

Agenda Item 11

Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Fenland Inspire! Manor Leisure Centre Redevelopment Project RIBA Stage 3 Progress Update	

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 To update Cabinet regarding progress of the Manor Leisure Centre redevelopment project. Note; RIBA is short for **Royal Institute of British Architects**.

This report informs Cabinet about project development with a focus on:

RIBA 3 Completion information including:

- Information regarding the planning submission including design updates
- Draft images of how the new facility may look, alongside section diagrams from the planning application
- Budget update
- Expected development programme timeframes

Overview

1.2 The redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre is a Fenland Inspire! project. The existing Manor Leisure buildings have reached the end of their useful lives with an expected conditions survey cost previously identified as £4.331m, now likely to be around £4.5m due to inflation, to allow the existing buildings to 'stand still'.

1.3 The existing pool building was built as an outdoor lido and then covered in the early / mid 1980's. The building has served its purpose but is beyond its useful life and does not represent the sort of leisure facility that people would expect. The 1974 Sport Hall building contains the hall and spin room and changing rooms for football. Football is no longer played at the Manor, and the rest of the facility is now well beyond its expected life. Condition survey work required includes, amongst other issues, sports hall roof replacement, other significant external works, significant mechanical and electrical work and the replacement of pool plant.

1.4 The two facilities could continue to function – as previously advised to Cabinet – through conditions survey investments costed at £4.5m, allowing for inflation. Such an approach would allow an anticipated further 10 years of use, with interruptions to allow necessary works to be taken care of. Cabinet rejected this option in 2025, instead taking forwards the more substantial redevelopment plans that would provide a facility with a long lifespan.

1.5 Managing 2 buildings, 30m apart is inefficient, lacks customer focus and increases operational and maintenance costs.

1.6 This project will redevelop and expand the pool building and demolish the sports hall building, leaving the local community with a facility fit for purpose for the next 20+ years. The focus is on

developing a wider user base by modernising the facility and improving the offer substantially. This will broaden the attraction of the facility to more potential customers from both the local area, as well as potentially importing users from Peterborough and Stanground whilst keeping operational and maintenance costs low.

1.7 A further focus is integrating the facility into the beautiful site that the centre is situated within – the Manor Field. This project is an opportunity to blend the boundaries between a built leisure centre and outdoor activities. The new facility will invite users who walk and play at the field to also use the facility. People who fish, bowl, play tennis, cricket and netball will also be able to experience a fresh, vibrant facility. Users of the facility will take activity outside on the fields or in the padel courts. The new, relocated skate park will attract new users to skateboard, scoot and BMX. Users of the play park will also be able to enjoy the leisure facility.

1.8 Building a leisure centre just for sport is no longer a financially viable proposal. The facility must offer more, attracting users not just for physical activity, but for other activities too. This could include community youth activities, rehabilitation activity from injury or surgery, group classes for older and frail people, or education sessions regarding movement and healthy food. The facility may offer GP or other health professionals the opportunity to work closer to the community, impacting on the NHS Core20Plus5 targets.

Integrating the facility into wider community life is essential to the ongoing financial viability of the facility. The new facility is being designed to be able to offer a broader set of opportunities to the local community that positively influences community wellbeing and community cohesion.

1.9 In February 2025, further ratified by a subsequent report in June 2025, Cabinet approved the project to move through the Royal Institute of British Architects pre-construction phases (RIBA Stages 2 – 4) to deliver a scheme that would have planning consent, a firm contractual construction cost and a construction partner on board. A RIBA Stage 2 report and project update was presented to Cabinet in November 2025.

1.10 The currently approved pre-construction RIBA Stages 2 - 4 work is a significant project and is costing around £1.1m. Work has commenced on RIBA Stage 4 and is expected to complete in May 2026.

1.11 Completion of the RIBA 2 - 4 Stages work will provide the Council with cost certainty, along with a detailed construction programme allowing an informed decision as to whether to proceed with construction or not. The current project programme expects a report to Cabinet in June 2026 for Members to decide whether to commit to the full project cost of £18.67m. If Members do decide to go ahead, main construction works would commence on site in August 2026, and completion of the building redevelopment and extension work would occur in December 2027. Following the opening of the new building, demolition of the old sports hall building would then take place and the development of the footprint as a car park would be completed.