

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**LEISURE ARTS AND CULTURE  
CABINET MEMBER**

**RIDDINGS POOL – IMPROVEMENT WORKS**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval to proceed with improvement works to Riddings Pool ventilation and pool water treatment as part of the Free Swimming Capital Modernisation Programme.
- 1.2 The key points of the report are as follows:
- The council has committed to providing free swimming to those aged 16 and under and 60 and over.
  - Approval is requested to accept an offer of financial assistance towards the cost of improving the pool hall ventilation and pool water treatment at Riddings Pool.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The council introduced free public swimming sessions for those aged 60 (or over) and those aged 16 (or under) on 1 April 2009 running until 31 March 2011.
- 2.2 The Government's "Free Swimming Programme" is a £140m package offered to all local authorities in a series of funding programmes. The programme is divided into four distinct elements:
- (i) **Pot 1** – A fund to local authorities to allow them to introduce free swimming for those aged 60 (or over). Government is making available £15 million per annum in 2009-10 and 2010-11.
  - (ii) **Pot 2** – A further fund available to those local authorities who opted to provide free swimming for those aged 60 (or over) and wish to provide an additional offer for those aged 16 (or under). Government is making available £25 million per annum in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

- (iii) **Pot 3** -To support local authorities in making swimming free for those aged 60 (or over) and those aged 16 (or under), Government is also making available £10 million of capital funding in 2008-09 to modernise swimming pool provision. All local authorities that sign up to participate in Pot 1 and Pot 2 will be entitled to a one-off capital grant in 2008-09.
- (iv) **Pot 4** - Government is also making available £25 million capital per annum in 2009-10 and 2010-11 to modernise swimming pool provision and support more ambitious plans for free swimming. Local authorities that have signed up to participate in Pots 1 and 2 can bid for the modernisation and enhancement of their pools (Minimum Grant £50,000, no upper limit set).

2.3 We looked at the need for capital investment in swimming facilities at Riddings Pool and Ancholme Leisure Centre and submitted bids for both facilities to Pot 4.

2.4 The council has been offered a grant of £157,000 from Pot 4 towards the £214,600 anticipated cost of improvements at Riddings Pool.

2.5 The ventilation plant at Riddings Pool is old and needs replacing in the near future. During periods of cold weather it proves impossible to maintain the pool hall at required temperatures and this impacts on customer comfort.

2.6 The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) are acting in an advisory capacity on applications for Pot 4 funding. The ASA support the scheme to replace the ventilation system at Riddings Pool. They have also recommended that Pot 4 funding is made available to replace the existing pool water treatment plant with a modern ultra violet system. This system will further improve the quality of the swimming pool water.

### 3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 The options for the extent of this work are as follows:

- Option 1 – Accept the grant offer and progress the ventilation and pool water treatment works.
- Option 2 – Reject the grant offer.

### 4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 The grant offer from Pot 4 is a significant proportion of the cost of the work. We propose to make available sufficient funds within the council's planned maintenance budgets to provide the top up contribution required.

4.2 Rejection of the application would mean that the work could not proceed at the present time. The council would have to bear the total cost of this work when the plant needs to be replaced.

- 4.3 The council is currently committed to operating Riddings Pool “for as long as demand exists”. The planned completion of the Sports Academy in early 2011, may impact on demand at Riddings Pool. This needs considering before committing to further investment in the facility totalling around £217,000, particularly in the context of para. 5.1.2 below.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

### **5.1 Financial**

5.1.1 The draft planned programme budget for this year is £1.5m, £60,000 is provisionally allocated to support the improvements to pool hall ventilation and water treatment at Riddings Pool.

5.1.2 If the council accepts the grant offer of £157,000 from Pot 4, a ‘clawback’ requirement applies should the facility close in future.

### **5.2 Staffing, Property and IT**

5.2.1 There are no implications for staffing, property or IT.

## **6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 We are working hard to reach our diversity plan outcomes. One way of doing this is by removing any financial barrier to participation. Offering a programme of free swimming to the over 60s and under 16s should help increase participation in swimming across communities in North Lincolnshire. It should especially help encourage those on low incomes or facing financial hardship resulting from the economic down-turn to take part in swimming.

6.2 We have identified that a new system of pool hall ventilation is required. This provides the opportunity to introduce heat recovery, which will help achieve the correct temperatures in the pool hall, without impacting on the amount of energy used.

## **7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 We have consulted with the Department for Culture Media and Sport, Sport England and South Axholme Community Swimming Pool Association on how to best work together to deliver the free swimming offer in North Lincolnshire. These consultations have informed our proposals for implementing the free swimming initiative.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Member accepts an offer from Sport England of £157,000 to the council to improve ventilation and pool water treatment at Riddings Pool.

### **SERVICE DIRECTOR ASSET MANAGEMENT AND CULTURE**

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Date: 01 April 2009

#### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report**

North Lincolnshire Unitary Labour Party Manifesto 2007 – Back to the Future