

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

03 September 2008

**Joint report of the Director of Planning Transport
and Leisure and the Chief Leisure Officer**

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Council

**1 CAPITAL PLAN FAST TRACK EVALUATION: MAINTENANCE BUILDING AT
POULT WOOD GOLF CENTRE**

Summary

This report brings forward a fast track Capital Plan evaluation for the replacement/refurbishment of the Maintenance Building at Poulton Wood Golf Centre (PWGC) for approval in accordance with the agreed review procedure.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 At the meeting of the Finance and Property Advisory Board held on 2 January 2008, a number of schemes were considered for 'fast tracking'. Included in the list of schemes, subsequently approved by Cabinet was a scheme to replace/refurbish the maintenance building at PWGC on the grounds of health and safety and security.
- 1.1.2 The maintenance building provides storage for a considerable range of high quality machinery and equipment and is the work base for staff engaged in carrying out the full range of maintenance and management duties in respect of the golf course. It is therefore essential that adequate accommodation is provided.
- 1.1.3 At the further meeting of the Finance and Property Advisory Board held on 9 July 2008, a report recommending inclusion of the scheme in the Capital Plan List A was deferred to enable the investigation of any potential income from other commercial activities at Poulton Wood to offset some of the additional costs involved.
- 1.1.4 A full evaluation of the scheme is shown at **Annex 1**. Members will note that the scheme will address concerns raised by the Council's Health and Safety Officer in his audit of the building, which was built in 1974 to serve the needs of the 18 hole course.

1.2 Investigation Into Alternative Commercial Use

- 1.2.1 The potential for raising funds from alternative sources in the widest sense are heavily restricted by the prevailing planning policies that apply to the area. Being in the Green Belt the opportunity for commercial uses are very constrained. Some members will be aware that recently planning permission has been granted for a telecommunications mast. The Telecommunications Operator concerned has yet to approach the Council as landowner to negotiate any lease of the site concerned, which has caused some local controversy, and it is not known whether this will be pursued. If it were then the likely income would be in the region of £6,000 per annum. Other opportunities for this form of commercial opportunity have been considered during the various investigations by Operators looking at telecommunications coverage in this part of the Borough but no other locations on PWGC have yet been found to be operationally satisfactory, notwithstanding any planning issues that might arise.
- 1.2.2 Officers are alive to the need to consider alternative income sources in order to assist the Council in funding its objectives and projects. In this case the prospects are limited but officers will continue to review the telecommunications position and any other opportunities ancillary to the management of the Golf Course itself.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The Council have a duty to provide proper and safe accommodation for staff which is one of the key objectives of this project.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The proposed refurbishment of the maintenance building at PWGC requires capital expenditure of £173,000 with a resultant loss of investment income of £8,650 per annum.
- 1.4.2 Members will note that this capital cost is significantly greater than the 'cost band' attached to it when it was first outlined to the Finance and Property Advisory Board as a potential 'List C' scheme. At that stage, the cost was estimated to be in the band £51,000 to £100,000. As previously reported to the Board the cost is greater than originally estimated following the results of a full survey and quantitative costing, and additional costs associated with security, temporary accommodation and staff welfare facilities. Given the Health and Safety issues connected with the scheme, Members provided funding within the 'fast track' contingency of the Capital Plan; but only to a maximum level of £100,000. If Members were to recommend that the scheme progress as outlined in the report, an additional sum of £73,000 would need to be approved by Council.
- 1.4.3 The Director of Finance has indicated that there is scope within our Capital Reserves to facilitate this, but has pointed out that there is an 'opportunity cost' to the allocation of further sums to this project; i.e. it will not be available to spend on other priority schemes that may come forward in the Capital Plan process. Given

the financial situation, it is necessary for the Council to consider the additional capital funding to be awarded to the scheme.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 The evaluation of the maintenance building at Poult Wood Golf Centre outlines significant concern related to health and safety and staff welfare. The management of health and safety is identified as an area of risk in the LSBU Operational Risk Register and identifies professional, financial, legal and physical risks from failure to adequately manage these issues.

1.6 Policy Considerations

- 1.6.1 Asset Management, Business Continuity/Resilience, Human Resources.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 It is **RECOMMENDED to the COUNCIL** that the proposed refurbishment of the Maintenance Building at Poult Wood Golf Centre (Option 1) as outlined in **Annex 1** to the report be approved and the scheme be included in the Capital Plan List A.

Background papers:

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File Reference: MG – PWGC Maintenance Building

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