

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 22 APRIL 2008

REPORT BY HEAD OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES

10. JOINT PROVISION WEEKEND CASUAL SWIMMING REVIEW

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

'D' RECOMMENDATION - that, the existing weekend swim programmes detailed in the appendix be retained, subject to ongoing review.

---

1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide a reviewed recommendation following six months of:

- (a) a reduced weekend casual swimming programme at Leventhorpe pool and gym and Ward Freman pool, and
- (b) the retention of an unreduced programme at Fanshawe pool and gym.

2.0 Consultation to the Councils Corporate Objectives

2.1 Enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.

2.2 Deliver responsible Community Leadership strategies with our partners and the public.

3.0 Background

3.1 In response to an estimated projected budget deficit of £150,000, the Executive of 12 June 2007 considered a range of cost cutting measures, including the withdrawal of weekend casual public swimming at Fanshawe pool and gym, Leventhorpe pool and gym and at Ward Freman pool. The Executive resolved to withdraw casual swimming sessions at the weekend at Leventhorpe pool and gym and Ward Freman pool. In relation to weekend opening at Fanshawe pool and gym, the Executive deferred a decision pending further scrutiny. Following a recommendation from Policy

Development Scrutiny of 9 October 2007, the Executive of 23 October 2007 resolved to retain the existing programme of casual swimming sessions at weekends at Fanshawe, primarily in order to protect the thriving direct debit income at that facility - direct debit customers having access to both the pool and gym. The Executive of 23 October 2007 also resolved that the programming in relation to weekend casual swimming at the three joint use pools be reviewed in six months time.

#### 4.0 Report

4.1 In the last six months the budgetary and programming environment has changed in three significant respects:

- (a) Due to the impact of re-pricing the direct debit gym and pool offer across the five facilities managed by Stevenage Leisure Ltd (SLL) in East Herts, SLL has been able to effect a very substantial growth in direct debit income that has contributed significantly to closing the previously identified budget deficit.
- (b) The process to procure new contracts for the Council's leisure facilities with a start date of 1 January 2009 (reference item elsewhere on the agenda) has progressed to the extent that officers anticipate being in a position to review a set of new proposals on programmes and pricing from a number of tenderers, as early as May 2008.
- (c) A pilot partnership arrangement has been agreed with Sawbridgeworth Town Council that the Town Council fund the marginal costs of Leventhorpe pool being opened for casual swimming on Sundays.

4.2 Members are invited to consider the income, expenditure and throughputs relating to the current weekend programmes at the three joint use pools at Appendix 'A' (Pages 10.5 - 10.25). (Notes: 1. These figures are as yet not audited. 2. The Leventhorpe figures in relation to the arrangement with Sawbridgeworth Town Council have at the time of writing yet to be finalised and agreed.)

4.3 Negotiations are taking place with Sawbridgeworth Town Council on the ongoing arrangements for casual swimming sessions on a Sunday. The Town Clerk has indicated that Members of the Town Council wish to continue with the existing arrangements for the next six months.

4.4 SLL has been consulted on the programme in relation to this six month review and they have advised that in their view, the current programme as set out Appendix 'A' (Pages 10.5 - 10.25) is working as well as expected and their preference would be to retain the current programme until their own process of programme review is better defined.

4.5 The recommendation at the head of this report is that the current programme is retained until either SLL bring forward a package of measures as a result of their review, or the new contract starts on 1 January 2009; programmes and proposals relating to either eventualities will of course be reported to this committee for approval.

#### 5.0 Consultation

Stevenage Leisure Ltd has been consulted on the contents of the report.

#### 6.0 Legal Implications

There are no new legal implications associated with the report.

#### 7.0 Financial Implications

There are no specific new financial implications associated with this report.

#### 8.0 Human Resource Implications

There are no new human resource implications within this report.

#### 9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no specific new risk implications associated with this report.

## Background Papers

None

Contact Member: Councillor Linda Haysey, Executive Member for Community Development.

Contact Officer: Will O'Neill, Head of Community and Cultural Services  
George A Robertson, Director of Customer and Community Services

Report Author: Will O'Neill Head of Community and Cultural Services

G:\BSWP\NPS\Community Scrutiny\22 April 2008\Joint Provision covering report.doc