

Subject:	Rossendale Leisure Trust – Efficiencies Update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny	Date:	28 November 2012 26 November 2012
Report of:	Chief Executive and General Manager of Leisure Trust	Portfolio Holder:	Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes	Attached: Yes
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: Yes /No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That Cabinet note the progress made to date on work to identify savings and efficiencies in relation to Rossendale Leisure Trust.
1.2	That Cabinet agree a formal 12 week consultation period commence in relation to the options identified in 6.12 and for a report to be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in due course.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The Purpose of the report is to update Members on work done to date in identifying efficiencies with Rossendale Leisure Trust.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.
 - **A Healthy and Successful Rossendale** – supporting vibrant communities and a strong economy

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Undertaking appropriate consultation on potential service changes is essential to enable informed decision making and to mitigate the risk of challenge. Importantly, this also reinforces a culture of engagement and empowerment.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet considered a paper on the Medium Term Financial Strategy in June 2012 and gave approval for officers to work with Rossendale Leisure Trust in identifying potential savings and efficiencies in order to support the overall reduction in Council funding. A further report was presented in September 2012 updating Members on progress to date. In particular, given the need for the Council to reduce its annual net revenue expenditure by in excess of £1.3m the June 2012 report noted the following action to “identify with Rossendale Leisure Trust potential savings and efficiencies”. The range of this potential saving was estimated to be £100k to £200k per annum.

6. ACTIVITY

6.1 Work identifying potential savings and efficiencies can be categorised as follows:

- Review of the Leisure Trust's information technology systems.
- Review of back office transactions with Rossendale
- Review of loss making/high subsidy activities within the Trust with specific focus on Haslingden Pool.

6.2 Work has now been completed in relation to the review of information technology. In addition agreement has been reached with the Leisure Trust in relation to the delivery of payroll and financial transactions. Initial savings have been identified as £15k and work continues in creating a single transactional system across both organisations which will generate further opportunities in due course.

6.3 Of the three facilities operated by the Leisure Trust, the area which remains of significant concern and which requires very significant revenue and capital investment is Haslingden Swimming Pool. Due to the importance of understanding the options surrounding the pool, a swimming pool panel have formed comprising representatives from swimming forums across the Borough, the Borough Council, Rossendale Leisure Trust and Members. The pool panel are not a decision making body but have been prepared to give their time to understand the possible options surrounding the pool and will form part of the consultation process. The pool panel have met regularly and have also received a presentation from Ski Rossendale in relation to the process they went through forming a social enterprise and have visited Whitworth Swimming Pool.

6.4 The key stages in terms of the options appraisal for the pool comprises:

- Stage 1 - determine options available in relation to the pool - completed
- Stage 2 - confirm criteria for assessing options - completed
- Stage 3 - develop equality impact assessments for each option - ongoing
- Stage 4 - assess options (first stage assessment) - completed
- Stage 5 - consult on options which meet the criteria
- Stage 6 - assess consultation feedback (second stage assessment)
- Stage 7 - report to enable preferred option to be confirmed

6.5 **Stage 1** - The options identified to date in relation to Haslingden Pool are:

- 1) For the pool to continue as is
- 2) Reduce costs, increase revenue and identify capital programme (it was recognised by the pool panel that this option needs to be expanded to demonstrate different variables)
- 3) Build an alternative pool
- 4) To close the pool and consider site disposal options
- 5) Transfer responsibility for the pool to another organisation
- 6) Other options identified as part of the consultation process

6.6 **Stage 2** - Development of appropriate equality impact assessments which will assist the assessment and final decision making stage.

6.7 **Stage 3** Each option has been assessed and the criteria for assessing each includes:

- Fit with Council Priorities (supports a healthy and successful Rossendale and supports the Medium Term Financial Strategy and equality considerations).
- Risk Assessment assessing against Timescales

6.8 **Stage 4** – An assessment group (a separate group to the pool panel) has met comprising Rossendale Leisure Trust Officers, Board member, Rossendale Council Officers and Members to identify which options were viable and able to go forward for public consultation. The assessment panel used the evidence which has been reviewed and considered by the pool panel. In addition, the following is a summary of the equality assessments undertaken at this stage in the process.

Option 1- For the pool to continue as is

Initial EIA. No impact to any protected equality groups has been identified as option 1 will not change current service provision for users. All circumstances will remain the same for current users. No negative impact identified on protected groups therefore full EIA not required.

Option 2 - Reduce costs, increase revenue and identify capital programme

Initial EIA. At this stage no significant impact has been identified for any protected equality groups. Based on only minor opening time adjustments set out in the assessment, specific equality groups could be accommodated at alternative locations to reduce the affect as far as is possible. Another consideration within this option is to make changes to the prices to services. However, evidence suggests changes to prices could impact on customer usage. This should be considered further if this is taken forward as a viable option. Any potential impacts would have to be determined and explored in further detail during consultation if this is pursued as a viable option.

Option 3 - Build an alternative pool within Rossendale

Full EIA as initial EIA identified possible negative impacts as well as general positive impacts. Specifically a potential negative impact is identified for; older people, children and young people, disability and women. However, we continue to explore actions and alternatives to reduce the potential impact, this would be picked up further during consultation if this is pursued as a viable option. There is a general cross cutting impact in relation travel across all group/current users.

Option 4 – To close the pool and consider site disposal options

Full EIA as initial EIA identified possible negative impacts. Specifically a potential negative impact is identified for; older people, children and young people, disability and women. However, we continue to explore actions and alternatives to reduce the potential impact, this would be picked up further during consultation. Many impacted could be accommodated at Marl Pits and other pool facilities. However, accommodation of schools and disabled users (individuals & special schools) would need to be explored further and might require RLT to reprogramme its pool schedules and/or liaising with neighbouring pool facilities to agree alternative accommodation. There is a general cross cutting impact in relation travel across all group/current users.

Option 5 – Transfer responsibility for the pool to another organisation

Initial EIA. No impact on any protected equality groups have been identified at this stage of consideration therefore a full EIA is not required unless evidence to the contrary is identified during consultation. However, a more detailed EIA would need to be undertaken as part of the development of this option detail/business case and associated consultation if this is pursued as a viable option.

6.9 The assessment group considered each option and in doing so considered all background information for each option which has previously been shared with the pool panel and reviewed the equality impact assessment information. The pool panel also asked for the following additional information to also be considered as part of option 2, closing boilers down at night and to consider price increases. Both areas were reviewed and were assessed as part of option 2.

6.10 The group agreed to use the criteria framework and risk matrix as shown in Appendix A. The threshold for options going forward as viable for consultation purposes would be all options which achieve a threshold of 100% or more.

6.11 Summary of Results

Option	Total for Priorities	Total for Risk	Shown as a percentage
1	12	30	40%
2	22	26	85%
3	20	31	65%
4	30	14	214%
5	36	18	200%

6.12 Cabinet are therefore asked to support the recommendation that the following options are approved to go forward for a 12 week public consultation period in relation to Haslingden Pool:

- Option 4 – Close the Pool and consider site disposal options
- Option 5 – Transfer Responsibility to Another Organisation

As the consultation develops over the next few months, the equality assessments will be amended in order to ensure the reports which are finally presented for decision making are informed and reflect the full equality assessment data.

6.13 Informal Consultation has been ongoing over the past six months. Now that it is proposed to move to formal consultation, the following will be undertaken over the proposed 12 week consultation period:

- focus groups working with equality groups potentially affected by either recommendation
- Rossendale citizen panel questionnaire which will be available to the public generally
- use of borough and leisure trust web site and social media
- contact with key stakeholders such as educational establishments, Rossendale’s clinical commissioning group, Lancashire County Council Public Health and Education Departments

6.14

In addition formal contact has been made with Lancashire Public Health, the Shadow Clinical Commissioning Group with responsibility for Rossendale and the Rossendale GP commissioning group to seek their views and comments as to whether they would wish to support the pool in Haslingden in their role as commissioners. Feedback from the respective organisations will be reported back in due course as part of the consultation.

7. COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

7.1 SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.2 Comments contained within the main body of the report. However, the Council is facing serious financial challenges and it is appropriate to review all activities.

8. MONITORING OFFICER

8.1 Advice is being provided in relation to the options identified.

9. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

9.1 There are potential staffing implications for the Leisure Trust in relation to Haslingden Pool, dependent on the final decision made.

9.2 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard in the exercising of its functions to three considerations. The need to :

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The amount of regard that is “due” is set out in the Act and will depend on the circumstances of the case.

Under the general equality duty there is a requirement to engage with people with protected characteristics and to have an adequate evidence base for Council decision-making.

9.3 The Council is under a Duty to Consult representatives of a wide range of local people; this should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 Rossendale Leisure Trust, Pool Panel and Rossendale Borough Council have been consulted. Citizen panel has been utilised. In addition, wider community engagement and specific focus groups are being organised to support the further development of the impact assessments. Staff and employee consultation has commenced and is being led by Rossendale Leisure Trust.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 The process identifying savings with the Leisure Trust has been undertaken in an open and transparent manner. Savings have been identified in relation to IT and back office transactional services and it is now recommended the Council moves to the formal stage of consultation in relation to the pool.

Background Papers	
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Document	Place of Inspection
Report to Cabinet on MTFS – June 2012/Sept	Rossendale Borough Council website