

Report of Jeremy Morton, Director Tiger 11

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**South Leeds Sports Centre
Proposals by Tiger11**

**Report to Inner South Area Committee Report
11th November 2010**

1. Background

The Executive Board of Leeds City Council (LCC) decided on 26th August 2009 to seek expressions of interest to transfer South Leeds Sports Centre to a Community Organisation as an alternative to closure of the centre.

Since then Tiger11 have been working up proposals to remodel the South Leeds Sports Centre and operate it going forward as a community run sports facility. It will operate on a not-for-profit basis with any surpluses being reinvested in the building and providing sports and health services in the Inner South Leeds area. The facility will be rebranded and has the current working name of "Sports Splash".

Tiger11 was accepted onto the Communitybuilders programme, a fund designed to help develop community assets. We secured funding for feasibility work and appointed a design team to progress this evaluation. We also appointed Kirklees Active leisure (KAL) to provide business planning advice and financial modelling, which was funded by the Inner South Area Committee. This work is nearing completion and we hope in November to confirm in principle funding with Communitybuilders. Council Officers have also been assisting in this process.

The Executive Board of LCC decided on 13th October 2010 to close the sports centre and allow a 6 month exclusivity period to Tiger11 in order to progress funding and work associated with progressing the scheme to site by the end of March 2011 (Community Builders deadline). The intention being that sports centre at that time would be leased to Tiger11 for 40 years at a peppercorn rent. The Executive Board will consider in January 2011 whether it wishes to progress with the lease.

2. Neighbourhood Context

South Leeds Sports Centre's situation at the northern end of Beeston Road puts it in the heart of the Beeston Hill & Holbeck regeneration area and yet just one mile from Leeds city centre. The Beeston Hill and West Hunslet Regeneration Plan is due to be adopted shortly after a prolonged period of consultation. The Sports Centre is highlighted in the plan as occupying an important site and as an asset supporting the economic, health and community safety agendas in the neighbourhood. Local investment plans include the PFI Housing and The Holbeck Urban Village.

Leeds City Council's current classification of priority neighbourhoods is based on the latest Index of Multiple Deprivation data. The three middle level Super Output Areas that make up the Beeston Hill & Holbeck priority area are ranked 1st, 7th, and 14th most deprived in the city.

The sports centre can support the regeneration agenda in a number of ways:

Health – NHS Leeds has identified Beeston Hill is an infant mortality hotspot. Activities for pregnant mothers and mothers and babies can be provided. There is an existing active older persons swimming group and initiatives around "prescribing" physical activity to assist patients with heart disease and depression are gaining ground. The Change For Life programme is attempting to tackle obesity and physical activity plays a big part in that. The comprehensive provision of a range of sports and fitness provision proposed means a whole family approach will be taken to engaging people in use of the centre; gym-minis, schools, family memberships, GP referrals.

Community Safety – whilst the sports centre has been a victim of anti-social behaviour it is also part of the solution. The multi-agency run Friday Night Project has been very successful in occupying young people in the area. Free swims for under 16s have been very popular amongst

local residents and recent research by the Extended Services Cluster found swimming to be by far the most popular activity requested by children and young people in the local schools.

Economy – The sports centre contributes to local economic activity – the Council’s figures for 2008/09 show a turnover of over £300,000. It is part of the local infrastructure which can help attract inward investment into the area. Our proposals would also develop the opportunity to support the employment and training agenda through a local employment policy and active training approach.

Consultation

A community meeting was held on 7th July where we outlined our proposals for the transfer and refurbishment. These were widely welcomed, ideas and feedback were gathered and a number of local residents put their names forward to volunteer as instructors, receptionists and trustees.

In addition more recently we have held consultation meetings with:-

- The planning department – who are supportive of proposals and view the scheme as minor.
- Splash – who have campaigned to retain the sports centre – who confirmed our proposals meet their expectations
- Beeston Broncos – who currently use the playing field and who would benefit from the proposals with the addition of outdoor changing facilities within the centre.
- Ward members

We also have meetings scheduled with a number of other groups who would either use the centre, or provide funding; Joseph Priestly College, Hamara, Primary schools, Playfootball, Football Foundation and Sports England

3. Capital works (see power point presentation/appended slides)

The Partnership proposes to remodel the centre to make it more attractive by improving its relationship to Beeston Road and to the sports field. Crucially for the financial viability we propose to build additional five-a-side pitches; crudely, income from these will offset the high costs of operating the swimming pools.

The provision will include:-

- Improve the entrance to make it more welcoming
- Open up visual connections within the building, both for staff and customers
- Retain Swimming pool (main pool and children’s pool); Sports Hall & two/three Squash Courts
- Remodel wet changing area to “village” style, mindful of issues around private areas, school use, BME use
- Provide fitness suite; activity room(s); community café; treatment room, external five-a-side pitches; outdoor changing facility; entrance from outdoor pitches
- Maximising opportunities for “green” energy solutions, in particular by reducing energy usage and introducing energy management systems

Timetable

Milestone	Start	Complete
Feasibility work completed (works and business plan)	August 2010	October 2010
Secure agreement to capital funding	November 2010	November 2010
Determine whether the proposals are viable or not	November 2010	

Report to January 2011 LCC Executive Board	November 2010	January 2011
<i>Design work to Planning submission</i>	<i>November 2010</i>	<i>December 2010</i>
<i>Planning Approval</i>	<i>December 2010</i>	<i>February 2011</i>
<i>Finalise capital funding</i>	<i>February 2011</i>	<i>February 2011</i>
<i>Tender works contract</i>	<i>December 2010</i>	<i>February 2011</i>
<i>Contract period</i>	<i>End March 2011</i>	<i>March 2012</i>
<i>5-a-side pitches open</i>	<i>May 2011</i>	
<i>Fit out</i>	<i>March 2012</i>	<i>April 2012</i>
<i>Centre re-opening</i>	<i>April 2012</i>	

4. Funding/Risk

Tiger11 has successfully applied to the Communitybuilders fund and has been accepted onto the programme. Communitybuilders is a funding stream designed to support “community anchor” organisations to develop their asset holding and financial strength. Community anchors are neighbourhood focussed organisations using community enterprise to meet local needs.

The Communitybuilders fund is split into feasibility (which we are in receipt of) and main investment phases. Tiger11’s plan for the sports centre has been accepted as having potential for main investment, but an offer of investment will only be made after the feasibility stage once the scheme design has allowed a full cost estimate to be produced and terms have been agreed with the Council. Communitybuilders is a time limited fund and has to commit its funding by March 2011, so its timescales fit well with our project, although timescales are tight.

Following discussion with Council Officers in order to possibly reduce the borrowing requirement we have also appraised options for either running the sports centre in its current state or doing lesser capital, neither of which we feel would be viable.

We are also seeking other funding sources to subsidise the overall borrowings and de-risk the proposals moving forward. This introduces a cushion to ensure variation in income assumptions can be managed without placing the operations at risk. These funding/subsidy sources include; Playfootball – we are in discussions with them to provide funding for the capital works to the 5 a side pitches and an income return; Sports England – may provide funding for some remodelling work; Leeds City Council – we are exploring options for provision of capital or revenue funding.

5. Conclusion

There is overwhelming support for progression of these proposals and the project would undoubtedly support many strategic objectives at a community level.

The next step however is to demonstrate the capital works are viable and the business plan is sufficiently robust to absorb income variation and having demonstrated these to then obtain support from Communitybuilders for capital investment and LCC for disposal.