

North Yorkshire Council

Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny

23 September 2025

Leisure Investment Strategy

Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek feedback from Members of Overview and Scrutiny on the findings and recommendations for investment in the Council's leisure facilities. This includes consideration of future options for Richmond Pool.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report sets out the findings from the assessment of the Council's leisure facilities. The report sets out the principles for a strategic approach and makes recommendations for areas of investment. The report also seeks comment and feedback on the options appraisal undertaken in relation to Richmond Pool.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In January 2023 the Council agreed a new vision and operating model for the Council's leisure services. The new Active North Yorkshire (ANY) service has a strong emphasis on health and well being and ensuring participation in physical activity is accessible to everyone.
- 3.2 ANY is one of the largest council owned and operated services in the Country and a key part of the development of the new Active Well being model has been to assess the Council's leisure assets to support a more impactful and sustainable service in the future. This includes the role of the Council's facilities in supporting wider health, well being and place shaping work, whilst maintaining facilities that are financially and environmentally sustainable.
- 3.3 Phase one of the Leisure Investment Strategy considered each of the sites and where investment in facilities might best be targeted to maximise the potential for income generation, efficient delivery and to best support the new delivery model focused on active well being and enabling a wider range of people to become and stay active throughout their lives. Each site was assessed based on its location, financial performance, demand and asset condition. The development and improvement potential for both core provision and ability to contribute towards active well being and inclusion were also assessed.
- 3.4 From this initial assessment sites were categorised as follows:
- **Active WellBeing Hubs** – these are strategically important sites which have the potential to play a significant role as a flagship health and well being hub. These are generally the larger sites and include sites with higher levels of population need and where investment has the capacity to improve financial performance and sustainability.
 - **Retained sites** – these sites are important locally and will be retained with lifecycle investment as required. This category includes sites that have been recently refurbished and the three community well being hubs in Harrogate (Fairfax, Stockwell

and Jennyfield) which will continue to focus on specialist delivery. It also includes a number of smaller sites with more limited potential but which will continue to focus on meeting local needs, particularly in areas where alternative provision is limited.

- 3.5 Sites in Ryedale, Skipton, Whitby and Selby were identified as priorities for investment as Active Well Being Hubs and proposals for the development of these sites is detailed within this report. In addition there are a number of other strategic sites that will operate as significant well being sites, offering a wider range of provision, but which are in generally good condition (a number have been refurbished more recently) and are not considered to require major investment currently. These include Jack Laugher (Ripon), Scarborough Sports Village, Northallerton, Harrogate and Knaresborough.
- 3.6 Alongside the priorities for investment additional assessment was undertaken in relation to Richmond Pool, which has been closed for safety reasons following a partial ceiling collapse in April.

4.0 ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Investment in Active Well Being Hubs

4.1 The following sites have been identified for in principle investment as active well being hubs. This is subject to further detailed work being undertaken to develop next stage designs costings and programming. High levels business cases suggest budget provision of c£36m would be required to undertake the works identified, although precise costings will be further developed at the net stage. NB this figure is based on the high level capital costs identified below, with a further 10% added to reflect the Council’s additional fee and contingency assumptions.

- Craven Leisure Centre (Skipton)
- Whitby Leisure Centre
- Selby Leisure Centre
- Ryedale Swim and Fitness (Pickering)

4.2 The proposed works at **Craven Leisure Centre** are set out in the table below, at an estimated cost of c£9.9m

Current facility mix	Core brief
61 station gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 station movement space (gym) split into zonal areas with 24/7 access through separate entrance • Installation of Changing Places • Additional dry change
6-lane 25m pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of pool pod

Current facility mix	Core brief
12m x 6m teaching pool with moveable floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of pool pod
Wet change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light touch refurbishment (cubicles, lockers etc.)
1 spin studio (10 bikes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spin studio (20 bikes with storage) – for use as multi-purpose space combined with mind and body / AWB activities
1 group exercise studio (24 capacity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional studio (30 capacity) and consultation room
Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconfiguration of café / reception to create single shared reception desk / café servery • New external seating area to cafe with retractable canopy • Refurbishment of café

4.3 Overall the high level investment case shows a significant financial improvement over the 25 year period compared to the do minimum case. Taking account of operational lifecycle costs, equipment replacement costs and capital repayments (all the modelling assumes borrowing costs associated with the capital investment) the investment is expected to generate a small annual surplus of c£8k overall, a £576k annual improvement compared to the “do minimum” scenario. See Table 1 below.

4.4 Each site has been considered across three key areas:

- **Necessity** - Is “do minimum” a viable option?
- **Active Wellbeing** - To what extent does the proposed investment meaningfully enhance the Council’s ability and capacity to deliver active wellbeing services?
- **Finances** - To what extent does the proposed investment deliver a financial improvement – i.e. will it cost the Council more or less than the “do minimum” option

4.5 The summary for Craven Leisure Centre against these criteria is below:

Necessity

- Existing facility is underperforming – despite strong demand
- Insufficient health and fitness space
- Tired and in poor condition

Wellbeing

- Proposals would increase capacity to support AWB
- Wider range of classes and programmes
- More accessible – for people with disabilities and complex needs

Finances

- Strong financial case, significant increases in income
- Overall financial return over 25 years despite capital repayment costs
- Decarb initiatives (LED lighting) energy saving of 8,864kwh pa
- £2.4m asset condition works (20 years). £252k of these in scope

Table 1: Summary of Craven Leisure Centre Financial Modelling (25 year averages and totals)

Craven Leisure Centre			
25-Year Annual Averages	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£1,508,433	£3,023,042	£1,514,609
Expenditure Total	(£1,873,936)	(£2,002,545)	(£128,609)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£365,503)	£1,020,497	£1,385,999
Lifecycle costs	(£115,474)	(£102,848)	£12,627
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£86,589)	(£166,389)	(£79,800)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£567,566)	£751,260	£1,318,826
Capital repayments	£0	(£743,288)	(£743,288)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£567,566)	£7,972	£575,538

Craven Leisure Centre			
25-Year Totals	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£37,710,832	£75,576,049	£37,865,217
Expenditure Total	(£46,848,406)	(£50,063,636)	(£3,215,230)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£9,137,574)	£25,512,413	£34,649,987
Lifecycle costs	(£2,886,860)	(£2,571,198)	£315,663
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£2,164,720)	(£4,159,716)	(£1,994,996)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£14,189,154)	£18,781,499	£32,970,653
Capital repayments	£0	(£18,582,198)	(£18,582,198)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£14,189,154)	£199,301	£14,388,455

4.6 The proposed works at **Whitby Leisure Centre** are set out in the table below, at an estimated cost of c£9.7m.

Current facility mix	Core brief
4-lane 25m pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of pool hall – pool surrounds (tiling), wall coverings, ceilings, lighting • Installation of pool pod

Current facility mix	Core brief
Teaching pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of pool pod • Installation of sensory lighting
Wet change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full refurbishment and reconfiguration to village change • Installation of Changing Places
c. 45 station gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 station movement space (gym) split into zonal areas
Group exercise studio (capacity of c. 25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional studio (30 persons)
Dry change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbish existing dry change
4-court sports hall	N/A
2G 5-a-side MUGA (floodlit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x covered and floodlit Padel court(s) on MUGA
2 tennis courts (floodlit)	N/A
Reception	3 x consultation rooms and reconfigured reception

4.7 Overall the high level investment case shows a meaningful financial improvement over the 25 year period compared to the do minimum case. Taking account of operational lifecycle costs, equipment replacement costs and capital repayments the investment is expected to require a reduced annual deficit of c £121k overall, a £164k annual improvement compared to the “do minimum” scenario. See Table 2 below.

4.8 The summary for Whitby Leisure Centre against the key criteria is below:

Necessity

- Existing facility is in very poor condition, tired, dated and in poor condition
- Insufficient health and fitness space
- Performs well considering current condition
- Lack of competition in the area

Wellbeing

- Proposals would increase capacity to support AWB
- Wider range of classes and programmes – including introduction of Padel tennis
- More accessible – for people with disabilities and complex needs

Finances

- Clear financial case, significant increases in income
- Overall financial return over 25 years despite capital repayment costs
- Decarb initiatives (PV panels) result in energy saving of 188,743kwh pa

- £1.2m asset condition works (20 years). £100k of these in scope

Table 2: Summary of Whitby Leisure Centre Financial Modelling (25 year averages and totals)

Whitby Leisure Centre			
25-Year Annual Averages	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£819,009	£2,069,765	£1,250,755
Expenditure Total	(£986,274)	(£1,249,089)	(£262,815)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£167,264)	£820,676	£987,940
Lifecycle costs	(£58,422)	(£53,424)	£4,998
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£59,880)	(£132,000)	(£72,120)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£285,566)	£635,251	£920,817
Capital repayments	£0	(£756,536)	(£756,536)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£285,566)	(£121,285)	£164,281
Whitby Leisure Centre			
25-Year Totals	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£20,475,237	£51,744,113	£31,268,876
Expenditure Total	(£24,656,839)	(£31,227,224)	(£6,570,384)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£4,181,603)	£20,516,889	£24,698,492
Lifecycle costs	(£1,460,544)	(£1,335,606)	£124,938
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£1,497,011)	(£3,300,007)	(£1,802,996)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£7,139,157)	£15,881,276	£23,020,433
Capital repayments	£0	(£18,913,411)	(£18,913,411)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£7,139,157)	(£3,032,134)	£4,107,023

4.9 The proposed works at **Selby Leisure Centre** are set out in the table below, at an estimated cost of c£2.5m.

Current facility mix	Core brief
6-lane 25m pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of pool pod
Teaching pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of pool pod

Current facility mix	Core brief
Group exercise studio (30-person capacity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of existing studio
Spin studio (21 bikes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion of spin studio for group exercise including virtual capability
97 station gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of H&F changing rooms
2G artificial pitch	N/A
2 x group exercise studios in Summit Indoor Adventure (SIA) centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of Summit studios and conversion of smaller studio for immersive / virtual spin studio • 1 x consultation room

4.10 Overall the high level investment case shows a modest financial improvement over the 25 year period compared to the do minimum case. Taking account of operational lifecycle costs, equipment replacement costs and capital repayments the investment is expected to require a reduced annual deficit of c £582k overall, a £25k annual improvement compared to the “do minimum” scenario. See Table 3 below.

4.11 The summary for Selby Leisure Centre against the key criteria is below:

Necessity

- Existing facility is in overall good condition, with good levels of usage
- Limited studio space – restricts range of activity
- Key site – in area of disadvantage
- Beyond end of life gym equipment

Wellbeing

- Proposals would increase capacity to support AWB and a wider range of classes and programmes in an area of health disadvantage
- Pool pod - more accessible for people with disabilities and complex needs

Finances

- Small reduction in operating subsidy
- Benefits in terms of a strategically significant site
- Decarb initiatives (LED lighting) result in energy saving of 5,880kwh pa
- £2.1m asset condition works (20 years). £370k of these in scope

Table 3: Summary of Selby Leisure Centre Financial Modelling (25 year averages and totals)

Selby Leisure Centre			
25-Year Annual Averages	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£1,999,520	£2,184,023	£184,503
Expenditure Total	(£2,363,544)	(£2,384,848)	(£21,304)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£364,024)	(£200,825)	£163,199
Lifecycle costs	(£105,015)	(£86,513)	£18,502
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£137,325)	(£125,004)	£12,321
Operating surplus / (subsidy) lifecycle / FF&E	(£606,364)	(£412,343)	£194,022
Capital repayments	£0	(£169,342)	(£169,342)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£606,364)	(£581,685)	£24,680
25-Year Totals	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£49,988,008	£54,600,581	£4,612,574
Expenditure Total	(£59,088,609)	(£59,621,203)	(£532,594)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£9,100,601)	(£5,020,621)	£4,079,980
Lifecycle costs	(£2,625,380)	(£2,162,836)	£462,544
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£3,433,125)	(£3,125,108)	£308,016
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£15,159,106)	(£10,308,566)	£4,850,540
Capital repayments	£0	(£4,233,548)	(£4,233,548)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£15,159,106)	(£14,542,114)	£616,992

4.12 The proposed works at **Ryedale Swim and Fitness (Pickering)** are set out in the table below, at an estimated cost of c£10.2m (core and enhanced elements).

Current facility mix	Core brief	Enhanced brief
4-lane 25m pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light refurbishment of pool hall (excluding re-tiling of poolside) Installation of pool pod 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace poolside tiling (excluding re-tiling of pool tank)
Wet change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full refurbishment of wet change Installation of Changing Places 	N/A

Current facility mix	Core brief	Enhanced brief
28 station gym (semi-permanent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75-station movement space (gym) split into zonal areas 	N/A
Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General refurbishment of reception / development of small F&B offer 	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x studio (capacity 30 persons) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x studios (capacity 30 persons)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New dry change 	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x consultation room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x consultation rooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

4.13 Overall the high level investment case shows an additional annual cost to the Council of c£165k over the 25 year period for the enhanced AWB improvements compared to the do minimum case. Although the investment delivers significant revenue improvements they are not enough to offset the capital repayment requirements. However, it is important to note that the do minimum does not include any future capital costs for the replacement of the semi permanent building housing the gym at this site. At some point investment will be required to address this issue if the site is to continue to operate in its current form.

4.14 The enhanced AWB investment identified in the table above shows a modest cost over the 25 year period compared to the core investment case. Taking account of operational lifecycle costs, equipment replacement costs and capital repayments the investment is expected to require an annual subsidy of c£549k overall. See Table 4 below.

4.14 The summary for Ryedale Swim and Fitness against the key criteria is below:

Necessity

- Existing facility requires improvement and has a semi permanent gym structure which is too small to meet demand.
- Performs well financially and usage considering current condition.
- Would enable consolidation of dry side/classes onto one site (from Lady Lumley's school) subject to agreement with the school about community access to outdoor facilities and sports hall.

Wellbeing

- Proposals would increase capacity to support AWB (studio and consultation space)
- Wider range of classes and programmes

- Would secure the site for the foreseeable future

Finances

- With capital repayments the enhanced option is a negative financial position as compared to do nothing (£4.1m over 25 years)
- Without capital repayments the net improvement in operating position is £15.9m against an £10.2m investment.
- NB over a 25 year period do nothing is not a realistic option for this site given the semi permanent construction of the gym building.
- Decarb (LED and PV) result in energy saving of 74,978 kwh
- £1.13m asset condition works. £94k in scope.

Table 4: Summary of Ryedale Swim and Fitness Financial Modelling (25 year averages and totals)

Ryedale Swim & Fitness					
25-Year Annual Averages	Baseline - Do Minimum	Core Investment	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement Core vs Do Minimum	Net Improvement AWB vs Core
Income Total	£547,914	£1,250,528	£1,369,084	£702,614	£118,556
Expenditure Total	(£783,111)	(£868,628)	(£917,805)	(£85,517)	(£49,177)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£235,197)	£381,899	£451,279	£617,097	£69,380
Lifecycle costs	(£66,940)	(£62,218)	(£62,218)	£4,722	£0
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£81,707)	(£138,444)	(£138,444)	(£56,737)	£0
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£383,845)	£181,237	£250,617	£565,082	£69,380
Capital repayments	£0	(£693,518)	(£799,897)	(£693,518)	(£106,379)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£383,845)	(£512,281)	(£549,281)	(£128,436)	(£37,000)
Ryedale Swim & Fitness					
25-Year Totals	Baseline - Do Minimum	Core Investment	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement Core vs Do Minimum	Net Improvement AWB vs Core
Income Total	£13,697,841	£31,263,189	£34,227,095	£17,565,348	£2,963,907
Expenditure Total	(£19,577,774)	(£21,715,703)	(£22,945,121)	(£2,137,930)	(£1,229,418)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£5,879,933)	£9,547,485	£11,281,974	£15,427,418	£1,734,489
Lifecycle costs	(£1,673,510)	(£1,555,450)	(£1,555,450)	£118,060	£0
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£2,042,679)	(£3,461,103)	(£3,461,103)	(£1,418,424)	£0
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£9,596,122)	£4,530,932	£6,265,421	£14,127,054	£1,734,489
Capital repayments	£0	(£17,337,960)	(£19,997,437)	(£17,337,960)	(£2,659,477)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£9,596,122)	(£12,807,028)	(£13,732,016)	(£3,210,906)	(£924,988)

4.15 The option for a **new build facility in Malton** to replace Derwent Swim and Fitness was also assessed. The works that would be required are set out in the table below, at an estimated cost of c£26.5m.

Current facility mix (Derwent Swim & Fitness)	Core brief
4-lane 25m pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-lane 25m pool with moveable floor and pool pod
Sauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10m x 8m Teaching pool with pool pod
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing village with Changing Places
20 station gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75-station movement space (gym) split into zonal areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x group exercise studios
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x spin studio
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dry change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x consultation rooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Café ('grab & go' offer) and social space

4.17 Financial modelling is shown in table 5 below, with the baseline “do minimum” case being the retention of the existing Derwent Swim and Fitness, with lifecycle investment as required. Overall the high level investment case for a new facility in Malton shows a significant additional cost over the 25 year period compared to the do minimum case. Taking account of operational lifecycle costs, equipment replacement costs and capital repayments the investment is expected to require an annual subsidy of c£2m overall, a £1.8m annual increase compared to the “do minimum” scenario.

4.18 This is due to the much higher capital costs required to deliver a new Active Wellbeing Hub facility in Malton compared with retaining the existing Derwent facility as assumed in the “do minimum” scenario. The investment case also has significantly higher lifecycle costs compared to the projected costs for Derwent which have been based on Sport England guidance and assumed ongoing investment in the facility to maintain it to a good standard. Although the new facility improves the revenue position by c. £134K annually, this does not fully offset the additional capital repayment, lifecycle and FF&E costs. In part this reflects the size of the catchment and the limited income generating potential of a facility in this location as a result. Investment in the Pickering site as above, with retention of Derwent, would deliver better value than a new build site in this location.

Table 5: Summary of Derwent Swim and Fitness and new Malton AWB hub Financial Modelling (25 year averages and totals)

Derwent Swim & Fitness vs new Malton AWB Hub			
25-Year Annual Averages	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£422,316	£1,652,036	£1,229,720
Expenditure Total	(£546,422)	(£1,641,696)	(£1,095,274)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£124,106)	£10,340	£134,446
Lifecycle costs	(£37,124)	(£117,516)	(£80,392)
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£28,901)	(£102,777)	(£73,876)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£190,131)	(£209,953)	(£19,822)
Capital repayments	£0	(£1,801,414)	(£1,801,414)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£190,131)	(£2,011,367)	(£1,821,236)

Derwent Swim & Fitness vs new Malton AWB Hub			
25-Year Totals	Baseline - Do Minimum	AWB Hub Investment	Net Improvement
Income Total	£10,557,904	£41,300,898	£30,742,994
Expenditure Total	(£13,660,550)	(£39,278,402)	(£25,617,852)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£3,102,647)	£258,494	£3,361,141
Lifecycle costs	(£928,100)	(£2,937,900)	(£2,009,800)
FF&E / H&F equipment costs	(£722,529)	(£2,569,425)	(£1,846,896)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle / FF&E	(£4,753,275)	(£5,248,831)	(£495,556)
Capital repayments	£0	(£45,035,347)	(£45,035,347)
Operating surplus / (subsidy) including lifecycle, FF&E and capital repayments	(£4,753,275)	(£50,284,178)	(£45,530,903)

4.19 The summary for a new build facility in Malton against the key criteria is below:

Necessity

- Derwent facility is functional but dated.
- Capacity to deliver more from the current Derwent site is constrained with no scope to expand existing site.
- But could continue to deliver the core offer (with a wider offer at the Pickering site)
- It should also be noted there is a significant community facility in Malton (Malton Sports Centre) providing a range of dryside activity and well being programmes.

Wellbeing

- A new facility could deliver considerably more capacity and a full range of AWB activity.
- Fully accessible
- Potential links to other public sector/health services if on a shared site

Finances

- Significant capital costs, limited financial case.

- Could possibly work as a broader public sector hub project – rather than a stand alone leisure development
- From a leisure and well being perspective better value is delivered through refurbishment of the Pickering site and retention of the existing Derwent site.

Investment in Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FFE)

4.20 There are significant requirements for the replacement of FFE (gym and fitness equipment) across many of the leisure sites. This includes a number of sites where the equipment is extremely old and at end of life. However, across all sites it is important that this key component of service delivery is maintained, kept up to date and meets modern customer expectations. This is important to enable facilities to remain attractive and competitive and to ensure we can meet the needs of existing customers and the needs of new users.

4.21 It is proposed that c£2.7m is invested in FFE to deliver a phased programme of upgrades across the Active North Yorkshire sites over the next 5 years. In addition to the requirements of the 4 proposed AWB hubs above, this would include the following 12 sites.

- Northallerton
- Scarborough Sports Village
- Derwent Swim and Fitness
- Tadcaster
- Pateley Bridge
- Bedale
- Stokesley
- Thirsk and Sowerby
- Pindar
- Richmond (Liberty)
- (Harrogate and Knaresborough – existing equipment traded to allow for installation of consistent equipment contracts across all sites)

Retained sites for Lifecycle investment

4.22 A high level assessment of the lifecycle maintenance required for all leisure sites has been undertaken and these works will be undertaken, as required, through a planned programme of maintenance. Where appropriate, lifecycle works will be undertaken alongside any major works proposed, for example, in relation to the Active Well Being Hubs identified above.

Richmond Options Appraisal

4.23 Richmond Pool has been closed to the public since April, following a partial collapse of the wooden ceiling batons. Given the initial cost estimates for the work, alongside the potential costs for other essential works required, a full options appraisal has been undertaken to assess fully the options for the future of this site.

4.24 This has included consideration of usage trends, asset condition, financial sustainability and the impact of other nearby facilities, including the MOD owned leisure centre at Catterick. Community consultation has also been undertaken and the results of this are summarised in section 5 below.

4.25 Options assessed included:

- Option 1 – undertake essential works only and reopen the pool
- Option 2 – undertake essential works with refurbishment of changing rooms and accessibility improvements
- Option 3a – reconfigure the teaching pool to increase health and fitness offer

- Option 3b – reconfigure to remove both pools and increase health and fitness space and flexible space (rental/office etc)
- Option 4 – decommission and demolish
- Options 5 – disposal of the site for sale/long lease

4.26 Overall there have been some increases in usage in recent years. However, Richmond has much lower levels of usage than other council pools, in terms of both annual usage and learn to swim members. Membership and usage figures are shown below. The following trends have been identified:

- **Total throughput has fluctuated in recent years.** This is primarily due to the post-Covid closures. Despite these closures, usage of the pool recovered well in 2024/25, reaching the highest throughput across the five-year data period.
- **Swimming lesson throughput has recovered strongly from the impacts of pool closures in 2022/23 and 2023/24.** Swimming lesson throughput increased by 30.8% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, indicating positive signs of recovery following the closures in 2022/23 and 2023/24 prior to the most recent closure in April 2025.
- **The strategic importance of the site as a facility for the delivery of school swimming has diminished.** School swimming throughput was 42.8% lower than that recorded in 2019/20. It is likely that schools have found alternative venues given the operational disruption of the pool in recent years.
- **Casual swims have recovered well and there is further potential for growth.** Throughput for casual swims increased by 64.0% on the previous year to 21,686 in 2024/25. This is still below a peak of 22,767 casual swims achieved pre-COVID which suggests further potential for growth.
- Throughput for **aqua fit classes** increased significantly in 2024/25 in comparison to previous years.

	2019/20 (pre- COVID- 19)	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Casual swimming	22,767	14,760	9,131	13,222	21,686
Swimming lessons	9,805	13,842	6,672	8,640	11,303
School swimming	13,039	9,293	5,316	8,730	7,455
Aquafit	1,535	1,560	1,245	1,514	2,987
Other	5,617	15,098	10,074	14,696	15,521
Total throughput	52,763	54,553	32,438	47,032	58,952

4.27 A summary of the financial accounts for 2024/25 is summarised below. It should be noted these are not directly comparable to the current operating costs as the pool was operated by Richmond Leisure Trust prior to March 2025. During this period the Council paid RLT a grant of £362k, with remaining losses coming from reserves. The net service budget for the current year is £408k. The site requires ongoing financial subsidy

	Richmond Swimming Pool	Liberty Gym	Total
Income	£338,220	£260,980	£599,200
Expenditure	(£641,183)	(£242,039)	(£883,222)
Net operating position surplus / (subsidy)	(£302,963)	£18,941	(£284,022)
Central costs	(£168,384)	(£17,424)	(£185,808)
Net surplus / (subsidy)	(£471,347)	£1,517	(469,830)

4.28 A key factor influencing demand in Richmond is the presence of Catterick Leisure Centre, a modern facility including 3 pools, swimming lessons and school swimming programme. Catterick is 2.5miles from Richmond Pool. It is owned by the MOD but has substantial community access, which has recently been increased since the closure of Richmond Pool, with opportunities to expand further. The two clubs that are based at Richmond pool have been using Catterick pool, although Richmond District ASC are also utilising pools space in Sunderland and Darlington. There is a significant learn to swim programme with capacity to expand this further.

4.29 For each of the options outlined above financial modelling was undertaken over a 15 year period, taking into account potential capital costs and revenue implications. A summary of these, alongside an assessment of service benefits and impact on users is shown below:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3A	Option 3B	Option 4	Option 5
Capital cost	£1.18M	£4.35M	£7.24M	£10.96M	£396.5K	£0 (sale) c. £1M (rent)
Revenue implications	£7.9M – 15yr total £529K annual average	£12.3M – 15yr total £821K annual average	£13.0M – 15yr total £866K annual average	£15.8M – 15yr total £1.06M annual average	£481K – 15yr total £32K annual average*	n/a (sale) +£37.2K p.a. (rent)
Service / user / AWB benefits						
Displacement of users / unmet demand						
Assumed opening	Apr 2026	Apr 2026	Oct 2026	Dec 2026	n/a	n/a

4.30 Option 1 assessed the costs of undertaking essential works to the Richmond Pool. Under this option gym equipment would also be replaced as part of the FFE programme outlined in section 4.20/4.21 above. Works proposed include:

- Works identified as urgent or required in years 0-2 in the building fabric asset condition survey
- Works identified as urgent or required 1 years 0-2 in the mechanical and electrical condition survey
- Pool plant works identified in relation to the pool filtration systems.

- 4.31 Options 2, 3a and 3b looked at various alternative configurations for the building and options for more significant capital investment. Given the capital costs and revenue implication none of these options were financially viable for the Council, nor proportionate given the levels of usage and the presence of a large alternative facility at Catterick.
- 4.32 Option 4 would result in the permanent loss of the facility and the demolition of an attractive building. Option 5 examined the market for an alternative use either as a long lease rental or sale. Whilst this could potentially provide a financial return and the productive reuse of the building, the market was uncertain, without a clear alternative use. This has the potential for a long period of uncertainty around an empty building, with subsequent costs and negative impact of the surrounding environment.
- 4.33 Overall the Richmond Leisure site is a challenging one, within the context of a large more modern leisure centre within a couple of miles of the site. This clearly impacts demand and given the capacity of Catterick this facility is likely to meet the core leisure needs of the local population. Although Richmond Pool is expected to operate more efficiently and benefit from the economies of scale benefits from being part of the larger Active North Yorkshire service, it will still require considerable ongoing subsidy.
- 4.34 However, Richmond does serve an important local population and the results from the consultation show the value placed on the facility. The site also plays an important role for local swimming clubs. It is also the case that there is not a clear alternative use for the site, market conditions and alternative uses are uncertain and could result in a lengthy period with an empty building and associated costs and community concern. Having considered carefully all of the options the recommendation is that **option one is preferred** and that essential works are undertaken to the pool to enable it to reopen as quickly as possible.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 5.1 Lets Talk Active was undertaken in 2024 and sought feedback about people's perceptions, priorities and barriers to becoming and staying active. Over 3200 people responded to the survey, around half who currently used leisure centres and half who did not. A number of factors were identified about what people valued about their facilities and also why leisure centres did not currently meet people's needs. Most commonly these include limited class availability, costs, facility issues, accessibility challenges and lack of specific programmes. When asked to rank their top priorities for improvement these were:
- Community sports facilities (73%)
 - Health and well being programmes
 - Disability and inclusive facilities.
- 5.2 The feedback from Lets Talk has informed the development of proposals for the well being hubs. Provision such as additional studio and gym space will facilitate a wider range of programming, and improvements to the physical accessibility of centres with the installation of pool pods and other access improvements. The inclusion of flexible and consultation space will also support the delivery of targeted programmes for healthy weight and long term health conditions, alongside opportunities to increase partnerships with other health providers.
- 5.3 Consultation was also undertaken in relation to the options appraisal for Richmond Pool, with over 2200 responses received. A petition is also due to be considered by Richmond Area Committee in September. These show strong feelings about the potential closure of the pool and widespread support for reopening the pool with essential repairs. Key headlines from the survey are summarised below:

- 53% (1208) used the facility at least once a week
 - 46% for general swimming / 9% swimming lessons / 7% aquafit
 - 7% sauna / 8% spectator / 5% club user / 18% gym/class
- 74% very important, 17% moderately important
- 60% drove to the facility / 32% walked
- 79% stated their activity levels were slightly lower (31%) or a lot lower (48%) since closure
- Over half had used an alternative facility (47% had not)
 - 28% Catterick / 10% Dolphin Centre / 6% Northallerton / 4% Active Life (Scotch Corner) / 3% Bedale / 2% Teesdale / 1% Thirsk
- What stopped people from using alternatives was too far (38%) / too difficult to get to (26%) / times of classes (13%) / offer not what was wanted (10%) / too expensive (9%) / didn't know about alternatives (3%)

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

6.1 The provision of inclusive and accessible active well being facilities contributes to Council ambitions to support thriving places and ensure people are safe, healthy and living well.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 A range of alternative options have been considered as outlined in section 4 above.

8.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

8.1 The proposals in this report have been developed as part of the wider Strategic Leisure Programme, supported by the Council's Project Management Team and in partnership with key Council services including Finance and Property/Estates.

8.2 Successful delivery of the recommendations will be supported by relevant teams as part of the Strategic Leisure programme.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Financial modelling has been undertaken in respect of each of the options set out above and summarised in the table below.

AWB Hub	Capital Cost	Net Revenue Saving/ (Cost) Average per annum
	£m	£k
Craven Leisure Centre (Skipton)	9.90	576
Whitby Leisure Centre	9.74	164
Selby Leisure Centre	2.48	25
Ryedale Swim & Fitness (Pickering)	10.18	(165)
	32.30	
Additional Fee/Contingency (10%)	3.23	
Total	35.53	600

9.2 For the Leisure Investment Strategy proposals, in principle approval is sought for c£36m of investment in the proposed 4 sites as set out above. This is subject to further detailed work being undertaken as below.

- Funding to be approved to undertake next stage feasibility and planning work.
- Undertaking of further detailed work on costs and returns, local market and designs
- Development of a phased programme
- Individual sites will be subject to further approvals within the context of the overall financial position of the Council once further work is completed.

9.3 As highlighted within the report, and set out in the table above, each of the sites are estimated to deliver varying levels of financial return. Therefore, capital financing recommendations will be developed as part of the detailed business case approval, which is likely to be a combination of spend to save (where capital is repaid) and Strategic Capacity Unallocated reserve funding. Any borrowing requirements will be considered as part of the Treasury Management Strategy.

9.4 It is further proposed that FFE (gym and fitness equipment) of c£2.7m (up to £3m) is approved and included in the capital plan once financing options have been considered.

9.5 The preferred option for Richmond Pool is to undertake essential repairs at a cost of £1.2m, funded from the Strategic Capacity Unallocated reserve.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 S19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 grants discretion for local authorities to provide such recreational facilities as they think fit.

10.2 Any expenditure as part of the Leisure Investment Strategy will be spent in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and, to the extent applicable, the Procurement Act 2023 or the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

10.3 Any management of the leisure sites will be in accordance with the Council's Property Procedure Rules.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 An EIA will be completed. However, the proposed investment will improve the accessibility of leisure centres for disabled people.

12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 A climate change impact assessment will be completed. However, the proposed investment will improve the energy efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint of the leisure centres.

13.0 CONCLUSIONS

13.1 That the Council invests in a targeted way in its leisure facilities in order to support delivery of the wider aims as set out in the Strategic Leisure Review and to ensure the long term sustainability of its facilities.

13.2 That essential works at an estimated value of £1.18m are undertaken to enable the Richmond Pool to fully reopen.

14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 To support the delivery of the aims for Active North Yorkshire, as set out in the Strategic Leisure Review. To ensure the service can contribute towards improving health and well being and ensure participation in physical activity is accessible to everyone, whilst maintaining facilities that are financially and environmentally sustainable. The recommendations below will be considered by the Council's Executive in November, with options for Richmond Pool being considered by the Executive on 7th October 2025.

15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and approve that the following recommendations be referred to the Executive:

i) that approval in principle is given for investment of approximately £36m in Craven Leisure and Well Being Hub, Whitby Leisure Centre, Ryedale Swim and Fitness (Pickering) and Selby Leisure and Well Being Hub in accordance with this report and subject to further detailed work being undertaken to develop the design schemes, business planning and programming and that the decision on final approval of the proposals for each site, having considered the overall financial position of the Council, be delegated to the Corporate Director of Resources, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Community Development and the Executive Member for Resources and Executive Member for Culture, Leisure & Housing.

ii) that approval is granted for funding to develop the next stages of the business cases and design works, with funding approval to be delegated to Corporate Director of Resources in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources.

iii) to approve investment of up to a maximum of £3m to replace the Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (Gym and fitness equipment) for 12 additional leisure sites across North Yorkshire as a phased programme.

iv) to approve that essential repairs are undertaken to a value of approximately £1.2m to enable Richmond Pool to reopen (to be the subject of a separate report to Executive on 7th October 2025 to enable works to commence as soon as possible).

APPENDICES:

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

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Report Author – *Jo Ireland, Assistant Director (Culture, Leisure, Archives and Libraries)*
Presenter of Report – *David Ashbridge: Head of Operations (Active North Yorkshire)*

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.