

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet – 2 April 2024

Cheltenham Ice Rink – Review and Future Plans

Accountable member:

Councillor Max Wilkinson, Cabinet member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing

Accountable officer:

Helen Mole, Head of Place Marketing and Inward Investment

Ward(s) affected:

N/A

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

Cheltenham Borough Council (“the council”) ran a Christmas ice rink event from Friday 17 November 2023 to Monday 1 January 2024. It is evident that the ice rink was a success in influencing visits and bringing new money into the town centre during the Christmas period with 31,100 visitors to the ice rink who spent a total of £1.6m during their visits. £860,000 of this was additional spend which wouldn't have been spent in Cheltenham without the presence of the ice rink. This means that the return on investment to the economy for the council's spend was approximately £11.50 per £1.00 invested.

A total of £1.2m additional business turnover occurred in Cheltenham as a result of the presence of the ice rink (indirect and induced) and this additional money supports the equivalent of 13 FTE jobs or 17 estimated actual jobs in the town.

The ice rink was designed to be accessible to all, being fully wheelchair accessible and with dedicated relaxed sessions for people with additional needs, as well as discounts for families, schools, home educators and groups. The team ensured that local residents were engaged throughout the development and delivery of the event with the intention of preventing negative impacts for them.

In line with the council's corporate plan priority of making Cheltenham net zero by 2030, the team worked in partnership with suppliers to develop an innovative approach to powering the event. This led to the rink using only 12.7% of the fuel and reduced carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 98.7%, when compared to the town's 2021 ice rink.

This report sets out the key outputs of the 2023-24 event and seeks approval to commence planning for a 2024-25 event. The report highlights lessons learned which will positively impact the results of a future event.

Recommendations: That Cabinet:

1. Notes the information about the outputs of the 2023-24 ice rink;
 2. Approves, in advance of planning permission being considered by the Planning Committee, noting the costs and risks set out in this report, for Cheltenham Borough Council to lead the delivery of an ice rink in Cheltenham for the 2024-25 Christmas period;
 3. Subject to planning permission, approves extension to the contract for delivery and management of the Christmas Ice Rink at Imperial Gardens, Cheltenham for 12 months;
 4. Approves a total potential financial commitment as set out in section 4 of this report;
 5. Notes that officers are progressing procurement and delegates appointments of contractors to the Director of Communities and Economic Development, as per section 5 of this report.
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1. Implications

1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

The ice rink was delivered by the Council in 2023 at a direct cost of £74k however this does not take into account the wider economic benefits for businesses operating in the town centre and in particular our own car parks. For the period over which the ice rink was operating the income generated from car parking income performed significantly above budget, generating the Council itself around £80k of direct financial benefit in November and December. Had the ice rink operated for the first week of January, this would have been even higher. It is this additional income which we will look to use to offset any gap in the financials for the direct delivery of the event in 2024/25, in light of the wider investment benefits for our visitors, residents and businesses.

Signed off by: Gemma Bell, Director of finance and assets (Deputy Section 151 Officer),
gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.2 Legal implications

The Council contracted with S3K Limited following a procurement exercise in 2023, for the delivery and management of a Christmas Ice Rink at Imperial Gardens, Cheltenham. This contract commenced on 3rd July 2023 and is set to expire on 2nd July 2024, unless the Council opts to extend the Term by (up to) 24 months. In order to effect this extension (or part thereof) the Council must give S3K Limited no less than one month's notice (no later than 2nd June 2024) of its intention to extend the Contract.

Signed off by: One Legal, legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

Climate Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 2.

Signed off by: Louise Forey, Programme and engagement officer, Climate Team.
Louise.forey@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Key Priority 2 - Working with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham net zero by 2030.
- Key Priority 4 - Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity.

1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

An equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix 3.

1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review

If permission is granted, the event will be recorded as a project with the corporate projects team. Outputs and financial information will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. An economic impact assessment will also be carried out for the 2024-25 event so that we can compare the results of the event to the 2023-24 event.

2 Background

- 2.1 Cheltenham Ice Rink was located in Imperial Gardens from Friday 17 November 2023 to Monday 1 January 2024 (closed Christmas day). This location was chosen because of its proximity to the town centre and the positive impacts this would have on local businesses, its history of hosting events (including the ice rink in 2021), and the onsite event infrastructure such as electricity and water.
- 2.2 The overall event was managed by the council team with the provision of the ice rink and day-to-day rink management outsourced to S3K Group Ltd, an established ice rink operator. Separate suppliers were procured for other elements, including power, security, toilet hire, and more. All costs were met by the council with income to the council from ticket sales (less card fees), sponsorship, advertising, and commission from the onsite café concession.
- 2.3 The ice rink was undercover and provided a memorable festive experience in all weathers, for approximately 31,100 people, including 600 free tickets to local residents coordinated by No Child Left Behind. The fully wheelchair-accessible ice rink offered relaxed skating sessions for people with sensory issues or additional needs, and discounts for families, schools, home educators, and group bookings, as well as dedicated student sessions and themed skates.
- 2.4 It is evident from the results of the independent visitor survey conducted, that the ice rink was successful in influencing visits and bringing new money into the town centre during the Christmas period, an important time for local businesses. See section 3.1.4 for more detail.

3 2023-24 Ice Rink Performance

3.1 Economic Impact

- 3.1.1 A visitor survey was commissioned by the council with an independent agency, The South West Research Company. The survey sought to understand the economic impact of the event, visitor profile, length of stay, motivation for visit, and satisfaction levels. The survey was analysed using the Cambridge Model, a standardised and industry accepted methodology.

3.1.2 An email containing the online survey link was sent out to the database of ice rink ticket purchasers and promoted via social media. A total of 823 useable online survey responses were submitted by the closing date including 799 respondents who had visited the ice rink.

3.1.3 Not included within the economic impact report is the fact that car parking revenue figures for November and December show that the council over-performed on parking revenues by over £82,000 highlighting significant numbers of additional visitors to the town during the ice rink period.

3.1.4 Key results are as follows:

- A total of £1.6m was spent in Cheltenham by all those visiting the ice rink, £860,000 of which would not have occurred without the presence of the ice rink.
- A total of £1.2m additional business turnover occurred in Cheltenham as a result of the presence of the ice rink (indirect and induced). This is new money that would not have occurred without the ice rink being in place. This additional money supports 13 FTE jobs or 17 estimated actual jobs in the town.
- 83% of all those who had visited Cheltenham Ice Rink said it had been the main reason for their visit to Cheltenham / coming into the town.
- 58% of all visitors to the ice rink went on to undertake other activities in Cheltenham.
- 76% of visitors were from the GL postcode area, with 19% of visitors from elsewhere in the UK, 3% from elsewhere in the South West, and 2% from overseas.
- On the whole user satisfaction levels with visitor experiences of going ice skating whilst in Cheltenham over the Christmas period were 'good' to 'very good'.

3.1.5 It is evident from the analysis of the survey that the ice rink was a success in influencing visits and bringing new money into the town centre during the Christmas period with 31,100 visitors to the ice rink (including free HAF funded tickets, groups). People visited an average of 1.9 times so the total visitor figure was generated by 19,600 unique visitors.

3.2 Environmental Sustainability

3.2.1 The innovative power supply solution created for the event has led to a clear reduction in the environmental impact of the rink when compared with the previous rink and the industry standard for events. The improvement has been so notable that the council has been invited to share the results from the ice rink at industry forums to inspire other organisations to consider adopting similar measures to improve the environmental sustainability of their events.

3.2.2 Key results are:

- The 2023 ice rink used **12.7%** of the fuel used by the 2021 ice rink.
- The 2023 ice rink generated 1.778 tonnes of CO₂e compared to approximately 139.07 tonnes generated in 2021 - **a reduction of 98.7%**.

- 3.2.3 A reliable power source was required 24/7 for chillers to protect the integrity of the ice and power was also required for other operational aspects of the rink, including lighting, payment systems and CCTV. The ice rink was powered by onsite grid power, a high-capacity battery system and an efficient and silenced generator. The generator was fuelled by sustainably sourced hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) instead of traditional diesel.
- 3.2.4 The existing grid supply onsite has been a great benefit to the event this year, contributing to the environmental efficiencies achieved, but it is not quite adequate for total operation of the event. A project is currently underway to implement this via a new substation. Progress is ongoing with this project and a full update will be presented in due course. With more power available onsite in the future, it would be possible to operate the event without any generator.
- 3.2.5 Initially it was anticipated that the battery would operate for up to eight hours overnight and then be charged via a combination of generator and onsite grid power during the day. However, upon operation, it quickly became apparent that the battery, once charged, was able to power the chillers for between 21 and 23 hours per day meaning that the generator was required for only 1-3 hours per day on average. The 2021 rink required the generator to be running 24 hours a day, so this represented a significant improvement in terms of the environmental sustainability of the event and contributed to the reduced emissions and fuel usage, as well as minimising the noise impact of the event.

3.3 Social Impact

- 3.3.1 Every effort was made to add social value at all stages of the operation from procurement through to delivery, with suppliers required to explain what their social value offer would be in relation to this project and how it would be of benefit to Cheltenham residents. This resulted in the following outputs:
- C.£73,000 direct spend with Cheltenham suppliers as a result of the project, including local contractors, accommodation for the ice rink team, and supplies purchased locally.
 - Local suppliers were invited to respond to an invitation for an onsite catering concession and this was awarded to local caterer, StrEatery.
 - No Child Left Behind coordinated the delivery of 600 free tickets over four sessions to ensure accessibility for families across Cheltenham where cost may be a barrier. This was funded through a combination of the Holiday Activity and Food scheme and the Holiday Activity Programme, funded by the Department for Education and Gloucestershire County Council. These sessions included food and drink while at the ice rink, and the opportunity for members of CBC staff to engage with local residents.
 - 14 local people were recruited and trained as ice stewards and rink staff.

3.4 Accessibility

One of the key priorities for delivery of the ice rink was that it was accessible to as many people as possible. This element was integral to the procurement exercise for the ice rink operator. People with all ranges of access requirements were invited to input into the operation of the rink to inform processes, and adaptations were made to standard operating procedures when required.

- 3.4.1 Wheelchair users were welcome on the ice at all times, special relaxed sessions were introduced

for people with sensory issues and staff were specially trained to respond appropriately to anyone with additional needs. In addition, No Child Left Behind funded four dedicated sessions plus individual tickets to ensure accessibility for families across Cheltenham for whom cost may have been a barrier.

3.5 Noise impact

- 3.5.1 Due to the noise mitigation measures in place and the successful implementation of the battery set up, no complaints about noise attributable to the ice rink were received.
- 3.5.2 One complaint was received about a persistent noise heard at around 3am every morning. However, this was subsequently found to be emanating from a nearby building, not the ice rink. That building's management were informed to enable them to respond and deal with this. Further to this, one comment was received about some noise from a vehicle during the first day of the de-installation and this was responded to and dealt with appropriately.
- 3.5.3 This is in contrast to significant numbers of noise complaints received about the 2021 ice rink and highlights the positive engagement work carried out by the team and through the support of local residents to ensure that residents' needs were considered at every stage of the planning and delivery of the event.

3.6 Financial Results

3.6.1 The ice rink cost the council £74,276 to deliver. Based on the results of the economic impact analysis of the event, this represents a return on investment of approximately £11.50 per £1.00 invested by the council.

3.6.2 Income (subject to reconciliation)

- £314,685 was generated through ticket sales, sponsorship and commission from the onsite catering concession.
- Compared with 2021, fewer tickets were purchased in 2023. This can be attributed to factors including:
 - School holidays started a week later than normal in 2023 which meant that there was less time to maximise income from the traditionally busy pre-Christmas week.
 - The ice rink closed a week before schools went back, reducing sales potential.
 - The number of competitor rinks is greater now than in 2021. There were at least six competitor rinks within an hour of Cheltenham in 2023, compared to three in 2021.
 - Despite residual Covid concerns, 2021 was a 'bumper year' for attendance at outdoor Christmas events because so many events had been cancelled in 2020.
- The cancellation of the 2022 rink led to some uncertainty in the market for sponsors that the 2023 rink would go ahead. Sponsorship sales efforts could not begin in earnest until planning was progressed for the event which meant that some marketing budgets had already been committed. It can be anticipated that a 2024 event, if agreed earlier, would not suffer from this effect as the positive impact of 2023 would carry over.

- For the same reason, the team missed the opportunity to capitalise on school trips and, in particular, a collaboration with the Christmas pantomime. Initial discussions have commenced (in principle) to investigate joint ticket deals for schools visiting Cheltenham over Christmas in 2024.
- Income was generated from the onsite café concession, a new addition for 2023. The team would investigate options for enhancing this and creating additional income generating opportunities in 2024.
- A reserve of £37,092 was set aside in 2023 to cover potential overspend for the 2023 event.

3.6.3 Expenditure (subject to reconciliation)

- £388,961 was spent to deliver the rink, not including staff time which was accounted for from within existing budgets.
- The fuel bill was c.£19,000 lower than initially estimated thanks to the efficiencies created by the power solution.
- However, additional expenditure was incurred in some areas because of unknown factors from the development of the previously untested power arrangement. Now that this system has been proven in situ, it would lead to further savings of c.£23,000 if the ice rink takes place utilising the same solution in future years.

4 Delivery of future events

4.1 A lot of lessons have been learned and documented by the team involved in the 2023-24 event, and good relationships with suppliers have been formed which would support both cost savings and additional income generation in future years.

4.2 The nature of temporary ice rinks, or any event installations of this nature, are that they are inherently high-cost - yet equally offer the potential for high return through the revenue generated by ticket sales. Inevitably however, the costs are almost entirely fixed, whilst the income from ticket sales cannot be guaranteed. This will always present a risk for any event of this nature.

4.3 The following factors will inform the team's approach to future delivery of ice rink events:

- Change the dates to reflect the school Christmas holidays.
- Investigate the cost variation if the number of days on which the ice rink is open is reduced.
- Review and simplify the pricing structure.
- Enable reduced price hire for schools, especially those visiting Cheltenham for the pantomimes to encourage more hires at quieter times.
- Start work on the rink earlier in the year to allow time to get more income from sponsors and advertisers and look to achieve a headline sponsor.
- Reconsider the food and drink and wider ancillary offer to support enhanced activation of the site and potential income generation.

- 4.4 In 2023/24 expenditure exceeded income, requiring an investment by the council of £74,276. Our forecast for 2024/25 shows a reduced investment of around £22,000 will be required.
- 4.5 There are a number of factors based on lessons learned from this year which should positively impact this, as set out in section 4.3 above, but nonetheless this is highlighted as a risk in the risk assessment at Appendix 1.
- 4.6 Permission to run an ice rink in the current location, for 2023/24 and 2024/25, was granted by the planning committee on 22 September 2022. If the decision is taken by Cabinet to run the ice rink again in 2024, an application to discharge the conditions set against the existing planning permission will be submitted as soon as possible after the Cabinet meeting. It is anticipated that this will be heard by Planning Committee at the meeting on Thursday 30 May which, if approved, will allow the team to commence work earlier than in previous years thereby maximising income generation opportunities.
- 4.7 Future events for 2025 onwards would need to be subject to a new planning application as the existing permission will expire. This will enable the team to carry out a full location analysis to review alternative sites and the potential implications of changing the location.

5 Procurement with contractors

- 5.1 The ice rink operator, S3K Group Ltd was selected via a competitive procurement process for the 2023-24 event. The contract permits the council to extend the term of the contract by up to 24 months (or two further events). Should Cabinet permit, it is proposed to take up this option for 2024 to ensure continuity of service from the operator.
- 5.2 All other contractors will be subject to new procurement exercises and, subject to Cabinet permission, work on this process will commence after the Cabinet meeting with agreements put in place only if planning permission is awarded by Planning Committee.

6 Reasons for recommendations

- 6.1 The independent economic impact evaluation has clearly demonstrated a positive impact for the town and its businesses with £1.3m business turnover supported and £860,000 additional spend as a result of the event. This is directly in line with Key Priority 4 of the Corporate Plan, ensuring that residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity.
- 6.2 Concerns raised about the energy usage and environmental impact following the previous ice rink have been addressed with significant improvements achieved. Work by the council events manager and partners in the innovative use of new technologies has led to a reduction of 98.7% in CO₂e emissions and only 12.7% of the fuel being used. These factors, along with the use of sustainably sourced HVO fuel instead of traditional diesel, have proven to be an inspiration to other event organisers with discussions ongoing with industry colleagues across the country.
- 6.3 Feedback for the rink was positive from residents, businesses, and visitors to the rink. The team worked hard to engage local residents to ensure that they had a better experience than previous events. The No Child Left Behind project, via HAF funding, provided four free sessions for local families and individual tickets to ensure accessibility for families across Cheltenham where cost may be a barrier. These sessions included food and drink while at the ice rink, and the opportunity for members of CBC staff to engage with local residents.
- 6.4 The social value impact was also monitored, with money spent in local businesses, local staff trained

and employed, local companies contracted, and engagement with community projects and charities.

6.5 The Cheltenham Cultural Strategy recognises the importance of building on the quality and scale of Cheltenham's already renowned festivals and events programme. Events of this nature raise the profile of the town and, in this case, the impact of the innovations created for powering the event more sustainably, have further highlighted both the cultural offer and the importance that the council places on achieving net zero targets as a borough. This will also inform the forthcoming council events strategy.

6.6 Despite the challenges highlighted in this report, the ice rink has generated significant positive impact for the town. The strategic rationale for a return of an ice rink in 2024 is therefore based on the following objectives:

- To support the town's economy, in particular the retail and hospitality businesses;
- To drive incremental footfall and spending in the town and to ensure that Cheltenham remains competitive at this critical time of year;
- To help position Cheltenham regionally and nationally as a destination of choice and drive continued investment.

7 Alternative options considered

7.1 As demonstrated by the economic impact report, the ice rink has been effective in attracting new and repeat visitors into the town and generating positive feedback. The alternative is not to deliver this event which is not recommended as then the town would lose the opportunity to generate the additional spend, economic impact, and community engagement opportunities.

8 Consultation and feedback

8.1 Visitors to the ice rink were consulted for the economic impact assessment.

8.2 A feedback meeting has taken place with local residents, with further meetings planned in the coming weeks.

8.3 A summary of the town's tourism and town marketing offer, including reference to the Christmas ice rink and marketing campaign, was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee on Monday 26 February 2024.

8.4 If Cabinet agrees to officers delivering an ice rink in 2024, the following consultation and feedback activities will take place:

8.4.1 Resident engagement programme for 2024-25, following the same process as 2023.

8.4.2 Planning Committee Thursday 30 May

8.4.3 Conversations with potential sponsors and advertisers.

8.4.4 Conversations with local partners who may contribute to the delivery of the rink or to look at potential collaborations to increase mutual ticket sales and economic impact.

8.4.5 Commissioning of an economic impact assessment of the 2024-25 event.

9 Key risks

- 9.1 Financial – costs outweighing income. As highlighted throughout the report, there are always inherent risks that the cost of this activity will outweigh the income generated. Early approval of this event will mitigate some of these risks and the team are committed to securing as much income as possible. The positive experiences of visitors to the 2023-24 ice rink supports the forecast that they will visit again. In addition, the economic impact of the event and the benefit to the town, its businesses and residents should be considered alongside this.
- 9.2 Reputational – negative impact on residents. This has been highlighted as a risk but acknowledges the improvement in event management processes and the ongoing positive engagement with residents and businesses in 2023, as well as the positive feedback provided by visitors to the rink.
- 9.3 Environmental – the developments in battery technology and the innovative use of this, alongside HVO fuel and existing grid power have reduced emissions by 98.7% compared to the previous event. With further understanding of the capabilities and capacity of the battery available, this may reduce further.
- 9.4 Planning – There is a risk that Planning Committee will not permit any use of generators for future events. The application to vary the conditions on the existing permission will focus on the fact that generators were in use for only 1-3 hours per day on average and that the fuel has been sustainably sourced.
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Report author:

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Appendices:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Climate Change Impact Assessment
- iii. Equality Impact Assessment

Background information:

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 February 2024 - [Agenda for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 26th February, 2024, 6.00 pm - Modern Council \(cheltenham.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
1	Financial – potential exposure to financial pressures should costs exceed income from ticket sales and sponsorship.	Director of finance and assets	2	3	6	Reduce	<p>Ensure sufficient lead-time to secure sponsorship and to maximise commercial opportunities.</p> <p>Review opening hours and dates for the rink to maximise school holiday period.</p> <p>Review and simplify the pricing structure.</p> <p>Enable reduced price hire for schools, especially those visiting Cheltenham for the pantomimes to encourage more hires at quieter times.</p> <p>Continue to invest in effective marketing and sales strategy,</p>	Head of place marketing and inward investment	June 2024

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
							<p>with sufficient lead-time to maximise ticket sales.</p> <p>Rink will be an all-weather structure with a roof and will therefore continue to operate during spells of poor weather.</p>		
2	Reputational – negative impact on local residents and businesses.	Head of place marketing and inward investment	2	3	6	Reduce	<p>Continued engagement with local residents and businesses.</p> <p>Build on the good practices introduced and developed for the 2023-34 event.</p> <p>Early engagement with Planning and Environmental Health teams to ensure that lessons learned from previous events and</p>	Events Manager	Ongoing

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
							that negative impacts on noise, light, visual, and other aspects are mitigated.		
3	Environmental	Head of place marketing and inward investment	2	2	4	Reduce	Ensure timely procurement to secure the same measures as introduced during the 2023-24 event to ensure reduced emissions and fuel usage	Events Manager	June 2024
4	Planning – risk of Planning Committee refusing permission for the event based on requirement to use a generator.	Head of place marketing and inward investment	4	3	12	Reduce	Utilise the knowledge, experience and information gained from the operation of the 2023-24 event to highlight the developments in fuel and power technology and the positive impact this	Events Manager	April 2024 submission of permission to vary conditions. May 2024 Planning Committee.

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
							<p>has had on emissions.</p> <p>Provide expert testimony on the use of HVO fuel, in particular the fact that this is sustainably sourced.</p> <p>Highlight the fact that the generators were in use for comparatively low hours compared to the previous ice rink and other events, thanks to the battery technology.</p>		

Appendix 2: Climate Impact Assessment Tool

Cheltenham Christmas Ice Rink 2024



Key

	Significant and/or long-term positive impact identified. No changes needed.
	Slight or short-term positive impact identified. No changes needed but could be reviewed to improve.
	Not applicable or no cause for concern.
	Slight or short-term negative impact identified. Review to identify possible improvements.
	Significant and/or long-term negative impact identified. Changes needed before proceeding.

ENVIRONMENTAL	Scores	Action	Justification
GHGs	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	<p>The power generation for site will consist of a high capacity battery system as well as a silenced generator. The generator will run exclusively with sustainably sourced HVO as opposed to traditional diesel. Based on evidence from 2023's event, the battery unit, in conjunction with a trickle feed of supplied mains power will power the operation for approximately 21-23 hours each day. The generator will only be required to run for approximately 1-3 hours each day, and always within sociable hours e.g. between 8am-11pm, not overnight.</p> <p>This system is fully self-contained, automatically handing power over between each supply. In addition, the generator is in a super silence housing rated to 55dB(A) at 7m away without mitigation. This technology was employed for the first time for an installation such as this in the UK at the 2023 Cheltenham Ice Rink. It proved to be industry leading and hugely effective in reducing both exhaust and noise emissions. The rink used only 12.7% of the fuel and reduced carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 98.7%, when compared to the town's 2021 ice rink.</p> <p>Unfortunately, at the moment there is not sufficient power available to run this event entirely off grid in Imperial Gardens but there are plans to address this in the future.</p>

Air quality	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	HVO fuel will be used in place of traditional diesel. HVO demonstrates large reductions in emissions of nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide (NOx) and particulate matter (PM) relative to conventional diesel. For example, the fuel supplier procured for 2023's event confirmed their fuel demonstrated 30% and 85% reductions respectively.
Sustainable Transport	2	No action required	In our marketing material we are emphasising the convenient, central location of the ice rink and listing the various ways in which people can reach the attraction using more sustainable modes of travel. This will include by foot, rail, bus, where to find electric car charging points etc.
Biodiversity	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	This event will have a short-term impact on the park's biodiversity due to increased footfall and consequent noise. There will also be a temporary, very slight increase in artificial light levels which may impact nocturnal animals.
Land use change	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	The quadrant will need to be returned following removal of the rink. This will be booked well in advance and the work will commence the week after the rink is removed to ensure minimal impact on the aesthetics of the garden. The flower beds will be replanted later in January, which would be the case regardless of whether the rink takes place or not. Experience from the 2023-24 event has shown that the re-turfing planted well and that the impact of the event was barely discernible within 2-3 weeks of the closing date.
Soil and waterway health	0	No action required.	0

<p>Climate Change Adaptation</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>No action required</p>	<p>The creation of a much more sustainable power solution for the 2023 event has had, and will continue to have, a positive impact on other event organisers. The innovations developed have led to the council being invited to share their findings with other event organisers, including Cheltenham Festivals, to highlight the possibilities of battery power solutions. The developments will also feed into the council's forthcoming events strategy, potentially impacting future policies for the hire of council land for events.</p>
<p>Energy Use</p>	<p>-2</p>	<p>Review - identify possible improvements</p>	<p>The ice rink undeniably requires a lot of power to run. Consumption is at its highest during ice creation which takes place over several days of the build phase. Once the rink is live this settles at a lower level as the ice is simply maintained. The ambient temperature will also have an impact on energy use over the course of the event. However, we will run the event using sustainably sourced HVO in an industry-leading hybrid set-up (as detailed in section 1) to maximise efficiency and minimise reliance on generators.</p>
<p>Waste</p>	<p>-2</p>	<p>Review - identify possible improvements</p>	<p>Waste bins situated throughout the structure allow for the collection of waste. Ubico will provide infrastructure to enable waste streams to be separated by both the general public and suppliers. Marketing Cheltenham will sign this in a user-friendly way.</p> <p>No waste is left on site overnight. Installation and dismantle of the rink produces zero waste as every item is accounted for. The site is walked on exit to ensure it is handed back in a satisfactory condition. Where possible everything regarding the ice rink is operated on a paperless basis, machines are contactless and ticketing software confirmed via email and QR code in person on arrival.</p>

Sustainable Materials	-1	Review - identify possible improvements	<p>Waste bins situated throughout the structure allow for the collection of waste. Ubico will provide infrastructure to enable waste streams to be separated by both the general public and suppliers. Marketing Cheltenham will sign this in a user-friendly way. No waste is left on site overnight.</p> <p>Installation and dismantle of the rink produces zero waste as every item is accounted for. The site is walked on exit to ensure it is handed back in a satisfactory condition. Where possible everything regarding the ice rink is operated on a paperless basis, machines are contactless and ticketing software confirmed via email and QR code in person on arrival.</p>
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SOCIAL	Scores	Action	Justification
Food	1	No action required	0
Health	0	No action required.	This event will encourage people to be physically active and promote social connection.
Housing	1	No action required	0
Education	0	No action required.	<p>Schools and community groups e.g. scouting groups will be encouraged to attend and offered preferential rates to help facilitate access at suitable times of day. Marketing Cheltenham will explore coach hire options for 2024 as this cost is the key hurdle for schools who would otherwise like to attend. HAF funding will be applied for to offer free skating sessions to families and young people who may otherwise not be able to afford to attend. SEND and pre-school sessions will also be in place.</p>

Community	0	No action required.	This event will bring people from the community together to enjoy spending time in our green spaces. It will bring a new audience to Imperial Gardens with the hope they will connect with the space and return in the future.
Culture	0	No action required.	The ice rink will be a key attraction for a diverse community audience over the winter period. Accessibility is at the heart of the project. The ice rink is fully accessible to people with additional or alternative access needs. With varied opening hours, specialised sessions i.e. Relaxed Sessions, student themed nights, and discounted tickets for families, the council strive to make the event as accessible as possible.
Accessibility	0	No action required.	The ice rink will be accessible with ramps and specific SEND / Relaxed Sessions will be run at various times/days to encourage those with access needs to participate safely and comfortably. Extremely positive feedback was received by users with additional or alternative access needs in 2023 and a new Accessibility Video Guide has been created for use in 2024 outlining exactly what to expect, before and during a visit to the ice rink. The site is located in the town centre and is easily accessible by foot, car or using public transport. It is anticipated that discount codes will be offered to families of children experiencing hardship via HAF to help overcome financial barriers.

<p>Local Economy and Jobs</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>This is best demonstrated by a looking at post-event analysis from 2023 with similar results forecast for 2024:</p> <p>An independent economic impact assessment shows that a total of £1.6m was spent in Cheltenham by all those visiting the ice rink in 2023. A total of £860,000 of this is classed as ‘additional’ and would not have occurred without the presence of the ice rink. This represents a return on investment of around £11.50 per £1.00 invested by the council in the delivery of the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 83% of all those who had visited Cheltenham Ice Rink said it had been the main reason for their visit to Cheltenham/coming into the town. • A total of £1.2m additional business turnover occurred in Cheltenham as a result of the presence of the ice rink (indirect and induced) and this additional money supports 13 FTE jobs or 17 estimated actual jobs in the town. <p>Car parking revenue figures for November and December 2023 show that the council over-performed on parking revenues by over £82,000 highlighting significant numbers of additional visitors to the town during the ice rink period.</p> <p>In 2023 approx. 30,000 visits were made to the ice rink. Many local suppliers were used throughout the project and the ice rink recruited and trained skate marshals from the local area. Local businesses were promoted via the onsite advertising and sponsorship as well as social media and websites.</p>
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<p>Safety</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>With greater footfall and lighting in the area, this should automatically present fewer opportunities for crime. The rink will be covered by multiple CCTV cameras and there will be an overnight security presence during non-operational hours. All PAYE staff will be First Aid trained and able to provide a quick response in the event of an accident/injury.</p>
<p>Democratic Voice</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>A thorough resident engagement plan was created for 2023's event and this resulted in positive engagement with and feedback from the residents of Imperial Square. This feedback highlighted improvements in the look and feel of the rink, noise management, communication, and power solutions. Post-event wash-ups have already taken place and communication is ongoing with representatives from FISG to build upon that success as we look ahead to 2024.</p> <p>An application to vary the conditions of the existing planning permission will soon be submitted which will offer local stakeholders the opportunity to input with support/areas of concern.</p>
<p>Equity</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>Those with access needs have been carefully considered. The rink will be accessible by ramp and is fully wheelchair accessible. In addition, there will be Relaxed Sessions, reduced rate tickets will be available to those in need and free carer tickets will be available.</p>

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

Name of service / policy / project and date	Cheltenham Christmas Ice Rink 2024-25
Lead officer	Helen Mole, head of place marketing and inward investment
Other people involved in completing this form	Hannah Ward, events manager

Step 1: About the service, policy or project

What is the aim of the service / policy / project and what outcomes is it contributing to	<p>To deliver an ice rink over the Christmas season 2024-25.</p> <p>This contributes to the Cheltenham Corporate Plan Priority 4 - Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity.</p> <p>The objectives of the event are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the town's economy, in particular the retail and hospitality businesses; • To drive incremental footfall and spending in the town and to ensure that Cheltenham remains competitive at this critical time of year; • To help position Cheltenham regionally and nationally as a destination of choice and drive continued investment.
Who are the primary customers of the service / policy / project and how do they / will they benefit	<p>Cheltenham residents – invited to participate in a fun, engaging activity over the Christmas season.</p> <p>Community engagement – opportunities for CBC and No Child Left Behind team to host engagement sessions and free activities for the Cheltenham community.</p> <p>Cheltenham businesses – benefitting via increased footfall and spend by visitors in local businesses, stays in</p>

	<p>local accommodation providers, as well as Cheltenham suppliers who will be contracted by or make sales to the ice rink team.</p> <p>Potential visitors to Cheltenham – providing further encouragement to visit and stay in Cheltenham during this key trading time for local businesses.</p>
How and where is the service / policy / project implemented	The ice rink is proposed for Imperial Gardens.
What potential barriers might already exist to achieving these outcomes	If the ice rink is permitted to go ahead, the event will generate significant economic impact and social value for the town. If the ice rink is not permitted then alternative promotional methods will be considered, but it is unlikely that any would have the same level of sustained benefit for the economy.

Step 2: What do you already know about your existing and potential customers?

What existing information and data do you have about your existing / potential customers e.g. Statistics, customer feedback, performance information	<p>We have data from customers to the 2023 ice rink who provided their details and GDPR permission for us to contact them.</p> <p>We know via the visitor survey where customers have come from and how much they spent in the local area.</p>
What does it tell you about who uses your service / policy and those that don't?	An economic impact assessment was carried out from the results of the visitor survey to help us to understand the impact of the event, customer feedback about their experiences, motivation for visiting, and how much they spent. We also collected data from customer services and social media comments to further help inform planning for the event.
What have you learnt about real barriers to your service from any consultation with customers and any stakeholder groups?	<p>School customers highlighted that the costs of coach travel was prohibitive in many cases. We are investigating options to combine with other school trips, e.g. the pantomime to see if it's possible to make the event more affordable for school trips.</p> <p>We had feedback from some visitors that the ice rink was too crowded at busy times. Numbers will be reviewed to ensure this isn't the case for future years.</p>
If not, who do you have plans to consult with about the service / policy / project?	We will continue to consult with local residents, members, businesses and stakeholders.

Step 3: Assessing community impact

How does your service, policy or project impact on different groups in the community? Please outline what you are already doing to benefit this group, what you are doing that might disadvantage this group, what you could do differently to benefit the group.

People from black and minority ethnic groups

People who are male or female

People who are transitioning from one gender to another

Older people / children and young people

People with disabilities and mental health challenges

People who have a particular religion or belief

People who are attracted to their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

People who are married or in a Civil Partnership

People who are pregnant or who are on maternity leave

Other groups or communities

It is important to consider all visitors and potential ice rink customers in these plans. There are a number of ways in which the ice rink might impact people from different groups in the community:

1. Accessibility for all is at the heart of the event. This was written into procurement exercises and reviewed continually throughout the delivery of the 2023-24 event, and this will continue / be enhanced for 2024-25.
2. Operational procedures have considered users with alternative or additional access needs, including via consultation with representative groups. Policies and processes have been updated as feedback has been provided.
3. Dedicated SEND and relaxed sessions were introduced in 2023-24 (and will be in 2024-25) at varying times and on different days each week, to ensure accessibility.
4. Training will be provided to ice rink and council staff to ensure that terminology is used correctly and that everybody is treated equitably.
5. Family discounted tickets will be offered to make the activity more affordable.
6. Free carer tickets will be provided.
7. The ice rink will be fully wheelchair accessible.
8. We will seek a partnership with No Child Left Behind / HAF to ensure access for people who may not otherwise be able to afford this experience.

Step 4: What are the differences?

Are any groups affected in different ways to others as a result of the service / policy / project?	As a result of the measures being implemented, every visitor to the ice rink will be treated equitably.
Does your service / policy / project either directly or indirectly discriminate?	No
If yes, what can be done to improve this?	n/a
Are there any other ways in which the service / project can help support priority communities in Cheltenham?	We will seek further engagement with local community groups and will look to identify more relaxed sessions.

Step 5: Taking things forward

What are the key actions to be carried out and how will they be resourced and monitored?	See Cabinet report
Who will play a role in the decision-making process?	Head of place marketing and inward investment, Events Manager, Cabinet, Portfolio Holder, stakeholders, community groups.
What are your / the project's learning and development needs?	We would like to understand any other measures we can introduce to ensure the ice rink is as accessible as possible. We will engage with community groups and representatives to help with this.
How will you capture these actions in your service / project planning?	Ice rink event management plan and action plan will cover all of these aspects.