the past 3 years. He is by no means a strong swimmer, and for this reason I feel it's even more important that he can keep up with lessons, so that he gets as much practise and confidence around water as possible – especially living in a town with a river running through it! He has persevered, because he knows that it will allow him to go in swimming pools and in the sea when we visit the coast.

Travelling every week is just not viable, both from a cost perspective, from the extra petrol used (and accompanying environmental cost from extra travel!) and the time – trying to get there after school. Not to mention that when my youngest (hopefully) starts lessons it could mean making that journey twice a week!

week; if she moved to another club that wouldn't be possible as she wouldn't make it back in time for school. She also swims on days when my son plays football in Deeping, and if it was changed to swimming at Grantham or Boston, I'd have to make a choice in who to take: I'd have to make a choice in whose health and well-being is more important – my son or my daughter.

I would love for someone who makes decisions to answer that, or to tell me that it wasn't a waste in supporting my children when spending everything spare, I had to pay for it, that it wasn't a waste in getting up at silly o'clock most mornings even when I've been so tired from work, and that it wasn't a waste in driving them back and forth to the pool hundreds if not thousands of times over the years to help keep them fit, healthy and happy. What is it the government keep saying – that we all have to play our part, that we all have to do what we can to stay fit and healthy and not put extra pressure on the NHS? Because that's what I've been trying to do for years.

How do I truly explain to a teenager, to my teenager that has been through so much these last 18 months, that the one thing that gives her confidence and self-belief isn't there now, because the man with the wallet says she's not important enough any more.

My daughter is 7 and just getting her confidence to swim again after lockdown. Her skills and stamina quickly declined during lockdown. She was just about back to where she was, and then the leisure centre closed. This is a life skill that she needs to keep improving on. My husband learnt to swim there too when he was in his thirties; a life skill that he now has thanks to the local pool and instructors.

I also used the pool for exercise and walking netball.

Part of the reason we moved to Deeping St James was to be close to the leisure centre. It is within walking distance of our home.

I am concerned about the closure of the leisure centre for several reasons, one being that I grew up in the Deepings and learnt to swim as well as spent much of my childhood doing various activities there, and I want my children to have the same opportunities. My husband and I were also members of the gym until lockdown.

My daughters have both been learning to swim at the pool for a number of years, and since lockdown my 12-year-old daughter, who has a disability has, not been able to return to her lessons unlike the other typical children. This, I have been told, was due to the leisure centre being advised against resuming lessons which require teachers in the pool with the students until further easing of the COVID restrictions. Thus meaning that the smaller children – and children like my daughter who learn better with a teacher in the pool – have not been able to take swimming lessons in 18 months. I understand that the guidance has now changed, but with the pool closed, she is still unable to

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I also work at DSJ Primary School; the children all use the swimming pool for their swimming lessons – I'm sure you would agree it is extremely important that they learn how to swim. It would be very sad for us to lose this facility; I think the people of The Deepings deserve to have this building fixed up at least until the new one is built. It is such a shame the building has been allowed to get into this state.

have the opportunity to learn this valuable life skill, unlike her non-disabled peers. I had made enquiries just before the closure and was not given any indication of when her lessons could resume. I would like to know how SKDC are going to meet their obligations under the Equalities Act and start making swimming lessons accessible to disabled children of the Deepings, like my daughter. I understand that other non-disabled children have been offered alternative lessons at another pool, but we seem to have been forgotten and are still waiting to be contacted. Any assistance that you can give to try and help my daughter and the other children with SEND in her swimming class to get some local(ish) swimming lessons would be greatly appreciated.

We moved to DSJ attracted by all that it could offer a young family, particularly the Leisure Centre within walking distance of our home. We loved our family swims, and our daughter was progressing well in the swim school thanks to the brilliant instructors. We are all devastated that the Centre has been forced to close. Other pools in the region just aren't practical for us, so I fear that without regular swim sessions our daughter will lose this valuable skill that she worked so hard to learn.

My name is [REDACTED], for me the Leisure Centre means everything for my mental health. I am a swimmer; I attend every morning at 7.15 am, and it's my fuel for the day, my chance to clear my mind and get off on the right start each day. The centre is not just four walls where I let go and swim a mile or more each day; I have made the best friends I could ever wish for. All ages, all abilities, pulling together and learning from one another. I have really suffered with my well-being since this place has been closed; I fear many others do too.

My name is [REDACTED]. Previously a member of staff at Deeping Leisure Centre. Where do I even begin? Those 4 walls are not just a sport centre. It's a home for many: The loving family of staff. The children who partake in lessons to gain a life skill to prevent them from being in danger. The elderly that come in to socialise because they have no one at home and the leisure centre is their safe place. Those that come in to help their mental health and leave with a sense of achievement. My list could go on and on. Seeing a customer leave with a smile on their face would be enough to complete our day!

Deeping is a loving and humble community. We pull together, we fight for what is right. We need our Centre open.

A new Centre would be amazing and that would be great if that was the end goal. But unfortunately, that isn't good enough. We need something now. We need something for the residents of Deeping and the surrounding villages. We cannot be expected to wait. We deserve the Centre open which has been home to many for years. We deserve some well overdue investment.

I am 14 years old. I attend the Deepings School; I love my swimming lessons provided by the school and swimming with my friends. I am worried about where GCSE exams will be held when it comes time for me to take mine. I also go swimming when we are able, with my family at weekends and have lots of fun.

I love the cafeteria too, and we go after our family swim for a snack or meal.

I have been to many parties within the centre, and roller skating too; I miss the fact I cannot go now spontaneously without planning days in advance.

“Leaving the town without a leisure centre will negatively impact me, my children, and the whole community”

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