



Cabinet

Wednesday, 27 November 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel

Supplementary Agenda 1 – Be Well Leisure capital proposals

Contact for further enquiries:

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<p>Report Summary: In September 2024, Cabinet agreed to support the development of options appraisals and feasibility studies for further investment to improve leisure facilities and decided these should be presented to the November meeting for consideration. The report is requesting approval in principle to a Be Well leisure facility improvement programme based upon those feasibility studies. Any additional investment will need to be agreed by Cabinet and Council as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.</p> <p>Wards: All Wards Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation Corporate Priority: Invest in public services</p>	



<p>Cabinet</p> <p>27 November 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Simon Baxter, Corporate Director Communities</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Be Well Leisure Capital Investment Project Proposals</p>	

Lead Member	Cllr Kamrul Hussain, Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation
Originating Officer(s)	Keith Townsend, Programme Director for Leisure Simon Jones, Head of Leisure Operations Tim Clee, Head of Cultural Capital, Projects, and Quality Assurance. Sean O'Reilly, Commercial Manager Chris Tye, Leisure Operations Manager
Wards affected	Bethnal Green West, Canary Wharf, Lansbury, Mile End, St Katherine's and Wapping, Shadwell, Spitalfields and Banglatown
Key Decision?	Yes
Reason for Key Decision	Financial threshold
Forward Plan Notice Published	29 October 2024
Exempt information	No
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	4. Boosting culture, business, jobs, and leisure 5. Investing in public services

Reasons for Urgency

It was requested that this report be presented to the November meeting of Cabinet in order to seek timely approval for funding to support the delivery of eight proposed *Be Well* leisure facility projects. However, due to amendments to one of the proposed projects requested my MAB, it was only possible to seek agreement in principle to those amendments on 19th November.

Executive Summary

This report details a series of capital project feasibilities and proposals for investment in the *Be Well* leisure facilities following the insourcing of the service on 1st May 2024. In September 2024, the Mayor in Cabinet approved capital funding to invest in Mile End Leisure Centre 3G outdoor sports pitches and York Hall Spa. The report

also highlighted initial options being developed for future investment in leisure facilities. Cabinet supported the development of options appraisals and feasibility studies for further investment to improve leisure facilities and decided that these should be submitted to the November meeting of Cabinet for consideration.

Recommendations

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the *Be Well* leisure facility improvement project proposals and feasibilities for 2025/26 to 2027/28 as summarised in Appendix 1 and detailed in Appendix 2.
2. Note the anticipated outcomes and impact of the proposals in terms of income generation alongside the wider benefits in terms of supporting targeted customer engagement customers and new customers, enhancing customer experience, and providing a new service offer.
3. Note that the project proposals have been presented as a Project Initiation Document (PID) for consideration in accordance with the council's capital programme governance process.
4. Approve an addition £1.504 million capital funding for 2024/25 for projects across all leisure facilities as shown in Appendix 1.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS.

- 1.1 In September 2024, Cabinet agreed to support the development of options appraisals and feasibility studies for further investment to improve leisure facilities and decided these should be presented to the November meeting for consideration. The report is requesting approval in principle to a *Be Well* leisure facility improvement programme based upon those feasibility studies. Any additional investment will need to be agreed by Cabinet.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 This report effectively provides a schedule of options for improving the leisure facilities and services to support the delivery of the vision of the *Be Well* leisure service. the decision about the level of investment will be dependent on the overall affordability alongside the benefits of the investment.
- 2.2 There is an option to prioritise the projects over a longer period and focus on the Tower Hamlets Place Based Partnership (subject to approval), supported by Sport England, which may result in additional investment becoming available up until 2028.
- 2.3 The council could decide to focus on investing in projects already committed, alongside prioritising investing in the core fabric, mechanical and electrical aspects of the leisure facilities rather than improvements, new facilities and

enhancing customer experience. However, this approach would not necessarily meet resident or customer expectations or support the delivery of the wider ambitions for the service following the insourcing. This option may also make it more difficult to achieve the income assumptions assumed within the council's *Be Well* leisure services 10-year financial model as presented to Cabinet in May 2024.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

***Be Well* leisure facilities**

3.1 The council has six operational sports and leisure centres, and one (St George's Leisure Centre) which is currently closed and part of a major leisure and social housing redevelopment project:

- John Orwell Sports Centre, Wapping
- Mile End Leisure Centre and Stadium
- Poplar Baths, Leisure Centre & Gym, Poplar
- Tiller Leisure Centre, Isle of Dogs
- York Hall Leisure Centre Spa, Bethnal Green
- Whitechapel Sports Centre, Whitechapel

***Be Well* Vision and Brand**

3.2 The council has developed *Be Well* as the brand for the new leisure service following extensive resident engagement. It was designed to encapsulate the council's wider ambitions for the service around health and wellbeing. The vision statement is shown below:

Be Well Vision Statement

*"Be Well, run by Tower Hamlets Council, provides leisure services to support residents' journeys to a healthier lifestyle. Our aim is to raise the quality of life for the Tower Hamlets community through three pillars: Health, Wellness and Play.
We believe sport and physical activity has a significant role to play in improving the physical and mental health of our community, supporting the economy and reconnecting communities."*

3.3 The *Be Well* mission statement is:

Leisure activities, programmes and facilities for the Tower Hamlets community delivered through health, wellness, and play.

3.4 Investing in the council's leisure facilities will support the council's vision for the *Be Well* leisure service by improving the leisure offer, improving customer experience and supporting residents to become new customers. This will facilitate more residents to become more active more often and therefore contribute to the health and wellbeing in the borough.

Figure 1 Definitions of Health, Wellness and Play

HEALTH	WELLNESS	PLAY
<p>Providing excellent services to enable healthy lifestyles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full and varied programme of activities to support physical and mental health for all. • Clean, inviting and well-equipped facilities. • Dedicated, passionate and qualified staff. 	<p>Removing barriers to create inclusive and accessible environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted programmes and interventions to remove barriers and support groups who don't currently access services. • Connecting the community with health and wellbeing services that support their lifestyles. • New opportunities and spaces for women and girls. • Regular review of centres and programmes to ensure our offer meets the diverse needs of our community and increase participation. 	<p>Supporting local groups and clubs to bring communities together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working with schools, community and voluntary groups, governing bodies, sports clubs, parks, youth services and more. • Encouraging and enabling group activities to improve health and wellbeing. • A Sports Strategy for all ages and abilities.

Proposed, Current and Future Leisure Facility Investment

3.5 There are eight proposed new projects proposed which are summarised in table 1 below:

Table 1: Proposed Be Well Leisure Facility Investment Projects

Centre	Project Proposal	Capital	3-year ROI	Payback
		(£000)	(£000)	(Years)
Poplar Baths & Leisure Centre	Develop new women only gym and fitness suite facility	406	-335	3.0
Mile End Leisure Centre	Swimming pool changing room refurbishment	438		
Mile End Leisure Centre	Sauna and Steam room facilities Refurbishment and expansion	248	-168	3.7
Mile End Stadium (football pitch)	Football Stadium Upgrade to FA Step 4 standard.	63		
Whitechapel Sports Centre	Sauna and Steam Rooms Refurbishment and Re-opening	94	-78	3.0

York Hall Leisure Centre	Creation of Women Only Gym Space within existing gym / fitness suite	25		
Poplar, Mile End, Tiller LC	Develop Pop-Up Creche facilities	75		
All Centres	Water Play and Sports Hall Inflatables	156	-325	1.2
Total		1,504	-906	

- 3.6 In May 2024, Cabinet received a report which identified the level investment required for the leisure centre assets based upon the completion of asset condition surveys. This identified a total level of investment required (including fees at 11%) of £27.14 million over the following 10 years as shown in table 2.

**Table 2: Assets Management Capital Investment Requirements
(2023 Asset condition Surveys)**

	Year 1 2024/25	Year 2 2025/26	Year 3-5 2026-2029	Year 5-10 2029-2034	Total
Replacement costs from condition surveys based on 2023 costs	3,165	6,139	8,170	6,381	23,855
Staffing and Professional Fees	500	500	785	1500	3,285
Total Required Budget	3,665	6,639	8,955	7,881	27,140
Approved funding	3,665				3,665
Additional Budget Required	0	6,639	8,955	7,881	23,475

Costs beyond year 1 are provisional and do not include any allowance for inflation.

- 3.7 The future Asset Management capital investment requirements are currently being updated to take into consideration the 2024/25 programme and based upon the most important priorities.
- 3.8 The council has also approved investment for the redevelopment of a new St George's Leisure Centre which will create a flagship swimming, and sports offer alongside exciting and flexible new facilities.
- 3.9 Furthermore, in September 2024, Cabinet approved an additional £1.166 million capital funding for 2024/25 for the refurbishment of York Hall Spa to Mile End Leisure Centre outdoor sports pitches.
- 3.10 Priorities and options for further improvements to the *Be Well* leisure facilities have been developed and informed by a previous resident consultation exercise, customer feedback, facility condition surveys carried out as part of the insourcing.
- 3.11 of the service and evidence of health inequalities in the borough. This is alongside the introduction of new initiatives including the free-swimming programme and building on previous initiatives, for example to create women only facilities to encourage and increase the proportion of female users of the leisure facilities.
- 3.12 For each project proposal an initial assessment has been made against four outcomes / impacts:

- Target Audience (the project impacts positively on key target audiences e.g. women, children and young people, older residents etc.).
- Customer Experience (the project will support improvement to customer service and therefore influence customer experience).
- New Service Offer (the project provides an additional or new service for existing and potentially new customers).
- Income Generating (the project supports the delivery of existing or additional income).

3.13 The total cost of the projects would be £1.504 million for 2025-26 which, subject to approval, could be funded from CIL and s106.

3.14 There is an opportunity for the council to start to consider and develop a long-term strategy for the council's leisure facilities. For example, York Hall is considered to have significant potential considering the building's heritage interest, as the home of British Boxing and its spa facilities. This is supported by its location, adjacent to the recently refurbished Young V&A museum and excellent public transport links. There is also an opportunity to consider how John Orwell Sport Centre could be developed further in the context of potential wider regeneration opportunities in the area. Similarly, there are opportunities to investigate longer-term opportunities for Whitechapel and Tiller Leisure Centres.

Financial Planning and Income

3.15 The new *Be Well* Leisure Service budget was approved by the council in February 2024. The approved budget for 2024-25 is £2.105 million reducing to £1.344 million in 2025/26 including central support costs.

3.16 This was used to develop a 10-year revenue model for the service which is shown in Table 2 (below). It is projected that the service will move from net subsidy into surplus in 2027/28 with forecast growth in income of 24%. A key aspect of delivering additional income will be from attracting new members to the *Be Well* leisure facilities (including additional swim school customers) as well as additional event income, the refurbished York Hall Spa alongside potential NHS commissioned services.

Table 2 – 10-Year Revenue Model – *Be Well* Leisure Service

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34
Income	9,629	11,709	13,083	13,705	13,979	14,259	14,544	14,835	15,132	15,434
Expenditure	11,735	13,053	13,325	13,608	13,880	14,157	14,440	14,729	15,024	15,324
Net	2,105	1,343	241	(97)	(99)	(101)	(103)	(105)	(107)	(110)

3.17 The project proposals and investment outlined within this report will be important to support the delivery of projected additional income for the service with the potential to exceed the projections.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A key consideration for investing in the council's leisure facilities will contribute to reducing health inequalities because of increasing physical activity and wellbeing of residents.
- 4.2 Furthermore, several of the projects have been developed to support increasing participation in physical activity of specific target audiences known to be experiencing health inequalities within the borough. The following evidence base had been considered and is being used to develop the proposed projects:
- Women and girls are less likely to be active than men (25% compared to 23%).
 - People aged 65+ are less likely to be active than younger people.
 - People living with long term conditions and disability are less likely to be active than those without.
 - People from Asian, Black, or Other backgrounds are less likely to be active than people with white background (42% Asian population inactive compared to 17% from White British background).
 - People living in more deprived areas and on low incomes are less likely to be active than those living in more affluent areas.
 - 50% of Girls are less active compared to 40% of boys.
 - There are high levels of excess weight amongst children and young people in the borough.
 - Low healthy life expectancy and a 7-year gap between men (65 years) and women (58 years) with wider gaps in Asian and Mixed ethnic groups with a high prevalence of females who are long-term unemployed.
 - Post covid, sedentary lifestyle has increased amongst young people of the borough. This has led to an increase in number of cases of stress and anxiety reported amongst school aged children. This is reflected in the high number of children being referred to CAMHS.
 - The number of reported cases of diabetes within women in the borough, 78% come from the BAME background compared to 22% who came from a white background.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Best Value Implications

- 5.1 All the projects will be subject to a full procurement and tendering process following the completion of a Procurement Initiation form (PIF) supported by the corporate procurement service.
- 5.2 Several of the projects, should they be approved, would generate additional income for the council. The estimated value of the additional income is shown in Appendix 1 for the period 2025-26 to 2027-28.
- 5.3 Following Cabinet approval of any of the projects, further work will be undertaken to develop a procurement strategy for the programme. The strategy will determine the optimum approach to develop packages of contracts that deliver the expected

quality and value for money alongside Social Value opportunities in support of the council's wider priorities.

- 5.4 At the same time further work will be undertaken to determine opportunities to secure additional external funding, for example from grant to support further investment in the *Be Well* leisure facilities.

Consultation

- 5.5 A consultation exercise completed in 2022 as part of the decision to insource the leisure service indicated that more than half of respondents disagreed that the current facilities met their needs. Therefore, the proposed improvements are likely to have a positive impact customer perception of the leisure facilities.

Environmental (including air quality)

- 5.6 As part of the Leisure Assets Invest Programme, the replacement of heating systems within the facilities will enable the council to consider the most appropriate technologies and approach to decarbonising the leisure estate including heating solutions, improved insulation and the use of photovoltaics (solar power) technologies which will also help to reduce the consumption of energy. Whilst the council is dependent upon government funded grant schemes to support decarbonisation, there is the opportunity for the council to use approved capital funding as match funding for grants.

Risk Management

- 5.7 The risks that have been identified in the relation to the proposed projects are:
- Delivering the projects on time and on budget.
It is envisaged this risk will be mitigated by the projects being commissioned by the *Be Well* leisure service and delivered by the existing Capital Team within the Culture division. The programme has been costed to allow for additional project management capacity. Project Governance will be via a new Communities Capital Projects Board, chaired by the Corporate Director.
 - Impact of project implementation on operational service delivery.
This risk will be mitigated by carefully planning the projects to ensure that the impact on customers is minimised, and this will be a key quality requirement of all contracts. There will also be an opportunity to use the construction period to provide positive, on-site communications about the new facilities and services offers.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 This paper is asking cabinet to agree in principle to a *Be Well* Leisure Facility Improvement programme. This request is for £1.504m for 2025-26, for eight projects across six leisure centres.

- 6.2 For each project proposal an initial assessment has been made on costs and the projects are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 6.3 The eight projects will be funded using s106 agreements that have been identified for use.
- 6.4 All requests for funding will be subject to the capital governance process, and full finalised PIDs will need to be submitted and reviewed prior to the release of any funding.
- 6.5 It is envisaged that capital investment detailed in Appendix 1 will enable leisure centres to enhance service delivery and generate additional estimated income of £0.9m over 3 years as outlined in Table 1, along with indicative payback periods for specific investments that are expected to generate income.
- 6.6 There are risks associated with income projections provided in this report, as it is based on a set of assumptions that are predominantly reliant upon increasing and sustaining the customer base. In addition to this, Leisure centres are newly insourced which brings some uncertainty on service running costs such as repairs and maintenance and are being monitored closely.
- 6.7 Under achievement of income targets will not only adversely impact the payback period for proposed capital investment, it will also result in an unfavourable impact on the 10 year leisure services business plan shown in Table 2. The business plan is currently profiled to be operating at a surplus position from year 4 onwards (2027/28), if income targets or cost reductions are not achieved, it will risk operating at a deficit position for longer periods which will require funding from General Fund budgets.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The Council has the legal power to undertake the activities referred to in this report.
- 7.2 The provision of leisure facilities is a legal function of the Council albeit the Council is not required to provide leisure services. However, having elected to provide a leisure function the Council must do so in a manner consistent with its Best Value duty and deliver the function demonstrating continuous improvement in terms of economy efficiency and effectiveness. Budget setting and developing a plan of improvements is consistent with this legal duty.
- 7.3 The purchases of works goods and services of which the programme comprises will be subjected to an appropriate level of competition in line with the Council's procurement procedures and the prevailing procurement law. In each case the winning bidder will be determined based upon pre-advertised evaluation criteria representing a blend of quality and price. The resultant contract awards will represent Best Value as well as being compliant with the procurement law. Each award will be subject to its own approval process in line with the constitution.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

NONE.

Appendices

1. Be Well Leisure Facilities Proposed Improvement Programme Capital Bids
2025-26 – Summary
2. Project Proposals & Feasibilities

Appendix 1: Be Well Leisure Facilities Proposed Capital Projects 2025/26

Appendix 1: Be Well Leisure Facilities Proposed Capital Projects 2025/26					Outcomes & Impact			
Facility	Project Title	Scope	Cost (£000)	Summary Proposal	Targeted Service	Customer Experience	New / Better Service Offer	Income Generating (3 year £000)
Poplar Baths & Leisure Centre	Poplar Baths Women Only Gym	Creation of a new 190m2 women's only gym facility at Poplar Baths and Leisure centre using the former cafe space	406	There is an opportunity to create a new facility which would include Cardio area (bikes, treadmills, rowers, ellipticals etc.); free weights area; dedicated functional zone a dedicated stretch area. This would utilise the former café space and pool viewing gallery on the ground floor and enable the reconfiguration of the existing gym on the first floor.	✓	✓	✓	-335
Mile End Leisure Centre	Mile End Wet Change Facility refurbishment	Upgrade of swimming changing village	438	This was previously identified by as a potential project for future investment, but funding was not made available. The wet changing facilities are considered to be poor with obsolete storage lockers, fittings and furniture which cannot be repaired. The proposal is to also reconfigure the changing rooms to better accommodate users including additional individual / personal changing cubicles, enhanced disability access and improved family changing facilities to meet customer needs and modern standards.		✓	✓	
Mile End Leisure Centre	Mile End Health Suite (Sauna and Steam Room Expansion and Refurbishment	Refurbishment and expansion of existing Sauna, Steam and Spa Facilities	248	The existing facilities whilst open to customers would benefit from a substantial refurbishment of the facilities including the mechanical and components which are nearing end of life and increasingly difficult to maintain. This would enable the facilities to be rebranded alongside the refurbished York Hall Spa along with bringing the facilities at Whitechapel Sports Centre back into use.		✓	✓	-168

Mile End Stadium (football pitch)	Stadium Upgrade (FA Step 4 standard)	Football facility upgrades to meet and enable Football Association Step 4 football use	63	This investment would support match funding to bring in £100k from the Football Stadium Fund in partnership with Sporting Bengal United FC recently promoted to the Isthmian League North (Step 4) which means there are minimum standards for the facility required by the Football Association which would have a wider benefit for other users.		✓	✓	
Whitechapel Sports Centre	Whitechapel Health Suite (Sauna and Steam Rooms)	Refurbishment of the currently closed steam room and sauna facility to support enhance service offer	94	The Sauna and Steam Room facilities have been closed since the pandemic and therefore there is an opportunity to carry out a major refurbishment and rebranding to create a new offer at Whitechapel Sports Centre.		✓	✓	-78
York Hall Leisure Centre	Women Only Gym Space	Creation of flexible gym facilities to enable women only programming	25	The current gym / fitness suite is located on the first floor and is restricted in terms of space and therefore there are no opportunities or space to expand the gym or create a women's only facility. This project would provide a light refurbishment to the existing facilities and add a flexible screen to enable part of the current gym to be screened off to support programming of women only gym sessions and activities.	✓	✓	✓	
Poplar, Mile End, Tiller LC	Pop Up Creche facilities	Pop up Creche facilities and equipment to support new facility and service for customers	75	This would be part of the investment in creche equipment alongside other swimming venues in the borough. The pop-up creche model is being developed in support of the Free-Swimming Programme and has the opportunity to expand to wider facility users on the basis of operating as a cost neutral model with a small charge to offset staffing costs.	✓	✓	✓	

All Centres	Water Play and Sports Hall Inflatables	Investment in new 'pop up' inflatable play and swimming pool facilities to develop a flexible offer for activities for children and families.	156	This project would support the service to provide enhanced 'pop up' inflatable swimming and sports hall activities and programme for children and their families across all of the leisure centres. This would also support the expansion of children's 'wet and dry' parties as well as pay and play sessions as part of the wider programme and offer and generate additional income.	✓	✓	✓	-325
Total Additional Investment			1,504					-906

Appendix 2 Project Proposals & Feasibilities



Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2028 Project Feasibility Proposal

Project: BWL01	Poplar Baths Women's Only Gym
Site	Poplar Baths & Leisure Centre
Report Author	Keith Townsend

Section 1 – Project Summary & Outcomes

This project will create a new women's only gym facility utilising the former café space on the ground floor. The facility would include Cardio area (bikes, treadmills, rowers, ellipticals etc.); free weights area; dedicated functional zone a dedicated stretch area. This would utilise the former café space and pool viewing gallery on the ground floor and enable the reconfiguration of the existing gym on the first floor which is a separate proposal. The project would also run in parallel with the new reception facilities and pop-up creche facility creating a new and exciting offer on the ground floor.

The key outcomes of the project will be to:

- Support **targeted services** by providing a new state of art women only facilities and therefore supporting the proportion of service users who are female (a key performance indicator).
- Improve **customer experience** through improved facilities meeting customer demand for women only and personal gym training space.
- Provide a **better service offer** through the latest gym equipment supported by modern technology.
- **Generate income** through increased memberships and reduction in attrition of existing members due to the quality of the gym equipment.

Section 2 – Project Proposal & Business Case

Poplar Baths reopened to the public in July 2016 following a £36 million redevelopment. The under-utilised area has the potential to positively contribute to the overall offer at the facility and facilitate greater participation from the local community. The Café closed in 2019, and the proposal is to convert the café area into a dedicated Women Only Gym open in line with the normal centre opening hours and increasing woman-only gym provision within the borough.

The conversion would provide a dedicated women only gym within the footprint of the old Café which has self-contained toilet facilities, including an accessible toilet, and an opportunity to convert the existing kitchen area into a changing facility. The members of the women only gym will be able to access other changing rooms within the facility, should they wish to shower following their fitness session.

By creating this new additional and dedicated gym space, we believe that the additional space in the main gym will ensure an enhanced visit for existing customers as well as attracting users to the facility, reducing member attrition, and increasing centre usage.

The key driver is to create a women’s only gym at Poplar in support of the council’s key strategic objectives as identified in the Strategic Plan:

- Boosting culture, business, jobs, and leisure
- Investing in public services

The current women only gym offer is provided through programming and partitioning part of the exiting gym facility. Therefore, this proposal would also have the added benefit of supporting the reimagining of the current gym offer which would bring additional members into the facility and generate additional income.

This proposal is born from two issues with the current gym provision.

1. The main gym is a light and airy area when fully opened to the public. However, to provide a dedicated Women Only area, the Gym has to be partitioned off. When in operation this reduces the provision of the main gym area decreasing it by approx. 30%.

Previous customer feedback indicated that the that the reduction of space can cause queues for certain weights and resistance equipment, as well as make the area feel small, particularly in terms of local competition.

2. The current women only provision is “closed in” due to the partitioning of the area, and as such only limited equipment and facilities are on offer within this allocated space.

It has been assumed that there the new facility would support an average of 300 new memberships sale based upon the average monthly membership rate of £35.75 pm. For 2025/25 this estimated to be for a 6-month period and would generate £64.5k of additional income. For 2026/27 the same assumptions have been used but with a full-year effect equating to £129k of additional income.

It is also assumed there will be a modest additional income from causal / ‘Pay and Play’ customers of £2.5k in 2025/26 and £5k in 2026/27.

The following shows indicative income projection (based upon new memberships and modest additional income from play and play gym usage to contribute to the additional savings for the *Be Well* leisure service assumed with in the council’s medium term financial strategy:

Saving / Income Item	2025/26 (£000s)	2026/27 (£000s)	2027/28 (£000s)	Total
Direct Debit Income	(64.5)	(129)	(129)	(318.5)
Casual gym income	(2.5)	(5)	(5)	(12.5)
Total	(67)	(134)	(134)	(335)

Section 3 – Capital Investment

The new gym / fitness suite will be approximately 190sqm opposed to the current 70sqm (as part of the main gym / fitness suite when programmed) and will include a range of equipment including:

- Cardio area (bikes, treadmills, rowers, ellipticals etc.)
- Free weights area
- Dedicated functional zone
- Dedicated stretch area

As part of the project, the current swimming pool spectator’s gallery will not be accessible to the general public or the customers of children in swimming lessons. Therefore, part of the proposal will investigate the feasibility converting the old sales lounge into a new spectator’s gallery which is also being considered for the pop-up creche facility as part of another project proposal.

The cost estimates originated from a feasibility carried out by an independent specialist consultant in 2022-23. The estimated costs were reviewed, and an estimated inflation uplift was applied in order to develop the bid figures.



<i>Item</i>	2025-26 (£000)	2026-27 (£000)	2027-28 (£000)
Strip out, construction, M&E	190		
Fitout and gym equipment	135		
TOTAL	325		

Section 4 – Indicative Project Plan

Milestone	Date	Status
Submit PID for Funding	Sep 2024 – Oct 2024	Completed
Project approved for programme	Nov 2024	Pending
Full Feasibility & Finalise Scope	Q4 24/25	
Procurement Initiation	Q4 24/25	
Procurement & Evaluation	Q1 25/26	
Contract Award & Mobilisation	Q2 25/26	
Implementation & Completion	Q3 25/26	

Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2028 Project Feasibility Proposal

Project BWL02	Mile End Swimming Changing Village Refurbishment & Reconfiguration
Site	Mile End Leisure Centre
Report Author	Chris Tye

Section 1 – Project Summary & Outcomes

The proposal is to also reconfigure the changing rooms to better accommodate users including additional, individual / personal changing cubicles, enhanced disability access and improved family changing facilities to meet customer needs and modern standards. The current wet changing facilities have previously been identified as priority project and wet changing facilities are considered to be poor with obsolete storage lockers, fittings and furniture which cannot be repaired.

The key outcomes of the project will be to:

- Improve **customer experience** through improved and modern changing facilities for families and general swimmers including women and girls and other target groups.
- Provide a **better service offer** through high quality changing facilities.

Section 2 – Project Proposal & Business Case

Mile End Stadium and Leisure Centre is the largest and best used leisure facility.

The key objective of the proposal is to provide high quality, modern and clean changing facilities for *Be Well* leisure customers to provide a better customer experience and support the service to attract new customers, especially new Swim School customer which provides recurring income for the service.

Specifically, the project will support improved customer experience, satisfaction, and retention; provide improved appearance, cleanliness and hygiene standards; replace obsolete furniture and fittings and improve the layout and configuration to meet the needs of current and future customers.

Section 3 – Capital Investment

<i>Item</i>	2025-26 (£000s)	2026-27 (£000s)	2027-28 (£000s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of redesign / installation of lockers and cubicles and changing benches • Mechanical & Electrical works • New Shower Units and Fittings • Cost of redesign / installation of lockers and cubicles and changing benches 			
Sub total	350		
Fees and Surveys (15%)	52.5		

Contingency (10%)	35		
TOTAL	437.5		

Section 4 – Indicative Project Plan

Milestone	Date	Status
Submit PID for Funding	Sep 2024 – Oct 2024	Completed
Project approved for programme	Nov 2024	Pending
Funding approved	Nov 2024	Pending
Full Feasibility & Finalise Scope	Q4 24/25	
Procurement Initiation	Q4 24/25	
Procurement completion & Evaluation	Q1 25/26	
Contract Award & Mobilisation	Q2 25/26	
Implementation & Completion	Q3 25/26	

Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2028 Project Feasibility Proposal

Project BWL03	Mile End Health Suite (Sauna and Steam Room) Refurbishment and Expansion
Site	Mile End Stadium & Leisure Centre
Report Author	Keith Townsend

Section 1 – Project Summary & Outcomes

There is an opportunity to carry out a major refurbishment and rebranding to create a new offer at Mile End Leisure Centre.

The key outcomes of the project will be to:

- Improve **customer experience** by bringing back into use and expand the Health Suite (sauna and steam room) facilities for new and existing customers.
- Provide a **new and better service offer and branding** to align with the newly refurbished York Hall Spa and alongside the reimagined gym and fitness facilities.

Section 2 – Project Proposal & Business Case

Mile End Stadium and Leisure Centre is the largest and best used leisure facility.

The key objective of the proposal is to provide high quality, modern facilities for *Be Well* leisure customers to provide a better customer experience and support the service to attract new customers, which provides recurring income for the service.

The Spa facilities at Mile End Leisure Centre whilst in use are considered to be reaching ‘end of life.’ The project will support improved customer experience, satisfaction and retention; provide improved appearance, cleanliness and hygiene standards; replace obsolete furniture and fittings and improve the layout and configuration to meet the needs of current and future customers.

Specifically, the refurbishment of the Health Suite (sauna and steam room) facilities, linking with planned investment in the changing facilities to provide a quality health suite facility for end users is considered likely to attract additional members. There is an opportunity to reconfigure disused space within the proximity of the existing facilities to expand the offer for customers.

Income Generation

It is anticipated that the project would support additional casual ('Pay and Play') and membership income. The current facility can accommodate 15 customers per hour session and the increased capacity will enable this to become 30 per hour. Current occupancy is at c.95% indicating a strong demand for an improved and expanded facility.

Membership increases assumed are 80 (assumed to be annual and based upon an average monthly membership of £31.50). This would equate to £30.2k p.a.

Current average membership price is £31.50 per month for all facilities with a casual / 'Pay and Play' charge of £8.00 (peak) and £6.15 (off peak). For casual 'Pay and Play' income, it is assumed that 25% usage would be via this route. This would equate to £36.8k p.a.

The following shows an indicative income projection to contribute to the assumed additional savings for the *Be Well* leisure service:

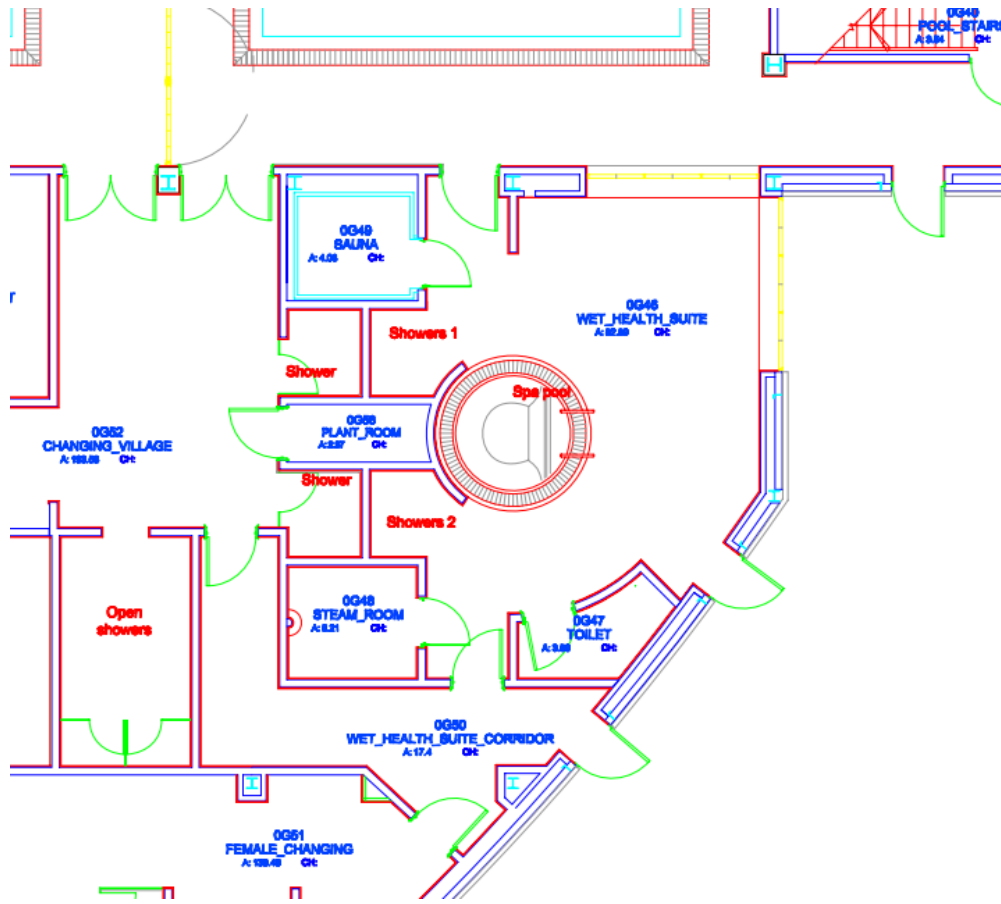
Saving / Income Item	2025/26 (£000s)	2026/27 (£000s)	2027/28 (£000s)	Total
Casual pay and play income	18.4	36.8	36.8	92.0
Increased memberships	15.1	30.2	30.2	75.5
Total	33.5	67.0	67.0	167.5

Section 3 – Capital Investment

The capital investment will include the installation of new sauna and steam rooms facilities, new tiling and fixtures, spa pool refurbishment, redecoration, access control systems (to assist with general and women only access), branding and signage updates and the installation of new spa features.

The intention is for the design to the new Be Well Spa branding at the new, York Hall Spa and integrated with the look and feel of the wider changing room refurbishment project.

Current Layout



Mood Board



<i>Item</i>	2025-26 (£000s)	2026-27 (£000s)	2027-28 (£000s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sauna and steam room replacement • New tiling and fixtures • Access control systems • Branding & signage updates • New spa features installation 			
Sub total	198.0		

Fees and Surveys (15%)	29.7		
Contingency (10%)	19.8		
TOTAL	247.5		

Section 4 – Indicative Project Plan

Milestone	Date	Status
Submit PID for Funding	Sep 2024 – Oct 2024	Completed
Project approved for programme	Nov 2024	Pending
Full Feasibility & Finalise Scope	Q4 24/25	
Procurement Initiation	Q4 24/25	
Procurement & Evaluation	Q1 25/26	
Contract Award & Mobilisation	Q2 25/26	
Implementation & Completion	Q3 25/26	

Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2028 Project Feasibility Proposal

Project BWL04	Mile End Stadium Upgrade
Site	Mile End Stadium
Report Author	Tim Clee

Section 1 – Project Summary

This project is to undertake stadium improvements at Mile End Stadium in order to bring the stadium in line with the requirements of the Football Association’s ground grading and also to benefit other users of the stadium such as those partaking in athletics.

Sporting Bengal football club who falls under the Sporting Foundation umbrella have made Mile End stadium their footballing home. As well as having a successful football team, Sporting Foundation are an organisation that has been working with kids in Tower Hamlets through sports for many years, with the objective of getting under-represented groups to participate in sports across Tower Hamlets.

This year Sporting Bengal football club have been promoted to step 4 of the English football pyramid, and because of this there is a requirement to undertake some stadium improvements to satisfy the Football Associations ground grading requirements which will allow Sporting Bengal football club to continue to play at the step 4 level. Currently the stadium has four failures which were identified by stadium power who undertook a stadium accreditation report in April 2024. If the upgrades required by the Football Association are not met by March 2025 they will face automatic relegation.

The Stadium improvements will also benefit the wider Tower Hamlets Community and leisure centre users, as upgrading the facilities at the stadium will hopefully encourage participation amongst other sporting activities such as track and field sports.

Section 2 – Business Case

The aim for this project is as a Council to provide a sport facility that allows teams and the local community to train and compete at the highest level in a variety of sports, which as a result should see an increase in participation in sports and events at Mile End stadium, especially amongst girls and women.

It is anticipated that the project would:

- Increase in participation amongst girls and women for field and track sports.
- Enable sports teams such as Sporting Bengal to play sports in the Borough at the highest level possible.
- Generation income from supporters of Sporting Bengal through admission fees and supporters’ food catering facility.

- Increase in facility users and local community satisfaction rate.
- Opportunities for young people, girls and women to participate in sports at Mile End Stadium.
- New facilities such as an upgrade to the function room and refurbished outdoor toilets.
- Improving Health and Safety through the installing of a new turnstile and upgrade to the lighting in and around the stadium stand area.
- Additional Accessibility and security by installing a new turnstile which will allow safe entry and exit to the stadium area.

Section 3 – Capital Investment

The capital works needed as part of this project are to install a new double turnstile with pay booth, erect windbreak cover on the surrounding fencing to stop external spectator viewing, outdoor spectator toilet refurbishment, upgrade to function room area to allow spectators to have refreshments, upgrade to floodlights, redecoration of the stadium stand area, upgrade to spectator lighting around the stadium and general repairs to the stadium.

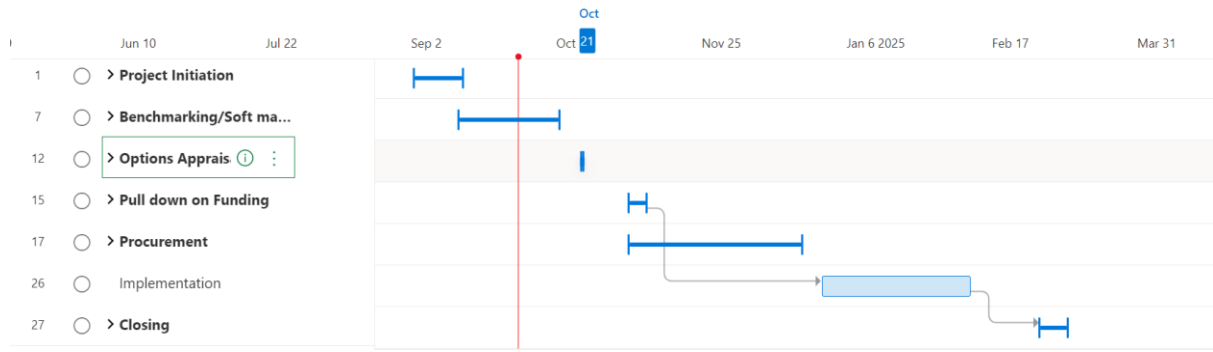
Stadium Power’s Mile End Stadium Accreditation Report details the failures found at the stadium.

Below are pictures of the proposed Turnstiles and windbreak material to be erected on the surrounding fencing.



Item	2025-26 (£000)	2026-27 (£000)	2027-28 (£000)
Turnstile	10		
Perimeter Fencing Cover	25		
Upgrade to spectator lighting	5		
General Repairs	10		
Sub total	50		
Fees and Surveys (15%)	8		
Contingency (10%)	5		
TOTAL	63		

Section 4 – Indicative Project Plan



Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2028 Project Feasibility Proposal

Project BWL05	Whitechapel Sauna and Steam Room Refurbishment
Site	Whitechapel Sports Centre
Report Author	Tim Clee

Section 1 – Project Summary & Outcomes

The Sauna and Steam Room facilities have been closed since the pandemic and therefore there is an opportunity to carry out a major refurbishment and rebranding to create a new offer at Whitechapel Sports Centre.

The key outcomes of the project will be to:

- Improve **customer experience** by bringing back into use the sauna and steam room facilities for new and existing customers.
- Provide a **new and better service offer and branding** to align with the newly refurbished York Hall Spa and alongside the reimagined gym and fitness facilities.

Section 2 – Project Proposal & Business Case

Spa facilities at Whitechapel Sports Centre have been decommissioned since before the COVID pandemic. Customers have therefore been without a core service offer at the centre for over 4 years.

It is proposed to reinstate the spa facilities made up of sauna and steam rooms, linking with planned investment in the changing facilities to provide a quality spa facility for end users.

The following shows an indicative income projection to contribute to the assumed additional savings for the *Be Well* leisure service.

Income Generation

It is anticipated that the project would support additional casual ('Pay and Play') and membership income.

Membership increases assumed are 60 (assumed to be annual and based upon an average monthly membership of £31.50). This would equate to £22,700 p.a.

Current membership prices are £42.50 per months for all facilities with a casual / 'Pay and Play' charge of £8.00 (peak) and £6.15 (off peak). For casual 'Pay and Play' income, it is assumed that 25% usage would be via this route. This would equate to £8,700 p.a.

Saving / Income Item	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
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	(£000s)	(£000s)	(£000s)	
Casual pay and play income	4.3	8.7	8.7	21.7
Increased memberships	11.3	22.7	22.7	56.7
Total	15.6	31.4	31.4	78.4

Section 3 – Capital Investment

The capital investment will include the installation of new spa facilities, full tiling, redecoration, and fixtures and fitting.

The design will align to the Be Well Spa branding and integrated with the look and feel of the wider changing room refurbishment project.



Mood Board



Item	2025-26 (£000)	2026-27 (£000)	2027-28 (£000)
Tiling and Redecoration	51		
Sauna Steam Facilities	24		
Sub total	75		
10% contingency	11.25		
15% Fees	7.5		
TOTAL	93.75		

Section 4 – Indicative Project Plan

Milestone	Date
Site Survey and Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nov 2024
Approval of Capital Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dec 2025
Order placed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mar 2025
9-week lead in time for deliver and install of Spa	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apr 2025
Tiling, Redecoration, Fixtures & Fittings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jun - Jul 2025
Soft launch and opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aug 2025
Event to launch to public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sep 2025

Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2028

Project Feasibility Proposal

Project BWL07	Pop-up Creche Facilities: Poplar, Tiller & Mile End Leisure Centres
Site	Poplar Leisure Centre, Mile End Leisure Centre, Tiller Leisure Centre
Report Author	Simon Jones

Section 1 – Project Summary & Outcomes

The proposal incorporates refurbishment of current spaces alongside investing in ‘pop up’ equipment, toys, furniture, furnishings and fittings to provide a rapid and flexible set up /down facility. The service aims to provide temporary childcare facilities for parents and guardians using the leisure centre, ensuring a convenient, safe, and engaging environment for children. This will build upon the free creche service as part of the free-swimming programme to be introduced as a pilot scheme in December 2024. The report covers the setup requirements, projected costs, revenue opportunities, and a profit and loss forecast.

The key outcomes of the project will be to:

- Support **targeted services** by providing facilities for childcare we break down one of the known barriers to participation.
- Improve **customer experience** through improved facilities meeting customer demand for a safe space for creche provision.
- Provide a **better service offer** allowing more people to access services.
- **Generate income** through increased memberships as a direct of consequence of adding creche facilities.

Section 2 – Project Proposal & Business Case

The key objectives of the project are:

To enhance the inclusivity of the *Be Well* leisure centre to families and parents to encourage increased usage and membership; and
To provide a convenient, cost effective and subsidy free childcare offer that encourages parents to engage in leisure activities.

The primary audience for the pop-up crèche will be parents with young children (typically aged 6 months to 5 years) who frequent use both Leisure Centre for activities such as gym workouts, swimming, or classes. Secondary audiences include occasional visitors who may use the facility during specific events or community programs.

Designate a specific area in the leisure centres for the crèche, ideally close to the main facilities but isolated enough to provide a safe environment for children. Identified as a space previously used as viewing area for lessons through a monitor and is within the main foyer / entrance area.

Poplar LC: It is proposed to utilise the former membership area on the ground floor between the current reception and the former café space.

Mile End LC: several options are being considered including the space within the foyer and disused back off space / meeting room (previous used as a creche facility by GLL). However, the option exists to use the existing soft-play area.

Tiller LC: It is proposed to repurpose a disused store area next to the current soft play.

Delivery model:

It is proposed to build on the pilot free-creche model developed for the free-swimming programme. The service is commissioning local women's advocacy charity Women Inclusive Team (WIT) to provide vetted childcare professionals with appropriate certifications (first aid training and DBS checks).

It is proposed to provide the service for 12 days per month for three hours per day.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that this service will generate sufficient income to self-fund.

The indicative business plan has been developed for the facilities using the following assumptions:

- Hourly Fees: Parents will be charged for the childcare service, typically on an hourly basis. Based on local market research, a fee of £8-£10 per hour is standard. A *Be Well* Members Discount of 25% will be available.
- Event and Program Partnerships: Partnering with local event organisers to offer childcare during events held at the leisure centres, increasing crèche usage.
- It is estimated that the additional staffing cost will be £72k per annum, and it is assumed that this would generate an income from fees and from potential additional memberships to offset the operating costs.

Indicative Expenditure Assumptions

- It has been assumed that the facilities would require two staff per 1 hour session, working on an adult to child ratio of 4:1 (based upon Ofsted guidelines). Based upon local market information it is estimated that a fee of £8-£10 per hour is standard. It is assumed that the average charge will be £8 per session.
- 2 staff x 4 hours per day x £25 p.h. x 3 days per week (average) x 40 weeks p.a. = £24,000 per annum.
- £24,000 per annum x 3 sites = **£72,000**

Indicative Income Assumptions

- Income Generation: It is assumed that the base charge will be £10 per session with 25% discount for members. Therefore, average yields assumed to be £8 per session. Occupancy levels assumed to be 16 per day (2/3)

- 16 children pd x £8 per session x 3 days pw x 40 weeks = £15,360
- Membership Growth: It is assumed that the scheme will attract 5 new members per site with an average membership yields of £35.75 x 52 weeks = £9,295
- (£15,360 + £9,295) x 3 sites = **£73,965**

Section 3 – Capital Investment

Item	2025-26 (£000)	2026-27 (£000)	2027-28 (£000)
Mile End LC Creche	20		
Poplar LC Creche	20		
Tiller LC Creche	20		
Sub total	60		
Fees and Surveys (15%)	9		
Contingency (10%)	6		
TOTAL	75		

Section 4 – Indicative Project Plan

Milestone	Date	Status
Submit PID for Funding	Sep 2024 – Oct 2024	Completed
Project approved for programme	Nov 2024	Pending
Approval of Capital Funding	Dec 2024	
Full Feasibility	Q4 24/25	
Implementation	Q1 25/26	
Completion	Q2 25/26	

Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2028 Project Feasibility Proposal

Project BWL08	Water Play and Sports Hall Inflatables
Site	All Sites
Report Author	Chris Tye

Section 1 – Project Summary & Outcomes

This project would support the service to provide enhanced ‘pop up’ inflatable swimming and sports hall activities and programme for children and their families across all of the leisure centres. This would also support the expansion of children’s ‘wet and dry’ parties as well as pay and play sessions as part of the wider programme and offer and generate additional income.

Section 2 – Project Proposal & Business Case

The Objective of the project is:

To provide inflatable swimming and sport hall play and activity platforms to allow for additional play programmes for children and families to encourage additional users and members and generate additional income.

This project would support the service to provide enhanced ‘pop up’ inflatable swimming and sports hall activities and programme for children and their families across all of the leisure centres. This would also support the expansion of children’s ‘wet and dry’ parties as well as pay and play sessions as part of the wider programme and offer and generate additional income.

Mile End

- An aquarun swimming pool assault course
- A larger obstacle course, pop up play jungle.

Whitechapel - Studio pop up play

- 3 in 1 bouncer, 12-piece jungle soft play and safety matting

Poplar Baths

- An aquarun swimming pool assault course

John Orwell

- Inflatable activity course and goalpost style bouncy castle

York Hall

- An aquarun swimming pool assault course
- Inflatable assault course

The financial modelling is based upon 2 children’s parties per week across 5 facilities at a unit cost of £250 (£250 x 2 parties x 5 sites x 50 weeks = £125k (full year)). The service has been relatively prudent in volumes considering that there are four swimming pools and six sports halls.

The drop-in sessions are on the basis of off-peak concession swimming fee of £5. The assumptions are that there will be 2 sessions per week attracting 10 customers (£5 x 2 sites x 10 customers x 50 weeks = £5k (full year)). The service is currently reviewing pool and sports hall programming in order to identify optimal opportunities for new ‘drop in’ wet and dry ‘active play sessions’ so determine opportunities for further income growth. School holidays are likely to provide a further opportunity to expand the offer.

It is assumed that there is no additional staffing requirement as the existing staff can support the set up of the inflatables and related equipment and pool staff will already be on duty. Children’s parties are assumed to be ‘self-supervising’ as a condition of the hire agreement.

The following shows and indicative income projection to contribute to the assumed additional savings for the *Be Well* leisure service:

Saving / Income Item	2025/26 (£000s)	2026/27 (£000s)	2027/28 (£000s)	Total
Children ‘s Parties (2 per week x 5 sites)	(62.5)	(125)	(125)	(312.5)
Drop-in sessions (1 per week x 2 sites)	(2.5)	(5)	(5)	(12.5)
Total	(65)	(130)	(130)	(325)

Section 3 – Capital Investment

Item	2025-26 (£000)	2026-27 (£000)	2027-28 (£000)
Cost of Inflatables for All Sites	142.2		
Sub total	142.2		
Fees and Surveys (15%)	0		
Contingency (10%)	14.2		
TOTAL	156.4		



Section 4 – Indicative Project Plan

Milestone	Date	Status
Submit PID for Funding	Sep 2024 – Oct 2024	Completed
Project approved for programme	Nov 2024	Pending
Approval of Capital Funding	Nov 2025	
Full Feasibility and scheme finalisation	Q4 24/25	
Procurement & Mobilisation	Q1 25/26	
Service commencement	Q2 25/26	

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