

COUNCIL
2 OCTOBER 2025

DOLPHIN CENTRE ASSET MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Matthew Roche – Health and Housing
Responsible Director - Dave Winstanley, Executive Director – Environment, Highways & Community Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To request that Council vary the capital budget by approving and releasing capital funding as detailed in the recommendations, to enable the delivery of the Dolphin Centre asset management programme of works and investment opportunities.

Summary

2. The Dolphin Centre is the Council's only indoor leisure facility and is a key asset in contributing to the vision in the Council Plan and ambition for our residents to live well and stay healthy. The centre provides a range of health and wellbeing activities for all, as well as it being a key community, leisure and social venue.
3. Located in the town centre, it is accessible for all and supports the continued change of town centres and high streets. There is now a greater emphasis on leisure and social activities in town centres, and the centre contributes to the mix of uses and town centre footfall.
4. The Dolphin centre is now over 43 years old and encompasses the much older Central Hall listed building. As with any building, and particularly older listed buildings there is a need to undertake periodic investment to keep the buildings operating and compliant with statutory requirements. This report provides an update on the asset management programme for the centre and seeks approval to progress with an essential repairs programme.
5. Having good quality leisure facilities along with other quality services and facilities is key to creating the conditions for inclusive economic growth that benefit our residents, investors or people looking to locate into the Borough. People want to know there are good facilities for them and their families to be healthy and enjoy.
6. Investment in the Dolphin Centre has always been a priority and there has been a substantial maintenance programme in recent years due to the age and nature of the

building, as well as a range of significant upgrades and refurbishments. This is to ensure quality services are provided to the people of the Borough and because so much of the activity at the centre links to the aspirations of the Council Plan.

7. The recent repairs to the pool have seen an increase in swimming and investment in the DC Bowl has strengthened the provisions of the centre. Two new options for investment in the Dolphin Centre have been developed for consideration by Members. These are the provision of an indoor golf with interactive darts and shuffleboard area and a new spinning studio and fitness studio refurbishment. These two elements are being proposed on the basis they would be self-financing and reduce the overall subsidy of the Dolphin centre from the MTFP.
8. On 9 September 2025 Cabinet considered a similar report and approved the recommendations to move forward to Council for consideration and decision.

Recommendations

9. It is recommended that Council:-
 - (a) Approve the proposed asset management programme outlined in the report and approval and release of £6.742M to continue the programme of repairs and maintenance.
 - (b) Approve the refurbishment of the space that used to be used for marriage and civil ceremonies and create an indoor golf, interactive darts and shuffleboard area, as detailed in this report and approve and release of £1.456M for the project on the basis this will generate a surplus of funding from income.
 - (c) Approve the creation of a new studio, with spinning equipment and approve and release of £0.752M on the basis this will generate a surplus of funding from income.

Reasons

10. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-
 - (a) To enable the asset management programme of essential works on the Dolphin Centre to continue.
 - (b) To enable the indoor golf, interactive darts and shuffleboard project and the new spinning studio and fitness studio refurbishment project to progress, which will increase the facilities at the Dolphin centre for residents of the Borough, contribute to the vision and ambition of the Council Plan and reduce the overall subsidy to the Dolphin Centre from the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

Dave Winstanley
Executive Director – Environment, Highways & Community Services

Background Papers

Cabinet report 9 September 2025

Cabinet report 5 July 2022

Cabinet report 11 August 2023

Cabinet report 5 September 2023

Ian Thompson: Extension 6628

Lisa Soderman: Extension 6980

Council Plan	The Dolphin Centre contributes positively to the Councils ambitions and numerous the Councils priorities.
Addressing inequalities	The Dolphin Centre is one of the Council's key community facilities that is accessible and available to all.
Tackling Climate Change	There will be a positive impact on carbon reduction as a result of installing modern and efficient mechanical and electrical plant and equipment.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The investment opportunities present an opportunity to invest to save and reduce subsidy levels. The asset management programme is anticipated to save on energy and reduce the increasing number of reactive repairs that impact on cost and efficient and effective operation of the centre.
Health and Wellbeing	The Dolphin Centre is the Council's key facility in providing opportunities for residents to participate in an active and healthy lifestyle.
S17 Crime and Disorder	The content of this report will not impact on crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	Park East
Groups Affected	No group will be adversely affected as a result of this report.
Budget and Policy Framework	Cabinet have delegated approval to vary the capital budget by £500k per a year. Cabinets delegated approval to vary the capital budget will be exceeded by the proposed works within this report. Cabinet have approved the recommendations therefore Cabinet are requesting Council to vary the Capital Budget to enable the work to progress. There is no impact on the Council's policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision
Urgent Decision	No
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Background

11. The vision in the Council Plan is that “Darlington is one of the best places to live, learn, work and invest in the UK, with a strong and sustainable economy, healthy thriving communities and opportunities for all.”
12. The Dolphin Centre is the Council’s only indoor leisure facility and a key asset. It contributes to the vision and ambition for our residents to live well and stay healthy by providing a range a health and wellbeing activities as well as it being a key community, leisure and social venue in the town centre.
13. The location of the centre makes it accessible for all and supports the shift in the function of town centres and High Streets as they continue to change. There is now a greater emphasis on leisure and social activities in town centres, and the Dolphin centre contributes to mix of uses and the town centre footfall.
14. Having good quality leisure facilities along with other quality services and facilities is key to creating the inclusive economic growth conditions that are attractive to investors or people looking to locate in the Borough. People want to know there are good facilities to be healthy and enjoy.
15. To summarise, the Dolphin Centre is a key council asset and contributes to the vision and ambitions in the Council Plan by helping people:-
 - a) Live well and staying healthy.
 - b) Supports inclusive and sustainable economy.
 - c) Support the town centre and Borough being a thriving place and connected communities.
16. Key features and services provided in the centre include:
 - (a) 25 metre swimming pool with separate diving pool and boards, slides, training pool and toddler pool.
 - (b) Accessible in the town centre and contributes to town centre footfall with circa 900k visits per year.
 - (c) Water education programme and delivery of Key Stage 2 swimming to primary schools in Darlington.
 - (d) Modern gym facilities for members, casual users and college curriculum usage. The team are GP referral qualified, and local GPs refer into our team to

support health improvement and rehabilitation.

- (e) Fitness class programme.
- (f) Sports Hall facilities, equivalent to two 5 aside courts.
- (g) Recently refurbished and extended soft play facilities.
- (h) DC Bowl providing bowling lanes.
- (i) Catering and hospitality including a Bistro, café and pavement café generating up to £1m income per year.
- (j) Indoor events programme including sporting events, concerts, weddings and more.
- (k) A number of partners based in the Dolphin Centre including Connect Health who deliver the muscular skeletal contract on behalf of the NHS, Darlington Amateur Swimming Club, Darlington College and many more.

Asset Management Programme

17. The Dolphin Centre opened in November 1982 and will have been open for 43 years this year and is a key council asset. It is a substantial venue having been built around a much older listed building, Central Hall. As with any building, and older listed buildings there is a need to undertake periodic investment to keep the facility operating and compliant with statutory requirements.
18. There have been numerous interventions and changes to the building over the years, the most significant in 2006, which resulted in substantial remodelling of the building. However, this was mainly a “operating model” type intervention and changes to the building, with limited work carried out on the mechanical and electrical (M&E) installations. Whilst there has always been an ongoing repairs and maintenance programme, in recent years there has been a substantial maintenance programme due to the age and nature of the building, as well as a range of significant upgrades and refurbishments to modernise facilities for users.
19. In 2012/13, a detailed study of the Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) installations in Dolphin Centre was carried out. A phased approach to the replacement and upgrading of the mechanical and electrical installations was agreed and reports on the various phases have been brought to Cabinet with the programme still ongoing with the final phase still to deliver.
20. The M&E programme was paused in 2023/24 to undertake some urgent works to the main pool tank, toddler pool and shower area including repairs to support beams, water proofing, repairs to channels and retiling. Further work to the structural elements of the diving pool and training pool tank structure was identified needing to be undertaken in future years.

21. All leisure and swimming facilities have seen significant pressures in recent years with energy inflation. The Government recognised this and launched a funding opportunity with incredibly tight timescales. DBC were successful with a funding bid to Sport England receiving funding of £0.526M for a new Combined Heat and Power system (CHP) and Photo voltaic (PVs). The Council did not receive the full funding bid but received £0.271M for the CHP and £0.255M for the PVs with the balance coming from the approved M&E budget allocation, with elements of the M&E programme also being delivered as part of this project.
22. The final phase of the M&E programme was paused whilst the structural issues associated with the pool were resolved. The estimates were provided a number of years ago and based on feasibility work undertaken over 10 years ago. Therefore, it was considered prudent to undertake a full review and given the changes in the construction sector and building technology. A detailed survey of the building has been undertaken to provide detailed cost estimates of the final phase, and this has identified additional works being needed since the original surveys in 2012/13 as a significant period has lapsed.
23. The works being put forward in this report are the essential items of repair that needs to be undertaken to keep the Dolphin Centre operational this includes M&E and other elements of the building fabric, such as windows. At the start of the design process a review was undertaken to ensure that only essential items were included in the overall cost plan. A number of areas have been excluded for example a new ceiling to sports hall and a significantly reduced lighting scheme in sports hall has been included. The remaining work is all essential as most of the plant and equipment is now 43 years old, beyond its anticipated replacement date and starting to fail impacting on operation of the centre.
24. More work has been identified and revised estimates to undertake required works are now higher than estimates produced over four years ago given more work has been included. It is also an indication of the changes in construction inflation and standards.
25. A significant development in the construction sector is the profile and importance of fire strategy since Grenfell and the subsequent reviews. As part of the project this has needed to be reviewed. This has involved:
 - (a) A review of the fire strategy for the building including fire compartments.
 - (b) Updated fire risk assessment for the Dolphin Centre.
 - (c) Advice has been taken from the Councils insurance company Zurich and fire risk consultants.
26. The approach proposed to be taken is where there is significant interventions or full refurbishment of an area, any fire stopping matters within the compartment zones will be rectified to the latest standards, this will include a full review of fire doors.

Areas within the Dolphin that are not subject to refurbishment or significant interventions as part of these works will be reviewed in the future if and when refurbishment takes place in these areas.

27. A sample area has been investigated to examine the likely rectifications that may be required to meet current standards. There will be works to be undertaken, but it is not considered cost effective to undertake this level of intrusive survey throughout the building, so a sum has been estimated and is proposed to be built into the cost plan that can be drawn down if rectification works are identified as works progress.
28. This approach has been agreed with the fire strategy consultant and the Fire Risk Assessor. Advice has also been taken from the Councils insurance company Zurich, who have confirmed they are satisfied with the proposed approach.
29. As mentioned in previous cabinet reports, further monitoring was planned in relation to the structural elements of the diving and training pool areas as further work would be required. The monitoring of the structural elements has identified work is required to the diving pool in the next 18 months. The final phase of the M&E works will mean disruption to various areas of the centre. The diving pool being one, therefore it is proposed to build the repair works on the diving pool into the programme and minimise the overall disruption to the centre. The pool will be emptied, and investigation works undertaken in areas to determine the scale of the repairs. The estimates in the financial section of the report are based on the findings in the main pool.
30. More detail on the costs for the asset management programme are included in the financial section of the report.

Investment Opportunities

31. The Dolphin Centre is a key council asset contributing to helping our residents live well and stay healthy by providing a range a health and wellbeing activities as well as a key community, leisure and social venue in the town centre.
32. The location of the centre makes it accessible for all and supports the shift in the function of town centres and High Streets as they continue to change. There is now a greater emphasis on leisure and social activities in town centres, and the Dolphin centre contributes to mix of uses and the town centre footfall.
33. The recent investment in the DC Bowl has strengthened the provisions of the centre and more options have been developed to ensure the Borough has good quality leisure facilities along with other quality services and facilities that will continue to create the conditions that are attractive to our residents, investors or people looking to locate in Darlington. People want to know there are good facilities for them and their children to enjoy and be healthy.

34. The Dolphin Centre is a significant building and maximising the use of the space is critical. Two new options for investment have been developed for consideration by Members.

(a) An Indoor Golf with Interactive Darts and Shuffleboard project.

(b) A new Spinning Studio and Fitness Studio refurbishment.

Indoor Golf with interactive darts and shuffleboard

35. An indoor golf, interactive darts and shuffleboard option has been investigated which will build on the entertainment offer within the Dolphin Centre complementing the successful DC Bowl. This is envisaged to appeal to both the daytime family market and an adult market on evenings. This will contribute to the Physical Activity Strategy whereby encouraging people to become active, by whatever means, has many positive effects on health and well-being.

36. The strategy is to maximise the use of the asset and identify the Dolphin Centre as a nighttime destination for entertainment and to secure financial growth where there is capacity for increased business on evenings.

37. The indoor golf will be a bespoke modular installation that will tie in with the theme and feel of the bowling alley to ensure there is continuity between the new entertainment offer and existing. Through the design and lighting an appropriate atmosphere can be created for the both the family and adult markets. The design will be carried through into the Bistro an area that requires essential mechanical, electrical plant and fire compartmentation works completed as part of the main project.

38. It is proposed that three interactive darts stations that are a technical enhanced twist to traditional darts as well as one interactive shuffleboard are included. Both the interactive darts and shuffleboard work well within this type of entertainment venue complementing the golf and bowling alley, creating a fun social environment for both families and adults and extends the overall visit.

39. Within the new entertainment venue there will be a bar area offering customer the opportunity to enjoy refreshments whilst having fun and enjoying the golf and wider offer.

40. The Bistro area is subject to significant M&E works and will be redesigned to follow the design principles of the DC Bowl and new Golf entertainment area making the whole area integrated. There will be no loss of capacity in terms of space and seating and the project team will look to increase capacity wherever possible, given the current busy daytime patronage.

41. Concept design illustrations of the venue are attached at **Appendix 1**.

42. The areas within the building where this new venue will be located is the existing Stephenson room, Pease room and seminar room. These areas are currently utilised for meetings, classes and courses which for the majority will be relocated into other areas within the Dolphin centre. Initial consultation has taken place with regular users and will continue as we work through each group's individual requirements if the project is approved to progress.
43. There will be disruption, and a communications plan has been developed that will aim to keep staff, customers, clubs and partners advised ahead of the works and throughout. There are a number of areas of the Dolphin Centre that will be closed. Every effort will be made to minimise these periods and offer alternative venues. There is a plan to work with any clubs and groups who will need to be permanently relocated, and every effort will be made to provide alternative provision with the Dolphin centre. There will be revenue implications as a result of this project, which have been built into the financial assumptions. More detail of the planned works and mitigations are provided in the milestones and programme section of this report and **Appendix 2**.
44. The financial aspects of the proposal are included in the financial section of the report.

New Spinning Studio and Fitness Studio refurbishment.

45. The Dolphin Centres primary focus is health and wellbeing for residents of Darlington. In recent years investment has been made into the gym facilities which has in turn increased memberships from 550 members to in excess of the budget base of 1900. The approach in all business areas is a constant challenge and investment which enables the centre to ensure facilities are high quality, in line with current demands and attractive to residents. This approach allows continuous improvement, maintenance of membership levels and constant drive to reduce subsidy levels of the MTFP and deliver outcomes in the Council Plan.
46. The existing fitness studio needs investment. This area is running outside of its life cycle and not in line with the quality of facilities elsewhere and also not to the standards in the building, in particular the gym and pool. To further increase the capacity to attract new members and retain existing it is proposed to install a bespoke spinning studio directly adjacent to the fitness studio. This area is currently redundant and not a well utilised space. The spinning studio would include virtual classes in addition to the traditional instructor led classes making the space accessible for members throughout the opening hours of the Dolphin Centre. Modern decoration, equipment and lighting will provide an excellent, high quality member experience that will compete with the local market and support the retention and growth of the membership base.
47. The financial aspects of the proposal are included in the financial section of the report.

Programme and milestones

48. If approved, the programme of work is scheduled to commence in November 2025 and be delivered in two phases, with planned completion September 2026 (38 weeks).
49. It is acknowledged that there will be disruption in certain areas and details are provided in **Appendix 2** of what is planned and how we intend to mitigate the disruption wherever possible. A communications plan has been developed that will aim to keep staff, customers, clubs and partners advised ahead of the works and throughout.

Financial Implications

Asset Management Programme

50. The Asset Management Programme is ongoing and some of the elements outlined below are being delivered on site as part of the previously approved programme.
51. The cost plan for asset management programme is outlined in the table below:

Project Element	Budget	Status
Previously approved budget (incl. Sport England Grant)	£2.776M	Approved
The Combined Heat and Power & Photo Voltaic Project (£526k from Sport England) match funding requirement. This includes essential M&E works linked to this equipment and air handling units in basement plant room that needed to be undertaken as part of the CHP and PV project.	£1.709M current projected outturn	On Site
Fees including surveys, design and development costs of the current project and the next phases of the asset management programme and investment opportunities	£0.459M	Committed
Total Estimated Expenditure	£2.168M	
Remaining funds from Approved Budget	£0.608M	

Asset Management Programme subject to Approval		
Asset Management Mechanical and Electrical renewals and other essential elements of asset management.	£4.906M	Subject to Approval
Fire Strategy Any fire stopping required to be undertaken to meet current standards in areas where there any major works being undertaken, including the replacement of any fire doors requiring upgrades. The budget also includes specialist consultants to oversee and approval the works.	£0.753M See Note 1	Subject to Approval

Project Contingency – See Note 2	£0.531M See Note 2	Subject to Approval
Diving Pool Tank structural repairs and re-waterproofing.	£1.100M	Subject to Approval
Project Management	£0.060M	Subject to Approval
Total	£7.350M	
Remaining approved Budget	£0.608M	
Funds sought to be approved	£6.742M	
Note 1 The proposed approach from the design/build contractor was to undertake intrusive surveys in all parts of the building to be able to provide costs. This would mean closing an area, removing ceilings, surveying and re-fitting the ceilings. This would have significant cost in terms of lost income, inconvenience and the costs for doing these survey works. Instead, a sample survey has been carried out in the studio with regard to identifying the type of defects in that area to understand the issues and the interventions that could be required. From this work the design/build contractor has worked with the supply chain to prepare costs to repair the defects. This information has been used to estimate the costs for the work required to repair the defects in the areas where significant interventions or refurbishment is taking place. This contingency sum will only be drawn down if required but provision in the budget is required to be approved.		
Note 2 A relatively high contingency has been built into the budget. This is to cover the approach being taken to fire stopping works that may be identified and also the risk associated with works to the diving pool. The full extents of the repairs will not be known until the pool is drained and the tiles and waterproofing removed to expose the structural elements.		

52. Subject to approval, it is proposed the capital works would be funded through prudential borrowing over the life of the asset (40 years), at an estimated annual cost of £0.328M based on current borrowing costs and the MTFP would be adjusted to reflect the approval.

Investment Programme

53. In terms of the Investment Programme, the cost plans and financial aspects have been developed on existing usage patterns and rates advised by industry experts who have experience of this sector along with benchmarking and consultation with finance officers. The details are below:

Indoor golf with interactive darts and shuffleboard

54. The cost plan and business cases have been developed on a range of scenarios. The proposal in the report is an average price per game of £7.20 and 50 games on

average per day. This is a total of 18,000 games per year. Sensitivity checks have been undertaken and whilst the industry recommended average is 55 games per day a more cautious number has been assumed.

55. Interactive darts is projected to attract 3150 games per year with a price per game of £20 (hire of the space) and Shuffleboard 1000 games with a price per game of £25. Similarly to the golf projections this has been based on industry advice.
56. Testing this against the performance of DC bowl, the last three years has averaged 825 games per week, which is more than the anticipated 700 games per week in the original business case for that facility. The bowling reduced the subsidy of the Dolphin by £0.114M in 2024/25 – this was £0.029M better than the £0.085M surplus target that was built into the MTFP in 2024/25.
57. The number of games for golf, darts and shuffleboard is based on industry advice which is the same approach taken for the bowling. The indoor golf and associated facilities will complement the bowling and extend offer on an evening giving the opportunity to generate additional income to support the MTFP savings targets.
58. The table below provides an indication of the full year calculations for 26/27, although this will only be a part year given the construction timetable.

Element	Cost per annum
Capital Costs	
Borrowing costs for capital costs to convert the area (£1.197M) and to fund the equipment (£0.259M). Total Capital cost = £1.456M.	£114,682*
Operating Costs	
Increased operating costs including salaries, security, R&M, consumables and licenses.	£93,143
Revenue Income	
Change in revenue from the various gaming activities as outlined above plus food and beverage sales.	£255,298**
Surplus	£47,473
*The capital is made up of costs for physical alterations to the building borrowed over 40 years and a cost for the equipment within the area that will require renewal and replacement over a shorter borrowing period of 5 years.	
**If the 55 games industry recommended average per day at £7.20 average per individual was achieved the 26/27 income is estimated to be £273,004, which would generate a further £17,706 of surplus.	

59. Subject to approval, it is proposed the capital works would be funded through prudential borrowing over the life of the asset at an estimated annual cost of £0.115M based on current borrowing costs; and the MTFP would be adjusted to reflect the

approval, including the projected income increases to cover the borrowing costs and return a surplus.

New Spinning Studio and Fitness Studio refurbishment.

60. The cost plan and business cases have been developed on retaining core membership and attracting new membership.
61. The table below provides an indication of the full year calculations for 26/27, although this will only be a part year given the construction timetable.

Element	Cost per annum
Capital Costs	
Borrowing costs for capital costs to convert the area (£680,880) and to fund the new spinning equipment (£71,500). Total Capital cost = £752,380.	£48,859*
Operating Costs	
Increased operating costs including R&M, consumables and licenses. No additional staff are assumed in this model.	£4,000
Revenue Income	
Revenue from Memberships only assumed in increased income. No additional retail, refreshments or beverages have been assumed.	£201,600
Surplus	£148,741
*The capital is made up of costs for physical alterations to the building borrowed over 40 years and a cost for the equipment withing the area that will require renewal and replacement over a shorter borrowing period of 5 years.	

62. Subject to approval, it is proposed the capital works would be funded through prudential borrowing over the life of the asset at an estimated annual cost of £0.049M based on current borrowing costs. The MTFP would be adjusted to reflect the approval, including the projected income increases to cover the borrowing costs and return a surplus.
63. Throughout the work period several facilities will be closed therefore there will be an impact. Members are asked to note that there will be a revenue pressure in financial year 2025/26 of £0.041M and £0.133M in 2026/27.

Carbon Impact and Climate Change

64. There will be a positive impact on carbon emissions by reducing energy consumption as a result of the installation of 400 PVs on the roof, new CHP, LED light fittings in the building and new plant. However, the investment opportunities will intensify use of the centre and increase energy consumption.

Consultation

65. Initial consultation has taken place with groups who will be impacted during the works and those that will be displaced. A full communication plan will be developed to keep all customers and residents up to date on the project subject to approvals.

Appendix 1 - Concept Illustrations

Golf, Darts and Shuffleboard



Bistro



New Spinning Studio and proposed location in the centre



To be located in the circulation space next to the existing fitness studio



Appendix 2 - Programme and milestones

1. If approved, the programme of work is scheduled to commence in November 2025 and be delivered in two phases with planned completion September 2026. (38 weeks).

Phase 1 - November 2025 to July 2026 (24 weeks)

Nov 25 to April 26 (20 weeks)	Existing fitness Studio refurbishment. Classes and activities will be moved to Central Hall during this period.
Nov 25 to May 26 (22 weeks)	New Spinning Studio area created as part of the invest to save option
Jan 26 to May 26 (16 weeks)	The Bistro will be closed for essential mechanical and electrical works. However, catering will still be provided in the soft play, bowling, 16 Horsemarket and temporary facilities within the Dolphin to minimise the impact.
Jan 26 to Mar 26 (7 weeks)	Poolside showers refurbishment. There will still be small provision within the village and customers will be well informed in advance.
Jan 26 to July 26 (24 weeks)	Indoor Golf and associated facilities as part of the invest to save option will be installed. Any regular bookings are being accommodated in other parts of the centre during the refurbishment and the team are working with customers on the long-term options for them at the centre.
Jan 26 to May 26 (16 weeks)	Offices will be closed to accommodate window replacement and essential works in plant Rms 9 and 10. Staff will be relocated within the building, but the town hall also being an option.
May 26 to Jul 26 (5 weeks)	Work will be completed on the outside plant that services the 2 nd floor kitchen.

Phase 2 - May 2026 to September 2026 (14 weeks)

May 26 to Sep 26 (14 weeks)	Mechanical and Electrical works will take place in the Main Sports Hall. Events and bookings will not be possible during this period. Where possible customers will be signposted to Eastbourne Sports Complex although availability is limited during peak times.
May 26 to Sep 26 (14 weeks)	Mechanical and Electrical works will take place in Central Hall including Plant rooms 5 & 7. Events and bookings will not be possible during this period.

2. There will need to be a small closure of the toddler pool currently anticipated in January 2026 to accommodate the installation of the gym windows, which will happen overnight to avoid disruption of gym members. This will be kept to a minimum and captured in the business disruption communications plan. Alternative provision will be made for toddlers during this period.
3. In addition to the above closures there will be work taking place throughout the building replacing the lighting and emergency lighting. The impact of this work will be kept to a minimum with the most impactful work taking place out of hours through the night.
4. The diving pool will be drained, and investigation works will take place to determine the repairs required. This will be built into the above programme.
5. There are a number of areas of the Dolphin Centre that will be closed and whilst every effort will be made to minimise these and offer alternative venues and continue to offer food and beverage there will be revenue implications. The detail of this is covered in the financial section of report.
6. Throughout the works the contractor will need a compound in close proximity to the area of work within the Dolphin centre. The compounds have been agreed with the highways team and will be located as follows: -
 - a) Compound 1 - Feethams - Nov 25 to May 26
 - b) Compound 2 - Market Square – Nov 25 to Jun 26
 - c) Compound 3 - Bull Wynd - Apr 25 to Jul 26
 - d) Compound 4 - Houndgate – Oct 25 to Oct 26

A location plan for the compounds is below

