
REPORT TO:	HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 9
DATE OF MEETING:	8 TH JUNE 2006	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	CHRIS MASON 5794	DOC:
SUBJECT:	MANAGEMENT OF THE GREEN BANK LEISURE CENTRE	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:HCS07

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members note the contents of the report
- 2.2 That Members approve the appointment of a working group to work with officers during the procurement process for the future management of the Green Bank Leisure Centre

3.0 Purpose of Report

- 3.1 To update Members on the contract situation for Green Bank Leisure Centre and outline the reasons behind the above recommendations

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 The Council's contract with Sport and Leisure Management Ltd. (SLM) commenced on 1st April 1998. The original contract was for a period of 5 years with an option, subject to the agreement of both parties, to extend for a further 5 years. This option was taken up and our current agreement is due to expire on 31st March 2008.
- 4.2 To allow sufficient time to undertake the procurement process for a future partner it is important to commence the process as soon as possible. For the next meeting of the Committee it is intended to produce a detailed timetable for the process together with recommendations on how the process will be managed.
- 4.3 The Green Bank Leisure Centre is the Council's most well used public building and one of its most significant assets. A key element in developing the current contract was Members' involvement in ensuring that their vision for the Centre was reflected in the contract documentation produced and ultimately, the partner appointed.
- 4.4 To support the development and delivery of the procurement process, Members are asked to nominate representatives to sit on a sub-group. This group would work with officers at key stages in the process to agree strategy etc. prior to reporting back to the main Committee.

4.5 Since 1998, when Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) was still in place, the nature of the contractual arrangement has changed significantly. Our tender documents are very prescriptive with a great deal of the risk placed on the contractor. Any future arrangement is likely to see this risk more evenly spread. The private and trust sector of the leisure management market have become more refined with various models being developed to reflect the particular challenges faced by their public sector clients.

4.6 One of the challenges, that this and other Councils face, is to ensure that the quality of facilities continues to meet the aspirations & expectations of the community, in what is a very competitive environment. At the Green Bank Leisure Centre, while SLM (and the Council to a lesser extent) have invested significantly in improving health & fitness provision, little has been spent on improving the basic infrastructure, particularly changing and toilet areas and the décor of areas such as the Grove Hall. Whatever the direction, if Members wish to continue to provide public leisure facilities, significant investment of capital would be required

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 From a strictly revenue viewpoint, our current arrangement with SLM is recognised as being financially advantageous to the Council compared with costs being incurred by others. However, without wishing to prejudge the outcome of the procurement process, the overall revenue costs to the Council of a retendered management contract are likely to increase. This may be balanced though against increased outcomes and closer links to the Centre delivering some of the Council's corporate priorities.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 To procure a new partner for the management of the Green Bank Leisure Centre will require significant staff time beyond the immediate resources of the Leisure and Community Development Division.

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 The Centre, located as it is in the centre of an ever-expanding urban catchment area, is, and will continue to be, an important community facility.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The future management of the Green Bank Leisure Centre is of crucial importance to the Council and early progress is required to examine the procurement options and complete the process. Whoever the Council chooses to work with in the future it will be on very different terms to current arrangements. We will though face the same challenges of providing and managing facilities to meet the aspirations of the local community

9.0 Background Papers

9.1 None