

Chief Officer Confirmation of Report Submission

Cabinet Member Confirmation of Briefing

Report for: **Mayor**

Mayor and Cabinet

Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)

Executive Director

x

Information

Part 1

Part 2

Key Decision

Date of Meeting	31/10/07
------------------------	----------

Title of Report	In answer to the need to explore opportunities for hydrotherapy provision in Lewisham
------------------------	---

Originator of Report	Christine Grice	Ext. 46300
-----------------------------	-----------------	----------------------

At the time of submission for the Agenda, I confirm that the report has:

Category	Yes	No
Financial Comments from Exec Director for Resources	x	
Legal Comments from the Head of Law		
Crime & Disorder Implications		
Environmental Implications	x	
Equality Implications/Impact Assessment (as appropriate)		
Confirmed Adherence to Budget & Policy Framework		
Risk Assessment Comments (as appropriate)		
Reason for Urgency (as appropriate)		

Signed: _____ *R. M. Money* _____ Executive Member

Date: _____ 22/10/2007 _____

Signed: _____ Director/Head of Service

Date _____

Control Record by Committee Support

Action	Date
Listed on Schedule of Business/Forward Plan (if appropriate)	
Draft Report Cleared at Agenda Planning Meeting (not delegated decisions)	
Submitted Report from CO Received by Committee Support	
Scheduled Date for Call-in (if appropriate)	
To be Referred to Full Council	

MAYOR AND CABINET		
Report Title	Proposed Response to Select Committee - opportunities for hydrotherapy provision in Lewisham	
Key Decision	none	Item No. 10
Ward	All	
Contributors	Executive Director for Children & Young People	
Class	Open	Date: 31/10/07

1 Background

- 1.1 The Mayor and Cabinet report dated April 18th 2007 entitled "Matter referred by the Healthier Communities Select Committee – Provision of Hydrotherapy facilities in Lewisham" item 15 stated:

"the future of the hydro-pool at University Hospital Lewisham is uncertain and there is increased demand for community use of Hydrotherapy pools, specifically from older members of the community."

The Mayor was therefore asked to explore opportunities for hydrotherapy provision in Lewisham, in particular to extending the opening times of the hydro-pool at Watergate School making it accessible to the public outside of term-time and therefore increasing hydro-pool facilities available locally to Lewisham residents. It has become apparent during this exploration that UHL are now no longer looking to close their hydrotherapy facilities. However the report explores the possibility of extending the use of the Watergate pool.

2 Recommendations

The Mayor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note that owing to the information regarding the non closure of UHL hydrotherapy pool the Mayor is asked to agree that the need for extended hydrotherapy provision is less pressing than maintained in the Mayor and the Cabinet report 18 April 2007 Item no. 15: *"Matter referred by the Healthier Communities Select Committee – Provision of Hydrotherapy facilities in Lewisham."*

2.2 Note the findings outlined in this report:

- Specifically that both Watergate and Greenvale are willing to make the facilities available for community use subject to recovery of costs and operational requirements.
- That it is recommended that requests should be made directly by groups to Watergate and Greenvale's Management team and Governing body

2.3 Request that the Executive Directors of Children and Young People and Regeneration support the school in negotiations with the PFI contractor to make the pool available for additional community use. Noting these negotiations are not due to be completed until Summer 2008.

2.4 Agree that this response be submitted to the Healthier Communities Select Committee.

3 Findings

3.1 Community use of Schools

The status of schools under local management is that the responsibility for extended use of school facilities is a matter for the Governing body. Government regulations also state that schools should have a policy for the letting of premises and as a general principal the additional costs of the letting must be covered by the users. The school may not subsidise letting from its delegated budget.

3.2 UHL current provision

In exploring alternative provision UHL were contacted to ask for an update on the use of their hydrotherapy pool. They were clear that the Hydrotherapy pool was now and for the foreseeable future not going to be closed.

3.3 In 2006 UHL had explored the possibility of selling off some of the North end of the UHL site following consolidation of wards into the new Riverside building. At that time, options had included the Physiotherapy block (which includes the hydrotherapy pool), however after initial investigative work, this building has been taken off their list of those that could potentially be offered for sale. Consequently there is no proposed change to the hydrotherapy service provided at UHL.

Watergate school usage

3.4 Current Provision

Watergate is a special primary school supporting children with severe learning difficulties. Due to the specific needs of its pupils it has an onsite hydrotherapy pool. This is used regularly by its 76 pupils on roll during term-time throughout the day, including most lunchtimes.

3.5 Current use by the school

Watergate school have been consulted about the possibility of increased community access to their hydrotherapy provision. They have stated that the pool is currently in use at all times during the school day and that the needs of their pupils has to take precedent over any other proposed use.

3.6 Current community use

Currently community usage is offered during term time after school to some parents and a special needs adult club as part of the Schools extended provision. During each school holiday period (except Christmas when the school is closed) there is further extended school facilities for community usage. This after school use is only on a Friday during term time and two sessions during school holidays. These two sessions are managed by the Early years service, who are happy to accommodate other extra usage. This school holiday usage is however limited due to the need to use non school time for essential maintenance and cleaning of the pool. During the summer the pool is also closed usually in week 3 or 4 to allow holiday for school maintenance staff.

3.7 Extending use – Issues at Watergate

The school noted that extra use of the pool would result in costs including :

- additional caretaking staff time for opening and closing the building and general security of the site.
- additional trained staff time to monitor and test the pool water quality and make necessary adjustments
- additional cleaning staff,
- additional maintenance materials such as chemicals and cleaning products
- additional heating, lighting and water.
- There would also be the unknown cost of additional 'wear and tear' noting that on top of standard cleaning required from extra use there is an added risk of 'deep cleaning' being required due to incidents connected to specific client use.
- In addition the building and maintenance costs the school also noted that groups would require additional insurance provision.

- The school was clear it could not provide trained “safety staff” and in order to meet health and safety requirements any group would need their own 'spotters' or even lifeguards depending on the specific use of the pool. Any usage would therefore be limited by availability of relevant staff and funding.

3.8 The school estimates costs as:

- Premises Officer £15 per hour
- Cleaner £9 per hour.
- Heating/Lighting/Water £30 per hour.
- Materials £10 per hour
- an unknown cost to be worked out dependent on usage for wear and tear.

Total: c.£64 per hour

3.9 Any letting / hire of school premises comes under the Governors lettings policy; the normal process involves contacting the school to ascertain availability and completing a form detailing requirements. The school has indicated that due to the need for special arrangements with regards to the pool, booking would require “a fairly long notification period”. Although in theory they are happy to accommodate further use of the pool they were concerned to point out that the difficulties of organising and managing the existing users and the other constraints, would limit the increased use of the facility.

Greenvale school usage

3.10 Current Provision

The pool at Greenvale was opened on September 1st 2007. The pool is operated under a PFI arrangement by third party contractors.

3.11 Current use by the school

The PFI contract stipulates that during school term time, Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm, the school have open access to the pool. There are 86 pupils at Greenvale who require timetabled access. Given that the pool has only recently been opened the school are still to work out their actual required usage.

3.12 Current community use

There is currently no community use of the pool.

3.13 Extending use – Issues at Greenvale

- Any usage could not be totally “open” community usage but “*strictly monitored and timetabled use by named community groups*”.
- All groups would require completed CRB checks of all staff accompanying any users.
- Groups may also be asked to supply their own life guards and/or spotters.
- Usage outside of these allocated hours, i.e. after 6pm, weekends and out of term time, is a matter for the third party contractors. Details of this extra usage is still under negotiation as part of wider extended school use and PFI negotiations. These negotiations are not due to conclude until all 3 schools in the PFI are operational (January 2008). It is therefore, not yet possible to provide and detail likely costs and logistical arrangements.

3.14 Other hydrotherapy provision in the Borough

- There is no other specialised hydrotherapy available within Lewisham.
- It is currently impractical to increase pool temperatures in standard Lewisham pools as detailed in the “*Swimming Pool Temperature Benchmarking Report*” to Mayor and Cabinet on the 29th June 2005

4 Financial Implications

As any additional lettings would be based upon an agreement between the school and relevant community groups there is no financial cost to the council.

The unitary charge is based on the planned use of premises by the school. If additional use was provided this would be through the third party income route for the facility management contractor: it would not share an impact upon the unitary charge.

5 Legal Implications

None

6 Environmental Implications

There is likely to be a very marginal increase in energy required for extra use of the pool arising from the need for extra lighting, heating and cleaning of the facilities, however any increase should not be seen as a barrier to extending use and may be mitigated by a reduction gained from users having to travel

less to other facilities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Christine Grice, 0208 3146300.