

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRANSITION BOARD  
8 MAY 2009**

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**LEISURE SERVICES - INTERIM REPORT 3**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To present a further report to Members on the wider scope of leisure issues as agreed at the November 2008 meeting of JOSTB.

**Background**

2. Members of the Board have received two reports to date outlining the approach being taken to manage the transition programme for five authorities' leisure centres up to 1 April 2009.

**Leisure Services**

3. The core activities covered by Leisure Services are all discretionary, though highly sensitive, as they are services that the public expect the Council to provide. They contribute to a number of the Local Area Agreement and Healthier Wiltshire ambitions.
4. The provision of Leisure Services and activities has an intrinsic value in its own right, as well as an enabling role to help deliver wider social agendas, making society a better place to live in. The range of services provided offers people opportunities as participants, administrators, leaders and audiences.
5. The development of a new and innovative approach to area governance from May 2009, a cornerstone of the 1C4W submission, will play an integral role in defining the future leisure service provision, providing a voice for local communities to help tailor services to reflect community need at a local level.
6. In addition to the Sports and Leisure Facilities there are a further two strands in Leisure Services:
  - Sports and Physical Activity Development
  - Civic and Entertainment

**Sports and Physical Activity Development**

7. There is recognition that the Council has a dual role to play, acting as both a service provider and enabler. Both roles will be used to help deliver the wider social agendas important to the Council.

8. As a direct service provider, the Council will offer a range of participatory sports opportunities across the County, through the provision of activities. As an enabler, the Council's role will focus on creating access to sport within the community, by providing advice and support to individuals and groups and enabling groups to work together to share skills, their expertise and skills.
9. The Service recognises the impact that sport and physical activity has on people and society. As such, it is currently concentrating its service on the following areas:
  - Sporting opportunities for all young people
  - Supporting active communities
  - Performance and excellence
  - Promoting educational opportunities and lifelong learning
  - Promoting healthy living and physical activity
  - Promoting social inclusion and access to all
  - Resourcing sport and recreation and provide funding advice
  - Supporting the local infrastructure through partnership working
  - Excellent services and consultation
10. The majority of sports and recreational activities are recognised, with the emphasis on getting people started in sport, getting people to stay with sport and enabling people to succeed in sport. Sport has an intrinsic value in its own right and an enabling role to help deliver wider social agendas, making society a better place to live in. The current sports development programme is based on the service provided by the four District Councils prior to March 2009 and offers people opportunities as participants, administrators, leaders and audiences.
11. Current services provided include:
  - Coach Education
  - Disability Sports Clubs
  - Sports Stars\*
  - School – Club links
  - Positive activities for young people
  - On Track
  - Club Development and Accreditation
  - Health Initiatives
  - Healthy Living Programme
  - Phase IV Cardiac Rehab
  - Postural Stability/chair based exercise
  - Mike Slade Sports Scholarship Fund
  - Coaching Programmes and Festivals
  - Wiltshire Youth Games
12. Looking to the future, a key priority for the Council will be to develop a new Sport and Recreation Policy which will be a statement of intent that provides the framework for the Council to deliver sport and Physical Activity in the future.

13. The new Sports and Physical Activity Development section has been structured in a way that will enable teams to be based in Area Hubs. They will undertake outreach work in a local area, with team leaders also being expected to lead on key work areas, whether this be the health agenda, developing GP referrals, promoting healthy life styles, education and lifelong learning or performance and National Governing Bodies/Club Development.
14. The other core area of work will centre around the management of events and bringing in external funding to support the delivery of programmes and activities, as well as playing a key role in advising on developers contributions.

#### Civic and Entertainment

15. The City Hall, Salisbury, is a multi function venue, owned and managed by the Council, comprising of a flexible main auditorium with 953 seats (1,255 standing), two ancillary function suites and a foyer, ticket office and reception area. There is also a licensed bar that has been successfully operated by the venue's management, having previously been operated under a number of franchise agreements.
16. The workforce within the facility comprises in excess of 20 FTE's.
17. Over the last ten to twelve years the City Hall has achieved significant increases in the number of performances presented, with total attendances rising by 55% and levels of retained income rising from £148,000 to over £570,000 in 2008/09.
18. Customer satisfaction levels remain high and a programme of capital refurbishment has resulted in improved facilities both front of house and backstage.
19. Fees and charges for the hire of the venue are set by the Council annually, based upon recommendations by the venue's management, using comparative data collected from similar venues both locally, regionally and nationally. Ticket prices and concessions for shows are set as a result of negotiations by the venue's management and the promoters, based on past performance, local and national economic conditions and trends.
20. Although primarily targeting audiences within the 45 minute drive-time, research clearly indicates that the venue is attracting visitors from a much wider catchment area and a market research study is currently being undertaken to produce up-to-date statistics on which future programming decisions can be based.
21. Benchmarking data collected from other local authorities demonstrates that the City Hall has consistently matched or out-performed other venues of similar capacity in terms of Net Cost of Service, Net Cost per Attendance and Subsidy per Head of Population and these will be updated once the 2008/09 outturn has been completed.

22. Challenges for the future:

- Providing a strategic direction for the venue in line with corporate aspirations, political priorities and budgeted financial position.
- The ability to consistently find new, popular but cost affordable product for the entertainment programme and to deliver this within the constraints imposed by the venues capacity, location and condition.
- To increase levels of income from private hire of the auditorium, meeting and function suites.
- Identifying new opportunities for income generation.

**Recommendation**

23. That the report be noted.

**MARK SMITH**

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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

None