

**ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT – HEALTHY COMMUNITIES SERVICE
APPLICATION FOR RESOURCES FOR: REALISING EFFICIENCY SAVINGS 2015-2018
SUBMITTED BY: IAN JONES, SENIOR MANAGER**

Background

1. As part of the Council's financial strategy between 2015/16 and 2017/18 the Department is required to deliver £1,053k of efficiency savings (with the exception of outsourcing schemes) within the Healthy Communities Service.
2. The Service has prepared schemes for meeting this target which have now been submitted to the corporate and political regimes.
3. One of those schemes is proposal HAM4 (Running Leisure Facilities more effectively). This proposal involves securing efficiency savings through a combination of the following:
 - Making adaptations to what is currently on offer in order to attract new income,
 - Reducing expenditure by reviewing resource management arrangements and,
 - Transforming the way service users contact and gain access to the service.
4. The intention of this application is to ask for capital funding in order to deliver one part of the third element, namely:-
 - Transforming the way users gain access to the facilities by upgrading the Service's Information Technology Systems.

The Need

5. The existing IT system has been in place since 2000 and although a limited upgrade programme has taken place during the ensuing period the system no longer meets the Service's expectations in relation to providing an effective interface with users.
6. This year, the Service has invested £17k revenue funding in order to improve the performance of the system when i) archiving historical information ii) rationalising the number of reporting layers and iii) deleting incorrect / incomplete information from the system. However, those improvements are limited to improving the performance of the system only.
7. There is a clear overdependence in the existing system on traditional interfaces e.g. every request to hire the centre must be done either by phone or by visiting the centre in person.
8. Based on recent research, the Service has identified that at least 33% of the users are very likely to use an electronic means of communicating with / contacting the centres. This means that it would be possible to realise efficiency savings by reducing the current customer contact resources and referring users to use information technology. The technology would include:
 - Self-service machines in reception areas
 - A website which will enable users to become members, hire facilities and pay on-line
 - An on-line portal which would enable parents to see the progress of their children in lessons and choose what time of day would be convenient for them to attend those lessons in future.
9. We are aware that the needs and expectations of our users are different and, therefore, we must be careful when anticipating the effect of any change on those users. Therefore, there will be a period of

educating and training the users likely to be using the technology on how to use it to its full potential.

10. In order to confirm the appropriate cost/benefit assessment the Service has completed a detailed analysis of the current situation which includes an assessment of the benefits of transforming the existing provision. That analysis has shown that it is possible to realise permanent revenue savings of £60k per annum from 2017/18 onwards should it be possible to secure a capital investment of £152k at the beginning. (a copy of this analysis is available should you wish to see it).

11. Therefore, the Cabinet are asked for an investment of £152k based on the business case submitted.

Cost: £152,000