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# NOTICE OF MEETING

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## CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FRIDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2020 AT 10.00 AM

### VIRTUAL REMOTE MEETING - REMOTE

Telephone enquiries to Lisa Gallacher 02392 834056  
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## CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Councillor Steve Pitt (Liberal Democrat)

### Group Spokespersons

Councillor Frank Jonas BEM, Conservative  
Councillor Stephen Morgan, Labour  
Councillor Claire Udy, Progressive Portsmouth People Group

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(NB This Agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting.)

Please note that the agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view online on the Portsmouth City Council website: [www.portsmouth.gov.uk](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk)

### Deputations

A written deputation stating to which decision agenda item it refers must be received by the officer named at the top of the agenda **by 12 noon two working days preceding the meeting.** Any written deputation received by email will be sent to the Members on the relevant decision making body and be referred to and read out at the meeting within permitted time limits.

## AGENDA

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Portsmouth Museums Annual Review and Forward Plan (Pages 5 - 12)**

### Purpose

To review the achievements of Portsmouth Museums in 2019/20 and to present the museum service 'Plan on a Page' (PoP) for the current financial year.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- (1) The achievements of 2019/20 are noted.**
- (2) A new Museums Strategy is developed in dialogue with stakeholders.**
- (3) The Landing Craft Tank (LCT) project is completed in partnership with the National Museum of the Royal Navy, opening in 2020 as part of the D-Day Story.**
- (4) Audiences are broadened and better understood by involving them in the work of the museums service and through special projects, programming, evaluation and visitor surveys.**
- (5) Standards of customer care are raised through training and performance monitoring and that the museums service continues to develop volunteers and paid staff to create a single integrated team**
- (6) Preparations begin to renew accreditation with Arts Council England.**

**4 Museum Collection Development (Pages 13 - 18)**

Purpose

To update the Cabinet Member on activity relating to the development of the Council's Museum Collection to ensure it remains relevant to the City and its communities.

**RECOMMENDED**

- (1) The contemporary collecting initiative focusing on Covid-19 and the experience of the city during lockdown is noted.**
- (2) The disposal of 'the mountain collection' from the City's Museum collection is approved.**
- (3) The review and rationalisation of the handling collection is noted.**

**The following reports are for information only**

**5 Landing Craft Tank - preparing for opening (information report) (Pages 19 - 22)**

Purpose

To describe the preparations for the opening of Landing Craft Tank to visitors as an exciting addition to The D-Day Story.

**6 Pyramids and Eastney Swimming Pool capital schemes update (information report) (Pages 23 - 50)**

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the cabinet member with an update on developments and progress related to two items in the 2020/21 approved

capital programme:

- Pyramids refurbishment (£1,400,000)
- Feasibility and Outline Planning for a New Eastney Swimming Pool (£100,000)

These two projects concern indoor facilities, and consequently the report will also discuss wider strategic considerations regarding Portsmouth's other swimming, and health and fitness facilities.

The decision referred to in this report is to reallocate money from some capital schemes that either will not now go ahead or will not do so for some time. This is a delegated decision, which has already been taken by The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to respond to the emerging priority of the Pyramids. This report is the mechanism for reporting on that decision. Consequently the report is being presented for information only. The Section 151 Officer has also advised that this falls within the Budget and Policy Framework because it does not exceed the budget.

## **7 The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection (information report) (Pages 51 - 54)**

### Purpose

- (1) To update the Cabinet Member on the move of the 'You Don't Know Sherlock Holmes, Yet' exhibition from Portsmouth Museum to the Third Floor of the Central Library
- (2) To show how the Conan Doyle Collection Study Packs and social media engagement have been used during the lockdown period to engage with a wider audience and more volunteers
- (3) To outline the continuation and adaptation of programming under the City of Stories project within the current Covid19 restrictions.

## **8 Hotwalls Studios Update (information report) (Pages 55 - 58)**

### Purpose

- (1) To outline to the Cabinet Member the funding secured from Arts Council England Covid-19 Emergency Fund and the use of the funds for the Hotwalls Studios *Pause. Reflect. Create* project.
- (2) To update and summarise the involvement and support given by the Hotwalls Studios to the Portsmouth Creates We Believe project.
- (3) To update and summarise the business support given to the Hotwalls Studios artists at the start and during the nationwide lockdown period.

This meeting is webcast (videoed), viewable via the Council's livestream account at <https://livestream.com/accounts/14063785>

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**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 16 October 2020

**Subject:** Museums annual review and forward plan

**Report by:** Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Wards affected:** ALL

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To review the achievements of Portsmouth Museums in 2019/20 and to present the museum service 'Plan on a Page' (PoP) for the current financial year.

**2. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that:**

**2.1 The achievements of 2019/20 are noted.**

**2.2 A new Museums Strategy is developed in dialogue with stakeholders.**

**2.3 The Landing Craft Tank (LCT) project is completed in partnership with the National Museum of the Royal Navy, opening in 2020 as part of The D-Day Story.**

**2.4 Audiences are broadened and better understood by involving them in the work of the museums service and through special projects, programming, evaluation, and visitor surveys.**

**2.5 Standards of customer care are raised through training and performance monitoring and that the museums service continues to develop volunteers and paid staff to create a single integrated team.**

**2.6 Preparations begin to renew Accreditation with Arts Council England.**

### 3 Background

- 3.1 Last year was dominated by D-Day 75 and the national commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day Landings in which the city of Portsmouth played a leading role. In the final month of the year Covid-19 struck. This has had major impact on plans for 2020/21 with staff working from home, museums initially closed and services maintained digitally, some museums reopening with reduced capacity and other measures to limit the spread of the virus, some plans abandoned as no longer feasible (activities to celebrate 125 years of civic museums in Portsmouth for example), others delayed (such as the opening of Portsmouth revisited II) while other opportunities emerged including collecting, the City's experience of and response to Covid-19.

### 4. Reasons for recommendations

Achievements in 2019/20 include:

- 4.1 Projects and activities that enabled people to engage with The D-Day Story and the Landing Craft project (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund) including:
- D-Day 75 community projects in which community groups explored different aspects of D-Day and conflict more generally; work led by the third of our project interns.
  - We knew something was happening where re-enactors walked the route taken by soldiers through the city on their way to embark for D-Day.
  - The work of the Young Shapers facilitated by Unloc which gave young people the opportunity to develop and deliver events for visitors to The D-Day Story.
  - The work of the Pigeon Squad, a group of young people, led by writer in residence Steve Tasane to retell the story of Gustav the Pigeon.
  - The arrival of The D-Day Story tricycle and volunteers to ride it in the city as a means of raising awareness of the Landing Craft Tank project and starting point for community conversations.
  - The Landing Craft Tank Journey project which worked with communities and museum colleagues in Tyne & Weir, Norfolk, Southampton and Liverpool to uncover the story of LCT 7074 from manufacture in the North East via Normandy to Liverpool Night Club.
- 4.2 At Portsmouth Museum and Art Gallery we hosted displays, exhibitions and activities featuring:
- The Portsmouth Charter (including the loan from the Bodleian Library)
  - The Portraits of the D-Day Veterans commissioned by HRH Prince Charles (on loan from the Royal Collection).
  - Portsmouth revisited including loans from Tate Britain, Sheffield Galleries and the Royal Collection. The Royal Collection funded the conservation of one work that had never been on public display before.

- A complete skeleton of a Dodo on loan from Cherry Records which formed the centre-piece of the exhibition D is for Dodo, E is for Extinct.

- 4.3 Building work was carried out at Dickens' Birthplace, Southsea Castle and Eastney Beam Engine House. Work continued on the Wild about Portsmouth project to transform standards of collection care, documentation and access to the natural history collections for audiences ranging from children to specialists. Staff and volunteers successfully completed Welcome Host Gold training (delivered by members of the team trained to deliver the course), took the exam (City & Guilds Level 2), with two members of the team (one paid / one volunteer) achieving the result 'outstanding'. At Portsmouth Museum and Art Gallery we also welcomed our first tenant, LMJL Millinery.
- 4.4 Marketing for museums had some big wins with the world focus on Portsmouth for D-Day 75. South Western Railway named a new train 'The D-Day Story, Portsmouth' and displayed 100 posters across their network promoting the museums, supplemented by a local poster campaign and a dedicated window display in John Lewis, Southsea. Two large billboards promoting The D-Day Story were booked for October half-term and remained in place for much longer; one through to August 2020.
- 4.5 The Portraits of D-Day Veterans and the Portsmouth revisited exhibitions had poster campaigns, print adverts, articles and social media promotions. D is for Dodo E is for Extinct was promoted locally. All out of home marketing was supported by digital marketing via websites and social media. New websites were produced for all our museums (except DDS which already has one).
- 4.6 A total of just under 305,000 people visited our six sites in 2019/20 (4% less than the previous year). Visits to the D-Day Story would have achieved over 100,000 visits without the Covid-19 lockdown in March.

Our plans for the current year are shown in Appendix 1.

- 4.7 **The Museums Strategy** is due for revision and update. This was kick-started towards the end of last year with a peer challenge review, carried out by Tony Butler, CX of Derby Museums Trust, and a facilitated workshop with staff. A series of workshops is currently underway to explore Portsmouthness and the stories Portsmouth Museums should tell with representatives of the city's communities. In addition we plan to carry out market research to explore barriers to access to further inform the strategy. In light of the considerable investment in the Eastney Beam Engine House - part of the scheduled ancient monument - a way forward is required to ensure that momentum is maintained.
- 4.8 **The Landing Craft Tank (LCT)** project will end in 2021. Conservation of the ship is complete, it has arrived on site and the two D-Day Tanks (also conserved) loaded on board. Our role is to operate LCT as part of The D-Day Story. This project has been affected by Covid-19 and a key issue at the present time will be our ability to deliver the Business Plan and generate the surplus required for future maintenance.

- 4.9 **Activities designed to develop new and existing audiences, inspire and engage people** include delivery of the activity / audience development plans linked to our three live externally funded lottery projects (ie Transforming the D-Day Museum, the Landing Craft Tank project and Wild about Portsmouth). These have all been adapted and extended reflecting the impact of Covid-19. We have also contributed a number of online tours of the city's collections to the national Heritage Open Days programme. The Collecting Covid-19 project is underway in partnership with The News and as this is a shared experience to which everyone can relate we are keen to display some of the items acquired and celebrate the city's unsung heroes as soon as possible. In order to reach new audiences we are also working with Cascades to create an eye-catching window display featuring the city's stunning natural history collections (which are now much easier for staff to use as a result of the Wild about Portsmouth project). We are also keen to demonstrate the potential of museums to animate and contribute to the regeneration of high streets as a result of this initiative.
- 4.10 **Raising standards of customer care and empowering staff** to deliver is an important aspect of the service. We have therefore developed and begun to deliver the 'Happy Museums' project which aims to set the standards to which we aspire and equip staff to achieve them. We are also looking to create a bespoke form for performance development reviews which better suits the work of the team.
- 4.11 As a result of training programmes involving both paid and unpaid (volunteer) staff, teams are working together in a more integrated and effective way. The opening of Landing Craft Tank as part of The D-Day Story which will be dependent on volunteers will provide the final push towards achieving this.
- 4.12 **Accreditation** is the national benchmark for museums in England, managed by Arts Council England. We were due to reapply in 2021 but this has been postponed until 2022 due to Covid-19. Preparing for Accreditation is a massive undertaking and it will require us to review and update exiting policies and plans as well as producing some new ones (for all of our sites).

## 5. **Integrated impact assessment**

- 5.1 IIA not required as implementing previously agreed strategic aims.

## 6. **Legal implications**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. However, Legal Services will provide legal advice and assistance as necessary in the context of specific elements of the service plan as they are implemented over the plan period.



**7. Director of Finance's comments**

7.1 The recommendations contained in this report will be implemented within the existing approved budget resources of the Museums Service.

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Signed by:

**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Portsmouth Museums Plan on a Page 2020/21

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....  
Signed by:

**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Museums@Cascades display of the natural history collection</li> </ul>	CT KB	Open Oct 2020	£8,000 High Street Fund
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>500 Pompey Words / John and Ivy Guy-Hawthorne Award, writing competition for children and young people</li> </ul>	TT	Launch winter 2020	£1,750
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the Activity Programmes for the Transforming the D-Day Museum and LCT projects</li> </ul>	FW / DJ	End Dec / Oct 2021 respectively	£199K / £173K (includes project staff costs).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop engaging website content for a range of audiences to enable them to explore collections online.</li> </ul>	DH / ALL	March 2021	£7,400 (2019/20 budget)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install Wildlife Trust's Secrets of the Solent plastics sculpture.</li> </ul>	CT	Tbc	NLHF/HIWWT project budget
<b>Create a learning culture across the service to develop and empower staff</b>			
Deliver 'happy museums' project, raise standards of customer care and improve performance monitoring.	JS JB AMcG	Ongoing	
Continue to develop volunteers and paid staff to create single effective teams esp. in preparation for the opening of LCT 7074	JB DJ FW	Oct 2020 and ongoing	NLHF/LCT project budgets
<b>Ensure sustainability and resilience through an entrepreneurial approach to income generation and partnerships</b>			
Covid-proof services to enable delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reopening of sites to staff / visitors</li> <li>Events programmes (in person / virtual)</li> <li>Donation of objects</li> <li>Recast project budgets to maximise roi</li> </ul>	JS AM JB ALL Collections FW DJ CT		£8,000
Support the Portsmouth D-Day Museum Trust with fundraising and related activity	CL	Ongoing	
Complete Wild about Portsmouth project	CT	Dec 2020	NHLF
Continue collection development work to free up resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and rationalise the handling collection to manageable levels</li> <li>Dispose of D--Day set dressing items</li> </ul>	TT KB JD	Dec 2020	NLHF/TDDM project budget
Publish a new guide for the Overlord Embroidery (5,000 print run. Cost inc licences for use of images)	TT	Sept 2020	£15,300
Prepare Annual Action Plan for each museum site	JS AM	March 2021	
Deliver building works at Southsea Castle inc revaluation of the lighthouse project	JS AM	March 2021	Capital / Project budget
<b>Develop new audiences using digital technology</b>			
Prepare a digital strategy for The D-Day Story	FW		NLHF/TDDM project budget

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	16 October 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Museum Collection Development
<b>Report by:</b>	Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services
<b>Wards affected:</b>	ALL
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Full Council decision:</b>	No

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**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To update the Cabinet Member on activity relating to the development of the Council's Museum Collection to ensure it remains relevant to the City and its communities.

**2. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that:**

- 2.1 The contemporary collecting initiative focusing on Covid-19 and the experience of the city during lockdown is noted.**
- 2.2 The disposal of 'the mountain collection' from the City's Museum collection is approved.**
- 2.3 The review and rationalisation of the handling collection is noted.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council's Collection Development Policy sets out clearly the kind of material the museums service should be collecting. In the case of local history, objects should originate from the Portsmouth area, whether produced, collected or used by people or organisations with a substantial connection to Portsmouth. They should represent, document or illustrate the lives, cultural activity and aspirations of the people of Portsmouth and immediate region. Items may also show Portsmouth's role in national and international events and wider links through for example, twinning. Items will not be acquired when another museum has a better claim.

- 3.2 Care needs to be taken to ensure that the items acquired are relevant and contribute to telling Portsmouth's story as collections require large amounts of space for storage as well as resources to care for and display them.
- 3.3 Collections are a dynamic resource and are under constant review. Disposal is considered where the items do not meet the criteria of the collection development policy; they are not relevant or cannot be stored appropriately for example. In such cases the policy is to dispose of items by transfer to another accredited museum. Items in very poor condition may be disposed of appropriately or recycled where possible. All disposals from the Council's formally accessioned museum collections have to be approved by the museums governing body.
- 3.4 The collections development policy also makes reference to material acquired for handling purposes; ie not part of the council's accessioned collection. The disposal of items from this collection does not require oversight of the museum's governing body but is included here for information.

#### 4. **Reasons for recommendations**

- 4.1 **Developing collections** through acquisition and disposal is routine practice for the museums sector. It ensures the collection remains focused and relevant. Items from the main museum collection will be offered to other accredited museums first in accordance with council policy. We are not seeking to sell items to generate funds.
- 4.2 **Collecting Covid-19** As soon as lockdown began the museums team in partnership with archives developed plans to collect objects and material related to Covid-19 to help us tell the story of the City and its residents during this period. So far we have been offered a wide range of material including art produced during lockdown, home-made face coverings, face shields produced by local companies and social distancing signage used by high street shops.
- 4.3 Most of our collecting has been as a result of social media appeals, and has been guided by our audiences after we asked them what they thought we should collect. We are also working in partnership with The News who are producing a special publication. We plan to produce a small exhibition in the near future.
- 4.4 Collecting objects during lockdown and social distancing while observing bio-security measures has been a new challenge for all museums. However it has been a valuable opportunity to collect objects that relate to major events that are happening now.
- 4.5 **The Mountain Collection** is a group of 719 domestic items mostly focusing on home lighting and cooking given to the museum by Mrs Mountain of Tunbridge Wells, Kent. The collection was acquired as a gift just after the Second World War as Portsmouth began to re-build its collection after much was destroyed after a bomb fell on the museum. At this time collecting was not guided by a policy and everything that was offered was accepted. Since then we have

acquired domestic items which are much more relevant to the city and have a Portsmouth provenance.

- 4.6 The collection therefore is without provenance, has no connection with Portsmouth and does not meet the criteria of the collection development policy. There is significant duplication within the collection with many similar items and the sheer number of objects means that it occupies large amounts of storage space. There is no merit in retaining this collection other than a handful of items that fill gaps or that we are unlikely to have the opportunity to acquire in the future. The collection includes a number of Firearms. These will be processed separately.
- 4.7 **The handling collection** consists of several thousand objects and occupies a considerable amount of space in the main museum store. Documentation levels vary, there is a backlog of unprocessed material and a large percentage of the collection has not been used for many years.
- 4.8 In January 2020 we appointed a temporary Cataloguing Assistant funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and in February began a review of the handling collection. This aims to locate and document all items in the collection, re-home or dispose of unwanted items and create a handling collection that is relevant, versatile, accessible and inspiring. New loans boxes will be produced to complement the existing Wonder Boxes for schools.
- 4.9 Decisions will be informed by each object's condition, provenance, usage over the past 10 years, potential as an educational resource and relevance to Portsmouth's accessioned collections. Unwanted items will be offered to other accredited museums or sold on eBay or at auction. A small percentage of items will be taken to charity shops and those in very poor condition will be disposed of appropriately or recycled where possible.
- 4.10 Audit have confirmed that we can dispose of items using eBay without offering them to other Council departments first. We are keeping a comprehensive record of what the handling collection contains and what happens to each item.

## 5. **Integrated impact assessment**

- 5.1 The report is about the implementation of previously approved policy. An integrated impact assessment is not therefore required.

## 6. **Legal implications**

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report are in accordance with the Council's collections development policy and no significant legal implications arise.

6.2 It is understood that a reasonable price will be sought for any items for disposal which are considered saleable and not required for transfer to another accredited museum.

**7. Director of Finance's comments**

7.1 It is accepted that any disposal of collection assets will be in accordance with financial rules.

7.2 All additional costs associated with the management of collections and any income derived from sales will be managed within existing budgets.

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Signed by:  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:       None**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....



.....  
Signed by:  
**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**

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# Agenda Item 5



Portsmouth  
CITY COUNCIL

## **THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require an Integrated impact assessment, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting
<b>Subject:</b>	Landing Craft Tank - preparing for opening
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	16 October 2020
<b>Report by:</b>	Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Requested by**

1.1 Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development.

### **2. Purpose**

2.1 To describe the preparations for the opening of Landing Craft Tank to visitors as an exciting addition to The D-Day Story.

### **3. Information Requested**

- 3.1 LCT 7074 arrived onsite at The D-Day Story in August, the two D-Day Tanks were loaded on board and the ship moved under the canopy. The arrival of LCT 7074 on the Seafront attracted considerable public interest.
- 3.2 LCT 7074 arrived later on site than planned due to the coronavirus pandemic but rather earlier than might have been expected due to the cancellation of the Victorious Festival.
- 3.3 If everything goes to plan, the aim is to open LCT 7074 to the public just before the October half term during the week of the 19 October. This is on the understanding that work will still be taking place on site (e.g. landscaping) but the ship will be safe for people to visit. This will allow museum staff and volunteers to become familiar with the site and will enable some initial 'thank you visits' to take place with key stakeholders immediately before we open to the public.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

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**3.4 The preparations for opening include:**

- 1) Recruiting the 1.4 FTE visitor services posts that will be responsible for the day to day operation of LCT. The posts are funded by the LCT project for the first 18 months and costs then covered by admissions income. Recruitment is complete, start date 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.
- 2) Getting the DDS volunteers back on site and familiarised with the operation of LCT alongside the team of paid staff. The planned return date for volunteers is currently being risk assessed and is expected to be around the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to coincide with the arrival of the new visitor services posts.
- 3) Finalising the number of visitors to be allowed on board LCT at any one time due to Covid-19 in dialogue with our colleagues from the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN) who have particular expertise in this area. (A visit to DDS will start with LCT).
- 4) Recasting the Business Plan for LCT. The original plan was prepared by external specialists Tricolor as part of the round 2 bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund but is under review in the light of Covid-19 and the expected reduction in income from admissions, events etc. The review is informed by the performance of DDS since reopening on the 13 July. Visitor numbers and earned income from admissions and retail are currently rather better than predicted for the museum sector as a whole.
- 5) Market testing undertaken with visitors has confirmed that the prices proposed by Tricolor in the Business Plan - i.e. based on an uplift of £3.50 for an adult ticket - are acceptable. Ticket prices and a summary of the market research were included in an MIS item on the 11 September 2020.
- 6) In addition the price of the annual pass has been uplifted. The annual pass enables people to visit the museum as many times as they like during the year and to attend many of museum's events free. At present the cost of the annual pass only just covers the cost of converting a day ticket to an annual pass. This was included in the MIS item of the 11 September 2020.
- 7) A number of marketing plans have been produced to promote LCT 7074 in partnership with the NMRN. These have been revised and adjusted to reflect the impact of Covid-19 and will continue to be so.
- 8) We will continue to engage with harder-to-reach audiences through delivery of the LCT project activity plan. Activities to be delivered in the immediate future are career films for younger people to highlight the range of careers connected with museums and heritage and micro commission grants to combat loneliness and isolation working with The Hive.



**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

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- 9) In view of the impact of Covid-19 on the LCT Business Plan and our ability to generate the surplus, i.e. 'sinking fund', required for major maintenance of LCT 7074 in the future, we remain keen to have some form of joint ticket offer with the National Museum of the Royal Navy and this is being actively pursued.

.....  
 Signed by  
**Stephen Baily**  
 Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Appendices: None**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

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# Agenda Item 6



Portsmouth  
CITY COUNCIL

## THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require an Integrated impact assessment, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 16 October 2020

**Subject:** Pyramids and Eastney Swimming Pool capital schemes update

**Report by:** Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Wards affected:** St Jude, Eastney and Craneswater

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### 1. Requested by

1.1. The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development

### 2. Purpose of report

2.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the cabinet member with an update on developments and progress related to two items in the 2020/21 approved capital programme:

- Pyramids refurbishment (£1,400,000)
- Feasibility and Outline Planning for a New Eastney Swimming Pool (£100,000)

2.2. These two projects concern indoor facilities, and consequently the report will also discuss wider strategic considerations regarding Portsmouth's other swimming, and health and fitness facilities.

2.3. The decision referred to in this report is to reallocate money from some capital schemes that either will not now go ahead or will not do so for some time. This is a delegated decision, which has already been taken by The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to respond to the emerging priority of the Pyramids. This report is the mechanism for reporting on that decision. Consequently the report is being presented for information only. The Section 151 Officer has also advised that this falls within the Budget and Policy Framework because it does not exceed the budget.

2.4. Contents:

Section 3. Background and context

Section 4. Indoor sports facilities in Portsmouth

Section 5: The focus on swimming, and health and fitness (gyms)

Section 6: The Pyramids



**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**  
**(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require an Integrated impact assessment, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)**

Section 7: Eastney Swimming Pool

**3. Background and context**

- 3.1. The delivery of the Pyramids has had a checkered history with a range of decisions being taken which have then been altered or amended. In summary the council decided to close the Pyramids at the end of February 2007, a decision that was rescinded in March 2008. Subsequent to this a marketing exercise was commenced to dispose of the Pyramids on a full repairing lease.
- 3.2. Negotiations with the initial bidder stalled and subsequently the second placed bidder, Southsea Leisure Ltd - SLL was pursued whilst Parkwood, the existing operator continued to manage the site. As a result a 25-year lease was signed on 30th March 2010 with Southsea Community Leisure Limited (SCLL) as a long-term lease disposal.
- 3.3. In November 2010 the Council was advised of a cash flow problem, caused because the original funder had withdrawn their offer several months previously which then also put into jeopardy a second loan of £2.1m over a 15-year period which they had arranged directly. SCLL were unable to meet their first loan repayment so an emergency payment was made by PCC of £28,000. The Authority agreed further financial support of up to £1.33 million to support the operation until September 2012 subject to a series of conditions which, with the application of a range of measures was extended to September 2013 in order to facilitate a further procurement process.
- 3.4. In October 2012 the City Council resolved to undertake a procurement process in relation to the delivery of services in the Pyramids by way of a competitive process to secure an operator in place as soon as practicable for 2013.
- 3.5. The formal process was undertaken and as a result BH Live were selected as the preferred operator in July 2013. They were issued with a contract, which commenced on 30th September 2013 for an initial 5-year period. Following the flooding incidents of winter 2014 and 2015 the extension period of a further two years was agreed which took the contract period up to 30th September 2019.
- 3.6. For the last 6 years BH Live have operated the centre at a loss with a cumulative deficit of c £1.8m over this period compared to the previous operators who received both a management fee and considerable support around the loan repayments. The Council however have had a maintenance obligation, which has been significant due to the requirement to meet the repair costs on the majority of areas since the flood incidents
- 3.7. ***Physical activity is an important element of a healthy lifestyle.*** The clear message from many agencies, national and local, is that people should try to be physically active as part of their ongoing lifestyle. Portsmouth is behind regional and national levels of physical activity, especially among children.





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3.8. Portsmouth's Health and Wellbeing Strategy<sup>1</sup> includes as a key priority the reduction of the harms from physical inactivity. The benefits of physical activity include<sup>2</sup>

- improvement to muscular and cardiorespiratory fitness
- improvement to bone and functional health
- reduction of the risk of hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, breast and colon cancer and depression
- reduction of the risk of falls, as well as hip or vertebral fractures
- fundamental contribution to energy balance and weight control

3.9. The Government recommends that adults accumulate 150 minutes of physical activity per week and that children should engage in an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week. Any activity is better than none, and more is better still.<sup>3</sup>

3.10. The council's priorities<sup>4</sup> include:

- Make Portsmouth a city that works together, enabling communities to thrive and people to live healthy, safe and independent lives:
  - By supporting and encouraging healthy lifestyles in all our communities, reducing health inequalities in our city
    - By making sure children and young people have access to a wide range of cultural and sporting activities and facilities, enhancing their quality of life
    - By promoting positive physical health and encouraging physical activity.

3.11. The levels of physical activity among adults in Portsmouth broadly mirrors the national average (England) but is slightly less than the regional average and Hampshire.<sup>5</sup>

Adults	Portsmouth	Hampshire	South East	England
<b>Active (&gt;150 min/wk)</b>	63.8%	64.8%	65.9%	63.3%

<sup>1</sup> Portsmouth City Council (2018). Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2021. <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cons-114.86-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-proof-2.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation. Physical Activity Fact Sheet. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>.

<sup>3</sup> Chief Medical Officer (2019). Physical Activity Guidelines. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-uk-chief-medical-officers-report>

<sup>4</sup> Portsmouth City Council. Our Priorities. <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-councilpriorities2018.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Sport England (2020). Active Lives Adults Survey Nov18-Nov19. <https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives>



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<b>Fairly active (30-149 min/wk)</b>	12.2%	12.7%	12.1%	12.2%
<b>Inactive (&lt;30 min/wk)</b>	24.0%	22.4%	22.0%	24.6%

3.12. In children, however, Portsmouth is well below the Hampshire, regional and national averages.<sup>6</sup>

Children	Portsmouth	Hampshire	South East	England
<b>Active 60 min/day</b>	38.1%	43.4%	47.8%	46.8%
<b>Fairly active (30-59 min/day)</b>	30.8%	25.7%	23.5%	24.2%
<b>Less active (&lt;30 min/day)</b>	31.1%	31.0%	28.7%	29.0%

3.13. **Physical activity plays an important role in tackling obesity.** The importance of tackling obesity has received increased publicity in recent months, giving greater prominence to this long term public health issue. Physical activity plays a vital role in helping people lose weight.

3.14. In response to the evidence that obesity has a strong correlation with poor outcomes from Covid-19 the government in July 2020 introduced a new Tackling Obesity Strategy<sup>7</sup>. This is "a call to action for everyone who is overweight to take steps to move towards a healthier weight".

3.15. The strategy takes a broad, multi-pronged approach and much is centred on healthy eating (eg food labelling, kerbing the promotion of foods high in fat, sugar or salt, particularly to children). The campaign will signpost people to a 12-week NHS Weight Loss Plan app which will encourage them not only to eat healthily but also to get active and record their levels of physical activity.

3.16. Levels of obesity among adults in Portsmouth are higher than the national and regional averages.<sup>8</sup>

Adults	Portsmouth	South East	England
<b>Obese</b>	28.6%	21.4%	23.4%
<b>Excess weight (overweight or obese)</b>	64.4%	59.7%	62.0%

3.17. Levels of obesity among children in Portsmouth are higher than the national average at both year R and year 6 and higher than comparator Southampton in year R children.

Children in year R (4-5 years old)	Portsmouth	Southampton	England
<b>Obese</b>	12.5%	10.3%	9.7%
<b>Excess weight (overweight or obese)</b>	26.5%	22.3%	22.6%

<sup>6</sup> Sport England (2020). Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Academic Year 18/19.

<https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives>

<sup>7</sup> Department of Health and Social Care (2020). Tackling obesity: government strategy.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-obesity-government-strategy>

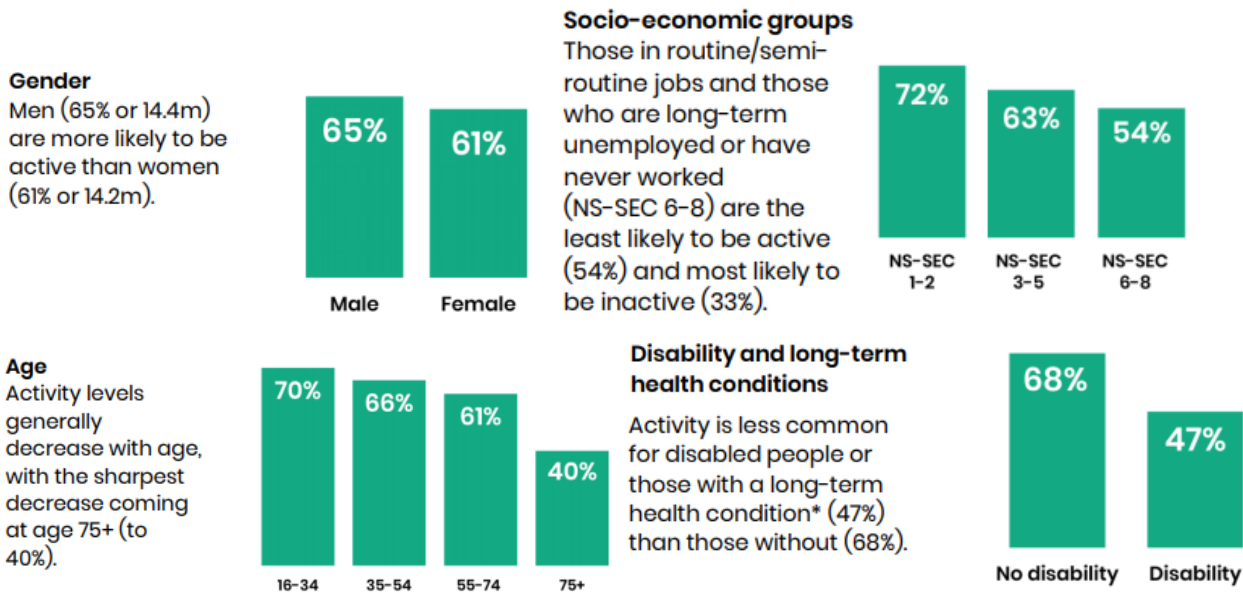
<sup>8</sup> Portsmouth CCG (2020). Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Healthy Weight Briefing Note.



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Children in year 6 (10-11 years old)	Portsmouth	Southampton	England
<b>Obese</b>	21.6%	23.3%	20.2%
<b>Excess weight (overweight or obese)</b>	36.6%	36.2%	34.3%

3.18. **Demographic differences have an impact on levels of physical activity.**



3.19. Lower socio-economic groups are the most likely to be obese. It is clear that the very groups who would benefit most from physical activity are the ones who do not take part. Sport England's Towards an Active Nation<sup>9</sup> campaign aims to address the need for greater participation among under-represented groups. They acknowledge that "the answer for these people is unlikely to be a single great idea" so their focus is on those activities which have wide appeal and are relatively easy for people to fit into their busy lives (eg swimming, running, cycling, outdoor activities, gym and fitness). This report will focus on the indoor activities from this list, ie swimming, and gym and fitness.

3.20. **The availability of quality facilities in places where people can access them easily is essential. This particularly includes co-located sports facilities and multi-sport facilities.**

3.21. The government's Sporting Future Strategy<sup>10</sup> acknowledges that good quality sporting infrastructure is essential to drive up participation. It suggests ways of achieving greater participation through quality facilities:

<sup>9</sup> Sport England (2016). Towards an Active Nation. <https://www.activehw.co.uk/uploads/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Cabinet Office (2015). Sporting Future: A new strategy for an active nation. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sporting-future-a-new-strategy-for-an-active-nation>



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- Co-locating sporting facilities with other services that people use like libraries, doctors' surgeries or community centres
- Focusing on the customer and their experience
- Providing artificial pitches
- Improving outdoor infrastructure like footpaths, pavements and parks
- Making better use of school facilities (and other public sector facilities)

3.22. Sport England's Towards an Active Nation Strategy<sup>11</sup> states that building the right things in the right places makes taking part in sport and physical activity a realistic option for many more people and leads to a better experience for those who are already engaged.

3.23. Sport England has taken the decision to increase their investment in their Strategic Facilities Fund to support long-term investment decisions by local authorities. They prioritise co-located facilities integrated with other community services and favour multi-sport solutions.

#### **4. Indoor sports facilities in Portsmouth**

##### **4.1. The impact of BH Live on facilities**

4.1.1. In 2016/17 the council went through a re-procurement exercise for the leisure management contract (which does not include the Pyramids), having terminated the contract with the previous supplier Broadwater Leisure. The successful bidder BH Live's offer represented a significantly better deal for the council.

4.1.2. In February 2017 BH Live began managing all the council's leisure facilities. Over the course of the following three years their revised pricing model has driven up membership by 66% and as part of the new contract an additional £1.2 million has been invested into the facilities. Participation is up across all 'dry' activities (ie not swimming pools).

4.1.3. The contact was re-negotiated in 2018, due to issues with affordability and the fact that the plan to expand the gym at Wimbledon Park Sports Centre could not go ahead. This significantly reduced the revenue contribution to PCC over the period of the contract (around £2.4 million over the remaining 8 years). However, the investment programme of approximately £1.2 million still went ahead and included the following:

- upgraded gym (and gym equipment) at the Mountbatten Centre
- reception redevelopment at the Mountbatten Centre
- a new café, soft-play and Clip-n-Climb attraction at Mountbatten Centre

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<sup>11</sup> Sport England (2016). Towards an Active Nation. <https://www.activehw.co.uk/uploads/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf>



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- new gymnastics flooring at the Gymnastics Centre
- investment in Charter Community Sports Centre and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre gyms

4.1.4. BH Live reviewed the pricing model following competitor benchmarking and reduced the monthly gym membership fee by around £10 per month from the start of the contract which increased members from circa 2700 in February 2017 to around 5200 in February 2020.

4.1.5. Other initiatives have delivered greater participation across most of the facilities

- Gymnastics Centre increased participation from 646 children to 1069
- Tennis Centre increased participation from 240 to 384
- Swimming memberships have increased from 1386 to 1594
- The exercise referral scheme has grown from 204 to over 360
- New wellbeing initiatives (eg Nordic-walking, COPD classes, cardiac referral classes) have generated over £1,000 per week casual income

4.1.6. Other commercial activity has generated greater revenue across the contract

- Retail sales increased from £12,000 per year to £54,000 per year
- Children's parties implemented across 4 venues with approximately 10-15 parties per weekend

## 4.2. Overview of facilities in Portsmouth

4.2.1. Portsmouth's Sports Facility Strategy identified two overarching principles that will guide decisions on future provision of sports facilities:

- Ensure all residents in all areas of Portsmouth have pay and play access to good quality local accessible and affordable provision
- Ensure that public money is invested strategically to ensure economic viability and sustainability of provision.

4.2.2. This will be achieved through:

- Ensuring that existing, and any new, sports facilities on education sites provide a balance of opportunities for community access - both pay and play and club use.
- Replacing and refurbishing ageing facilities where updated provision is required - and all new and refurbished provision should be designed and developed based on Sport England and NGB guidance and be fully inclusive
- Considering opportunities to rationalise provision where new, fit for purpose facilities can replace or improve existing buildings (but maintain at least current levels of provision in areas of undersupply)



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- Making better use of existing facilities
- Investing strategically in existing provision to improve quality
- Where possible, making facilities available closer to where people live, with a focus on improving access to multi-purpose halls

#### **4.3. Building condition surveys - specific areas of concern**

- 4.3.1. Structural surveys at Wimbledon Park Sports Centre since 2018 have concluded that the building is in poor condition due to corrosion to the steel frame and deterioration of the concrete panels. Without significant remedial work the building will have reached the end of its life by 2023. The estimated cost of the work required to extend the building's useful life is approximately £700,000.
- 4.3.2. Surveys of Eastney Swimming Pool reveal that the building is generally in poor condition with serious concerns about the roof. Significant works are required to extend the life of the building. The estimated cost of the required work is £850,000 (further investigations are underway and will report back soon).
- 4.3.3. A condition survey of the Pyramids in 2018 concluded that the building required £1.33 million of works to keep the building operating. These works are mostly related to the building fabric, and mechanical and electrical installations associated with the swimming pool.
- 4.3.4. The costs above (totalling £2,880,000) would, in the main, only address the structural or building fabric issues with the buildings to extend their lives. This would not contribute significantly to addressing the quality of the leisure offer or the customer experience which is generally not up to modern standards at these three sites.

### **5. The focus on swimming, and health and fitness (gyms)**

5.1. Having established that:

- the availability of quality facilities in places where people can access them easily is essential (see 3.4); and also that
- we should focus is on activities which have wide appeal and are relatively easy for people to fit into their lives (see 3.3); and also that
- Portsmouth has some indoor facilities that are low quality and expensive to maintain (see 4.2)

this report will now focus on swimming pools and health and fitness centres (gyms).

#### **5.2. Swimming pools**

- 5.2.1. Portsmouth currently has sufficient swimming pool space, but access to it is an issue due to quality issues of older facilities and a lack of pay and play access. This can be addressed by improving or replacing older facilities and working with



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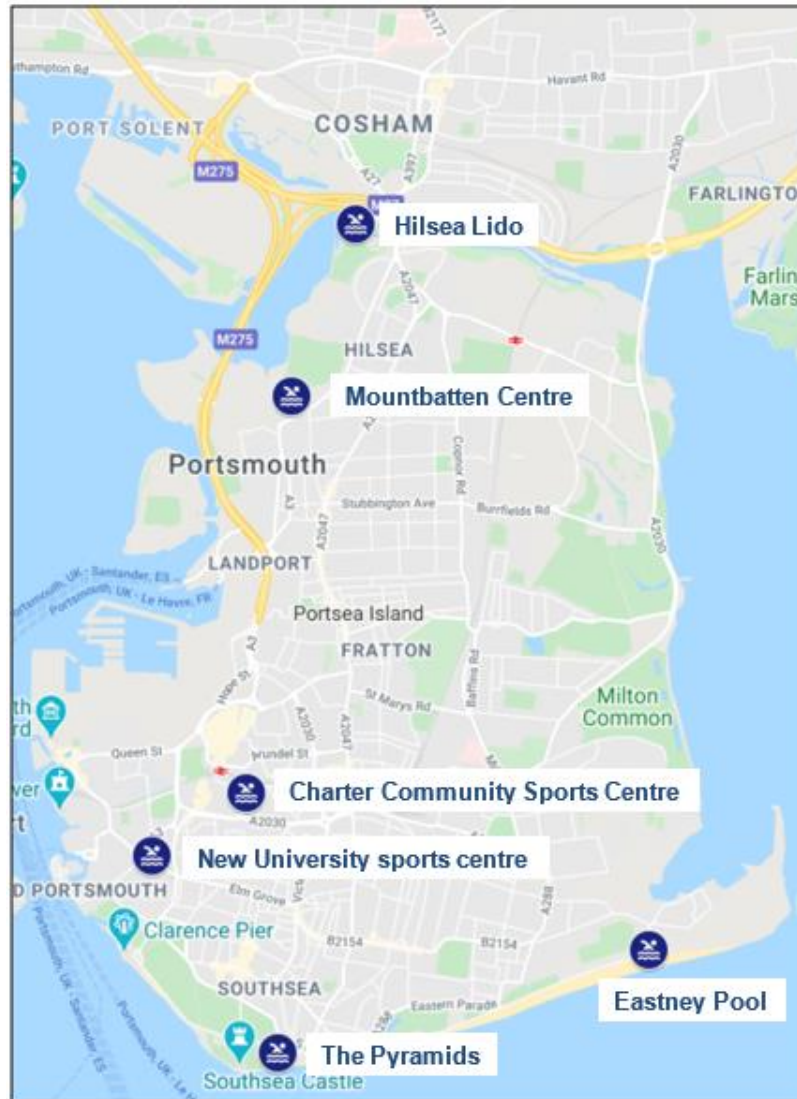
other providers to increase community pay and play access. A citywide approach to swimming club timetabling will contribute to improving access.

- 5.2.2. Participation levels are in decline but the arrival in 2021 of the new University of Portsmouth sports centre is an opportunity to take a strategic look at the provision of swimming in Portsmouth.
- 5.2.3. There are 18 swimming facilities in Portsmouth, but currently only 5 are available for pay and play access. Of the 5, Charter Community Sports Centre is not open during school hours and Hilsea Lido does not open all year round. The Pyramids swimming pool is unlike the rest as it does not fulfil a formal health and fitness purpose (due to its shape, and no lanes) and is mainly a leisure pool (although it does accommodate some swim lessons, and aqua fitness).

<b>Pay and play access facilities</b>	<b>Education sites with access for clubs / swim lessons</b>	<b>Member / commercial facilities</b>	<b>MOD (limited access)</b>
Mountbatten Centre	Redwood Park School	David Lloyd	HMS Temeraire
Charter Community Sports Centre *	St Edmunds School	Marriott Hotel	
Eastney Swimming Pool	College Park School	ROKO	
The Pyramids *	Mary Rose Academy	Holiday Inn Southsea	
Hilsea Lido *	University of Portsmouth Ravelin facility *	Royal Maritime Club	
		Village Hotel	
		Nuffield Health	



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Map 1 Strategic sized pools in Portsmouth (>160 m2)

5.2.4. According to the Sports Facility Strategy, which used the Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM), Portsmouth has sufficient pool space for its population when all the pools are taken into account. Access to a pool (and in particular of pay and play access) is more limited however. One factor is that due to the demographic profile of the city many residents are not able to afford to join commercial facilities. Another is that there are few formal community use agreements in place at, for example, educational facilities.

5.2.5. Recommendation R3 of the Sports Facility Strategy states that:

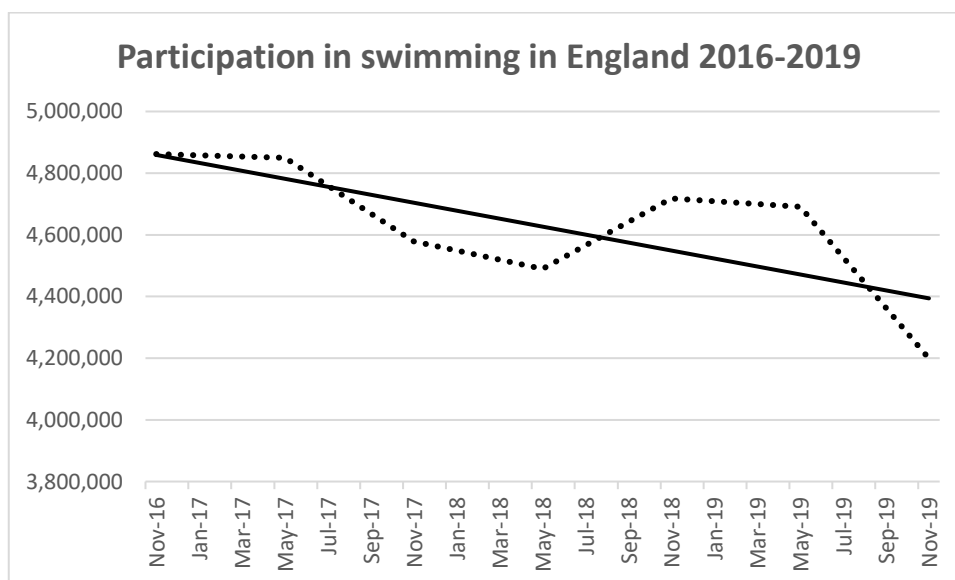
*"PCC and partners address the ... swimming pool provision in the city through a package of measures including considering options for replacement of older facilities; extension of community use agreements; widening pay and play access to commercial sites; and considering programming of current capacity to ensure it is used most effectively and with regard to needs of clubs."*





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- 5.2.6. Sport England's Swim Pilots Report<sup>12</sup> from 2018 found that participation increased by 14% and satisfaction increased by 10% when steps were taken to transform pools into 'community centres' by offering opportunities for people to be social, and by making staff more representative of the community and through volunteering opportunities. This approach also contributed to the delivery of local strategic priorities (eg health and wellbeing, community development). Increased revenues also followed.
- 5.2.7. The University of Portsmouth's new facility at Ravelin Park is due to open September 2021. The planning consent has a condition that a community use agreement with PCC must be agreed. It is expected that this will provide additional capacity for club use and lessons as well as opportunities for pay and play access, although this is still to be negotiated.
- 5.2.8. The arrival of the new University pool gives the opportunity for partnership working to take a new strategic look at the pool provision in the city and try to optimise access for clubs, swim lessons, exercise and casual use.
- 5.2.9. Participation in swimming nationally is in decline. Data from Sport England<sup>1314</sup> suggest declining participation year on year since 2005. The most recent data from the Active Lives Survey reveals approximately a 14% decrease in the 3 years to November 2019. The long term figures show a 24% decrease over the last 10 years.



<sup>12</sup> Sport England (2020), Transforming Swimming: What the swim pilots learnt. [https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/demographic-knowledge/popular-activities/swimming?section=research#what\\_works](https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/demographic-knowledge/popular-activities/swimming?section=research#what_works)

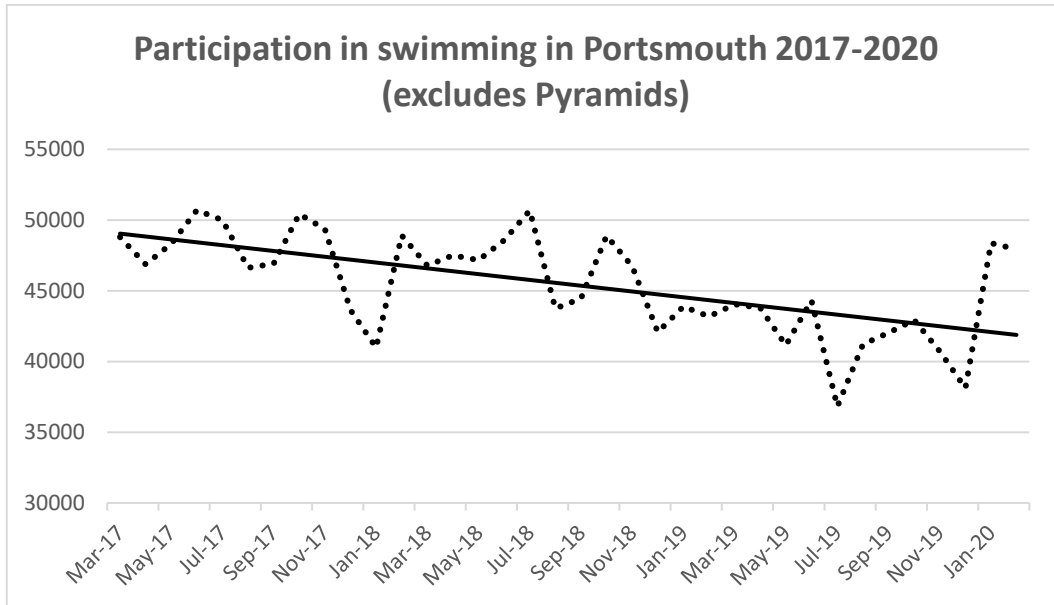
<sup>13</sup> Sport England Active People Surveys 2005-2016. <https://activepeople.sportengland.org/>

<sup>14</sup> Sport England Active Lives Surveys 2016-2019. <https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives>

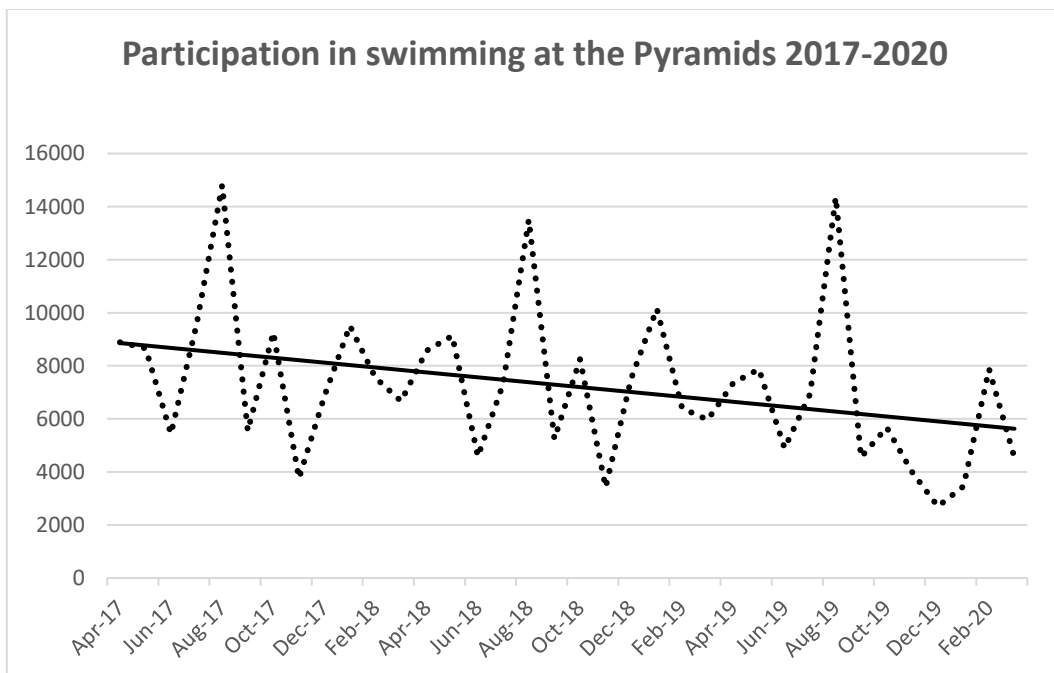


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5.2.10. This decline is also seen in Portsmouth over a similar timescale and to a similar degree. Approximately 14% over the 3 years to January 2020 excluding the Pyramids.



5.2.11. Participation data for the Pyramids show a steeper decline (roughly 33% over the 3 years to March 2020) at the Pyramids compared with the rest of the BH Live operated swimming pools in Portsmouth. A strong school holiday peak can be observed.





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5.2.12. Given the need to improve access, and in particular to the under-represented groups identified in section 3.3, this report will focus on the pay and play swimming pools as being the most likely to be able to address problems of access to opportunities for physical activity.

<b>Pay and play pool</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Mountbatten Centre	In good condition. Well used.
Charter Community Sports Centre	In good condition. Continues to provide community access. PCC not responsible for buildings maintenance.
Eastney Swimming Pool	In poor condition. Requires expensive repairs to continue operating (£850,000 estimated). Stable usage, but well under capacity. Disability access not compliant.
The Pyramids	Condition good but deteriorating. Requires £1.33 million of works to continue operating. Rapidly declining participation in leisure swimming.
Hilsea Lido	Average condition. Limited opening due to outdoor pool PCC not responsible for buildings maintenance

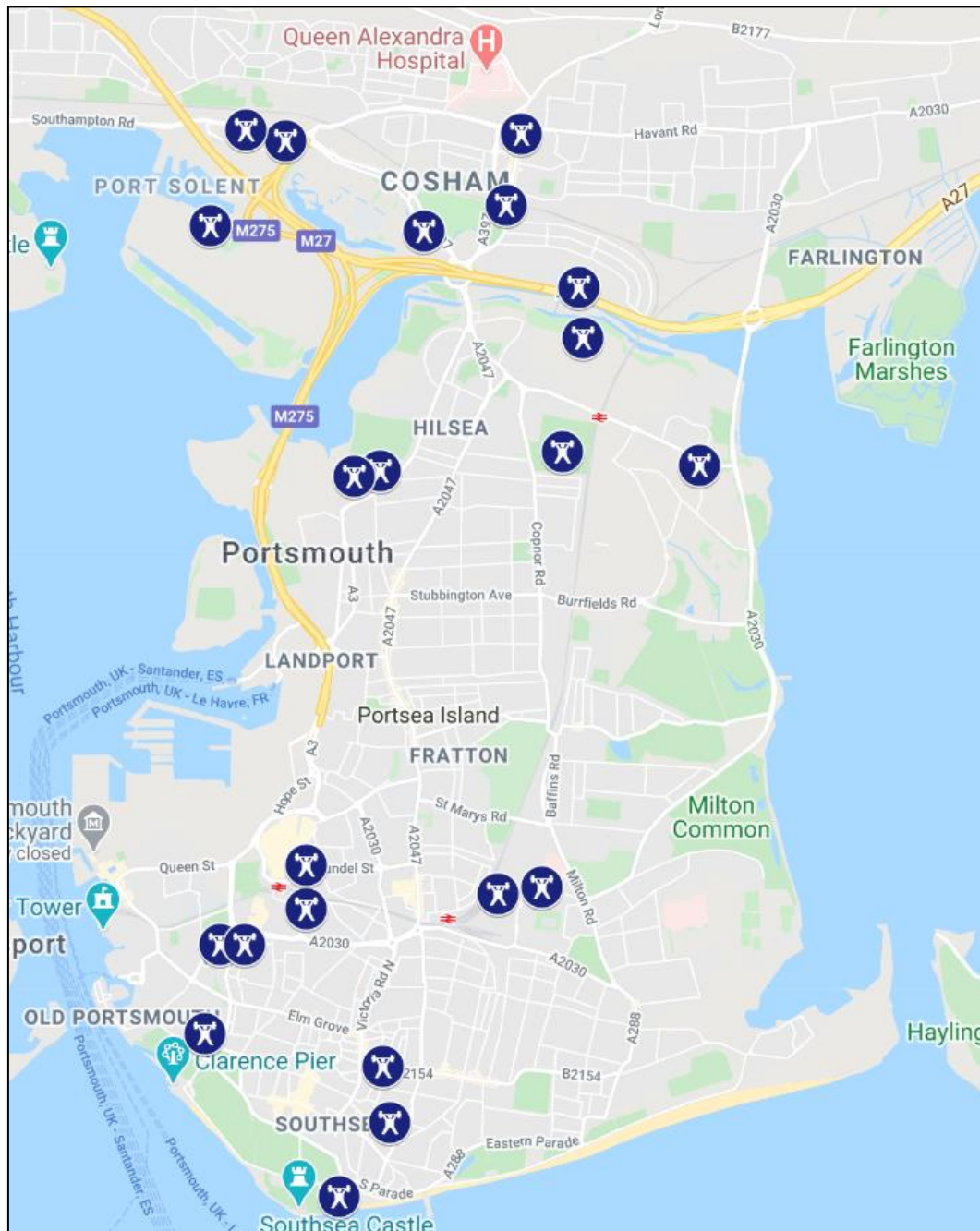
In section 6, this report will focus on The Pyramids and in section 7, Eastney Swimming Pool.

### 5.3. Health and Fitness Centres

5.3.1. Portsmouth has 23 general health and fitness suites (and several more specialist gyms - eg bodybuilding, dance focused etc). Most require some form of payment or membership. There are, however, some community access pay and play gyms at community centres (eg Fratton, John Pounds).



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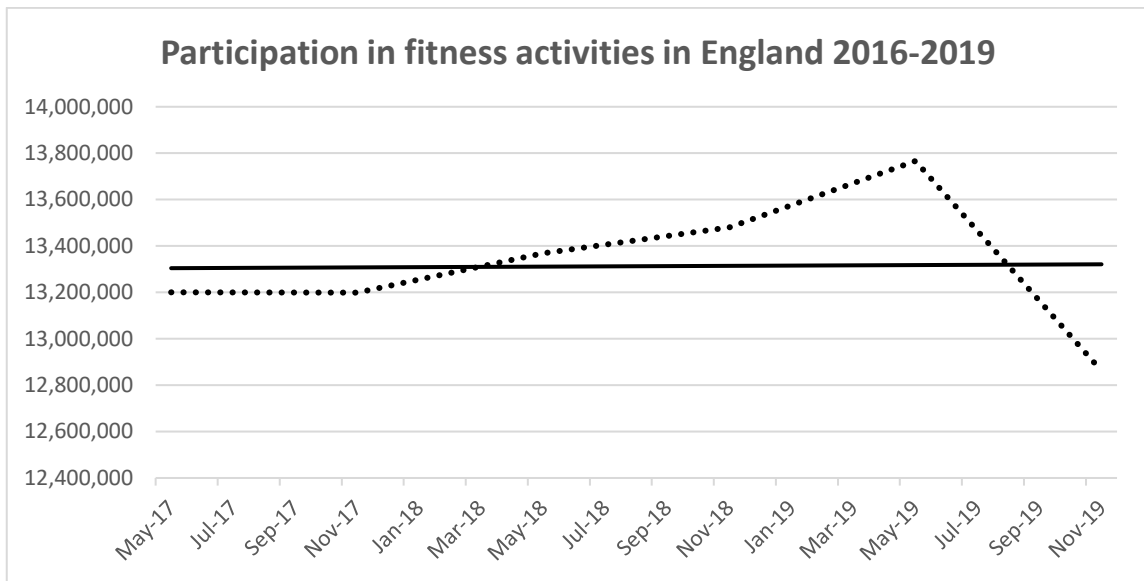
Map 2 Non-specialist health and fitness suites in Portsmouth

- 5.3.2. The University of Portsmouth's new facility at Ravelin Park is due to open September 2021. The planning consent has a condition that a community use agreement with PCC must be agreed. The University expects that there will be a significant degree of community membership of the health and fitness suite. Community use needs to include the sports hall and swimming pool to be meaningful.
- 5.3.3. Along with swimming, health and fitness activities demand an indoor space to fully meet demand. Fitness activities are the fourth most popular form of exercise in

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England (1. walking, 2. cycling, 3. running, 4. fitness activities, 5. swimming and 6. football)<sup>15</sup>

5.3.4. Sport England records participation in fitness activities (exercise machines, fitness classes, interval sessions and weights sessions). Whilst the last survey (12 months to November 2019) shows a decline it is not known whether this is significant, and this was the last survey before the Covid-19 pandemic so subsequent surveys will look very different. Up to the last survey participation was reasonably stable (or even rising) in England.

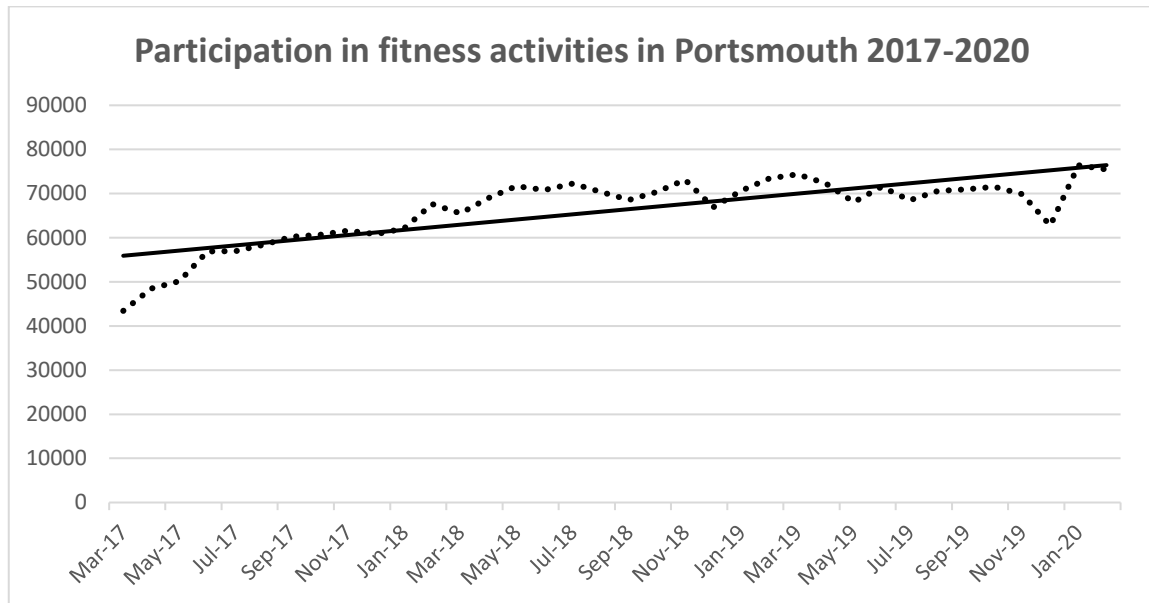


5.3.5. In Portsmouth participation levels are growing, bucking the national trend. Participation in Portsmouth (this data excludes the Pyramids) is driven by the gym at the Mountbatten Centre. The gyms at Charter Community Sports Centre and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre only contribute 1% to the total. The new pricing model introduced by BH Live has driven up participation levels.

<sup>15</sup> Sport England (2020). Popular Activities. <https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/demographic-knowledge/popular-activities>



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#### 5.4. Strategic options appraisal of swimming, and health and fitness

5.4.1. The pressing issues that are emerging from the work to date are, in summary:

- The Pyramids requires £1.33 million to continue operating, but that would not significantly change the customer experience of a tired leisure pool with steeply declining customers, a small gym and an underused event space.
- Eastney Swimming Pool requires an estimated £850,000 to continue operating, but that would not change the customer experience of an old facility in poor condition, with low numbers of users and which is non-compliant in terms of disability access and safeguarding of children. Further surveys have taken place and will report soon.
- Wimbledon Park Sports Centre requires an estimated £700,000 to continue operating, but that would not change the customer experience of an ageing building, with a gym that is too small to be an attractive offer to improve participation.

5.4.2. In 2019 Strategic Leisure Ltd were commissioned to produce a report that followed on from the 2017 Sports Facility Strategy and which looked at the options available to the council regarding its sports facilities.

5.4.3. The report made reference to the key issues affecting the city's sports facilities including age and condition of buildings, accessibility issues, declining participation levels (particularly at the Pyramids) and also the wider social and demographic factors at play in the health and physical activity agenda.

5.4.4. It concluded that:

*"It is clear that there is a consensus that the time is now opportune to consider all options for the future provision of the City's ageing sport and leisure facilities, and also that taking a pro-active approach to change now will be beneficial in*



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*the long term. Ensuring the right facilities are provided in the right place now will not only ensure operational sustainability but contribute to regeneration and economic agendas in the City"<sup>16</sup>*

5.4.5. The table below summarised the options that were considered:

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
Status Quo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Close Pyramids</li> <li>2.Close Eastney</li> <li>3.Close Wimbledon Park SC</li> <li>4.Do not replace</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Close Eastney and Pyramids</li> <li>2.Develop one new facility – swim and fitness</li> <li>3.Invest in Wimbledon Park SC</li> </ol>	<p>Retain Pyramids (leisure pool and venue)</p> <p>Close Eastney</p> <p>Close Wimbledon Park S C</p> <p>Develop one new small pool and dry facility- location to serve existing catchment areas of the above</p>	<p>Retain Pyramids (venue only)</p> <p>Close Eastney</p> <p>Close Wimbledon Park S C</p> <p>Develop one new wet and dry facility- location to serve existing catchment areas of the above</p>	<p>Close Pyramids</p> <p>Close Wimbledon Park S C</p> <p>Retain Eastney</p> <p>Develop one new wet and dry facility- location to serve existing catchment areas of the above</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Close Eastney</li> <li>2.Close Wimbledon Park S C</li> <li>3.Close Pyramids</li> <li>4.Develop one new wet and dry facility- location to serve existing catchment areas of the above</li> </ol>

5.4.6. The options appraisal concluded that option 7 represented the best one for the council to pursue (ie close Pyramids, close Eastney Swimming Pool, close Wimbledon Park Sports Centre and develop a new 'wet and dry' facility in a similar location).

5.4.7. The report summarised the key issue for Portsmouth:

*"That replacing ageing facilities with more modern provision will have an impact in 5 key areas:*

- *Reduction in capital liability*
- *Increased throughput*
- *Increased revenue generation*
- *Ability to better address and deliver the health and well-being priorities in the city*
- *Deliver better long-term value from capital investment*

*"In addition, strategic replacement of ageing facilities is likely to create increased partnership opportunities with organisations in the city who also provide sports facilities, or who have the capacity, or aspiration, to do so."*

5.4.8. Wimbledon Park Sports Centre is not within the scope of this report as it does not have a capital allocation to provide an update on, but its closure is not a

<sup>16</sup> Strategic Leisure Ltd (2019). Leisure Facilities Options Appraisal.



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consideration at this point. Any decision on its future will be taken in consultation with its user groups. It is clear, however, that it will not be able to continue in the short term without significant investment.

## **6. The Pyramids**

### **6.1. Summary of recent issues**

- 6.1.1. BH Live took on the running of the Pyramids in September 2013. For the last six and a half years BH Live has operated the centre at a loss with a cumulative operating loss of around £1.8 million over this period.
- 6.1.2. The council is responsible for building maintenance, which has been significant due to the requirement to meet the repair costs on the majority of areas after the flood incidents of 2014 and 2015. The structure of the building remains in relatively good condition.
- 6.1.3. Since 2013 the council has spent a total of £2.2 million on maintenance at the Pyramids. This does not include the majority of the spend on works associated with the flood incidents as these were largely recovered by insurance claims.
- 6.1.4. Since 1 October 2019, under the open book agreement with BH Live following the end of their contract, the council has also been responsible for the trading deficit at the Pyramids. This is approximately £65,000 per month (due mainly to the swimming pool, and to some extent the events programme, however the gym remains profitable). The configuration of the pool (its shape and the waterslides) means that many more lifeguards are needed to operate it safely than at a standard swimming pool. This adds significantly to costs, as does the consumption of utilities and maintenance of plant and machinery required to heat the water and operate the wave pool and the waterslides. The level of subsidy needed to keep the Pyramids open as a leisure pool amounts to around £8 per swim.
- 6.1.5. The 2018 condition survey revealed £1.33 million would be required over the next 3-5 years to continue operating (and a further £621k over longer timescales giving a 10-year cost of £2 million). Of the £1.33 million only 8% was on structural issues. The bulk of the cost would be replacement or major refurbishment of mechanical plant and electrical installations (30%) and works needed to the fabric of the building such as relaying flooring extensively, and redecorating most areas (62%).
- 6.1.6. To this end £1.4 million was allocated for refurbishment of the Pyramids. However once complete the building would be essentially the same with little change to the customer experience aside from the redecoration. There is no evidence that swimming participation would rise to levels where it would be at a minimum operationally breakeven and from 1 April 2021 there is no budget provision for subsidising ongoing trading losses. Swimming continues to decline in popularity locally and nationally, and leisure pools (ie with no lane swimming) are declining more steeply.





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- 6.1.7. In this context even a full refurbishment of the Pyramids (ie a £4 million investment to renovate the customer facing elements as well as the essential works) is likely to see a 10-15% increase in swimming numbers. A doubling of swimming participation, even if this were conceivable, would only halve the subsidy required.
- 6.1.8. The conclusion therefore, is that retaining a leisure swimming pool at the Pyramids (either by addressing the essential building requirements to allow its reopening; or by a larger renovation project to improve the customer experience) does not represent a sufficient change to the Pyramids' offer to reverse the strong national trend away from leisure swimming and restore the centre to profitability. Alternative options must be considered.

**6.2. Alternatives to renovation**

- 6.2.1. The gym at the Pyramids is profitable and performs well despite being relatively small (approximately 80 stations compared with 150 at the Mountbatten Centre, 220 at Pure Gym, 175 at ROKO). It suffers from a relative lack of space for group exercise, something that if addressed would have the potential to draw more members (and particularly female members<sup>17</sup>).
- 6.2.2. The situation in 2019/20 financial year was that the Pyramids made an operating loss of £700,000. With an increasingly unpopular swim offer, an under-utilised events space and a gym that is not large enough to compete effectively with others in the city, the centre has no likelihood of a return to profitability, unless the fundamental cause of the operational loss is addressed - the pool.
- 6.2.3. In response to this situation BH Live proposed a reconfiguration of the Pyramids which would remove the swimming pool and replace it with an indoor adventure centre (comprising a mix of soft play, trampolines, and climbing attractions) in the pool hall. Under the proposal the gym would be expanded and take over the plaza events space. The remaining events space in the glasshouse would be retained. This would allow each operation (indoor adventure, gym, events) to have its own separate entrance to improve the customer experience.
- 6.2.4. The pool hall would be segmented into various zones aimed at different age groups. Important to the overall provision is an appealing café with a seating and table area for at least 250. Party rooms are required with the opportunity to expand subject to need. The mix of elements (play, climb, trampoline) is presented as an optimal balance between commercial performance and maintaining an attractive offer for as wide a range of age groups as possible, to keep the Pyramids as a family attraction.
- 6.2.5. The new gym would include several zones incorporating cardio, strength, start up and functional areas and three dedicated studios (main impact studio, wellness

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<sup>17</sup> Sport England (2017) This Girl Can programme. <https://www.thisgirlcan.co.uk/activities/group-fitness/>

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mind and body studio, group cycling studio) and new male and female changing areas. The new gym is anticipated to drive memberships up by 400 to 600.

- 6.2.6. This proposal maintains the family offer at the Pyramids. The indoor adventure centre provides activities for a wide range of age groups up to 13/14 and beyond (the trampoline and ninja warrior elements appeal to older children). The Pyramids gym currently runs 14+ gym sessions every weekday evening and at weekends. These are currently well attended and these sessions would continue in the new fitness suite and additional more targeted group exercise sessions would be offered (junior cycle/circuits for example).
- 6.2.7. Crucially BH Live's proposal is projected to return the centre to an operating profit after its first year of operation. The council is not able to continue subsidising the facility in its existing configuration.
- 6.2.8. BH Live's proposal has been costed at £2.6 million. There is already £1.4 million in the capital budget for the renovation of the Pyramids meaning that an additional £1.2 million must be identified for the project.



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6.2.9. Summary of options

Option	Pros	Cons	Costs	10 year cost
<b>BH Live's proposal.</b> Convert pool to indoor adventure centre plus convert Plaza to large gym.	Keeps building open for 10 more years. Affordable within existing capital budget Returns the centre to profitability (or break even) Maximises gym offer.	Loss of pool and events space.	£2.5 million Plus £400,000 per year maintenance (likely to be less) Plus potential for income to the council	£6.5 million
<b>Only do essential works</b> Re-open and proceed with £1.33 million essential works (mainly not customer facing) plus £620,000 works in year 5-10.	Keeps the building open for 10 more years	Does not address causes for trading deficit (ie failing pool offer) There is no budget for ongoing subsidy. Further capital bid required for years 5-10. Does not maximise profitable gym offer	£2 million Plus £400,000 per year maintenance Plus £780,000 per year trading deficit	£13.8 million
<b>Essential works plus full refurbish</b> As above, with renovation of customer facing elements	Keeps the building open for 10 years Improves the customer experience. Likely to attract customers back to the pool.	Not currently affordable. Likely 10-15% increase in swimming would not have a significant impact on the trading deficit.	£4.0 million Plus £400,000 per year maintenance Plus £680,000 per year trading deficit (estimate)	£14.8 million
<b>Close the Pyramids entirely</b>	Cheapest option	Total loss of the leisure centre. Doesn't	£500,000 (demolition)	£700,000



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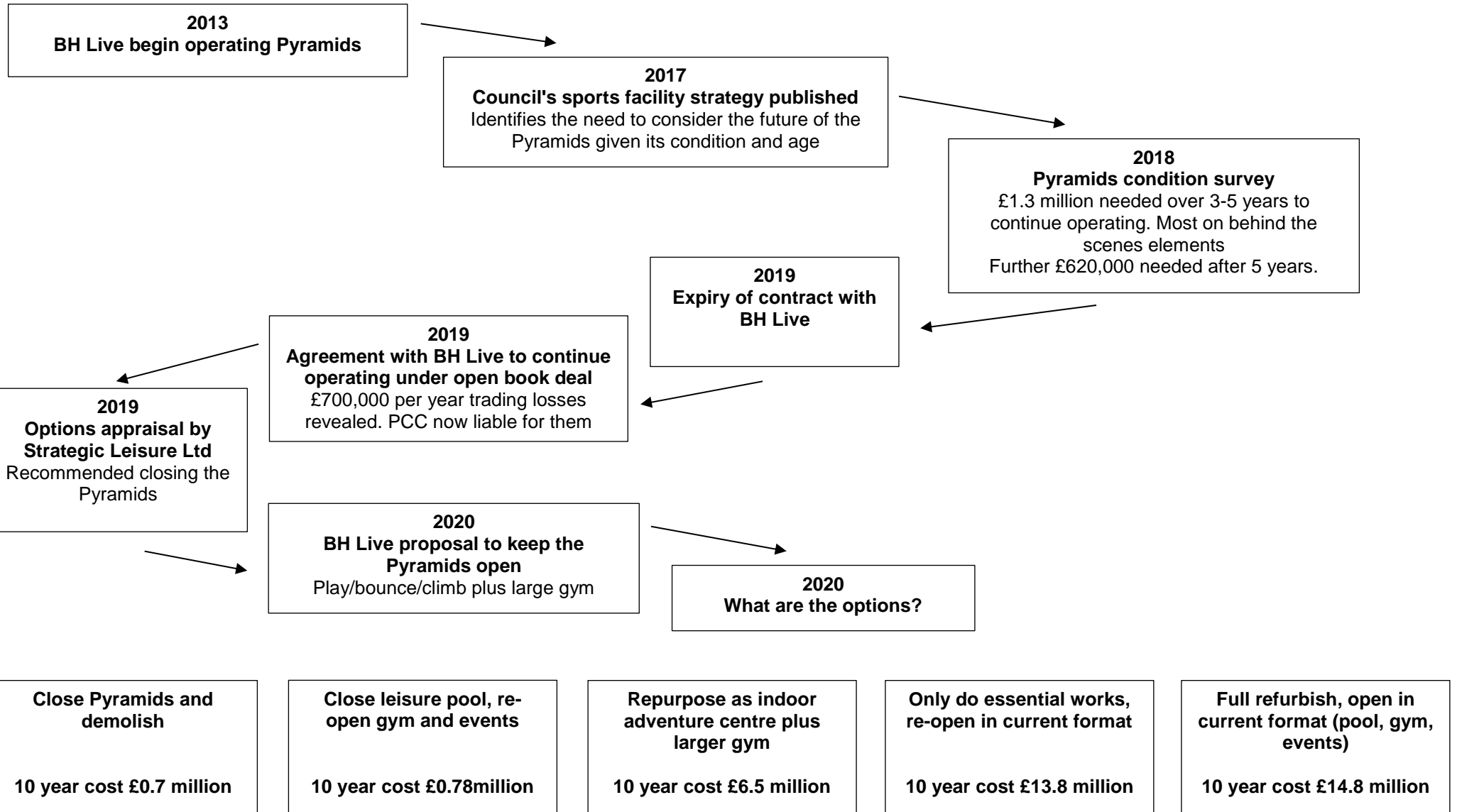
Demolish and return to open space		address strategic need for sports and leisure facilities.	Plus £20,000 per year grounds maintenance	
<b>Close the pool only</b> Retain the gym and events space	Cheapest option Eliminates the main cause of the trading deficit Keeps the building open (but only part)	Net loss of leisure facility to the city. Doesn't maximise the gym offer.	For the purposes of this appraisal a 60:40 split of the essential works is assumed (60% pool, 40% non-pool) £780,000 Assumes break even on remaining offer.	£780,000



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6.3. Summary of events from 2013

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#### **6.4. Market testing and financial appraisal**

- 6.4.1. Industry-level market analysis suggests that the bulk of growth in 2018/19 was on the 'dry side' expansion (ie not swimming pools). Market analysis also reveals that leisure centre revenues are increasingly driven by sports and fitness activities.<sup>18</sup>
- 6.4.2. The leisure industry began to consider its response to coronavirus pandemic early on and emerging strategies saw it as an opportunity to address underlying issues. In the words of one sport and leisure consultant: "Through a clear post COVID-19 strategy, some councils may not reopen some of those poorly-performing and ageing facilities, but instead use the crisis to reimagine a compelling, affordable locally co-produced alternative."<sup>19</sup>
- 6.4.3. A market testing exercise was conducted by council officers with specialist play and trampoline suppliers. This concluded that that the proposed facility mix in the play side of the proposal was an optimal one which would be likely to be successful (ie the right blend of trampolines, climbing activity, soft play, café and party rooms).
- 6.4.4. An initial financial assessment of the proposal to reconfigure and improve the Pyramids offer has been undertaken and a full financial appraisal of the proposed project is now taking place.
- 6.4.5. This will include an assessment of the capital costs for the reconfiguration and improvement works which will require additional capital resources of £1.2 million to those already approved (£1.4 million). This funding has been identified following a review of the existing capital programme.
- 6.4.6. In addition to this, a review of the revised operating costs and revenue projections provided by BH Live as part of their proposal is being carried out to assess whether the revised proposal will provide at least a breakeven position for the council in the short term.

#### **6.5. Wider implication of the repurposing of the Pyramids**

- 6.5.1. Investment in the Pyramids is likely to benefit the wider seafront offer and is consistent with the recent investment into the D-Day Story and the LCT landing craft nearby.
- 6.5.2. The seafront has seen a range of major investment and improvements in recent years with the opening of The D-Day Story, re-opening of South Parade Pier, the arrival of LCT 7074 (opening this autumn) and improvements to the public realm in the Brian Kidd Way area. In addition a range of new hospitality businesses have opened up including The Courtyard at Southsea Castle, The Briny and Watkins

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<sup>18</sup> Mintel (2019). Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools - UK - September 2019

<sup>19</sup> A New Future (April 2020). The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy. <https://www.slc.uk.com/wp-content/uploads/A-New-Future-HCM.pdf>



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and Faux. Investment in the Pyramids will undoubtedly add to the wider seafront offer and help to extend the visitor season in this area into the shoulder months.

- 6.5.3. In its current format and condition (in the 12 months to February 2020, ie pre-Covid19) the Pyramids consumed over 6 million kWh of energy. Roughly 70% of this is from gas. Without a large pool of water to heat, gas consumption is likely to halve. This will mean that once repurposed the Pyramids is projected to reduce its carbon footprint by at least 30% from 1,300 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> to around 900 tonnes.

## 6.6. Conclusion

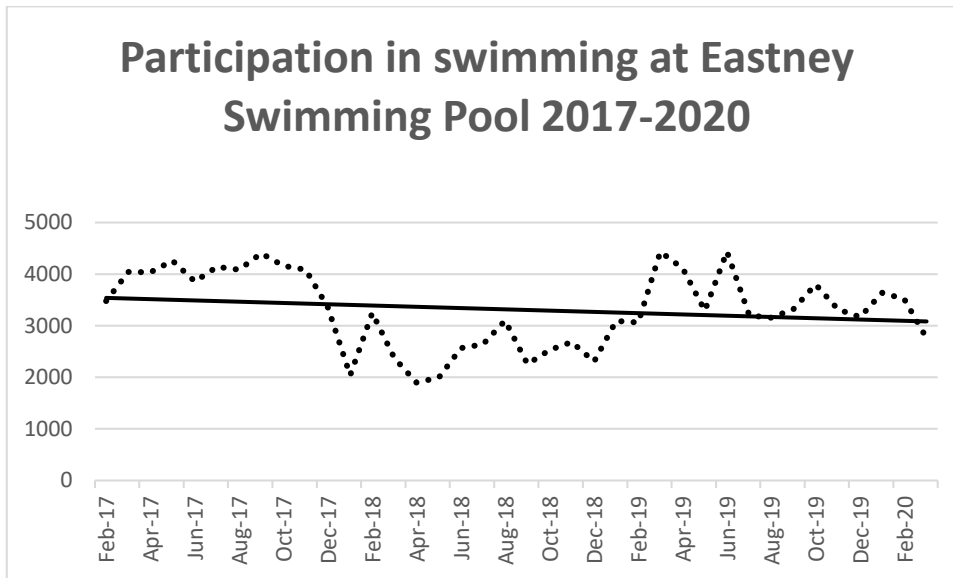
- 6.6.1. The current situation at the Pyramids results in a significant ongoing operational loss from the swimming pool and a gym that does not fully meet the latent demand in the area in order to compete with the market. The only affordable options available to the council are to accept BH Live's proposal or to close the leisure pool or the whole centre. BH Live's proposal is the only affordable option which retains the whole building in full use. Consequently officers are proceeding with the BH Live proposal.
- 6.6.2. Whilst this does represent a short term loss of swimming capacity in the city, the University pool due to open in September 2021 will help to redress the balance (a community use agreement is a planning condition). Swimming remains a key focus sport for the council. As part of the council's agreement with BH Live they are required to employ a swimming development officer to deliver a co-ordinated city wide learn to swim programme and to ensure close links with Portsmouth Northsea Swimming Club and other clubs.
- 6.6.3. The council continues to offer free swimming to children under 12, and has done since 2009. This helps to develop habits of physical activity at an early age, and provides an important life skill. State funded schools will continue to benefit from free swimming lessons at the Mountbatten Centre during term time, and discounts will continue to apply to under 18s and residents with a leisure card (those on means tested benefits are eligible).
- 6.6.4. The swimming pool at Charter Community Sports Centre has been available under a community use agreement since it was built in 2000. This agreement had been due to expire in 2020, but Ark Charter Academy have agreed to renew it to continue public access to the sports facility. This agreement will guarantee the availability of publically accessible swimming close to the city centre.

## 7. Eastney Swimming Pool

- 7.1.1. Eastney Swimming Pool is a small stand-alone community pool built in 1904. It is used for children's swimming lessons (32% of current use) and adult users (predominantly older people) (68%).
- 7.1.2. Usage at Eastney Swimming Pool is fairly stable, but is only around 50% of capacity. As a stand-alone site there is no wider provision to draw greater usage (eg a gym).



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- 7.1.3. The building is in poor condition. The operating costs of the building are increasing due to its design and condition, and levels of use. Disabled access is inadequate, changing provision does not address safeguarding guidance, the on-site car parking is very limited, and the site is not adequately served by public transport.
- 7.1.4. At present, forecasts due to the Covid-19 restriction identify that the facility potentially requires an ongoing operational subsidy of between £100,000 and £150,000 per year.
- 7.1.5. A recent condition survey estimated £850,000 of essential work required in the next 3-7 years including the need to undertake a detailed structural investigation of the roof structure which has been identified as being in a poor condition. External consultants have recently assessed the condition and a report is due shortly. This will allow a series of options to be considered, depending on the extent of any works required which may include renovation, rebuilding or even re-provision at an alternative site nearby (if available), depending on what the condition survey shows.
- 7.1.6. Officers may be able to provide a verbal update at the cabinet member's meeting when this report is considered on 16 October.

.....  
 Signed by:  
**Stephen Baily**  
 Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Appendices:**  
 None

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**





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The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
Portsmouth City Council Sports Facility Strategy 2017-2034	<a href="https://bit.ly/3nhCfn1">https://bit.ly/3nhCfn1</a>

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Signed by:

**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**

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# Agenda Item 7



## THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

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<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	16 October 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection
<b>Report by:</b>	Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All

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### 1. Requested by

- 1.1 This report was requested by the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development.

### 2. Purpose of the report

- 2.1 To update the Cabinet Member on the move of the 'You Don't Know Sherlock Holmes, Yet' exhibition from Portsmouth Museum to the Third Floor of the Central Library.
- 2.2 To show how the Conan Doyle Collection Study Packs and social media engagement have been used during the lockdown period to engage with a wider audience and more volunteers.
- 2.3 To outline the continuation and adaptation of programming under the City of Stories project within the current Covid19 restrictions.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection - Lancelyn Green Bequest is the tangible result of Richard Lancelyn Green's lifelong interest in Conan Doyle and his work. The Collection testifies to the worldwide interest in Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes over the last century and to the wide range of Conan Doyle's interests.

### 4. You Don't Know Sherlock, Yet exhibition move

- 4.1 The 'You Don't Know Sherlock, Yet' exhibition at Portsmouth Museum infrastructure was moved and re-installed into the Third Floor Central Library just before lockdown in March. There will be facsimiles instead of real archives due to the environmental factors of the space and these have been produced and re-installed ready for the beginning of September.



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Due to the current hygiene and cleaning rota within the café, the interactives will not be re-installed until it is feasible to do so.

- 4.2 This new exhibition will now be referred to as 'Holmes at Home' in its new location around the Third Floor café and communal space.
- 4.3 We are exploring options for an online launch of 'Holmes at Home' rather than a physical one that will go showcase the collection in more depth, such as a talk through and show of the original 'Beeton's Christmas Annual: A Study in Scarlet'.

## 5. **Conan Doyle Collection Resources**

- 5.1 Throughout the last ten years, the Conan Doyle Collection has amassed many resources and activities through all the different projects delivered in Portsmouth, gained through projects like the HLF funded Sharing Sherlock, the HLF funded RNIB Sensing Culture project and the recent ACE funded City of Stories project. Some of these resources have been invaluable during the Covid19 lockdown.
- 5.2 A range of Study Packs for key stage 1 - 4 were produced from the HLF Sharing Sherlock project and other resources. In the early days of lockdown, these were emailed out to all schools via the School Library Service and also advertised on the Conan Doyle and Libraries social media pages. There were 30 direct requests, with many of these people sharing them with others through group and other school networks.

## 6. **Volunteers**

- 6.1 The Conan Doyle Collection has a long history of working with volunteers, and the Covid19 pandemic has been no barrier to this continuing. During lockdown we have taken on two new volunteers - both young women are between education courses. Using the many resources collated over the years along with their own research, they have been writing and devising adult study packs for use by vulnerable adults. They include text on a specific topic along with further reading/website link lists, crosswords and puzzles. When completed, these will be sent to any vulnerable adults wishing to use them and afterwards with other community groups. There has also been further cross service working with links made with the vulnerable adults who volunteer at the Waterfront Garden Centre.
- 6.2 One volunteer who only started as a social media volunteer in January 2020 has been on hand virtually from home, posting onto all the social media platforms throughout lockdown, and still continues to do so. By following the Conan Doyle social media marketing strategy, we have seen an increase in visits to the website by 45%. <https://www.visitportsmouth.co.uk/conandoyle>. These hits were mainly to past exhibition pages promoted on Facebook, showing that there is a real interest in the actual collection items.



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**7. City of Stories**

7.1 The ACE funded City of Stories project now has an extension to April 2021 due to Covid19. The final projects and delivery has changed, and we are now in the process of setting up a virtual Sherlock dance project with Portsmouth's young people, inspired by dance images from the collection. We will also be looking to develop an online 'create your own comic book' workshop too, to further promote the *'Mr Doyle Presents A Study in Sherlock'* graphic novel.

The celebratory event we had wished to have to mark the end of the City of Stories project is currently being adapted into a celebratory film, which we anticipate will be a celebration of all aspects of the City of Stories project of which the work around the Conan Doyle Collection was an integral part.

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Signed by:  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:**

None

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

.....

Signed by:  
**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**

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# Agenda Item 8



Portsmouth  
CITY COUNCIL

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1

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting
<b>Subject:</b>	Hotwalls Studios Update: <i>Pause. Reflect. Create</i> Project We Believe Arts Trail Business Support to Hotwalls Studios artists
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	16 October 2020
<b>Report by:</b>	Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services
<b>Wards affected:</b>	St Thomas

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### 1 Requested by

- 1.1 This report was requested by the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development.

### 2 Purpose of the report

- 2.1 To outline to the Cabinet Member the funding secured from Arts Council England Covid-19 Emergency Fund and the use of the funds for the Hotwalls Studios *Pause. Reflect. Create* project.
- 2.2 To update and summarise the involvement and support given by the Hotwalls Studios to the Portsmouth Creates *We Believe* project.
- 2.3 To update and summarise the business support given to the Hotwalls Studios artists at the start and during the nationwide lockdown period.

### 3 Pause. Reflect. Create.

- 3.1 In March 2020, as the Governments national lockdown was put in place creative businesses across the country, including the Hotwalls Studios artists, were thrown into a situation where they were unable to work from their studios to either create work, finish commissioned pieces or create income from visitors. The direct effect of this caused these creative SMEs an immediate halt and in some cases a reduction in income. Through this time the Hotwalls Studios team worked with the artists, internal and external parties to navigate the areas of both business and financial support available to creative practitioners.
- 3.2 As Portsmouth City Council tenants the Hotwalls Studios artists were able to apply for some support through the Councils rent deferral scheme. However as tenants that



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are on short one year leases with monthly rent terms this support unfortunately was not beneficial in most of the studio artists. This is when the Hotwalls Studios team looked outside of the council for further financial support for our artists.

- 3.3 In response to the Covid-19 crisis Arts Council England reallocated their funding support to their Covid-19 Emergency Support Fund announcing £160 million emergency response package to support individuals and organisations across the cultural sector. The Hotwalls Studios team identified this as the best fund to apply to for direct financial support to our artists.
- 3.4 In May a cross service team including the Hotwalls Studios team, Finance Officers and the Cultural Projects and Development Officer developed a successful bid for £15,000 for the *Pause. Reflect. Create* project. The funding allows Portsmouth City Council to fund 21 micro commissions to each Hotwalls Studios artist and purchase a small amount of equipment to be able to display the work in the Round Tower once the project was complete.
- 3.5 The *Pause. Reflect. Create* project aimed to give a small but much needed amount of financial support directly to the Hotwalls Studios artists and to create a body of work, firstly reflecting on the effect of Covid-19 for creative practitioners and secondly a social commentary of effects on Portsmouth through artistic practice.
- 3.6 The project is designed to be shared digitally across the Hotwalls Studios online platforms as the individual pieces of work are created. The digital content varies from artist and specialism but include images, pre-recorded and live videos and artist Q&A sessions.
- 3.7 Currently, the online delivery programme is a quarter of its way through with healthy engagement. The current outcomes from the digital outreach for *Pause. Reflect. Create* have included an increase in saved and shared posts. The average post has had double the usual outreach of similar posts online, and has expanded the audience who generally engage with posts from the Hotwalls Studios. The increase in saved posts is promising for future business prospects for the artists.
- 3.8 Once the project is completed it will culminate in an exhibition both virtually and physically. Initially this exhibition was planned for November 2020 but in light of the changes to social distancing guidelines our revised timetable for this is now March 2021. The body of work will then move to the Portsmouth Museum Service Covid-19 collection creating a legacy for the Hotwalls Studios artists and the City.

## **4 We Believe Arts Trail**

- 4.1 The Hotwalls Studios and the Business Support Team supported Portsmouth Creates to deliver the *We Believe* arts trail project which ran across 6 weeks in August and early September 2020. The project led by Portsmouth Creates, aimed to provide small pots of monetary support to freelance artists that had fallen through the gaps to qualify for financial support from the various Government Covid-19 schemes in place.
- 4.2 Portsmouth Creates developed a successful £12,000 Portsmouth Crowdfunder online campaign, with Portsmouth City Council match funding £5,000 towards the





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final target. This project supported 20 local freelance artists who were granted micro commissions for artwork which became a three part arts trail in parks and open spaces across the City, in Old Portsmouth, Milton and part of Southsea Seafront.

- 4.3 Portsmouth City Council provided over 60 poster cases and 11 entrance to the city poster sites that were empty due to businesses not advertising due to the effects of Covid-19, to display the artwork and advertise the trail. This use of poster cases not only visually improved areas of the City, but was an opportunity for artists to increase their exposure to a wider audience as well as encouraging Portsmouth residents to be active by walking or cycling these trails whilst taking daily exercise.
- 4.4 This project also gave Portsmouth residents that do not usually engage with cultural activities access to artwork across their City. The artwork will become part of the Portsmouth museum Covid-19 collection as a legacy and commentary on life in Portsmouth during the pandemic.
- 4.5 There are initial plans for the Hotwalls Studios to support the project further by housing an exhibition of the artwork at an event in The Round Tower making it accessible for those that were unable to visit the trails. The artworks currently can be viewed at the *We Create* market events held at Handley's Corner every second weekend of each month through until December 2020

## **5 Business Support to Hotwalls Studio artists in response to the Covid-19 Crisis.**

- 5.1 As the Covid-19 Crisis unfolded and the impact on SMEs across Portsmouth started to become clear the Hotwalls Studios team worked closely and sought advice from the Economic Development team to navigate and understand the level of support available to creative businesses. With a wealth of information coming through on a daily basis and often conflicting as the response to the pandemic grew it was important for the Hotwalls Studios Development Manager to support the studio artists looking at what the best support schemes were.
- 5.2 As the Hotwalls Studios units are registered as separate business in individual units we identified that they qualified for the Governments Small Business Grant scheme. We guided 12 of the studio artists to apply for this support fund all of which were successful in receiving this grant.
- 5.3 This scheme meant that 11 of the Hotwalls Studios spaces retained tenants throughout out the lockdown and supported the reopening of studios as social distancing guidelines eased.
- 5.4 Unfortunately, 3 artists made the decision to leave the Hotwalls Studios over this period and we have now interviewed and will welcome 3 new artists for these studios which will be filled from mid October 2020.



**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require an Integrated impact assessment, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)**

5.5 Utilising our relationships through Shaping Portsmouth, University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth Creates, Creative Network South and the Studios Providers Network South , the Hotwalls Studios team will continue to research funding streams available to our artists, supporting them where needed , and offering as many opportunities as possible to build resilience into their business models .

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Signed by  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:** None

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

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Signed by:  
**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**