
FUNDING APPROVAL FOR WORKS BY LIVE BORDERS AT THE GYTES LEISURE CENTRE PEEBLES AND EYEMOUTH LEISURE CENTRE

Report by Director of Finance and Procurement
EMERGENCY POWERS

17 JULY 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to allocate funding to urgent works required at the Gytes Leisure Centre in Peebles and the Public Swimming Pool in Eyemouth Leisure Centre. The funding is part of the normal block allocation to Live Borders. The Council's Financial Regulations, however, require block programme within the capital programme to be reported to Executive Committee to provide approval to spend prior to expenditure being incurred. This report fulfils that requirement.**
- 1.2 The likely cost of the works to replace the boilers at the Gytes are in the order of £131,000. The main boiler at the Gytes is beyond economic repair and the back-up boiler system has recently been condemned following its scheduled safety inspection. Currently, therefore, the centre is without heating or hot water. The works required to the air handling system which regulates the temperature in the pool hall at the Eyemouth pool are £198,000. Responsibility for these works rests with Live Borders.

2 STATUS OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report is an emergency powers paper due to the urgency of these works, the anticipated lead in times to deliver and install the necessary plant and equipment, and the lack of an appropriate committee due to the summer recess.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that approval is given to fund £131,000 of works from the capital grant allocation to Live Borders to replace the boilers at the Gytes Leisure and approval is given to fund further works totalling £198,000 to replace the air handling units and heating controls at the Eyemouth Leisure centre under emergency powers.**

4 ISSUES AT GYTES LEISURE CENTRE AND EYEMOUTH LEISURE CENTRE

- 4.1 Approval is required under the Council's financial regulations to allocate budget to fund urgent works at two major facilities operated on behalf of the Council by Live Borders. Council provides an annual capital grant to Live Borders to maintain sport, leisure and culture facilities operated by Live Borders in a useable condition. Live Borders receives an annual grant allocation of £185,000.
- 4.2 Urgent works are now required at the Gytes Leisure Centre in Peebles and the Leisure Centre in Eyemouth which contains the swimming pool. The funding is part of the normal capital funding block allocation to Live Borders. The Council's Financial Regulations however require block programme within the capital programme to be reported and agreed by Executive Committee to provide approval to spend prior to expenditure being incurred. This report enacted under the Council's Emergency Powers procedure, on the grounds of urgency fulfils that requirement.
- 4.3 The likely cost of the works to replace the boilers at the Gytes are in the order of £131,000. The main boiler at the Gytes is beyond economic repair and the back-up system has recently been condemned following its scheduled safety inspection. Currently therefore the centre is without heating or hot water. The works required to the air handling system at the Eyemouth pool are £198,000.

GYTES LEISURE CENTRE

- 4.4 Of the two boilers at the Gytes, it has recently been confirmed that Boiler 1 has been out of operation for approximately 18 months and the recent gas safety test undertaken on Boiler 2 declared it as immediately dangerous. Neither of the Gytes boilers, therefore, remain currently operational.
- 4.5 The Gytes centre remains open but there is no hot water or heating. If a solution is not in place by October 2023, the centre will have to close because there will be no heating. This means the centre will not be available as a public venue nor as a changing venue for Peebles Rugby Club. Peebles Rovers are also in active discussion about sharing the pitch at the Gytes and a failure to keep the centre operational would potentially impact adversely upon both the Rugby and Football clubs to the significant detriment to club sport in the town. The lead in times for replacing the boilers is estimated at 4-6 weeks.

4.6 **Table 1**

Gytes: Boiler & Pump replacement including pressurisation unit	70	Boiler & Pump replacement including pressurisation unit
Gytes: Calorifier replacement	32	Calorifier replacement
Gytes: Control works to facilitate £28,807	29	Control works to facilitate

Total £131,000

EYEMOUTH LEISURE CENTRE

4.7 Eyemouth pool is served by 2x Air Handling Units. Both are in excess of 25 years old. Revenue was spent during 2022 to maintain and prolong life of the units but both have now failed and are not repairable. The facility remains open with workarounds but this is not a long-term solution. Failure to urgently replace the air handlers may result in the long term closure of the facility. Lead in times for the parts required are significant and instructing works now minimises the prospect of an unplanned closure. The costs of the works required are set out in table 2 below.

4.8 **Table 2**

Eyemouth Leisure Centre - air handling unit (AHU)	14	£13,500 being spent to retrofit changing area AHU
Eyemouth Leisure Centre - secondary and main pool pumps & inverters	20	Purchase Orders issued
Eyemouth Leisure Centre - actuators pool heating	2	
Eyemouth: Main pool AHU	100	Currently only supplying air into pool, no extract. supply fan is on last legs
Eyemouth: Controls Upgrade	49	Must be completed before the winter or no heating. New controls require new AHU
Eyemouth: EICR Remedials	1	C1, C2 failings identified by EICR must be rectified
Eyemouth: Pool plant Remedials	2	Replace leaking day tank and repair dosing unit, not dosing correctly at present
Eyemouth: Pool Cover	8	At end of 5 year life, cost to repair is £400 less so might as well replace
Eyemouth Removal of refrigerant plant	2	This will prevent the need of annual f-gas inspections and servicing, currently paying £598 per year

Total £198,000

4.9 Authorisation for Live Borders to issue the necessary works orders for both facilities was provided by the Chief Executive on the 12 July 2023 with orders confirmed on the 14 July.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

The annual capital grant from the Council to Live Borders totals £185k per annum. Budget approved in previous years, but not yet expended, provides a further £206,000. It is recommended that both projects are prioritised to

ensure the facilities, which are at imminent risk of closure, remain open. The block for sports facilities for 23/24 would thereafter be substantially committed with £2k remaining and some further prioritisation of resources may be required. This leaves the Public Halls upgrade budget, also allocated to Live Borders through the Capital Plan, intact with a budget of £281k in 2023/24.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

Eyemouth

Currently, Eyemouth pool and changing area is using workarounds to keep the facilities open and operational. This is largely reliant on outdoor environmental temperatures. Humidity is being monitored and air-flow maximised via the use of fans. This is not however a long-term solution and failure to approve permanent works for Eyemouth will result in the inevitable closure of the facility from October 2023, because there will be no heating.

Gytes

Currently the Gytes has no heating or hot water. Failure to approve the works for the Gytes will result in closure of the facility from October 2023, because there will be no heating. The Peebles Sevens tournament is scheduled for August 2023. There could be heating and showering facilities available if the decision to progress is made quickly. Lead times for the solution proposed is circa 4-6 weeks for boilers. Orders were placed on 14 July 2023.

The risk of not proceeding is that both facilities will close causing significant public concern and reputational damage to both Live Borders and Scottish Borders Council.

5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

There are no direct implications associated with an Integrated Impact Assessment.

5.4 Sustainable Development Goals

There are no direct implications associated with an Integrated Impact Assessment.

5.5 Climate Change

The replacement of boilers and heating controls in both facilities will have a beneficial impact on costs and carbon output.

Eyemouth

The proposed new air handling unit (AHU) for Eyemouth is a Dantherm DanX CF unit. Live Borders has noted that a similar unit is installed at the Citadel Leisure Centre in Ayr. This is a larger facility than Eyemouth, comprising a swimming pool, diving pool and teaching pool – but South Ayrshire Council has estimated an energy saving of £65,000 per annum as

a result of the Dantherm unit. Live Borders estimate that if a potential saving for Eyemouth were to be in the region of £30,000 per annum, then this would be a 3-4 year payback period against the cost of the unit. The actual overhead cost for Eyemouth Leisure Centre in 2022/23 (including utility cost) was £208,780. The proposed solution for the changing room AHU uses fans, which use approximately 60% less energy than the current units.

Gytes

Live Borders estimate that the proposed Gytes boiler replacement will deliver a 20% energy saving (in comparison to the old boilers) and the new boilers will also have a 2-year parts and labour warranty. In terms of the drive towards Net Zero this while not the ideal solution the new gas boilers will be a significant improvement on the previous aged boilers and the cost of a biomass solution is prohibitive (£300,000). The cost and time to convert the Gytes to an all electrical solution is considered, by Live Borders, to be prohibitive. This would require an SP Energy networks supply upgrade to a 250amp 3 phase supply and the cost of the subsequent heating/showering electrical conversion. The new calorifiers will be stainless steel, which retains heat more effectively and the new controls are estimated to save 4% on energy.

5.6 Rural Proofing

Ensuring the continued operation of these facilities will provide a more secure future for local access to leisure facilities in Berwickshire and Tweeddale assisting the health and well-being of the local population and the sustainability of local sports clubs.

5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to the scheme of administration or the scheme of delegation proposed in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director of Corporate Governance, the Director People, Performance & Change, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

David Robertson
Chief Executive

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Suzy Douglas	Director, Finance and Procurement

Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Ref: N/A

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