



**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>URGENT WORKS AT AVONIEL LEISURE CENTRE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2013
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	George Wright, Head of Facilities Management (Ext.5206/6232)

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members may already be aware that the swimming pool at Avoniel Leisure Centre has been closed since 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2012. This is because, in the course of routine inspections by the Property Maintenance unit under the planned maintenance programme, a very significant water leak has been detected.
1.2	A number of initial investigations and excavations were carried out in terms of the tanks, pipe-work and pool fabric etc in order to locate the leak and carry out the necessary repairs. However, in the course of these investigations, asbestos testing was also routinely carried out by the unit and this subsequently resulted in a number of positive readings for the presence of asbestos in parts of the pool infrastructure.
1.3	This required formal reporting to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), followed by a stand-still period to allow the HSE to inspect the site and, once all investigations were complete, the removal and/or encapsulation of the asbestos by professional, licensed contractors.
1.4	Only then was it possible to resume the search for the source(s) of the major leak. After a further period of detailed excavation and research in relation to the main poolside deck, the Property Maintenance unit has uncovered wet rock and concrete in areas that should be completely dry. There is also extensive, widespread evidence of chlorine compounds from the pool that have leached into and calcified on the rock and concrete.
1.5	The only conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the entire pool basin (in addition to the problems with the tanks, pipes, etc already identified) is leaking pool water into the surrounding sub-strata; it is effectively a catastrophic failure of the waterproof pool membrane.
1.6	The only solution to this problem is therefore to re-line the entire pool basin, overflow channels, and balance tank, as well as replace virtually all associated pipes leading to and from the pool, and then reinstate the poolside deck tiling.

1.7	The total cost of the reinstatement work is estimated to be in the order of £250,000, and specifically the approximate costs of the specialist services required in relining the pool, overflow channels, and balance tank etc and which are the subject of this report are estimated at <b>£77,000</b> .
1.8	This scale and scope of work-package would normally be procured via tender and a contract under seal, however the lead times for the tender process could add at least 4 months to the overall time-scales. This would cause obvious operational difficulties for the Centre, and would also mean an ongoing loss of income of approx. £12,000-£15,000 per month during the extended closure.
1.9	We have developed an alternative outline programme for this work based on a quotation exercise as opposed to a tender exercise, which we believe would enable completion of the entire project work and have the pool operational by mid-June 2013.
1.10	This would require the Committee to approve the quotation action under Standing Order <b>62(a)</b> , which provides that in special circumstances the relevant Chief Officer may seek authorization to amend the normal procurement processes. This report therefore seeks authorization to utilise a competitive quotation process instead of the full tender process to procure the necessary services, in order to expedite the necessary and urgent work identified herein.
1.11	Finally, it is of course the case that many of the Leisure properties are of a similar age to the Avoniel site and it is therefore possible that similar failures may begin to occur at other locations. It is therefore the intention of the Property & Projects Dept to review and assess the relevant properties upon the conclusion of the leisure estate review.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The key issue is whether or not the Committee is content that the situation at Avoniel is sufficiently serious to justify the amendment of the standard procurement processes so as to permit the use of a competitive quotation process in place of the mandated tender process under the council's Standing Orders.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	The estimated costs of the specialist services required in re-lining the pool, overflow channels and balance tank etc is <b>£77,000</b> . The overall cost of the capital repairs and refurbishment project is £250,000, and will be financed from the capital financing budget for 2013/14.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	There are no equality and/or good relations implications in relation to this report.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	<p>It is recommended that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) the Committee endorses the proposal to set aside the requirement to invite tenders for the necessary remedial works at Avoniel Leisure Centre under Standing Order 62(a); <i>and</i></li><li>b) the Committee approves the invitation of quotations for the relevant package(s) of work.</li></ul>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
<p>If approved, the target date for the completion of the necessary remedial works is mid-June 2013.</p>	

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>