

Cabinet Report

Witham Leisure Centre – Design Options

Agenda Item 7a

Portfolio Area: Housing & Well-Being

Report Presented by: Cllr Lady Patricia Newton

Background Papers: Business Case Version 1.01 – 18th April 2009
 Cabinet Report – July 2009
 Strategic Leisure Report – September 2009
 Cabinet Report – October 2009
 Summary of Survey results – December 2009

Corporate Implications: Please refer to table at end of report

Options: Detailed in this report

Risks:

- The existing Bramston Sports Centre swimming pool received circa £200k remedial repair work which necessitated a six week closure to the public and Maltings Academy in 2008. Consultant engineers have indicated to Council that the main structure of the pool hall should remain secure for approximately 5 years.
- Should authority to proceed with a new build project be further delayed, project timescales will slip significantly beyond those of the Academies by which time the existing Bramston Sports Centre facilities could be unfit for purpose.
- Consultancy, planning and build costs could escalate if these projects are not closely aligned.

Executive Summary

In December 2008 Cabinet agreed to hold discussions with the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) and Essex County Council regarding the re-provision of leisure facilities on the Bramston site, and that an options paper would be presented to Cabinet regarding the continued provision of leisure facilities within Witham and the district.

A report was presented to Cabinet on the 30th March 2009 and there was agreement that a high-level Business Case and design options for a replacement pool in Witham should be prepared for Cabinet consideration. Members subsequently requested that a more detailed report should be prepared in order to assist them with their decision on design requirements. This report was prepared by consultants Strategic Leisure in September 2009 and was circulated to Members in advance of October 2009 Cabinet.

Three options were presented to October 2009 Cabinet for consideration and the Standard Option appeared to offer the most efficient balance of facilities and income, and was subsequently used as the basis for the public consultation phase of the project which concluded in December 2009.

Decision

1. That Members acknowledge feedback received from the Consultation process;
2. That Cabinet agrees to the production of a detailed Business Case based on the Standard Option, along with detailed capital costs and revenue implications for the additional options identified during the period of Consultation, as listed in this report.

Consultation Responses:

Results of the Consultation process have demonstrated that, whilst the majority of feedback has been very positive, concerns were expressed regarding the omission of a sports hall. This particular facility will not be included in the footprint of this new building due to site limitations; however a substantial sports hall facility, equivalent to 4 badminton courts, is to be included on the Spinks Lane Sports Academy site and will be available for use by clubs. We understand that a similar size sports hall will also be available at the New Rickstones Academy site at Conrad Road, Witham.

Interest was also shown in the potential for a moveable floor in the learner pool. It is our understanding that this facility would enable the learner pool to be fully adaptable for the use of toddlers, people with mobility difficulties, and the elderly and sub-aqua clubs.

Other facilities which will be investigated as a result of the consultation process include an additional Squash Court (taking the total number to three, two of which will have a moveable wall), a Sauna/Steam room, a Crèche and a "Free Weights" area in the proposed Fitness Suite.

The proposed revised option for investigation, based on feedback from the recent Consultation process, is as follows:

Standard Option

- 25m x 13m (6 lane) deck-level swimming pool with 50 spectator seats
- Additional learner pool (approximately 13m x 13m) with access for people with disabilities
- 70-75 station fitness suite with dedicated changing facilities
- Two good sized dance studios
- Two squash courts
- Café/shop area as part of a larger reception area

Plus the following additional options:

- Moveable floor (up to 4.3m total depth) in the learner pool
- Free Weights area
- Wet suite including sauna/steam room
- Total of three Squash Courts (two of which will have a moveable wall enabling them to be opened into a studio/dance space)
- Two small treatment rooms for physiotherapy etc.
- Crèche facility

Subject to Cabinet support, the results of the public consultation will form the basis of a detailed business case to be circulated to Members for Cabinet on the 29th March 2010. This report will include a revised specification of possible facilities and will provide details of capital/revenue costs and projected income.

Members are requested to note that costs associated with the production of this detailed Business Case will be met by the Academies Enterprise Trust.

Corporate Implications

Financial:

Detailed costs/income for the revised specification will be included in the Detailed Business Case and will be based on a requirement to provide facilities adhering to BREEAM “Very Good” (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards.

Note: For a detailed explanation of “BREEAM” specifications and processes go to: www.bre.co.uk

Legal:	Contractual issues with existing leisure operator to be determined.
Equalities & Diversity:	These issues are being taken into account in the project.
Customer Impact:	This project presents an opportunity to significantly improve leisure provision in Witham.
Environment & Climate Change:	It is intended that this facility will comply with BREEAM Very Good ratings.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	
A formal consultation process has been undertaken and included Witham Town Council, Witham Local Committee, Mid Essex NHS Trust, the Academies Enterprise Trust, local sports clubs and associations, stakeholders and the general public. It is anticipated that once a detailed specification has been agreed, plans will be placed on public display on the Council’s web site, at the Bramston Sports Centre, Maltings Academy, and in Witham Library and Witham Town Council offices in Newland Street, Witham.	
Key Decision:	Yes
Public/Private Report:	Public
Officer Contact:	
	Russell G Everard
Designation:	Head of Enterprise, Culture & Leisure
Ext No:	2582
Email:	russell.everard@braintree.gov.uk