



Report of the Director of Learning and Leisure

Executive Board

Date: 16th August 2006

Subject: Horsforth Swimming Pool Deputation

Electoral wards affected:

Specific implications for:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the gap

Eligible for call In

Not eligible for call in
(details contained in the report)

Executive Summary

The City Council has major investment challenges to renew its existing ageing swimming pools. This report responds to the deputation by local residents in Horsforth for the provision of a swimming pool in the area and suggests that £2500 is made available to assist in the development of a feasibility study.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide contextual information in relation to;
- The demand for new swimming facilities in the Horsforth area based on Sport England's facility planning model ("Active Places")
 - The Councils position in terms of investment needs for the cities leisure centres.

2.0 Background information

2.1 Discussions between officers in Learning and Leisure have previously taken place with local residents campaigning for a pool in Horsforth as well as local ward members. In considering the provision of a new swimming pool in Horsforth there are a number of issues to be considered;

- What are the current swimming pool facilities provided in the North West of the Leeds local authority area?
- Is there sufficient demand for a new pool in the Horsforth area?
- What would be the impact of the new development on existing facilities?
- What other new facilities might be planned within the proposed catchment area?
- Is the funding in place to build the new swimming pool?
- Is the funding in place to pay for the ongoing revenue costs of running a swimming pool?

2.2 The following response is a summary objective assessment of the current proposals.

3.0 Main issues

3.1 Value of Sport

It is agreed with the deputation that sport has a hugely valuable role to play in local communities. It is fun, it unites communities, it can help learning and self development. Whilst outreach sports development programmes are relatively inexpensive major capital projects are not.

Nationally there is a backlog investment need in local authority leisure centres of more than £3bn. In Leeds the figure is currently about £90m and this excludes the investment already underway with the new 50m pool in South Leeds and the new John Smeaton Leisure Centre in East Leeds. Whilst the allocation of £30 million of PFI credits and some capital receipts can help address part of this £90m gap there remains a major shortfall. Working with our partners the Council needs to be able to plan ahead with a network of affordable leisure centres in areas where there are clear supply problems, most notably where leisure centres are in need of replacement. The current PFI credits are not available for a new pool development in Horsforth.

3.2 Sport England assessment

Recent discussions with the residents referred them to Sport England's facility planning tool, known as "Active Places". It outlines the facilities that already exist within a given catchment of the proposed new facility and allows an informed assessment on the potential level of supply and demand.

Appendix 1 provides a list of facilities drawn from the Active Places website. It clearly shows that there is sufficient supply in the immediate area. The provision of additional waterspace would create excess supply and lead to unsustainable facilities in the longer term elsewhere in the locality.

3.3 Other Local Developments

Plans exist to replace Holt Park swimming pool within the next 3 years, as part of the redevelopment of the entire Holt Park district centre. This will have an affect on demand patterns. Furthermore Leeds Metropolitan University is also considering the provision of a new swimming pool, ideally on the Beckett Park campus. Furthermore the potential partnership with Trinity and All Saints and in turn their connection to the University of Leeds may create difficulties for the campaigners in that the University of Leeds is also planning to build a new swimming pool which is likely to restrict available capital funds to any development in Horsforth.

3.4 Impacts on other local swimming pools

Whilst the provision of new pools is welcomed consideration must be given to the potential impact on the Council's Kirkstall, Holt Park and Aireborough leisure centres. An increased supply of facilities in an area already well covered for swimming pools would dilute demand and result in lost revenues for the City Council run swimming pools.

Swimming lessons with schools are a key element of existing leisure centre programmes. It's not uncommon for schools to travel away from their local leisure centre as it often depends on the schools timetable and swimming pool availability. Again if schools change their pattern of use then it will impact on existing Council run facilities.

3.5 Build costs and Revenue costs

The deputation have requested support for a feasibility study to look at the potential funding sources and revenue affordability. Capital costs associated with building swimming pools to modern day standards are expensive. A stand alone 6 lane 25m pool with a small fitness suite would cost in the region of £6-8m. Furthermore the costs of running and staffing the pool would be considerable. Typically most Local Authority new swimming pools run at a deficit of at least £200k pa, excluding ongoing repairs and maintenance. This figure could be reduced depending on staffing regimes/rates of pay/programming/opening hours/pricing charges/ admissions policy (i.e. targeting use by disadvantaged groups or not).

Any feasibility study would have to address the fundamental question of funding the capital costs and meeting the annual running costs.

A suitable feasibility study itself would cost in the region of £8,000.

4.0 **Implications for council policy and governance**

4.1 None.

5.0 **Legal and resource implications**

5.1 £2500 funding support to be offered to the residents' action group to be used as part payment of a bona fide consultant to prepare a feasibility study.

6.0 **Conclusions**

6.1 In the context of the supply pattern demonstrated via "Active Places" and the investment needs of the existing leisure centres in the city it is doubtful that there is sufficient strategic demand to satisfy the need for a new swimming pool in Horsforth. Rather than fully fund a feasibility study, it is proposed that a funding contribution is made towards the engagement of a bona fide consultant to produce a feasibility study. This support does not imply future support of either funding or land to realise any proposal that may be forthcoming. Should the residents action group raise the required match funding then the appointment of a recognised, bona fide consultant and the consultants' brief must meet with the Director of Learning and Leisure's approval.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 That the request to support a feasibility study into the provision of a new swimming pool in Horsforth is part supported by the City Council up to a maximum of £2500.
- 7.2 That recognised, bona fide consultants are engaged to undertake the feasibility study, should match funding be found and the consultants' brief should be drawn up in consultation with the Director of Learning and Leisure.

APPENDIX 1

1. HOLT PARK LEISURE CENTRE

1004396

1.65 mile(s)

☎ 0113 267 9033

Leeds, LS16 7QD

[show ↗](#)

2. ESPORTA HEALTH & FITNESS (LEEDS - COOKRIDGE HALL)

1000130

1.8 mile(s)

☎ 0113 203 0000

Leeds, LS16 7NL

[show ↗](#)

3. BRAMLEY BATHS

1004369

2.01 mile(s)

☎ 0113 214 6034

Leeds, LS13 3DF

[show ↗](#)

4. VILLAGE LEISURE CLUB (LEEDS)

1000087

2.19 mile(s)

☎ 0113 278 1000

Leeds, LS16 5PR

[show ↗](#)

5. LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

1004442

2.24 mile(s)

☎ 0113 283 3160

Leeds, LS6 3QS

[show ↗](#)

6. WOODHOUSE GROVE

1201802

2.43 mile(s)

☎ 0113 250 2477

Bradford, BD10 0NR

[show ↗](#)

7. KIRKSTALL LEISURE CENTRE

1004403

2.47 mile(s)

☎ 0113 214 4555

Leeds, LS5 3BE

[show ↗](#)

8. DRAGONS HEALTH CLUB (LEEDS)

1000124

2.56 mile(s)

☎ 0113 239 1155

Leeds, LS19 7EN

[show ↗](#)

9. SEBASTIAN COE HEALTH CLUB (LEEDS)

1001317

2.61 mile(s)

☎ 0113 269 9010

Leeds, LS16 8AG

[show ↗](#)

10. ECCLESHILL SWIMMING POOL

1004381

3.18 mile(s)

☎ 01274 612329

Bradford, BD10 0QE

11. SPIRIT HEALTH & FITNESS (LEEDS)

1000712

3.19 mile(s)

☎ 0113 202 7433

Leeds, LS16 9JJ

[show ↗](#)

12. AIREBOROUGH LEISURE CENTRE

1004361

3.39 mile(s)

☎ 01943 877131

Leeds, LS20 9BT

[show ↗](#)

13. DAVID LLOYD CLUB (LEEDS)

1000115

3.41 mile(s)

☎ 0113 203 4000

Leeds, LS6 4QW

[show ↗](#)

14. PUDSEY LEISURE CENTRE

1004420

3.42 mile(s)

☎ 0113 256 8903

Pudsey, LS28 7BE

[show ↗](#)

15. VIRGIN ACTIVE CLUB (LEEDS)

1002786

3.57 mile(s)

☎ 0113 224 6601

Leeds, LS4 2DG

[show ↗](#)