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## Friary Grange Leisure Centre progress update

The project to keep Friary Grange Leisure Centre open up to five years and the long-term plans to build a new leisure facility in Lichfield are progressing at a pace.

Lichfield District Council is keen to keep everyone up to date about how its plans for leisure provision in Lichfield are progressing, following cabinet's decision in October 2019 to set aside £695,000 to fund repairs to Friary Grange Leisure Centre and to invest £5 million to build a new leisure facility.

The council is also highlighting that everyone can keep up with all the progress that is being made at [www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/leisureplans](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/leisureplans).

While nothing may appear to have changed since October, the council is making headway, and has set up a project board, which includes officers and councillors who are overseeing the short-term and long-term plans. The work has been separated into three projects, which are now underway to deliver the plans.

The first project includes working with Staffordshire County Council, The Friary School and Freedom Leisure to make sure the licenses, contracts and leases are in place to keep Friary Grange Leisure Centre open to the public beyond April 2020.

The second project is the essential repairs to Friary Grange, with the aim of keeping the leisure centre open for up to five years. The council has appointed Townsend and Renaudon to project manage the works. They are preparing the documentation for the tendering process to appoint a contractor.

The third project is to provide future leisure facilities. The council has appointed Max Associates to support this process, which includes choosing a site, consulting on plans, securing planning permission and completing the build within five years.

The next milestone will be appointing the contractors to carry out the essential repair works which will be in the spring.

**Councillor Andy Smith, Acting Cabinet Member for Recycling & Leisure, said:** "It's really important to share the progress we've made so far. Plenty of work is going on behind the scenes and so much has been achieved already within a relatively short amount of time.

"The discussions with our stakeholders to make sure we can keep Friary Grange open after April 2020 are well underway and we hope to have the agreements, licenses and lease finalised soon, so we are in a position to start the repairs to Friary Grange.

“I know that everyone who campaigned so passionately to keep the leisure centre open are looking forward to the repair works getting underway, and we should be in a good position to start these in the spring.

“Usage of Friary Grange has dropped in recent years, and we hope that everyone who supported the campaign will become regular users, helping to support its ongoing survival.

“We are also fully committed to providing new leisure facilities within the next five years, and are progressing our plans and look forward to sharing these with everyone in the future.”

To keep up to date on the project, visit [www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/leisureplans](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/leisureplans).

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