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**DECISION NO:**

*For Member Services use only*

Concurrence No: 066450

<b>Action under delegated authority of Chief Executive</b>	
<b>Action under delegated authority of Director of Finance and Cabinet Member for Finance</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Action taken by Chief Executive in consultation with Cabinet Member(s)</b>	

Subject: Exception to Contract Standing Orders – LTLC PV System Repairs

Signature and designation of officer(s) taking action:

15/02/2021	12/02/2021
_____ Chief Executive	_____ Director of Finance
Date	Date
	12/02/21
	_____ Head of Finance
	Date

**Name of Cabinet Member(s)  
Consulted:**

I have been consulted and concur with the  
proposals set out below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor P Mason  
Cabinet Member for Finance and Business Services

18/02/2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor  
Cabinet Member

Name of any member who has declared a  
conflict of interest in relation to this decision: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE**

The report overleaf sets out the decision to be taken, the reasons for the decision, and the details of alternative options, if any, considered and rejected. Officer decisions are available for public inspection, both at the Borough Offices and on the Council's website. Officer decisions are kept for a period of six years at the Borough Offices and for six months on the website after the decision is made. Background papers are available for four years.

**RECOMMENDED that:** An exception to contract standing orders be agreed to appoint Chelsfield Solar to carry out repairs to the PV system at Laura Trott Leisure Centre (LTLC) due to the specialist nature of the works.

## **Purpose**

To seek agreement for an exception to contract standing orders allowing Chelsfield Solar to carry out repair works to the Photovoltaic (PV) system at Laura Trott Leisure Centre (LTLC) and undertake 'pigeon proofing' works to the panels on the roof.

## **Background**

The PV system at LTLC was installed in 2013 and generates in the region of £7,000 - £8,000k per annum from the government Feed in Tariff (FiT) scheme and approximately £6,000k in electricity bill savings as all electricity generated is used on site. The FiT scheme is for twenty-five years and has another seventeen years to run.

The system consists of four inverters which translate the direct current (DC) generated by the solar panels on the roof to useable energy onsite. Each inverter generates income for the Council in the region of £3,250 - £3,500 per annum. The system has smart metering capability monitoring daily usage of the system per inverter and therefore remote analysis of any anomalies.

For the last few months inverter number three has been generating lower reads than the other inverters, operating at approximately 60% of previous generation. Chelsfield Solar were asked to investigate and have advised that the issue appears to be with the DC on the roof. There are no schematics available for the system so the only way to find the problem and rectify is to gain access to the roof and trace the cabling and connectors to identify where the issue is.

There is also a problem with pigeons nesting underneath the panels and this will affect the performance of the system through the guano left by the pigeons. This issue also occurred on the John Warner Sports Centre PV system and Chelsfield Solar cleaned and 'pigeon proofed' the system in 2017.

Chelsfield Solar have quoted £11,510 to:

- find and fix the issue with the DC cables on one of the roof areas, the position of the DC cable fault is not known so it will be a case of systematically working across the roofs checking cables and connections.
- remove any pigeons, pigeon mess and nest materials from underneath the Solar PV panels.
- fit a galvanised steel mesh around the perimeter of all of the Solar arrays to prevent pigeons getting under the panels in the future.

The works will require scaffolding to be erected to the two roofs where the solar panels are located and a two week lead time will be needed.

It is proposed to fund these works from revenue contingency which has a current budget of £169,490 and for the works to be completed before the end March 2021.

This will leave a remaining budget of £157,980.

Chelsfield Solar carried out the cleaning and 'pigeon proofing' at John Warner Sports Centre (JWSC) in 2017 and have worked on the system at LTLC so are familiar with the site. The works are of a technical and specialised nature and it is therefore proposed to appoint Chelsfield Solar to undertake the works as an exception to contract standing orders.

### **Financial, Legal and Risk Management Implications**

There is a financial risk in not undertaking the works with a reduced income to the Council. Each inverter generates approximately £3,500 per annum with inverter three running at 60% capacity this reduces to £2,100 losing the Council around £1,400 per annum. Over the course of the remaining seventeen years of the FiT scheme this would equate to approximately £23,800 in reduced FiT income and electricity bill savings. There is no guarantee that the same problem will not occur with the other inverters. The cost to carry out the works at £11,510 gives a payback in approximately 8.2 years.

There are no legal implications. Risk management will be incorporated in the contractors risk assessment and method statements to carry out the works.

### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

To not carry out the works and accept the lower level of income received. However as noted there is no guarantee that the same problem will not occur with the other inverters further reducing income.

### **Contribution to the Council's Objectives and Environmental Sustainability Priorities**

- Contribution to Environmental Sustainability through the generation of solar power
- Maintain a stable financial position.

### **Conclusion**

That an exception to contract standing orders is approved due to the technical and specialised nature of the works allowing Chelsfield Solar to carry out repairs to the PV system at LTLC, clear pigeon guano and 'pigeon proof' the panels.

Contact Officer: Tracy Brannick

Ext: 5407

Date 1/02/2021

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Action reported to the Cabinet on:

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