

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-012-2009/10

Date of meeting: 13 July 2009



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Leisure and Wellbeing

Subject: Provision of Sports Hall - Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool

Responsible Officer: John Gilbert (01992 564062).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To note that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Leisure Task & Finish Panel;**
- (2) That the proposals for the provision of a new sports hall be further developed to enable:**
 - (a) a planning pre-application submission to be made; and**
 - (b) subject to the satisfactory consideration of the pre-application a full planning application to be made;**
- (3) That the proposal be progressed to the pre-planning application stage at an estimated cost of £41,000 and that contract standing orders be set aside to enable the appointment of Stace to undertake this work;**
- (4) That subject to recommendation (2) to recommend to Council at its September meeting a supplementary capital estimate of £1.721 million; and**
- (5) That the indicative time frame for the project be noted and that consideration be given to the time period between the cessation of the Joint use Agreement with the Governors of King Harold School in January 2010 and the earliest likely date of opening of any new facility in the Summer of 2011.**

Executive Summary:

Following Cabinet's decision to withdraw from the Joint Use Agreement between the Council and the King Harold School in respect of the management of the sports centre at Waltham Abbey, the Leisure Task & Finish Panel was charged with considering the feasibility of constructing a replacement sports hall as part of the existing leisure complex at the Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool.

Having received and considered that feasibility study, the Task & Finish Panel accepted the recommendation that the proposal should be recommended for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. At its meeting on the 2 June 2009, Overview & Scrutiny accepted the Panel's recommendation and referred the matter onwards to Cabinet and Council to seek the appropriate capital provision in the Council's capital programme.

This is a key decision.

“A safe, healthy & attractive place” – “Address leisure need”

Council Plan 2006-2010 *“Fit for Life” – “Residents of the district having access to effective, high quality leisure & cultural services”* (FL1, 2 & 3)

Cabinet Key Priority 2009/10 – *“Subject to the outcome of the feasibility study, to commence the construction of a sports hall and changing rooms at the Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool”*

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To provide a replacement sports hall facility for the community of Waltham Abbey following the cessation of the Joint Use Agreement with the governing body of the King Harold School in January 2010. Although the cessation of the Joint Use Agreement does not preclude the school governing body from enabling continued community use of the sports centre, there has to date been no indication by the governing body of its future intentions. There can therefore be no certainty that community use will be possible after January 2010.

Waltham Abbey has been identified as having one of the worst health outcomes of any area within the District and a new facility such as is proposed could greatly benefit the fitness of, and the longer term health outcomes of, the local community.

Other Options for Action:

To not proceed with the proposed new sports hall; or

To defer consideration until a later date.

Report:

1. The report to the Leisure Task & Finish Panel of 18 May 2009 is attached to this agenda. The full feasibility study on the proposal is available as a background paper.
2. The recommendations of the Leisure Task & Finish Panel were accepted in full by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and these now stand referred to this Cabinet meeting for further consideration.
3. Cabinet's attention is drawn to the following particular issues:
 - (i) the overall timetable for the project decision making, noting in particular that the timetable has been constructed to align with the early stages of the Council's 2010/11 budget setting arrangements;
 - (ii) the estimated revenue consequences associated with the project, arising from:
 - the use of the £1.72 million of capital; and
 - the operation/management of the new facility;
 - (iii) the recommendation to set aside contract standing orders to enable Stace to undertake the pre-planning application exercise;
 - (iv) the cessation of the Joint Use Agreement in mid-January 2010 which could result in community access to the existing facilities at the Waltham Abbey Sports Centre being curtailed or withdrawn in full; and
 - (v) that, even if the proposal is agreed at this meeting, the new facility would not be

available for use until the summer of 2011.

4. All other details on the proposal are set out in detail in the reports to the Leisure Task & Finish Panel and Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Resource Implications:

(a) Capital

Item	Est. capital cost £
Develop proposal to planning stage (RIBA stage D)	130,000
Develop and oversee proposal to completion	130,000
Main construction costs	1,133,000
Other costs – sports equipment	46,250
sub station	100,000
EFDC officer costs (estimated)	25,000
Total construction related costs	1,564,250
Contingency @ 10%	156,425
Total project cost	1,720,675

(b) Revenue

Item	Est. revenue cost £
Use of £1.721 million of capital at 2%	34,420
Additional SLM management fee	15,350
Estimated NNDR	10,500
Estimated annual building costs	4,000
Total	£64,270

The report to Cabinet in December 2008 identified revenue savings of £270,000 per annum, from 2010/11 onwards, arising from the cessation of the joint use agreement with King Harold School in January 2010. The revenue expenditure identified above will therefore reduce those CSB savings to £205,730 per annum.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council can undertake this proposal using its general community wellbeing powers. SLM, the Council's contracted leisure providers have expressed a considerable interest in and a willingness to incorporate the management of the new facility into the existing leisure contract, but to enable this to happen formal amendments to current contract documentation will need to be made and agreed.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

No direct issue at this stage although the decision whether to proceed or not with the development may have an impact on communities in and around Waltham Abbey through

improved or restricted access to modern sporting facilities.

Consultation Undertaken:

Initial discussions with SLM regarding impact on present contractual arrangements – no adverse issues at this time (see legal & governance implications).

Governing body of King Harold School are aware of the cessation of the Joint Use Agreement and its potential implications but no formal response has yet been received.

Background Papers:

Cabinet meeting November 2008
Leisure Task & Finish meetings
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Feasibility study

Impact Assessments:

- (i) Financial risk associated with the use of £47,000 of capital (feasibility plus pre-planning application) having to revert to revenue (DDF) in the event that the project did not or was unable to advance beyond the planning pre-application stage.
- (ii) The Council's risk register has highlighted as a risk the use of significant amounts of capital receipts if they are not to be utilised for revenue generation purposes.
- (iii) Potential adverse effects upon the local community (health, social cohesion etc) if the current sports centre is not made available for community use following the ending of the Joint Use Agreement and some form of leisure re-provision is not made in its stead.
- (iv) Even if it were to remain available for some form of community use, the existing sports centre falls well short of modern standards for community use and for access by those with disabilities. The new facility would be constructed to address these issues.