

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 1 MARCH 2007

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

13. HARTHAM CHANGING VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT WORKS AND
CASTLE HALL RIVER ROOM IMPROVEMENTS

'D' RECOMMENDATION - that up to £40,000 underspends be diverted from the original 2006/07 Capital budget programme of £102,000 identified for swimming pool improvement works at Hartham and Grange Paddocks, broadband installation, and purchase of the new leisure facilities IT system, to fund new cubicles and associated changing room improvements at Hartham Pool and the purchase of new furnishings in the River Room at Castle Hall in 2007/08.

1.0 Background

1.1 Capital Strategy Group gave its approval to the expenditure of up to £45,000 Capital on improvements at both Hartham and Grange Paddocks on 27 September 2006. The works at Grange Paddocks are currently underway and are estimated at costing £8,500, this being less expensive than originally estimated owing to the fact that the suspended ceilings originally envisaged proved impractical to install. The works at Hartham have been delayed and will not be completed until after Easter 2007 in order to minimize inconvenience to the public. The costs of these works is estimated at £23,000 and will require some slippage into 2007/08, dependant on the volume of works completed prior to March 31 2007.

1.2 At present, estimates received indicate that the total spend on the projects at both Grange Paddocks and Hartham will be approximately £31,500, leaving £13,500 Capital unspent. The sum remaining does not include project management fees of 5%, previously negotiated between the Interim Director of Leisure and

SLL which would amount to £1,575. This means that of the original budget of £45,000, there remains approximately £11,900. Assuming a project management fee of 5% will apply to any works undertaken by SLL in regards to the proposed works, the budget available for actual Capital works is approximately £11,300.

- 1.3 Capital Strategy Group gave its approval on 24 November 2006 to the expenditure of up to £7,000 Capital on broadband installation at each of the five leisure facilities, as part of the procurement process for a new IT system covering all five pools. It is understood that the cost of these works has come in at £4,600.
- 1.4 Capital Strategy Group gave its approval on 24 November 2006 to the expenditure of up to £50,000 Capital on a new IT system at each of the five leisure facilities. Quotations received indicate that the system will cost in the region of £21,550 inclusive of client side additional equipment i.e. servers etc. The main reason for the large underspend is that the successful provider has undertaken to transfer licenses previously held by Aspire to East Herts Council at no cost. This is largely due to the work undertaken by the Client IT Department in securing this outcome. License costs were originally thought to be in the region of £25,000 in total.
- 1.5 Appendix 'A13' (page 67) details original budgets for the works outlined above, together with estimated spends against each budget. This shows that there is an estimated £42,150 available from the three Capital projects identified to fund alternative works, should these be approved.
- 1.6 Appendix 'B13' (page 68) shows photographs of the current state of repair of the Hartham Changing Village. These photographs clearly indicate that works are required on the changing village to ensure continued usage and address customer satisfaction and health and safety issues.
- 1.7 Appendix 'C13' (page 69) shows photographs of the current state of repair of the Castle Hall River Room furnishings. It is clear from these photos that these furnishings are outdated and require replacement with more modern and attractive products.

2.0 Business Case – Hartham Changing Village

2.1 Since taking over from Aspire on 6 October 2006, Stevenage Leisure Ltd have adopted an approach aimed at ensuring that the “product” on offer to the public is both fit for purpose, appealing, and marketed at a price commensurate with market rates. At present, one outstanding issue with Hartham Pool concerns the changing village which incorporates a number of changing cubicles and benches. These items are in a poor state of repair, with some doors to cubicles being removed for Health and Safety reasons. The remaining cubicles are showing significant signs of wear and tear and are unappealing to the eye.

2.2 SLL have obtained 2 of 3 quotes for the replacement costs of the changing village cubicles, in line with financial procedures for such a proposed procurement. These are shown below:

(a) £26,972 (installed)

(b) £27,736 (installed)

3.0 Business Case – Castle Hall River Room Furnishings

3.1 The management of Castle Hall has to the end of January 2007 increased user throughput on its own promotions in the main hall by almost 50% over total throughput for 2005/06. Income for the River Room in 2005/06 was £19,140, representing approximately 11% of total income for the venue. Income for 2006/07 to the end of January 2007 is £16,150, indicating that income for this important area of the Castle Hall operation has stagnated.

3.2 The River Room is an important social meeting area for the local community, and is also capable of hosting meetings in what could be argued as one the most beautiful settings in Hertford. It is therefore important that the image portrayed for the River Room is in keeping with the remainder of the venue which has recently undergone numerous improvements.

3.3 The Castle Hall management, and customers, recognise that the furnishings in the River Room are tired, and are in need of modernisation (see Appendix ‘C13’, page 69). Castle Hall

management and the Council's Property Department believe that the injection of up to £10,000 Capital would greatly enhance the appearance of the River Room, and contribute to its "sale ability" for local meetings and social gatherings. Quotations are currently being sought from suppliers to undertake these works.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Capital Strategy Group have been consulted on the content of this report.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 From the quotes detailed above, both SLL and East Herts officers are agreed that the best option to pursue is that of replacement of the changing village cubicles, and that the quotation that demonstrates Best Value to the Council, following an assessment of quotations received, should be accepted.

5.2 There exists sufficient Capital funding within the original budgets identified at Appendix 'A13' (page 67) to fund this project. Every reasonable attempt will be made to undertake the works outside of business hours, or through a process of changing village segregation, in order that disruption to the public is minimised.

5.3 The furnishings in the River Room are tired and the venue as a whole would benefit from the replacement of the existing furniture. There exists sufficient Capital funding within the original budgets identified at Appendix 'A13' (page 67) to fund this project.

5.4 An allowance of £3,000 has been made in excess of budget estimates to meet unforeseen eventualities in relation to the Capital works at Grange Paddocks and the Hartham changing village cubicles.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 Financial implications within this report relate to Council's approval to use underspends identified in Property existing Capital budgets

8.0 Human Resource Implications

8.1 There are no Human Resource implications within this report.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no risk management implications within this report.

Background Papers

None

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Contact Officer: Martyn Dutfield - Head of Leisure - Ext. 1505

APPENDIX 'A13'

<u>Works</u>	Budget Estimate	Budget Probable	Budget Remaining
Broadband Installation	£7,000	£4,600	£2,400
Purchase of IT System	£50,000	£21,550	£28,450
Hartham & GP Capital Works	£45,000	£33,700	£11,300
	£102,000	£59,850	£42,150

Proposed Works

Renew and install new cubicles in Hartham Changing Village	£27,000
Renew soft furnishings in Castle Hall River Room	£10,000
Total	£37,000

APPENDIX 'B13'

Hartham Pool & Gym – Changing Village Cubicles



Castle Hall, River Room Furnishings

