

## **Annex H - Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022 Discussion notes.**

### **Minutes for closed session of Overview & Scrutiny April 26<sup>th</sup> 2022 – Item 10**

The Committee noted the report and the recommendations from the Leisure and Cultural Management Option Appraisal.

The Committee commented that the report stated that the in house option “...would enable the Museum to have a more locally focussed approach” although much of the content of the museum was focussed on Roman history rather than local history.

The officer clarified that “locally focussed” referred to the management approach being closer to that of the Council, rather than describing the cultural approach or displays within the museum.

The Committee commented that the ‘Leisure Only’ option (i.e. without the Museums) was not offered, although the ‘Culture Only’ option had subsequently been soft market tested

The officer stated that the details of a Leisure Only’ option was not available when the initial options appraisal had been developed.

The Committee commented that the report was very Cirencester centric where the success of the Museum had been widely attributed to a talented, dynamic curator, and the manner in which success was achieved should be included in any decision making.

The Committee commented that care should be taken with Council owned assets/buildings to ensure these were not given away if an external contractor was chosen.

The Committee commented that there is provision for an extension to the current contract and care should be taken to ensure a robust negotiation process is in place to deliver a good settlement if this option is taken.

The Committee commented that when the current contract was agreed the Council’s leisure centres were the principle facilities in Cirencester, but that there are now a number of similar facilities and it was important that the Councils facilities continue to be a preferred option.

The officer agreed that the leisure market was now more challenging particularly in Cirencester, but the swimming pool remained a valued community facility and the public areas and changing facilities were being maintained and refreshed. Ensuring the attractiveness of dual use facilities was more difficult, however there are currently good relationships with the management of each of the dual use facilities.

The Committee welcomed the decision to undertake a second evaluation with criteria that gave a higher consideration to the costs involved in delivering each options, rather than just considering whether the option would deliver against the Council’s identified outcomes.

The Committee noted that the second evaluation indicated that cost of delivering the services was significantly less if an External Contractor provided them, compared to either the In House, or the LATC/NPDO option.

The Committee commented that the drafting of the service contract was key to ensuring the External Contractor clearly understood the service standards that were required and that they were able to deliver them.

The Committee commented that the Council would be happy to share the risk with an External Contractor as this was now commonly done, however it did not want to be left to pick up the pieces if the service failed. The final service contract would be key.