

Purpose : for Decision

## REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE

Date : 28 JULY 2004

Title : REINTEGRATION OF WIGHT LEISURE WITH THE COUNCIL

### JOINT REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE AND TOURISM

IMPLEMENTATION DATE : 9 AUGUST 2004

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#### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

To consider and approve the recommendations of the Wight Leisure Project Board in respect of the future delivery of the Council's leisure services.

#### Rule 15 ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

The Project Board was asked to report by the end of September and this report was scheduled to appear on the August and September Forward Plans. As the work is already sufficiently advanced to report, momentum and progress would be lost if the decision were to be delayed until after the publication of the next Forward Plan.

#### BACKGROUND

1. At its meeting of 28 January 2004 the Executive resolved not to proceed with the externalisation of Wight Leisure and to develop and deliver, through a project group, within a 12 month period, long-term service development proposals for leisure services on the application of normal best value and procurement principles.
2. Subsequent to that decision the Full Council at its meeting of 28 April 2004, resolved to reorganise the Council to create a Children's Services Directorate. It asked the Project Group to conclude its work by the end of September such that any proposed changes could be included within the overall reorganisation of the Council
3. The Project Board has met on seven occasions since the Executive decision and has worked closely with the senior management team of Wight Leisure to understand the breadth and scale of the services currently being provided through Wight Leisure as a precursor to making decisions about their future delivery. An important part of the work has been to visit some of the key leisure sites to understand their operation, needs and development potential.
4. One of the Board's immediate tasks was to agree the role of leisure in the Council's overall portfolio of services. In this sense the debate was not so much about the scale of the Council's involvement with leisure but whether and why it

should be involved with its delivery at all. The publication of the report by the Department of Health, "Choosing Health ? Choosing Activity ?" as the Government's future public health strategy proved quite timely in informing this debate.

5. An essential element in this part of the process was to review the service provision against its ability to contribute to the achievement of the Council's six corporate objectives. There is a general consensus from the Board that leisure can and does contribute significantly to the physical and mental well-being of the community. This; in the Board's view, should be the primary role of leisure in meeting the needs of the Island's community. A secondary role also agreed on however, is leisure's ability to sustain the economic well-being of the Island by underpinning and supporting its tourism product.
6. A clear role for the leisure service having been established, the Board and its officer support then undertook to review each of the individual services currently provided through Wight Leisure to identify whether each service made a contribution to the role and aspirations determined for leisure services as a whole.
7. The Board have created three categories into which the individual services have now been grouped:
  - Core Services; Central to the agreed role for Council enabled leisure services and to be provided through a leisure department.
  - Secondary Services; Supportive to the Council's leisure function and bringing benefit in terms of income generation or sharing of overheads, to be provided through a leisure department.
  - Other; Not related to the Council's overall leisure role or department.
8. The specific services which fall into each category are shown in Annex 1. It is the Board's view that if the leisure service is able to focus on the core and secondary activities, then it will be better able to achieve the aspirations which the Council may have for its leisure function. The Board has yet to give full consideration as to what the Council's options may be for those services in the "other" block. This is a further piece of work to be undertaken.
9. The issue of accommodation for the Wight Leisure central team has been a matter of some debate for a number of years. The potential for the creation of a new health and fitness facility in the Ryde area has had Council support (by way of a capital allocation) for 2-3 years. The Property Services department have recently done a significant amount of work to produce a scheme which sees both of these objectives achieved at the former Westridge Leisure Centre. The Board is happy to endorse these proposals on the basis that the whole of the central team for Community Development and Leisure is relocated to the Westridge Centre. This achieves three benefits for the Council.

- It allows the co-location of leisure and tourism on the same site, thereby increasing the potential for joint working and development between departments irrespective of line management responsibilities.
  - It frees up the Guildhall for further development of the first floor as gallery and exhibition spaces, (subject to Heritage Lottery Fund funding).
  - It allows the development of an inclusive health and fitness facility in a Disability Discrimination Act compliant building which will ultimately be of a positive benefit to the health of the local community and the Council's revenue account.
10. Given that the primary role of leisure is to improve the physical and mental well-being of the Island community, the Board has concluded that the service should be located within the Adult and Community Services directorate, which has "Improving Public Health" as a central part of its remit. The advice of Directors is that the services should move to this directorate with effect from 6 September and at the same time, Children's Services move in the opposite direction. The Board is happy to endorse this view.
11. As a strategic procurement project, the Board have approached their work to date as the first two phases of the cycle of procurement set out in the National Strategy for Local Government Procurement. That strategy provides for a gateway approach to strategic procurements, and this report can be seen as rolling together two gateway reviews.
12. The report recommends that the work of the Board in categorising current service provision, building on and developing the 2002 Best Value Review, sufficiently demonstrates the relative strategic fit of the services currently delivered by Wight Leisure and, further, lays the basis for concluding that core and secondary services should be delivered in house. The recommendation in relation to the third category of services will require further gateway reviews as the future delivery of each of those service elements is determined.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

13. One of the aspirations of the community strategy, under the theme of "Improving Access to Services and Facilities" is to "*encourage physically and/or mentally stimulating activities as a route to staying healthy and a foundation for a full and active life*"
14. The Council's own key objective of improving health, housing and the quality of life for all identifies the promotion of healthy living as being of particular importance and refers to encouraging the uptake of physically and mentally stimulating activities, as referred to above, as a key priority.
15. Working with the tourism industry to promote the Island as an all-year holiday destination, particularly seeking to develop sustainable tourism initiatives and improving standards of customer care in the industry is a particular priority for the

Council within the context of its objective to encourage job creation and economic prosperity.

16. Services provided by the Council through Community Development and Leisure and the areas for improvement identified in the best value improvement plans in particular, can be seen to clearly link with these strategic themes, objectives and aspirations.

#### CONSULTATION

17. Meetings with the Wight Leisure Senior Management Team have played a key role in advising the Project Board. A meeting with the Staff Consultative Committee of Wight Leisure is to take place on 20 July and its view will be reported verbally to the meeting.
18. An informal meeting of the Economic Development, Planning, Leisure and Tourism Select Committee is to take place on 22 July in order to discuss these proposals. Its recommendation will be reported to the meeting.

#### FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

19. A reduction in the range and scale of leisure services supported by the Council to a more focused approach will lead to some efficiency savings being generated in the overall management of the services. The scale of saving is currently being determined and will be factored into the budget setting process for 2005/06.
20. The major cost arising from this paper will be the capital cost of a relocation of Community Development and Leisure. Currently the Property Services Manager and his team are identifying the source and application of funds in this re-development to highlight the possible net cost/benefit to the Council of the project.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

21. Most of the services grouped under Community Development and Leisure are discretionary. There is, nevertheless, a need to procure their delivery in such a way as to deliver best value services as defined in the 1999 Local Government Act. The advent of the Local Government Act 2000 and the prudential borrowing code will assist in the lawful, innovative development of the service.

#### OPTIONS

1. Agree the Project Board's analysis of the core, secondary and other Council services currently provided through Wight Leisure, as set out in Annex 1.
2. Confirm Project Board's view that the core and secondary leisure services continue to be provided by the Council in the same, Community Development and Leisure Services Unit.
3. Agree the co-location of the Community Development and Leisure Services Unit with Tourism Services within existing resources.

4. Agree the transfer of the Community Development and Leisure Services Unit from the Children's Services directorate to the Adult and Community Services directorate with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> September.
5. Ask the Project Board to undertake additional work which identifies and makes recommendations on the future delivery and methods of delivery by the end of September 2004 in respect of the other services.
6. To vary or reject all or any of the options listed 1 to 5.

#### EVALUATION/RISK MANAGEMENT

22. The diversity and breadth of the services which the Council has asked Wight Leisure to deliver over the years, is considerable. The ability of its management to focus on the core services has therefore been compromised by its capacity and need to manage all of its services. A clear statement of the Council's expected role for leisure, alongside an increase in the management's capacity to focus on the core service can only lead to improvements in service quality, fit with community need, efficiency and effectiveness.
23. The creation of a Community Development and Leisure Unit will allow the development of management approaches which remove current areas of duplication and overlap in service delivery giving a wider focus to the Council's aspirations.
24. The recommendations of the report do not in themselves begin to resolve some of the current pressures on the leisure service (as highlighted in Annex 1). They do, however, enable the managers of the service to have a clearer focus on these services thereby creating capacity for them to attend more pro-actively to these pressures.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

25. As a gateway review, to approve the work undertaken by the project board and adopt options 1 to 5.

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

26. "Wight Leisure Externalisation", Report of the Leader of the Council to the Council to the Executive, 28 January 2004.

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**(A) CORE SERVICES**

<b>Activity area</b>	<b>Development Opportunities</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Heights Leisure Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to the internal layout to provide a larger health suite and integral crèche, Bar and café to be combined</li> <li>▪ Overall building refurbishment due to the age of the building</li> </ul>	<p>Business plan to be prepared.</p> <p>Programme to be agreed with property services.</p>
Medina Leisure Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to the internal layout to provide a larger health suite and integral crèche,</li> <li>▪ Completion of the sports/events hall to provide the most comprehensive facility on the Island</li> <li>▪ Overall building refurbishment due to the age of the building</li> </ul>	Dual use agreement to be completed.
Waterside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extension of the facility to include health and fitness, studio, crèche and community room</li> <li>▪ Considerable building refurbishment due to the age of the building</li> </ul>	Future direction and future of this site needs further work
Cowes Week	Re-establish Northwood House programme Subject to appropriate funding	Retain as core - possibility of increased infrastructure costs for firework night with regards to recharges
Walking Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop an enhanced and designated website</li> <li>▪ International walks</li> </ul>	Meets all council strategic objectives
Wight Air	Source funds to provide full two week programme	Meets all council strategic objectives
Music Festival	Secure more household/top names within each music genre to increase the appeal and potential investment to facilitate growth	3 day/ core 2 week festival requires further review Meets all councils strategic objectives
Cycling Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Secure national events to raise profile</li> <li>▪ Expand from nine days to two weeks and increase potential for investment</li> </ul>	Timetabling needs attention further links with highways and cycling officer
Community events :- Tourist Sports Marine		Categories core but exact events to be delivered to be agreed with the portfolio holder

(B) **SECONDARY SERVICES**

<b>Activity area</b>	<b>Development Opportunities</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Medina Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ To provide an all inclusive seating area to meet the needs of the DDA</li><li>▪ Enhance the facility to provide better artist facilities and a cloakroom for the public</li></ul>	Future of Islands theatres not clear further work to be completed Wight Leisure due to the proximity of the leisure centre.
Westridge	Creation of a four court squash conversion to a 40 station fitness faculty, activity room, reception and social area, health suite and refurbish the changing areas	Business plan revised- funding application to be made Wight Leisure, Members felt this was more but was an undeveloped site which should be multi-functional.
Sandham Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Themed crazy golf</li><li>▪ New fencing around tennis</li></ul>	A Successful site to be run from the established team at Browns
Browns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Extension to the clubhouse and facilities to improve service area</li><li>▪ Extension of the kitchen facilities and licensed bar plus the provision of an outdoor play area</li></ul>	Core but management arrangements requires further work in relation to seasonal sites  Business plan to be revised and funding to be identified.
Shanklin Esplanade	Themed crazy golf	A Successful site to be run from the established team at Browns
Shanklin Lift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Modernisation of lift cars</li><li>▪ Reconstruction of kiosk after cliff fall</li><li>▪ Provision of CCTV for the safety and users</li></ul>	A Successful site to be run from the established team at Browns
Boating Lake		A Successful site to be run from the established team at Browns
Appley Park	New attendants kiosk	A Successful site to be run from the established team at Browns

(C) **OTHER SERVICES**

<b>Activity area</b>	<b>Development Opportunities</b>	<b>Issues to Consider</b>
Puckpool Park	Resurface and re-fence tennis courts	Externalise or transfer to park and gardens.
Road Train	Extend route at Sandown to improve income	Externalise or transfer to highways.
Community Halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extensive refurbishment of both St Andrews and East Cowes halls required.</li> <li>▪ Issues surrounding DDA provision for a disabled toilet</li> </ul>	Provide by others e.g. Town Councils
Northwood House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete internal decorations</li> <li>▪ Relocation of registrars</li> <li>▪ Rationalise catering facilities</li> <li>▪ Provide additional male and female toilets</li> </ul>	Not core business, future home uncertain, possible transfer. Legal and Democratic Services to house registrars.
Ryde Harbour		Provide by others, possibly another department.
Seaclose Park	Re_ fence Tennis courts	Split up and find alternative management. Provide by others, possibly another department.
Sport Pitches	Review of pricing structure increase income and promote junior usage	Transfer to parks and gardens 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2004 Provide by others, possibly another department.
Dinghy Parks		Transfer to parks and gardens 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2004 Provide by others, possibly another department.
Beach Huts		Transfer to parks and gardens 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2004 Provide by others, possibly another department.
Amenity land Hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clarification of the land available for hire</li> <li>▪ Review Fees and Charges to provide greater income for the work involved</li> </ul>	Transfer to parks and gardens 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2004 Provide by others, possibly another department.
Ventnor Park		Available as a concession ( 3 months) Propose a concession or stop.
Northwood Park	Potential major Heritage Lottery Fund bid.	Dependent on Northwood House.



