

THREE YEAR LEISURE STRATEGY BUDGET

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1. At the meeting of Full Council held on 8 February, it was resolved in respect of the above:

“That a report on the current position be submitted to the next meeting of the Community Services Committee” (Minute 56(ii)/2000).

- 1.2 Members will also be aware that, at the meeting of Full Council held on 18 January, it was resolved:

“That the appointment of an Arts Development Officer be referred to the CCT Panel to seek possible inclusion of this post within the forthcoming Leisure Contract.” (Minute 17(i)/2000 Three Year Leisure Strategy Budget).

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the beginning of the Leisure Sub Committee held on 8 September 1999 a report was presented seeking funding for the financial year 2000/2001 in respect of Sports Development.

- 2.2 During the debate, it was suggested within the minute that “. . . Officers produce a report to the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group detailing a draft three year strategy for Leisure to enable forward planning for Sports Development to continue.”

- 2.3 The actual recommendation, which was notified by Community Services Committee on 16 September broadened this issue in that it was resolved:-

“That a report be submitted to the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group detailing a three year strategy for Leisure Service Budgets” (Minute 351/99).

3 LEISURE ISSUES CONSIDERED BY MEMBER BUDGET MONITORING WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 Consideration of Leisure issues by the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group began at a meeting held on 16 September, when it was recommended that valuations be obtained for Leisure premises.

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- 3.2 A report was presented to the Working Group by Savills Property Consultants on 11 November.
 - 3.3 On 18 November, a presentation was made by the Council's leisure contractor, in which issues regarding both the Leisure facilities and the future contract were raised.
 - 3.4 During this period, officers had received a preliminary report in respect of the building conditions survey of Leisure premises. Members of the Group were advised that this report highlighted the possibility of repair costs of around £1.7m. becoming due over the next ten years.
 - 3.5 At the meeting of the Group held on 25 November, the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) submitted a private and confidential discussion paper dealing with the future Leisure Services Contract.
 - 3.6 This discussion paper raised fundamental questions as to the possible way forward for the new contract. This would have a major impact on Leisure strategy and budgets as our facilities are key to the majority of services provided.
 - 3.7 As a result of the above, the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group recommended at a reconvened meeting held on 2 December:

"That consultants be engaged to advise upon the Council's Leisure strategy, to be funded from savings accruing from the Leisure Contract."
 - 3.8 In looking at the budget as a whole, Members Budget Monitoring Group has received all of the proposed budget for 2000/2001. No Leisure budgets were reduced as part of this process.
 - 3.9 Funding now exists in the 2000/2001 budget for the leisure initiatives shown at Table 1 in the report.
 - 3.10 The core of Leisure Services will be subject to extensive review, and budgetary decisions will need to be made as part of that process.
 - 3.11 In the light of the Council's decision to employ consultants, it is envisaged that an appointment will be made during March. The approved consultant will then work through the Leisure Sub Committee and the CCT Panel in developing the way forward for the authority in terms of leisure provision. It is hoped that the consultant's report will be available no later than September. A key part of the process will be an evaluation of what is proposed and the likely financial implications.

4 INDIVIDUAL LEISURE INITIATIVES

- 4.1. Within the development of the Leisure Strategy, it will be necessary to include a number of initiatives which are currently being undertaken. These are shown at Table 1 below over a three-year period at current costs.

Table 1

Item	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
	£	£	£
Children's play	8,300	8,300	8,300
Summer swim provision	10,000	10,000	10,000
Youth Arts partnership	2,000	2,000	2,000
Sports Development	(1)	(1)	4,000
Sports Development (employment of coaches)	3,000	3,000	3,000

Note:

- (1) At present expenditure in respect of this item can be funded from within existing budgets. Continuation will require Council to determine a specific budget provision in future years.
- 4.2. The Council has recently adopted an arts strategy, subject to appropriate funding being available. Eastern Arts Board has agreed to provide £5,000 towards arts development until 2000/2001. This will enable some aspects of the arts strategy to be funded during the first year. For the 2001/2002 budget a full report detailing possible ways forward together with funding arrangements will be presented later in the year.
- 4.3. As mentioned at 1.2 above, the CCT Panel has been asked to consider inclusion of an Arts Development Officer in the new leisure contract.
- 4.4. Although a three-year budget forecast is shown for these initiatives, Members will be aware that, other than long term contractual issues, it is not possible to commit succeeding Councils to ongoing revenue expenditure. Whilst it is good management and prudent to set budgets within a three-year time frame, budgets have to be set annually to reflect the prevailing financial situation at the time

5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Provision of sport and the arts is known to reduce instances of crime and disorder.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 As detailed in the report.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RECOMMENDS**:

That the position regarding the Leisure budget be noted.

That a review of budget implications be carried out as part of the Council's consideration of the most appropriate way forward on the Leisure strategy and contract.

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Background Papers:

None.

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