

To: Cabinet
Date: 13 September 2023
Report of: Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: The Leys Pools & Leisure Centre – Youth Hub

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Councillor Mike Rowley, Scrutiny Committee Vice Chair
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Deputy Leader (Non-Statutory) and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks
Corporate Priority:	Support Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Thriving Communities Strategy
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 05 September 2023 to consider a report concerning The Leys Pools & Leisure Centre – Youth Hub. The report, which is due for Cabinet consideration on 13 September 2023, recommends that Cabinet grants project approval to create a Youth Hub at Leys Pools and Leisure Centre; recommends to Council the addition of £1,120,199 into the capital programme together with £223,907 into the revenue budget for delivery of the project; and delegates authority to the Executive Director (Communities and People) in consultation with the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 officer, the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer and the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks to award the construction contract to Oxford Direct Services Ltd subject to it being within budget and value for money.

2. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Munkonge (Deputy Leader (Non-Statutory) and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks), Ian Brooke (Head of Community Services) and Hagan Lewisman (Active Communities Manager) for attending the meeting to answer questions.

Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Deputy Leader (Non-Statutory) and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks introduced the report. Oxford City Council, in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, had been successful in winning funding to create, expand and improve local youth facilities and services to drive positive outcomes for young people, including improved physical and mental wellbeing and skills for life and work. The proposed project would include remodelling of underutilised areas in the Leys Leisure Centre in order to bring them to life, alongside the recruitment of five hub staff to help drive activities with young people.
4. The Committee asked a range of questions, including questions relating to the sustainability of the youth programme given the current financial climate, level of engagement with local schools and other partners, ability of young people from across the City (more broadly than the Leys) to make use of the space, diversity of staff and staff retention, terms and conditions of the funding, range of activities to be delivered, age groups able to access the provision and the need to ensure young people’s access to different learning pathways (e.g. entrepreneurship).
5. In particular, the Committee was of the view that the sustainability of the youth programme within the current financial climate posed a level of risk to the Council and the young people who used the provision. The Committee noted that, should the youth programme be unable to be retained in future years due to financial constraints, this lack of continuity would have a negative impact on young people who had spent time building valuable relationships and developing skills. The Committee agreed that this risk should be added to the risk register for the project and monitored alongside the current risks, with any relevant contingencies being put in place to mitigate the risk.

Recommendation 1: That the Council includes a risk relating to continuity of the youth hub provision within the risk register, which will be monitored on an ongoing basis and any relevant risk mitigations implemented.

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