

Response to council address on the competition standard pool

The case for the competition standard pool adjoined to Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre has been consistently made through the due process over the past two years. The case is compelling on the grounds of; cost, carbon, access, usage, quality and sustainability. All relevant documentation and consultation has been published on the leisure pages of the council's website (www.oxford.gov.uk) and all the questions received to date continue to be responded to and added to the website. The points raised are not new and factual information has been provided on numerous occasions.

As such this response is only intended to ensure that those members who are not close to the project are not confused by any misinformation.

Inaccuracies in the address	Factual position
<i>Why spend £16m on a 25 metre pool when £3m will refurbish and improve two facilities enabling them to remain open for 20 years.</i>	The cost for the new pool is £8.5m (this includes fees and contingencies). The 16m figure includes the cost of borrowing. The construction cost for the pool itself is £6.5m-7m. It is therefore the £6.5m-7m figure that the £3m should be compared with. The maintenance backlog at TCP alone is £2.3m. By spending £3m on these sites there would be minimal visible improvements to the customer. The lifespan would not be extended by 20-25 years, but approximately seven. The new pool would have a lifespan of approximately 60 years not the 25 years that Mr Gibson has stated.
<i>The council claims that TCP costs over half a million to run.</i>	Temple Cowley Pools is subsidised by the council by just over half a million pounds a year.
<i>The greens have agreed a budget with the head of finance that would keep the pool running for the next 25 years.</i>	The head of finance has only agreed the proposed budget; it is not his role to review the impact that the proposed expenditure will have.
TCP is energy efficient	Temple Cowley Pools has by far the highest carbon footprint of our leisure centres. Temple Cowley Pools has numerous design and building fabric problems, TCP would not be more energy efficient than a new modern pool. The new pool is proposed to have a biomass boiler, modern energy efficiency measures and a combined heat and power unit. The design of the new pool is classed as <i>very good</i> in relation environmental adaptations and the current design is close to being one of a handful of sites nationwide that are classified as <i>excellent</i> .
<i>There is no demand for a pool in Blackbird Leys</i>	While the new pool would be a city wide facility our research shows that the facility would receive in the region of 400,000 visits a year.
<i>The existing facilities have over 450,000 visits a year</i>	While we continue to work hard to increase participation we have certainly not been this successful. The combined usage at both TCP and BLP last year was 256,000.
<i>Fusion benefit massively from the council closing the two facilities.</i>	The benefit Fusion attains is that they will be operating a modern, fit for purpose site. As charitable social enterprise any profits are re-invested into leisure and the council attain the majority share of any profits.
30 staff will be cut	We are planning for zero redundancies. This will be a managed process with staff transferring to the new pool, or vacancies at other sites. Fusion are taking on five apprentices and have created new posts in the contract.
The costs are not capped and they will skyrocket	The operating costs are capped, the only changes would be changes we request to service delivery, or reductions in the fee from continued improvements in the centres.

Note – The diving pool at Temple Cowley has now been closed for nine years and there are no diving clubs in the city.

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