
Report to: Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 23 October, 2014

Subject: Review of Leisure Services

Report by: Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present to Council the findings of the externally commissioned review of Leisure Services and to seek Council's views on key matters going forward in respect of the longer term provision of leisure services in Clackmannanshire.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Council:
- a) notes the Review of Clackmannanshire Leisure Services, its overall findings and recommendations;
 - b) agrees to develop a ten year Leisure Strategy for Clackmannanshire by December 2015 when the existing Strategy expires;
 - c) notes the Review's finding that the overall service provided by Wasp Leisure represents good value for money;
 - d) agrees to continue its contract with Wasp Leisure to the end of September, 2019 (subject to satisfactory negotiation of terms and conditions with the contractor), to ensure there is no loss of leisure provision while the Council develops a long term strategy and that there is continuity of leisure provision pending decisions which may flow from such a strategy and their implementation.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 In December of last year, on the recommendation of the Education, Sport & Leisure Committee, Council approved an interim Leisure & Sport Strategy for 2013-15. The rationale for having an interim Strategy was to enable the document to be revisited in response to potential future developments which could arise as a result of:
- a) relevant *Making Clackmannanshire Better* initiatives which could impact on provision of leisure and sport, generally, and the Council's role in that provision, specifically; and

b) the Leisure & Sport Strategy's aim to *"develop a core infrastructure that is sufficiently flexible to support participation and development in a range of leisure and sport activities."*

3.2 Related to b) above, a significant factor was that the contract for the provision of leisure and sport services at the Alloa Leisure Bowl was due for review at the end of September, 2014. While the terms of the original contract allowed for a five year continuation to the end of September, 2019, it was considered prudent only to pursue a contract for a year (to the end of September, 2015) in the first instance to allow a review to take place to inform future key decisions.

3.3 The remit of the Review was as set out below and the contract for the commission was placed on the public procurement portal.

Review of Leisure Provision - Remit

Purpose

The purpose of the review is

1 - to assess the current provision (as delivered by Alloa Leisure Bowl) against the following criteria:

- a. range and quality of activities offered
- b. cost and value of activities offered
- c. fitness for purpose of the facility taking into account the following contexts:

- other leisure facilities within Clackmannanshire
- other leisure facilities outwith but accessible to Clackmannanshire
- service user demand
- potential alternative models of provision
- the Council's interim Leisure & Sport Strategy

2 - to assess the potential capacity for other leisure provision in Clackmannanshire against the same criteria as above and taking into account the same contexts.

Outputs

The outputs of the review will be a report outlining:

- a) the assessments referred to above
- b) the provision of a range of options for future leisure provision which best align with the ambitions of the Council and the financial constraints that it faces
- c) an options appraisal of these options

3.4 Three organisations submitted tenders for the work and the contract was awarded to Alan Jones Associates. A well-attended all-member briefing on the Review took place on 8 September, 2014; copies of the full review report were also provided at that time.

4.0 The Review - Findings

4.1 The Review took account of the quality and quantity of leisure provision in Clackmannanshire, its accessibility and affordability and how it compares to provision in other areas of the country.

4.2 In addition, the Review assessed the Council's contract for the Alloa Leisure Bowl and whether that represented value for money based on comparison with other similar single site leisure facilities.

4.3 The Review included consultation with service users, providers, elected members and staff on their perceptions of the services, activities and facilities available in Clackmannanshire.

4.4 Key findings of the review were as follows:

a) in respect of Alloa Leisure Bowl:

- the Leisure Bowl meets many local needs at prices which are affordable; however, the overall ambience of the building is reflective of its age
- the Leisure Bowl offers value for money and the Council is receiving a good value for money service within the constraints of an ageing building
- a large majority of users feel the facility is fit for purpose (76%), that the range of activities offered is satisfactory (78%) and that the quality of service is good/satisfactory (79%)
- 86% of users think the facility is accessible
- 88% of users think the facility offers good value for money.

b) in respect of general provision of leisure:

- from our experience of reviewing other local authority provision, the facilities provided by Clackmannanshire Council are of a good standard and, when coupled with the affordability and accessibility factors, the overall provision should clearly meet any test of adequacy
- while many buildings are very old, these are in reasonably good condition and reflect the Council's investment in these buildings on an ongoing basis, despite the cuts in local authority budgets
- Clackmannanshire has proportionately more sport and leisure centres and halls for its size and population than do Falkirk and Stirling
- Clackmannanshire Council's pricing policies are relatively low when compared to other local authority providers
- there is a fragmented approach to Council provision due to a lack of strategic approach; Council needs to be clear on what it wishes to provide or support under the banner of Leisure
- Council leisure provision needs to be repositioned and there are different strategies to achieve that

- the leisure facilities at the three secondary schools are not used by the community as much as they could be and this should be addressed via a marketing strategy within any long term Leisure Strategy.

5.0 The Review - Recommendations

5.1 From these findings, the Review has put forward a number of recommendations, the most relevant to the purposes of this report being the following:

- 1) the Council should commission a ten year strategy for leisure
- 2) this strategy should define what comes under the leisure banner, link to relevant outcomes, be based on local needs and expectations, build on best practice and give clearly defined roles and responsibilities to relevant council services
- 3) any future strategy should have an evaluation framework for future planning and investment, as well as for decommissioning facilities which have fulfilled their purpose
- 4) a comprehensive assessment of operational performance, including locally derived performance Indicators, should provide benchmarks for the proposed strategy
- 5) an associated ten year capital facilities plan for leisure facilities should be drawn up, as well as a programme for replacing facilities coming to the end of their useful lives
- 6) the Council should commission the external market testing of options for the future delivery of services
- 7) Wasp Leisure's contract with the Council should be extended by up to 5 years during which time the Council will be able to commission, finalise and approve its Leisure Strategy and have sufficient time to market test for a future leisure operator. It will also be in a position to make an informed decision on either the replacement or the future of Alloa Leisure Bowl.

6.0 Considerations

6.1 The Review has provided clear recommendations on key strategic decisions which face the Council.

6.2 The most immediate issue is the future of existing provision of services at the Alloa Leisure Bowl, which was a key driver for the commissioning of the external review.

6.3 The Review has found that that provision offers good value for money within the constraints of an ageing building and recommends that the contract with Wasp Leisure should be continued for up to five years.

6.4 The benefits of continuing the current contract for that period are:

- a *to ensure there is no loss of provision while the Council develops a long term strategy*; this process (phase 1) could take up to a year
- b *to ensure continuity of provision pending decisions flowing from the agreed strategy being taken on future options for leisure provision in Clackmannanshire* (phase 2); given the Leisure Bowl as a facility now has a limited life, such decisions could include, among other things, providing a replacement for the Leisure Bowl or an alternative to the services offered there; market testing of various options could take up to a year
- c *to ensure continuity of provision while any such decisions were being implemented* (phase 3); providing a replacement facility, for instance, could take up to two years
- d *to incentivise the contractor to undertake care, maintenance and improvement of the facility* by offering certainty over a five year period.

6.5 The Review suggests that in order to reach a view on significant decisions, Council should develop a long term leisure strategy which would have an associated capital plan for investment in facilities and a programme for replacing facilities which are coming to the end of their useful life.

6.6 In order to inform the scope of any such strategy, it is suggested that preliminary members' workshops should take place to inform a number of issues and to provide those commissioned to develop the long term strategy with information on members' views at the outset. An illustrative work plan for the development of the long term strategy is set out as an Appendix to this report.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The Council faces a number of fundamental strategic decisions in an increasingly challenging financial context. Given competing pressures, there will be a need to be clear about the outcomes the Council aims to achieve through its service provision, its relative priorities, the extent of its investment in agreed priorities and the nature of its role in delivering these priorities.

7.2 The Review refers to a repositioning of leisure within a range of contexts and this direction of travel is consistent with the principles of *Making Clackmannanshire Better* which are guiding current thinking, activities and decisions.

8.0 Sustainability Implications

8.1 The development of a long term strategy should enable the Council to reposition the provision of leisure and put it on a sustainable footing.

9.0 Resource Implications

9.1 *Financial Details* - the overall costs of continuing the contract for the five years to the end of September, 2019, would be £2.619M broken down annually as follows (including indexation of 2.6% per annum): 2014-15: £497k, 2015-16: £510k, 2016-17: £524k; 2017-18: £537k, 2018-19: £551k. This compares with

a total of £2.278M for the first five years of the contract (indexation included). If the Council externally commissioned the development of a long term strategy, there would be a cost associated with that. Council previously committed 50k for this purpose and there remains circa 37k of that resource.

9.2 *Staffing* - there are no changes to the Council's establishment as a result of this report.

10.0 Exempt Reports

10.2 Is this report exempt? No

11.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) Our Priorities

Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing
The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence

(2) Council Policies (Please detail)

Community Plan, Single Outcome Agreement, Interim Leisure Strategy 2013-15

12.0 Equalities Impact

12.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

N/A

13.0 Legality

13.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers.

Yes.

14.0 Appendices

14.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Notional Work Programme

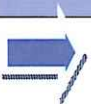






15.0 Background Papers


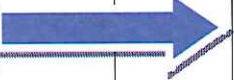
15.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Review of Clackmannanshire Leisure Services

NAME	DESIGNATION	
Elaine McPherson	Chief Executive	Signed E McPherson

Phase 1 - Notional Work Programme

Principle Outputs	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	March 2015	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015
Review of Leisure Services												
Desk top review of Initial Review of Leisure Services												
Workshop for Members- Defining Leisure Services												
Workshop for Members – Pricing Policies												
Workshop for Members – Locally based or Remote Facilities Community Transport Discounted Access for Leisure												
Workshops on Capital Projects for Leisure in Clackmannanshire												
Creation (inc consultation) of 10 Year Leisure Strategy incorporating, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure facilities and services (to be clearly defined) Sports and Sports Pitches Policy Open Spaces Policy Marketing, Events and Promotions Policy Pricing Policy Ten Year Capital Projects Policy 												

Presentation of Leisure Strategy to Members Future Governance Options for Leisure Services, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In House (e.g. within Education)? • Stand Alone Trust? • Combined Trust Option? • Outsource to private operator? 												
												
Phase 2 - decisions and market testing (2016)												
Phase 3 - implementation (2017+, dependent on decisions)												

