Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Agenda

Meeting: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
Date: **26 May 2026**
Time: **6.00 pm**
Place: **Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone**

To: **All members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The committee will consider the matters, listed below, at the date, time and place shown above. The meeting will be open to the press and public.

Members of the committee, who wish to have information on any matter arising on the agenda, which is not fully covered in these papers, are requested to give notice, prior to the meeting, to the Chair or appropriate officer.

This meeting will be webcast live to the council's website at https://folkestone-hythe.public-i.tv/core/portal/home. Although unlikely, no guarantee can be made that Members of the public in attendance will not appear in the webcast footage. It is therefore recommended that anyone with an objection to being filmed does not enter the council chamber.

Please note there will be 37 seats available for members of the public, which will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

1. **Election of Chair**

2. **Election of Vice-Chair**

3. **Apologies for Absence**

4. **Declarations of Interest (Pages 5 - 6)**

   Members of the committee should declare any interests which fall under the following categories:

Queries about the agenda? Need a different format?

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Email: committee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk or download from our website
www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Date of Publication: Friday, 15 May 2026

a) disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI);
b) other significant interests (OSI);
c) voluntary announcements of other interests.

5. **Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)**

To consider and approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 7 April 2026.

6. **Membership of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2026-27**

The Sub-Committee is required to be politically balanced and to comprise of five members, drawn from the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The political balance is set out below:

Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee	Total	Conservative	Green	Labour	Liberal Democrat & Independent Group
Membership	5	1	2	1	1

The following nominations have been received:

- Conservative: Alan Martin
- Green: John Wing
- Green: Rich Holgate
- Labour: Abena Akuffo-Kelly
- Liberal Democrat and Independent Group: Paul Thomas

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are asked to resolve the following:

1. Agree the membership of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee; and,
2. To elect a Chair of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2026-27

Note: The Chair must be appointed from among the members of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

7. **Town Centre Operating Model (TCOM): Strategic Direction, Funding And Delivery (Pages 13 - 26)**

The report and presentation cover the strategic direction, funding and delivery of the Town Centre Operating Model (TCOM) for Folkestone town centre. The presentation includes detail on delivery and financial implications for the Council and the actions that have been recently agreed

by the Corporate Leadership Team.

8. **Implications of Introducing 20 Minutes Free Parking in Town Centre Car Parks (Pages 27 - 34)**

This report reviews a suggestion from a member of the public to introduce 20minutes of free parking in town centre car parks as a measure to support and revitalise struggling high streets.

9. **Strategic Approach To Sport And Leisure: Martello Lakes & Hythe Pool (Pages 35 - 64)**

This report provides an update on the emerging projects at Martello Lakes and Hythe Pool as part of the Council's strategic approach to addressing investment in sports and leisure provision in the district.

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Declarations of Interest

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a Member has a new or registered DPI in a matter under consideration they must disclose that they have an interest and, unless the Monitoring Officer has agreed in advance that the DPI is a 'Sensitive Interest', explain the nature of that interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a DPI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation permitting them to do so. If during the consideration of any item a Member becomes aware that they have a DPI in the matter they should declare the interest immediately and, subject to any dispensations, withdraw from the meeting.

Other Significant Interest (OSI)

Where a Member is declaring an OSI they must also disclose the interest and explain the nature of the interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a OSI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation to do so or the meeting is one at which members of the public are permitted to speak for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter. In the latter case, the Member may only participate on the same basis as a member of the public and cannot participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter and must withdraw from the meeting in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

Voluntary Announcement of Other Interests (VAOI)

Where a Member does not have either a DPI or OSI but is of the opinion that for transparency reasons alone s/he should make an announcement in respect of a matter under consideration, they can make a VAOI. A Member declaring a VAOI may still remain at the meeting and vote on the matter under consideration.

Note to the Code:
Situations in which a Member may wish to make a VAOI include membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items; where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person; or where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position. It should be emphasised that an effect on the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc OR an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI.

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Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Minutes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone
Date:	Tuesday, 7 April 2026
Present:	Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly (Chair), John Wing (Vice-Chair), Bridget Chapman, Laura Davision, Tony Hills, Rich Holgate, Alan Martin, Elaine Martin, and Paul Thomas.
Apologies for Absence:	Councillor Anita Jones.
Officers Present:	Ewan Green (Director of Strategy & Resources – Monitoring Officer), Jyotsna Leney (Community Partnership Manager), and Jake Hamilton (Committee Services Officer).
Others Present:	Councillors Mike Blakemore (Cabinet Member for Community & Collaboration), and James Butcher (Cabinet Member for Place Plan, Heritage, Tourism and District Economy).

50. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

51. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 February and 3 March 2026, were submitted, approved, and signed by the Chair.

52. **Minutes of the Finance and Performance Sub-Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2026, were submitted, approved, and signed by the Chair.

53. **Community Grants Schedule 2026/27**

The Community Partnership Manager introduced the item and presented the report, and provided the committee with a presentation (attached).

Community Grants were described as a strategic investment in the voluntary sector, contributing to improved outcomes for residents, strengthened communities, and reduced pressure on statutory services. The report set out a draft proposal for the allocation of Community Grant funding as part of the 2026–27 General Fund Revenue Budget and included a proposed amendment to the Ward Budget Scheme (Ward Member Grants) Terms and Conditions.

Members discussed the report and raised a number of points, including:

- Members welcomed the comprehensive presentation and expressed strong support for the increased investment in communities, in particular the uplift in Member Grants, noting this would assist smaller charities, neighbourhood initiatives and hyper-local projects that might otherwise struggle to secure funding. - Officers acknowledged this and confirmed that the increase was intended to widen access to funding and empower Members to respond quickly to local need providing additional support for communities across the whole of the District.
- Members raised concerns about rising fuel and transport costs affecting voluntary and community groups, particularly those reliant on volunteers and community transport. - Officers advised that funding flexibility existed within the overall programme, including the discretionary funding pot, to respond to emerging pressures. Officers also confirmed that the Welfare Team was expecting additional national funding, and that community hubs were being regularly briefed to ensure eligible residents could access assistance.
- Members queried how new projects and allocations, such as the Romney Marsh sports and active lifestyle programme, were identified, and asked about transparency and fairness in the process. - Officers explained that allocations were based on established partnerships, evidence of need and delivery capacity. For the Romney Marsh programme, officers were engaging a wide range of partners including schools, community organisations, parish councils and leisure providers, and proposed establishing a local stakeholder group to shape delivery and ensure broad accessibility.
- Members sought reassurance regarding value for money and accountability for grant funding. - Officers confirmed that all grants were governed by formal grant agreements with defined outputs, monitoring requirements and reporting arrangements. Larger grants were subject to regular check-ins, site visits where appropriate and annual reporting, with outcomes shared through reports, websites and communications activity.
- Members raised questions about geographical equity, noting that a number of funded organisations were based in Folkestone and querying how rural and North Downs communities benefited. - The Cabinet Member clarified that the majority of funded services operated district-wide and were accessible to residents across all wards, including rural areas. Examples included food provision, advice services, volunteering schemes, sports development and cost-of-living support. Member Grants were also highlighted as a key mechanism for addressing hyper-local needs.
- Members highlighted the financial uncertainty faced by voluntary and cultural organisations due to annual funding cycles and encouraged exploration of

longer-term grant agreements where appropriate. Officers also referenced the proposed voluntary sector resilience project and ongoing networking and "Meet the Funders" events aimed at improving sustainability and access to external funding.

- Members asked for clarification regarding the Town of Culture bid, including when a decision would be known and how the allocated funding would be used if the bid was unsuccessful. - Officers and the Cabinet Member advised that a shortlist decision was expected later in the year. If the bid did not progress, the funding would remain within the community grants budget and be subject to a future members approval. If successful, the bid would attract significant external funding and would focus on inclusive social, economic and cultural outcomes, particularly in more deprived areas.
- Members welcomed the focus on sport, health and youth engagement, particularly the targeted investment on Romney Marsh, and asked how residents not currently engaged in physical activity would be reached. - Officers advised that programmes would be co-designed with schools, youth services, community organisations and health partners, and would focus on activities identified by residents themselves rather than traditional sports only. Engagement with the Youth Forum was also proposed.
- Members asked how smaller organisations would be made aware of discretionary funding opportunities. - Officers advised that options included website promotion, press releases, use of established funding portals, and direct engagement through Members and parish and town councils. The intention was to identify and allocate projects earlier in the financial year to avoid end-of-year pressures.
- Members sought clarification on governance and decision-making arrangements. - Officers confirmed that while the overall grants budget was approved by Full Council, the allocation of funds would be approved through a published Cabinet Member decision, allowing for transparency and scrutiny.
- Members raised the importance of sustainability and climate-focused initiatives within the grants programme. - The Cabinet Member and Officers advised that significant funding was already provided through the Green Grants programme, with additional opportunities for smaller sustainability projects through Member Grants and discretionary funding. Officers also highlighted that several community grants supported sustainability objectives indirectly.

Proposed by Councillor Tony Hills,
Seconded by Councillor Elaine Martin; and,

RESOLVED:

1. **To receive and note report OS/25/17**
2. **To consider and feedback on the draft allocations set out in the Community Grants Schedule.**
3. **To consider and feedback on the proposed amendments to the Ward Budget Scheme Terms & Conditions.**

(Voting figures: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions)

54. **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2026-27**

The Director of Strategy & Resources (Monitoring Officer) introduced the item and presented the report.

The report set out the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the 2026/27 municipal year.

Member raised several points, including:

- Members raised points relating to matters recently referred from Full Council, including water testing in Romney Marsh, the East Stour motion and the solar farm petition. Members noted that these matters had resolved to be subject to further scrutiny, including consideration of a potential Task and Finish Group. - Officers acknowledged Members' comments and confirmed that the Work Programme is intentionally flexible and able to accommodate items referred from Full Council. Officers further advised that, in respect of the solar farm petition, a report would be submitted to Full Council setting out the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations arising from the petition process, including matters relating to further scrutiny.
- Members commented on the volume and complexity of several scrutiny items, and suggested that some topics could be considered jointly where appropriate, such as lighting and pedestrian routes.
- Members asked whether they would be invited to shape the focus of individual items within the Work Programme. - Officers confirmed that the established process would continue, as set out in paragraph 1.8 of the report, whereby the Chair would invite Members to submit priorities and areas of focus in advance.

Proposed by Councillor Bridget Chapman,
Seconded by Councillor Laura Davison; and,

RESOLVED:

1. **To receive and note report OS/25/18**
2. **To note paragraph 1.8 of the report; and,**
3. **To endorse, and recommend to Full Council for approval, the Scrutiny Work Programme for the 2026/27 municipal year as set out in paragraph 1.6 of the report.**

(Voting figures: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions)

55. **Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26**

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly, introduced the item and presented the report.

The report outlined the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee during the 2025/26 municipal year.

Proposed by Councillor Paul Thomas,
Seconded by Councillor Alan Martin; and,

RESOLVED:

1. **To receive and note report OS/25/19; and,**
2. **To receive and note the Annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2025/26 (appendix 1).**

(Voting figures: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions)

56. **Cabinet Member updates**

In accordance with the Constitution, Cabinet Member updates were submitted to the Committee for consideration.

Members were advised that Councillor McConville had submitted his apologies. It was noted that any questions raised in relation to his written update would be recorded and responded to in due course.

Members considered the updates and raised the following questions:

Councillor James Butcher, Cabinet Member for Place Plan, Heritage, Tourism and District Economy:

- Members sought further information on the proposed town centre and community hub at 19 Guildhall Street, including its purpose and operation. - The Cabinet Member explained that the project formed part of a wider Town Centre Operating Model aimed at improving economic vitality and wellbeing. It was noted that a Town Centre Manager post was intended to be based at the site, overseeing professional markets and events, with the aim of becoming self-funding over time. The hub, would provide multiple functions, including support for micro-businesses through shared kitchen facilities, flexible workspace and community uses.
- Members asked for an update on progress towards establishing a UNESCO Geopark and the opportunities for sustainable tourism. - The Cabinet Member advised that the bid had been submitted and that a decision was anticipated later in the year. He highlighted the significant potential for sustainable and eco-tourism, informed by learning from existing Geoparks, and confirmed that specialist advice was being sought to identify future projects and opportunities for local businesses.

- Members commented on the importance of local events and festivals to tourism and the local economy, particularly in towns across Romney Marsh, and queried whether future community grant programmes could include a stronger tourism-focused element. - The Cabinet Member acknowledged the point and agreed that improving promotion and coordination of events was a key challenge.
- Members raised concerns about the significant impact of poor bathing water quality on tourism and local businesses along the Marsh coast, including implications for major attractions such as the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway.
- Members welcomed investment through the Rural England Prosperity Fund supporting countryside and visitor infrastructure, and highlighted opportunities to better link nature reserves, heritage assets and transport attractions, including engagement with schools and young people. - The Cabinet Member agreed that partnership working of this nature offered significant potential and cited ongoing discussions between organisations as positive examples.
- Members asked whether the Town Centre Operating Model could be replicated in other towns across the district and whether alternative funding mechanisms, including Business Improvement Districts, were being explored. - The Cabinet Member advised that discussions on Business Improvement Districts were ongoing but acknowledged associated challenges. He confirmed that while models would not be replicated identically, the principles could be adapted to reflect the distinct needs of different towns.
- Members sought an update on the effectiveness of recently produced tourism maps and future plans for mapping and promotion. - The Cabinet Member advised that the maps were now in circulation and had been well received overall, with reprints already being requested. He noted that future editions could be refined based on feedback.
- Members welcomed the development of an economic strategy and asked whether approaches such as community wealth building, local procurement and youth engagement were being considered. - The Cabinet Member confirmed that these themes had been reflected in consultations and surveys, and that findings would feed into a forthcoming consultant report.
- Members raised queries regarding ongoing works associated with the Folkestone – A Brighter Future project and how suggestions or concerns from residents could be escalated. - The Cabinet Member advised that ward Members raising issues with him remained an effective route for ensuring concerns were passed to officers, Kent County Council or contractors as appropriate, noting recent examples where feedback had led to prompt improvements.

Councillor Connor McConville, Cabinet Member for Assets and Local Government Reorganisation:

There were no questions raised.

This Report will be made public on Friday, 15 May 2026

Report Number: **OS/26/03**

To:	**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
Date:	**26 May 2026**
Status:	**Non-Key decision**
Responsible Officer:	**Andy Blaszkowicz – Director – Housing & Operations**
Cabinet Member:	**Cllr James Butcher, Cabinet Member for Place Plan, Heritage, Tourism and District Economy**

SUBJECT: **TOWN CENTRE OPERATING MODEL (TCOM) : STRATEGIC DIRECTION, FUNDING AND DELIVERY**

SUMMARY: The report and presentation cover the strategic direction, funding and delivery of the Town Centre Operating Model (TCOM) for Folkestone town centre. The presentation includes detail on delivery and financial implications for the Council and the actions that have been recently agreed by the Corporate Leadership Team.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The report and presentation provide Committee with an opportunity to understand more detail of the initiative and to provide feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **To receive and note report OS/26/03; and,**
2. **To provide feedback to officers.**

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE TCOM

1.1 The Town Centre Operating Model (TCOM) transitions Folkestone & Hythe District Council (F&HDC) from a reactive facilitator to a proactive strategic manager of the town centre in Folkestone. This strategic framework and roadmap are designed to enhance the economic management and long-term sustainability of the area.

1.2 This model sits as the central facilitator within a wider, integrated ecosystem for Folkestone town centre. Its primary purpose is to bring dynamic activation and consistent footfall to the new environment facilitated via Folkestone A Brighter Future (FABF) capital works, essentially bringing the high-quality physical environment to life. This coordinated approach builds directly upon the proven data and success of the 'Folke About Town' pilot markets, ensuring that local high street businesses are supported through a structured, resilient, and highly active public realm.

1.3 By establishing this proactive management structure, the initiative directly aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-30 'Creating Tomorrow Together' and will make a significant contribution to achieving positive outcomes for positive community leadership, a thriving environment, a vibrant economy, and quality homes and infrastructure.

2. STRATEGY AND DELIVERY

2.1 The TCOM is designed to actively manage the public realm and support local high street businesses through three core operational pillars:

- **Outsourced operations:** Market operations are outsourced to professional third-party operators.
- **Framework:** A formal framework is established to simplify pop-up activations.
- **Unified events calendar:** All public realm activations are integrated into a single, cohesive events calendar.

2.2 A new Town Centre Manager will serve as the primary liaison between the council, operators, key stakeholders and local businesses to ensure seamless coordination and compliance.

2.3 To ensure long-term operational stability and ease of delivery:

- **Planning updates:** F&HDC will update current planning permissions within the town centre (currently fragmented).
- **KCC agreement:** A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Kent County Council (KCC) Highways will streamline land-use permissions. This shifts operations away from site-specific and date-specific applications, enabling more flexible and frequent use of the public realm.

3. FINANCIAL PATHWAY

3.1 The model is structured to achieve complete financial self-sufficiency over a three-year cycle:

- **Years 1–2 (Foundation):** Setup and staffing costs are fully covered by external grants. This allows the council to offer early financial incentives to attract high-quality market operators but to continue with pilot activity where appropriate.
- **Year 3+ (Sustainability):** The model becomes entirely self-sustaining through regularised commercial operations.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Perceived Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Preventative Action/Mitigation
Formal MOU /Land Agreement with KCC is not forthcoming impacting levels of animation	Low	Medium	KCC engaged as part of stakeholder engagement during development of TCOM with positive input to work collaboratively to achieve MOU. If not achieved, any required event, KCC Streetworks would have to approve individually. The impact of LGR could also have a positive impact on this risk.
Planning variation for Y09/1210/SH not achieved	Medium	Medium	Modification to the level of markets and operators to work within the current permitted development rights for limited use not exceeding 28 days per annum.
Time taken to secure market operators taking longer than expected impacting levels of animation	High	Medium	ED will continue to work with local providers in line with the current pilot event series “Folke About Town”
Levels of assumed revenue generation not achieved in years 1 and 2 impacting “self-fund principle”	Medium	Low	Market operator contract negotiation and recruitment of Town Centre Manager to be subsidised through existing government Capacity Planning funding. HR consulted on any required provision.
Financial projections not met in Year 3	Medium	High	Phased incentives, flexible pricing, active TCO recruitment of traders and events.

External factors hamper the success of ongoing additional markets (e.g cost of living, nearby offer)	High	Medium	Look to incentivise early market operator adopters. Ensure town centre animation complements existing offers of nearby assets e.g. Harbour Arm
Unknown impact of LGR on TCOM	Medium	Medium	Programme delivery working timescale of 2 year period. Funding of associated resource for 2 years using existing grants with no financial exposure to F&HDC. Model supports a "lift and shift" methodology.

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Legal Officer's Comments (KP)

The Council's powers to undertake activities relating to town centre management derive from the general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 together with its functions under the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government Act 2000.

Sections 1 – 4 of the Localism Act 2011 allows councils to do anything an individual can do, unless prohibited and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides general ancillary powers which allows Councils to do anything "conducive or incidental" to their functions

The proposed use of any financial incentives and pilot initiatives must be administered in accordance with the Council's financial procedures, subsidy control obligations under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and any conditions attached to external grant funding.

Any future decisions involving expenditure commitments or formal agreements may require further approval in accordance with the Council's decision-making framework.

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (SO)

The financial implications are set out in paragraph 3 (Financial Pathway), which confirms that initial costs in Years 1–2 will be met from external funding, with no additional pressure to the general fund.

5.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

5.4 Climate Change Implications (JWi)

The proposed TCOM supports the Council's climate change action plan and district wide carbon plan by indirectly reducing carbon emissions by encouraging local shopping/supply chains, promoting green economy, and by utilising existing public spaces rather than constructing new infrastructure. Markets, events and higher foot traffic may lead to higher energy use, waste, and vehicles in the town centre. As part of the proposed TCOM the council should require potential operators to be energy-efficient, to use waste reduction measures and to use low-emission transport in contracts and logistics to align with the Council's climate objectives.

5.5 **Communications Officer's Comments (JW)**

This is an exciting project for Folkestone town centre and if approved will require a communications plan to ensure that funding sources and the positive elements are clearly presented from the outset. Early communications with existing town centre traders is recommended.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

Andy Blaszkowicz, Director of Housing & Operations
Telephone: 07730 751642
Email: andy.blaszkowicz@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report: None

Appendix 1 – OSC Presentation: Town Centre Operating Model P

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APPENDIX 1

OSC

Town Centre Operating Model

May 2026

Folkestone Town Centre - An Integrated Ecosystem

***The Stage*:** The FABF Capital works - creating a high-quality environment.

***The Performance*:** The TCOM - bringing the stage to life through consistent activity and footfall.

***The Script*:** UKSPF skills Programme - providing support for local high street businesses.

***The Rehearsal*:** Data proven through the 'Folke About Town' pilot markets.

***Backstage*:** Nineteen – A hub for business incubation and community activity.



Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Town Centre Operating Model

What is it?
A comprehensive strategic framework and roadmap for enhancing the management and economic sustainability of Folkestone town centre. This will transition the council's role from a reactive facilitator to a proactive strategic manager.

Key Aims:
Boost economic vitality by driving footfall and supporting existing & future businesses.

Sustainable Revenue:
Generate income for the council to ensure long-term longevity.

Animate Spaces:
Transform underutilised public areas into vibrant social hubs.

Streamline Governance:
Establish clear roles and a unified calendar for all town centre activities.

NB – This will be a ‘Lift and Shift’ model ahead of LGR.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Town Centre Operating Model

The operational shift:

Focus Area	Current Status (Fragmented)	TCOM Future (Integrated)
Event Licensing*	8-12 weeks per application	Pre-approved framework; instant setup
Public Realm	Reactive maintenance	Active curation and stewardship
Stakeholder Contact	Disjointed Council departments	Single Town Centre Manager
Strategy	Short-term, siloed projects	Curated calendar of events

**excludes events that require formal SAG group review*

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Town Centre Operating Model

The TCOM will transform the town centre through three key pillars:

1. **Operator-led markets:** Professionally run markets in key locations across the town centre that are diverse, high quality and reduce council risk creating a new town attraction.

2. **Streamlined activity:** A faster formalised process for commercial and charity pop-ups. Easier licencing mean more diverse offering across more locations.

3. **A diverse and unified events calendar:** Coordinating all public realm events into one cohesive calendar. This avoids clashes and creates a stronger year-round destination narrative.



Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Town Centre Operating Model

Key Components for Success:

Town Centre Manager: A single point of contact managing relationships between council, businesses and operators.

Land Use Agreement with KCC Highways: Enables regular markets and events without repeated road-closure applications.

Master Planning Consent: Replaces fragmented consents, allowing flexible use of the entire pedestrianised area and the new space at Bouverie Square.





Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Town Centre Operating Model

Timeline:

Initiation (May – July):
Commence recruitment process Town Centre Manager
Soft market test potential market operators

Activation (May – Oct):
Onboard Town Centre Manager
Formal tender process for initial Market Operator(s)
Negotiate KCC Land Use Agreement via MOU
Commence process for updating planning permissions

Formalisation (July – Oct):
Standardise rules for casual traders and report progress to leadership

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

APPENDIX 1

Q&A

This Report will be made public on Friday, 15 May 2026

Report Number: **OS/26/01**

To:	**Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
Date:	**26th May 2026**
Responsible Officer:	**Frederick Miller, Transportation Manager**
Cabinet Member:	**Cllr Polly Blakemore, Cabinet Member for Transport, Regulatory Services & Building Control**

SUBJECT: **IMPLICATIONS OF INTRODUCING 20 MINUTES FREE PARKING IN TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS**

SUMMARY: This report reviews a suggestion from a member of the public to introduce 20minutes of free parking in town centre car parks as a measure to support and revitalise struggling high streets.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **To receive and note report OS/26/01; and**
2. **To consider the proposal and either:**

    a. **Note the proposal and take no further action.**
    b. **Make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Transport for further consideration.**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 As part of the call for Scrutiny topics, a member of the public submitted a suggestion to introduce 20 minutes of free parking in town centre car parks. The stated intention of the proposal is to address concerns about declining activity on local high streets. The proposer notes that some residents may currently choose not to visit local shops for short trips due to the requirement to pay parking charges, which may have an impact on town centre footfall.

1.2 The proposal further indicates that the provision of short stay free parking could improve accessibility to local shops, particularly for those who may be less willing or able to use mobile based parking payment systems. It is suggested that this approach may encourage short visits to the town centre and provide potential support to local businesses.

2. REVIEWS ON FREE PARKING ON SHOPPING STREETS/HIGH STREETS

2.1 The issue of free parking on shopping streets has been the subject of long running national reviews and debate, most notably the 2011 Mary Portas "Portas Review", which examined the future of UK high streets.

2.2 Over the last 10 to 15 years, government reviews, various council studies, and transport and economic reports have generally concluded that:

- Free or cheaper parking can increase short term footfall, particularly in smaller towns and for convenience shopping.
- Parking incentives alone are not a complete or long-term solution to high street decline.
- The main drivers of decline were identified as online shopping, high business rates and rents, competition from out-of-town retail parks, a lack of attractive retail and leisure options, wider economic challenges, limited community focused uses, and poor town centre management.

2.3 The UK Government accepted most of Portas' recommendations in principle, including the need to make parking more affordable. However, there was no nationwide implementation of universal free parking. In practice, the outcome has been uneven.

2.4 Local authorities take varied approaches to parking incentives. Some have introduced limited free parking periods or reduced charges, while others have made no changes.

- Ashford provides free parking after 3pm in one car park every day and also offers free parking from 3pm in another car park on Sundays and public holidays.
- Thanet offers free parking on Saturdays in four car parks.
- Canterbury and Dover do not provide any free parking in town centre car parks.

- F**&**HDC continues to offer free parking everyday across all shopping streets, maintaining a more generous approach than neighbouring authorities.

2.5 Over time, a broader consensus emerged among local authorities that the long-term vitality of high streets required more than parking policy alone. Increasingly, focus shifted towards reinvention through leisure uses, residential development, markets, events, cafes, local services and mixed-use community spaces. This approach reflects the view that successful high streets depend on creating attractive destinations rather than relying primarily on free parking to drive footfall.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 It should be noted that, if adopted, the proposal would apply to the following ten car parks:

Folkestone	**Sandgate**	**Hythe**	**New Romney**
Shellons Street	Castle Road	Mount Street	West Street
Pleydell Gardens		Military Road	Church Road
Foresters Way		Prospect Road	
Sangate Road			

3.2 Members should note that the council already provides limited free parking in a number of shopping streets. This includes up to two hours of free limited waiting in Folkestone, Sandgate and New Romney, and up to one hour of free parking in Hythe.

3.3 In addition to the on-street free parking, F&HDC offers district residents a discounted car park permit. The permit costs £80 per year or £20 per quarter and allows up to three hours' free parking in long-stay car parks and up to two hours in short-stay car parks per day. The permit is due to be rebranded and more actively promoted to improve awareness and take up.

3.4 There is also the free pre-Christmas parking in F&HDC car parks on the 3 Saturdays before Christmas costing the council over £10k annually.

3.5 While the proposal aims to improve accessibility and support town centre activity, there are significant financial implications that should be considered.

3.6 The introduction of 20 minutes of free parking is likely to have a negative impact on parking income, particularly in car parks where short stay visits are common. Based on last year's usage data, the estimated reduction in income is approximately **£198,000 per annum**. This estimate has been calculated by applying the current 20-minute parking charge to usage levels across the car parks listed above.

3.7 However, there is a risk that the actual loss of income could be significantly higher. Approximately 60 percent of users currently park for 30 minutes or one hour, and these motorists may choose not to purchase a ticket if 20 minutes of free parking is introduced. In addition, current legislation allows motorists a further 10-minute grace period after their ticket expires, which

may further reduce the duration of paid parking. If this behavioural change occurs, the potential annual loss of income could increase to approximately **£356,000**.

3.8 This potential reduction represents around 11 percent of the total car park income received during the previous financial year under the best-case scenario outlined in section 3.6, and up to 20 percent under the worst-case scenario described in section 3.7.

3.9 There is a further risk that free short stay parking could increase demand for limited town centre parking spaces, potentially reducing availability for longer stay users and shoppers. This may lead to increased vehicle turnover and congestion within car parks, as well as additional pressure on enforcement activity to prevent misuse, such as drivers exceeding the free period without payment.

3.10 The implementation of free parking periods will require changes to signage, parking systems, and enforcement processes, which could result in additional administrative or implementation costs. The cost of changing parking signage and systems has been estimated to be around **£2,000** annually. The costs of additional enforcement are harder to quantify. If more time is taken enforcing town centre car parks, then less enforcement resource will be available for coastal and rural locations. This would need to be kept under constant review to ensure that enforcement levels could be maintained across the district.

4. F&HDC TOWN CENTRE MEASURES TO SUPPORT INCREASED ACTIVITY

4.1 Folkestone & Hythe District Council (F&HDC) has secured over £19m in Levelling Up funding, alongside UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment, to deliver the *Folkestone: A Brighter Future* programme and a suite of business-support initiatives. A new Economic Strategy is also being developed to guide targeted interventions that strengthen town centres and stimulate local economic growth.

4.2 A key component of the FABF programme is the enhancement of access and public realm in Folkestone town centre. To maximise the impact of these improvements, F&HDC has introduced a Town Centre Operating Model (TCOM), shifting the council towards proactive management of town-centre activity. The TCOM includes a dedicated Town Centre Manager, a coordinated events and activity plan, streamlined licensing for pop-ups and activations, and a partnership with KCC Highways to enable more flexible use of public spaces. The model is designed to increase footfall and can be replicated in other F&HDC town centres.

4.3 The redevelopment of Folca into a mixed-use scheme — including a medical centre serving 23,000 patients and additional commercial, leisure, and community uses — will act as a major new anchor, generating significant daily footfall and supporting the wider high street.

4.4 Through UKSPF, F&HDC has also delivered a High Street and Rural Business Support Programme, helping businesses adopt modern technology, improve resilience, and attract new customers, further contributing to increased activity and footfall across the district's high streets.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 As previously noted, the introduction of 20 minutes of free parking is likely to result in a reduction in parking income due to the associated loss of revenue. This reduction may have implications for the funding of parking services and other related council functions.

5.2 The potential loss of income is estimated at **£198,000 per annum** under a best-case scenario, and up to **£356,000 per annum** under a worst-case scenario. This equates to approximately 11 percent and 20 percent respectively of total parking income. These estimates have been derived using parking usage data from the ten car parks included within the scope of the proposal.

5.3 In addition to the potential income impact, there will be annual costs associated with enabling the 13 parking terminals to enforce the rules such as limiting users to one free period per vehicle per charging period. There will also be a need to update the signage within the car parks. The total cost of these implementation works is estimated to be approximately **£2,000** annually.

5.4 The introduction of 20 minutes of free parking is likely to need higher levels of enforcement as referred to in paragraph 3.10 of the report. This is difficult to quantify at this stage but is likely to have an impact on enforcement levels in other areas of the district unless the number of officers is increased. This would need to be kept under review.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

6.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Potential income loss	High	High	Potential income loss, data included so that this can be considered.
Uncertainty over whether increased footfall would offset any loss of parking income through wider economic benefits.	High	High	Extensive data collection and modelling would need to be undertaken to demonstrate increased footfall and economic benefit.
Increased pressure on town centre car parks due to higher demand for short stay spaces,	High	High	Monitor occupancy and turnover rates to assess whether parking stress increases.

which may affect availability for longer stay users.			
Increased risk of misuse, such as motorists exceeding the free parking period without payment, requiring additional enforcement resources.	High	High	Ensure clear rules are established for how the free period operates, including requirements for ticketing or registration. Higher enforcement presence will be required.
Possibility that the availability of free short stay parking may encourage vehicle trips that would otherwise have been made by walking, cycling, or public transport, potentially conflicting with wider transport or environmental objectives.	High	Medium	Monitor to assess if scheme aligns with wider transport and town centre strategies.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 It is not certain that the introduction of short stay free parking would directly result in increased spending in local shops, and the financial impact on the council would need to be carefully weighed against the potential economic benefits to the town centres.

7.2 There are also a number of significant considerations, such as an increased risk of misuse, added pressure on limited parking capacity, and conflict with wider transport and environmental objectives.

7.3 The council is involved in a number of significant interventions that are designed to significantly improve the town centre offers and increase footfall, particularly;

- The Folkestone a Brighter Future Project
- The reinvention of the Folca Building as a medical centre and mixed-use commercial space
- A new Town Centre Operating Model
- Increasing the market offer
- Employing a Town Centre Manager
- Romney Marsh Partnership Officer
- Drafting a district wide economic strategy

7.4 F&HDC offers district residents a discounted car park permit. The permit costs £80 per year or £20 per quarter and allows up to three hours' free parking in long-stay car parks and up to two hours in short-stay car parks per day. The permit is due to be rebranded and more actively promoted to improve awareness and take up.

7.5 F&HDC already provides limited free on-street parking in town centres across the district.

8. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

8.1 Legal Officer's Comments (KP)

The Council has the necessary statutory powers to introduce and vary parking charges, including the provision of a time-limited free parking period. Implementation of the proposals will be dependent on compliance with duties under the traffic management and equality legislation.

Under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 sections 32 and 35 empowers the Council to provide and regulate off-street parking places. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 set out procedural requirements (including publication of a notice of proposals and consultation requirements as applicable). Enforcement would continue under the civil enforcement regime established by the Traffic Management Act 2004 and associated regulations, and the Council must ensure enforcement arrangements are lawful, proportionate and clearly communicated (including the impact of any grace period to be applied above the 20 minutes free of charge).

Consideration should also be given to the Subsidy Control Act 2022. While the introduction of a time-limited free parking period is unlikely to constitute a prohibited subsidy, the Council should be satisfied that any economic benefit (for example, to business owners) is consistent with the subsidy control principles and that this is appropriately documented.

The Council must have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. An Equality Impact Assessment should be considered to ensure that proposals do not result in disproportionate adverse impacts on persons with protected characteristics, such as disabled users, and to consider mitigations.

8.2 Finance Officer's Comments (AM)

The key financial implications are set out in the report. There is no provision within the approved General Fund Revenue budget to accommodate any reduction in income, and any resulting shortfall would therefore need to be funded from alternative sources within the Council's budget. At this early stage of the financial year, there is no assurance that surplus parking income will materialise at a level sufficient to offset the potential loss. Based on the estimated reduction in income of between £198k and £356k—equating to approximately 11% to 20% of the total parking income budget—this represents a significant and unplanned pressure on the Council's finances.

Such a loss would directly undermine the Council's ability to deliver a balanced budget without the implementation of mitigating actions, such as the identification of alternative savings, the deployment of reserves, or other corrective financial measures.

8.3 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (FM)**

There are no diversities or equalities implications associated with this report.

8.4 **Climate Change Implications (JWi)**

The introduction of 20 minutes free parking may encourage car use for short trips instead of encouraging walking, cycling, or public transport in line with the council's District Wide Carbon Strategy. Consequently, transport carbon emissions and air quality could be impacted in the town centres with increased congestion.

8.5 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications (FM)**

Implementing the change presents a risk of reduced income. External auditors have advised that the council should not proceed with changes that could place income at risk.

9. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Frederick Miller, Transportation Manager
Telephone: 01303 853207
Email: frederick.miller@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices:
None

This report will be made public on Friday, 15 May 2026

Report Number: **OS/26/02**

To:	**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
Date:	**26 May 2026**
Responsible Officers:	**Ewan Green - Director of Strategy & Resources** **Andy Blaszkowicz – Director of Housing and Operations**
Cabinet Member:	**Mike Blakemore - Cabinet Member for Community & Collaboration** **Connor McConville - Cabinet Member for Assets & Local Government Reorganisation**

SUBJECT: **STRATEGIC APPROACH TO SPORT AND LEISURE: MARTELLO LAKES & HYTHE POOL**

SUMMARY: This report provides an update on the emerging projects at Martello Lakes and Hythe Pool as part of the Council's strategic approach to addressing investment in sports and leisure provision in the district.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To enable the Committee to consider the proposals for emerging projects at Martello Lakes and Hythe Pool.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **To receive and note report OS/26/02; and,**
2. **To consider the proposals for Martello Lakes and Hythe Pool and provide feedback for Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team.**

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Sport and Leisure Strategy is an item on the Committee's Annual Workplan. Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the Strategic Leisure Approach on 27 January 2026. Please refer to item 39 on the meeting agenda:

Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 27th January, 2026, 6.00 pm | Folkestone & Hythe District Council

1.2 Members of the Committee endorsed the Strategic Leisure Approach and agreed to receive further reports on the Martello Lakes and Hythe Pool projects. A presentation covering both projects is attached as the Appendix to this report.

1.3 Members are asked to consider the above and provide feedback to Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team.

2. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

2.1 **Legal Officer's Comments (EG)**
There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.

2.2 **Finance Officer's Comments (DL)**
There are no financial implications arising from the report.

2.3 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (EG)**
There are no direct diversity and equality implications arising from the report. Individual projects will be subject to Equalities Impact Screening as they progress**.**

2.4 **Climate Change Implications (EG)**
There are no climate change implications arising from the report.

3. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

Ewan Green, Director of Strategy & Resources
Telephone: 07783 659864
Email: Ewan.Green@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1 Presentation: Martello Lakes & Hythe Pool

APPENDIX 1

Sports & Leisure Strategic Approach

Martello Lakes &
Hythe Pool Redevelopment

OSC 26 May 2026

APPENDIX 1

Contents

- Recap: Strategic Approach to Sport & Leisure
- Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Proposal for land at Martello Lakes
- Options for Hythe Pool Redevelopment

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Recap: Strategic Approach to Sport & Leisure (1)

- New Sport & Leisure Strategy to be developed to support next Local Plan.

- Ahead of a new strategy there are strategic issues which require to be addressed now:
  - Swimming provision in the district
  - Future of Hythe Pool (the subject of a separate piece of work)
  - Land available at Martello Lakes for sport, leisure and community use

- The strategic approach was considered by Overview & Scrutiny Committee in January 2026.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Recap: Strategic Approach to Sport & Leisure (2)

- Cabinet agreement to £2.4M grant to the Sports Trust to support reopening of Folkestone Sports Centre swimming pool.
- Approach to the redevelopment of Hythe Pool received positively by OSC. Design work underway and due to report to OSC in May and Cabinet in July (for decision to progress preferred redevelopment option).
- Martello Lakes £5.5M S106 contribution received by Council (allocated to Folkestone Sports Centre Trust and Hythe Pool redevelopment).
- Further analysis of potential uses for land at Martello Lakes undertaken.
- The reserved land at Martello Lakes site is not considered suitable to accommodate a new leisure centre / swimming facility due to the limited catchment (and corresponding population served) in comparison to the Otterpool Park site.
- Alternative sports uses for the reserved land at Martello Lakes have been considered by The Sports Consultancy.

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APPENDIX 1

Martello Lakes

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Martello Lakes: Overview & Scrutiny Committee (1)

In relation to Martello Lakes site OSC feedback was:

- Concern about the limited availability of swimming and leisure facilities for Romney Marsh communities, and the distance residents must travel to access provision in Hythe, Folkestone or neighbouring districts.
- Recognition that analysis does not support the site as suitable for a swimming pool due to catchment considerations but supportive of further work to assess alternative sport, leisure and community uses.
- Suggested that Marsh Academy could offer a potential opportunity for future provision, including the possibility of a smaller scale swimming or leisure facility, building on recent investment in sports infrastructure at the site.
- Noted that Martello Lakes is a rapidly expanding residential area with limited access to community, sport and leisure facilities, and emphasised the importance of securing a facility to support community cohesion.
- The Council's ambition here should not be small in scale and we should be thinking of provision at scale.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (2)

- Expressed support for acquiring the Martello site for community use, with suggestions focusing on smaller scale, multi use provision such as the sports pavilion in Hythe.

- Recognised that the sport & leisure strategy being developed as part of the next Local Plan will provide a clear framework to assess current provision, future need and potential opportunities for Romney Marsh.

- Welcomed that a report setting out options and recommendations for the Martello Lakes site will be brought back to Committee for further consideration.

- Consultation, including the Youth Forum, is important.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

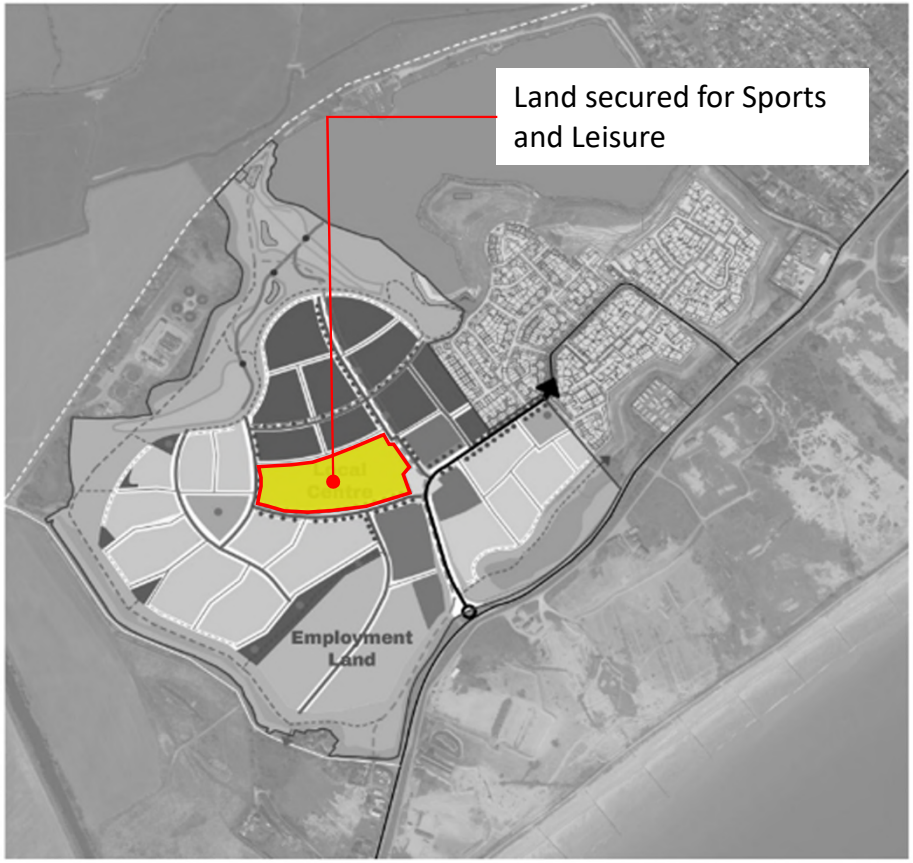
APPENDIX 1

Land at Martello Lakes

- Outline permission was granted for 650 dwellings, of which 200 have reserved matters approval and are being built by Vistry Homes. A reserved matters application for 400 dwellings has been submitted by BDW.

- The s106 includes provision for the Council to be given a parcel of land for sport, leisure and community use. This is identified edged red with yellow infill on the plan.

- The Council must decide to take the land by **October 29 2026** and this will then require a Reserved Matters planning application to be submitted by **29 October 2027**.



Martello Lakes Framework Plan (approved 650 dwellings)

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

APPENDIX 1

Martello Lakes: Proposed Sports & Leisure Development

- Following consideration of feedback from OSC and further analysis of potential site uses by The Sports Consultancy, the proposed facilities mix is based on provision for racket sports, junior football and community use:
  - 4 uncovered or covered padel courts
  - 2 multi use tennis courts
  - Junior grass football pitches
  - Changing facilities
  - Community studio / multi purpose room

- Note: there is currently strong commercial interest in the provision of padel courts.

- Estimated capital cost is £2.5M

- Estimated costs of feasibility study and Reserved Matters planning application is £250k.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

APPENDIX 1

MARTELLO LAKES RACKETS SPORTS APPRAISAL

Executive Summary

FACILITY MIX

Based on the needs assessment, the following facility mix was identified as potentially suitable for the Martello Lakes site:

- 4x outdoor uncovered floodlit padel courts
- 2x multi-use floodlit macadam tennis courts
- Flexible grass youth football pitches
- Temporary container pavilion
- 30-space car park

TEST OF FIT

Utilising CAD and GIS software, it was determined that the above facility mix would fit on the site.

Key

Blue area – site allocation

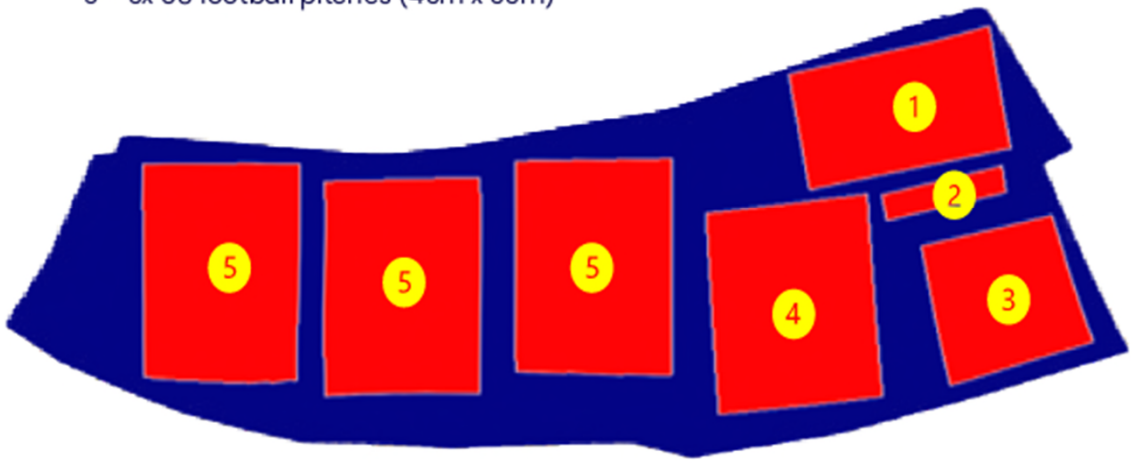
1 – 4x padel courts with run off (48m x 28m)

2 – Container pavilion (24m x 5m)

3 – 30-space car park (30m x 30m)

4 – 2x macadam tennis courts (37m x 34m)

5 – 3x U8 football pitches (43m x 33m)



Feasibility Stage

- **Feasibility Study**
  - Detailed design to RIBA Stage 3
  - Refinement of facility mix and layout.
  - Refined capital costing
  - Consideration of management options and operating model
  - Initial business planning and revenue assumptions
  - Recommended delivery route and operating model

Note: RIBA Stage 3 will be required for Reserved Matters application.

- **Consultation / Engagement**
  - Undertake consultation with Hythe Town Council, Youth Forum, local stakeholders and the community to inform detailed design and facility mix.

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Draft Recommendations for Cabinet

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Agree to secure land for the sport, leisure and community use comprising (1) padel courts, (2) multi use tennis courts, (3) junior grass football pitches, (4) community studio and changing facilities.
- Agree that a feasibility study including RIBA Stage 3 design, costing, business plan and operating model is commissioned.
- Agree that public and stakeholder consultation is undertaken to inform the design of the facility.
- Note that a further report will be presented to Cabinet with the outcome of the feasibility study (including consultation) and seeking agreement to submit a Reserved Matters planning application.
- Note that funding of up to £250k from approved 26-27 budgets will be utilised for the above.

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APPENDIX 1

Martello Lakes - Timeline

Action	Date
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	26 May 2026
Cabinet	24 June or 22 July 2026
Feasibility Study	August 2026 (6 month programme)
Consultation	October - December 2026
Notice to Landowner of Council intention to secure land	29 October 2026
Cabinet (approval to submit RM application)	June 2027
Submission of Reserved Matters planning application	By 29 October 2027

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APPENDIX 1

Hythe Pool Redevelopment

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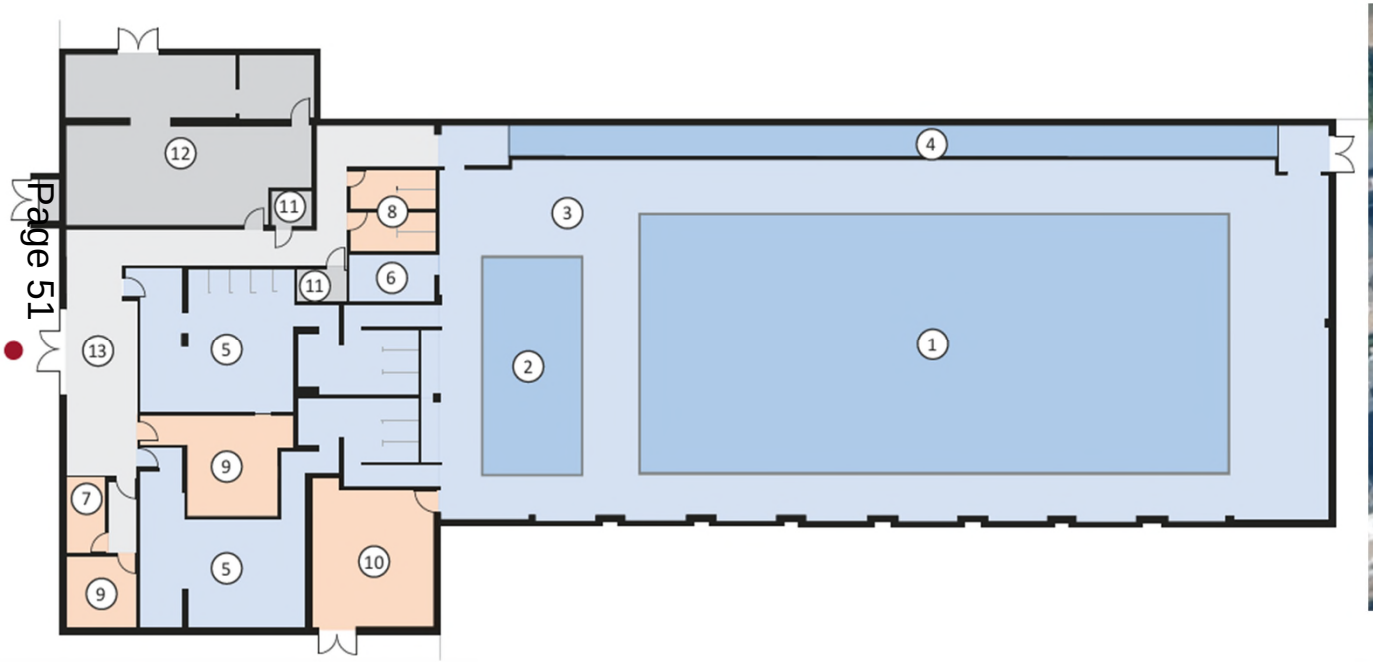
APPENDIX 1

Options for Hythe Pool Redevelopment

Current Layout





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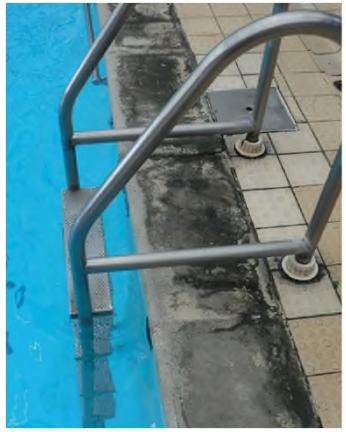
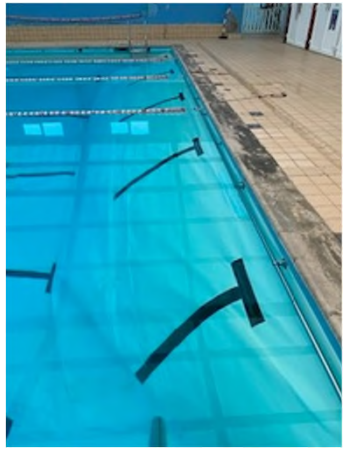
APPENDIX 1

Hythe Pool - Current Condition - Pool Hall











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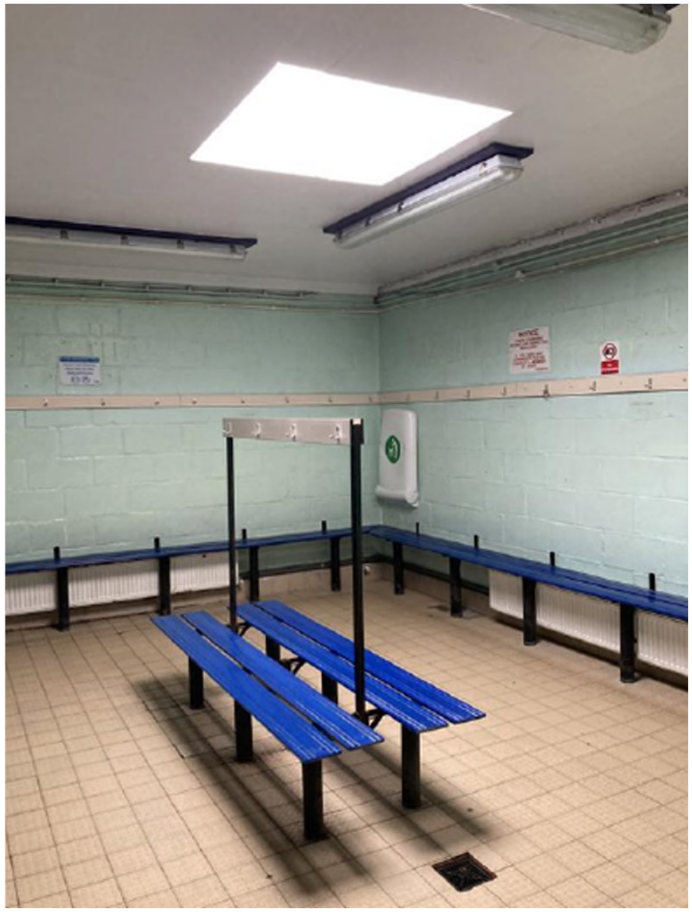
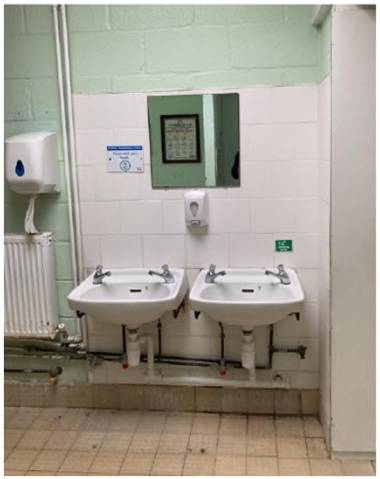
APPENDIX 1

Hythe Pool - Changing facilities









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APPENDIX 1

Hythe Pool - Plant Room









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APPENDIX 1

Hythe Pool - External







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Commissioned Consultants

Alliance Leisure Services (ALS) has been appointed under the UK Leisure Framework to carry out RIBA 1 Feasibility Report.

The ALS Design Team includes:

- GT3 - Architects
- Hadron Consulting - Project Management
- The Sports Consultancy - Sport and Leisure Consultants
- Etec Group - Contractors

<u>RIBA 1 (concept design) options</u>

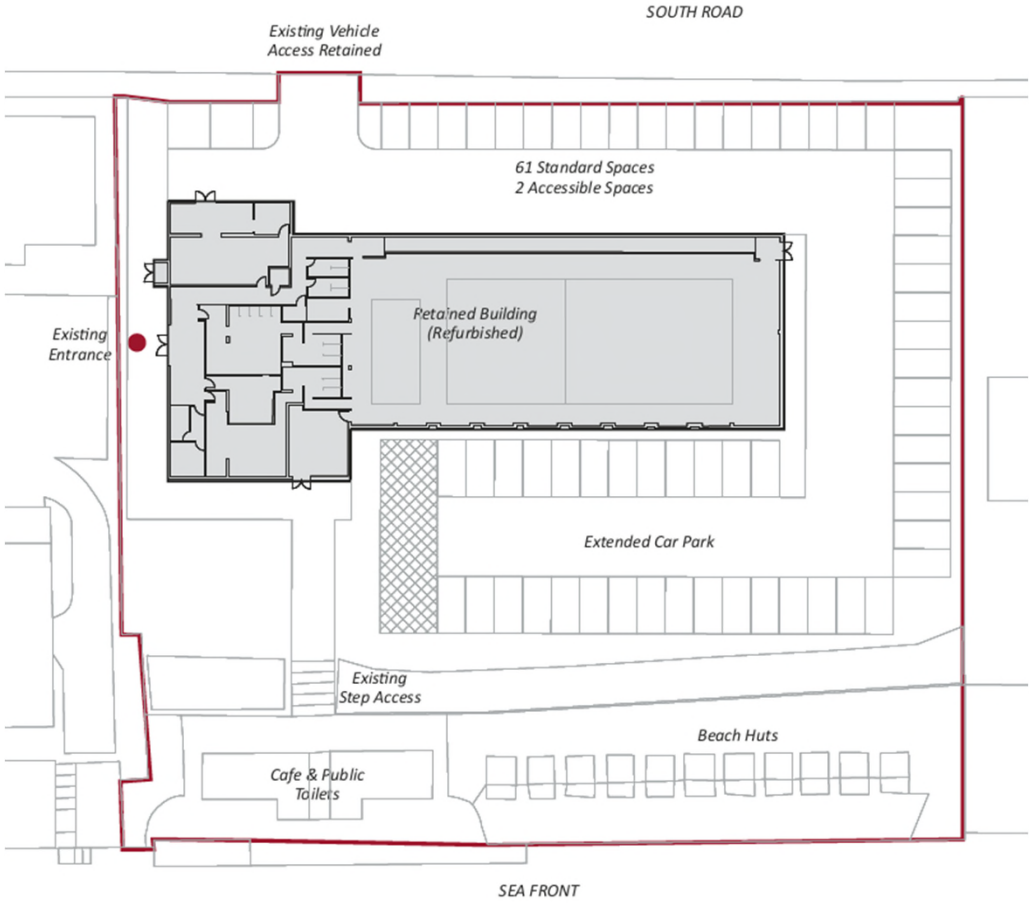
- Option 1 - Basic refurbishment
- Option 2 - Remodelled
- Option 3 - Remodelled fully electric
- Option 4 - Enhanced

Option 1 - Basic Refurbishment

- This is considered the baseline option for general maintenance and repair
- Full refurbishment of pool hall, changing rooms, reception, staff welfare and plant room
- External envelope/roof repairs
- Retains existing reception and changing room layout with no remodel or extension proposed
- Car park extension
- Gas to remain to site

Indicative budget for build costs

- **Option 1 - £4.0m**



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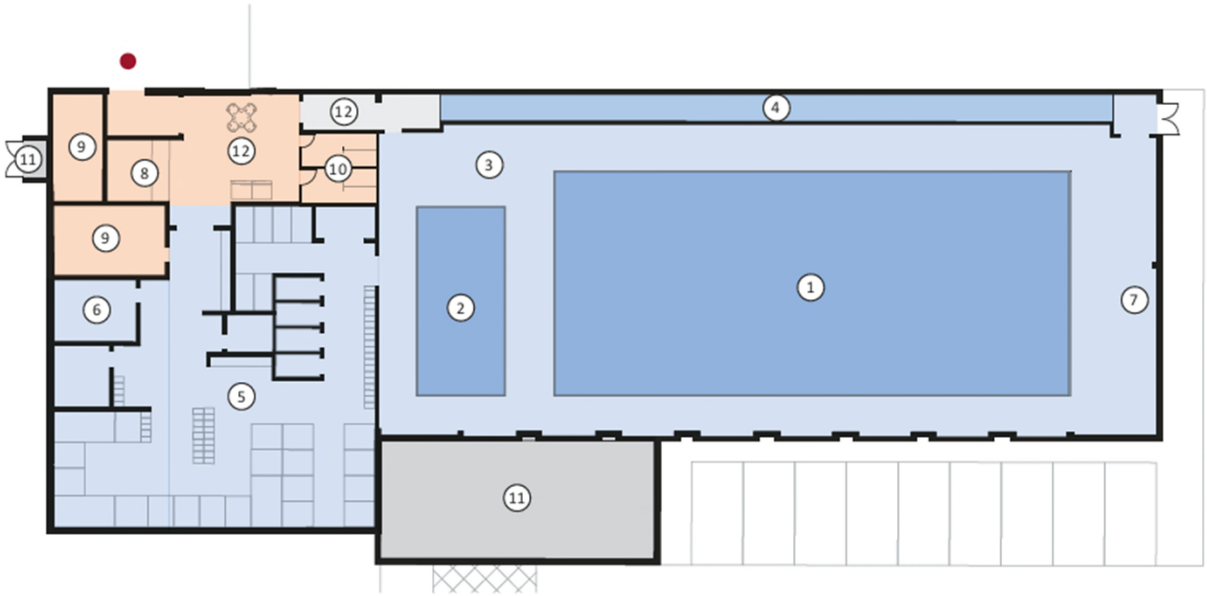
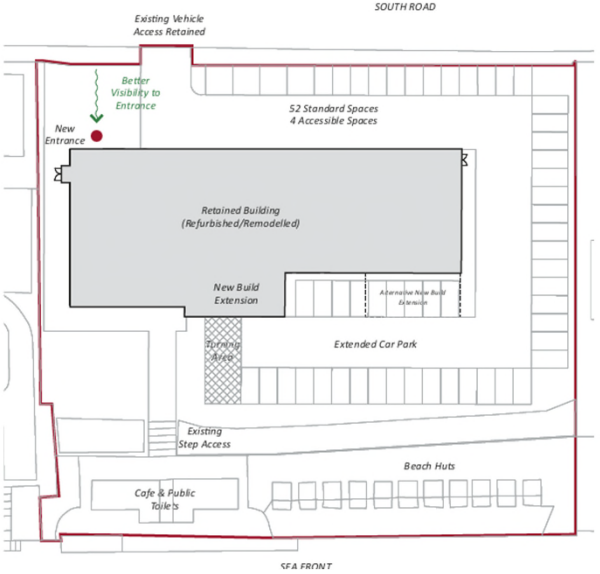
Option 2 - Remodelled

- This option includes internal remodel of existing building with new plant room to create a unisex changing village layout
- Some plant and equipment retained
- Full refurbishment of pool hall, changing, reception, staff welfare and plant room
- Reduces the running costs of the pool
- More useable changing village
- Modern swimming facility
- Car park extension
- Gas to remain on site for heating

Indicative budget for build costs

- **Option 2 - £4.6m**





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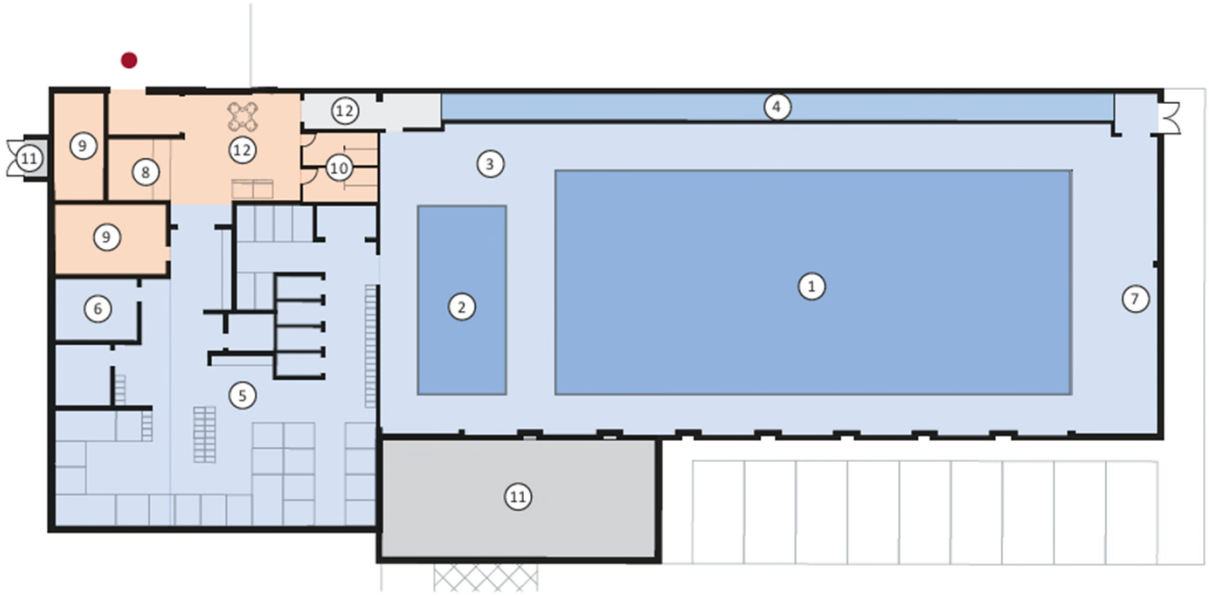
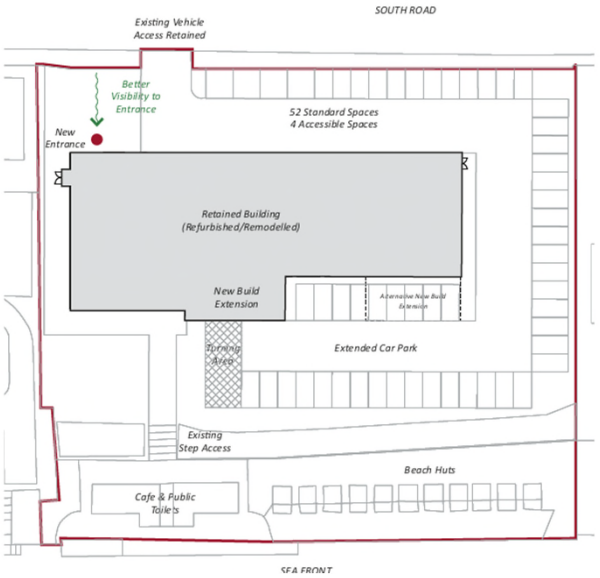
APPENDIX 1

Option 3 - Remodelled fully electric

- This option is the same as Option 2 but removes gas as the primary heating source
- Fully electric option to include ASHP, Solar PV, Heat Recovery systems
- All plant and equipment replaced
- Improvements to thermal efficiency of building fabric and roof





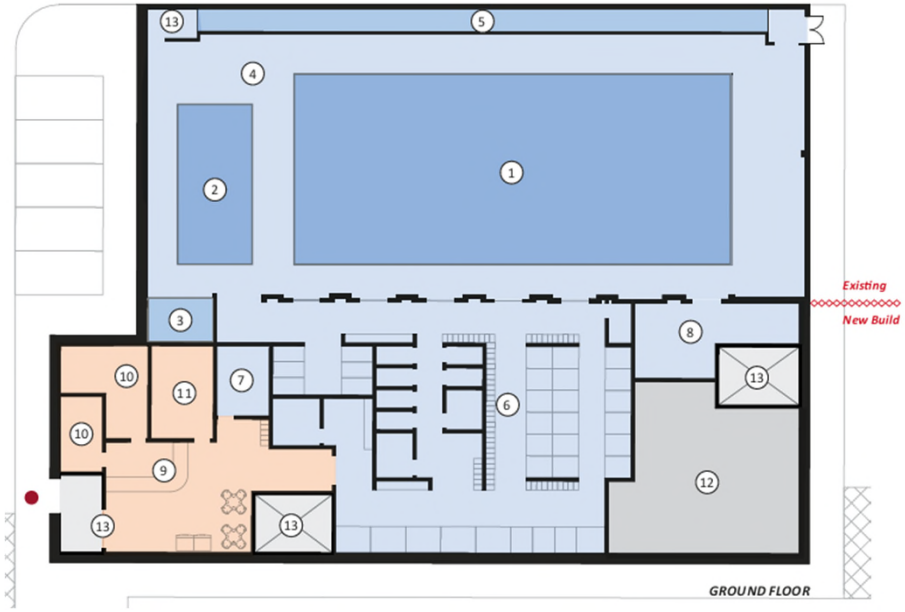
Indicative budget for build costs

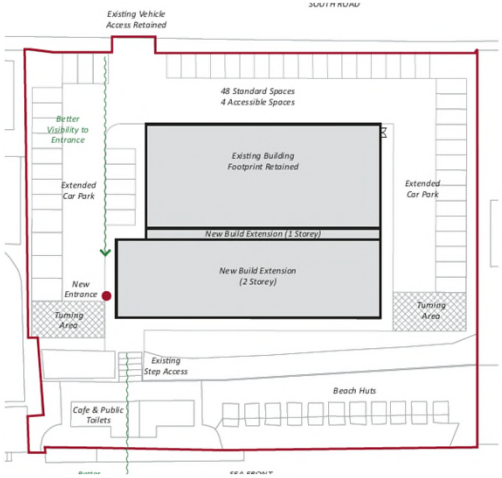
- **Option 3 - £6.8m**

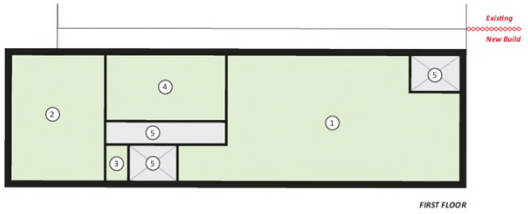
Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Option 4 - Enhanced

- This option includes demolition of the original changing rooms, and a new build extension to the southern elevation to create a unisex changing village layout
- Full refurbishment of pool hall, with new changing, reception, staff welfare and plant room
- 1st floor to include a gym, studio and dry change facilities
- External envelope/roof improvements
- Increased potential for revenue to support ongoing pool running costs, potential to create a cost neutral facility
- Modern pool and an increase in sports and leisure facilities for Hythe







Indicative budget for build costs

- **Option 4 - £10.7m**

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Finance

- Agreed budget in MTCP for Hythe Pool refurbishment project is **£6 million (£2m in 26/27, £4m in 27/28)**
- Room for growth of both user visits and swimming lessons to increase revenue
- Potential to significantly reduce operational costs of the pool – current pool net annual costs **c.£285k/year to run**

- Indicative cost estimates (as of April 2026)
  - *Option 1* - **£4.0 million** indicative construction costs - net annual revenue c. £45k/year to run
  - *Option 2* - **£4.7 million** indicative construction costs - net annual revenue c.£50k/year to run
  - *Option 3* - **£6.8 million** indicative construction costs – net annual revenue c.£37k/year to run
  - *Option 4* - **£10.7 million** indicative construction costs- improvement in operation c.£38k surplus

    Break even/small profit if gym/studio facility is included

- RIBA Stages 2-4 and detailed surveys - costs c.£650-800k (depending on option)
- Any additional Capital budget will need to be formally agreed through budget setting processes.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Draft Recommendations for Cabinet

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Consider the options presented and identify preferred options
- Proceed to RIBA Stage 2 for 2 preferred options – outline design, surveys, more detailed costings
- To note a further report will be presented after RIBA 2 works are concluded for Cabinet to confirm which option should be progressed to detailed design and planning (RIBA 3-4)

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

APPENDIX 1

Hythe Pool - Next steps & programme

- Cabinet approval to proceed with agreed options to RIBA 2 – July 2026
- RIBA 2 outline design, surveys and costings for up to 2 options
- Further approval to be sought from OSC/Cabinet following RIBA 2 work
- Proceed with detailed design and planning for preferred option, RIBA 3-4

Indicative programme	Date
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	May 2026
Cabinet approval – preferred options proceed RIBA 2	July 2026
RIBA 2 and site surveys	July to October 2026
Cabinet approval – preferred option proceed RIBA 3-4	November 2026
RIBA Stage 3-4	November 2026 to March 2027
OSC/Cabinet approval for scheme	April 2027
Planning Submission/approval	Spring/Summer 2027
Contractor appointment	Autumn 2027
Works start on site	Winter 2027/Spring 2028

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