

CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION ON SWIMMING PROVISION FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN HEREFORD CITY

Report By: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE - LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

1. To consider the Cabinet Decision to approve the closure of St Martin's Swimming Pool with immediate effect and the subsequent capital investment in the Hereford Leisure Pool prior to the new academic year which has been called in by three Members of the Committee: Councillors WJ Walling, WU Attfield, JD Woodward.

Financial Implications

2. As set out in the report to Cabinet attached.

Reason for Call-in

3. In accordance with Standing Order 7.3.1 and the Scrutiny Committee Rules set out at Appendix 2 of the Constitution, the Cabinet's decision on 31 July, 2008, on the issue has been called in for consideration by this Committee.
4. The stated reasons for the call-in are:
 - FINANCE
 - a. Clarity required on financial figures, particularly a breakdown of amounts on inspections and maintenance over the last five years.
 - b. Why was the pool allowed to leak for so long and what has been the eventual cost?
 - c. Knowing the running of the pool was costing money, what efforts were made to balance income and expenditure.
 - REPORT
 - d. Why is there no in depth risk assessment on the advantages and disadvantages of closing the LEA Pool and its effect on the Leisure Pool. Why was there apparently no risk assessment on the consequences and impact on clubs,

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Sharon Menghini, Director of Children's Services (01432) 260039

Schools and general public, especially in view of the likelihood of free swimming for the over 60's.

- SAFETY

- e. What procedures are to be put in place to ensure children are separated from the general public in the pools and changing rooms? Is supervision going to be as certain and safe as in the LEA pool?
- f. Has the introduction of a designated entrance at the rear been properly assessed and costed?
- g. Is the Café area Wi-Fi enabled and accessible to everyone and what is going to be done to safeguard the children if this is the case?

- GENERAL

- h. Why has this invaluable and successful asset been allowed to deteriorate and did we not learn any lessons from the Sydonia Pool in Leominster?
 - i. Who took the decision to close the pool WITHOUT consulting local members?
5. The draft decision notice (Ref No. 2008.CAB060 KEY) (Annex 1), together with the tabled report to Cabinet on 31 July 2008 (Annex 2) are appended to this report.
 6. An extract from the draft minutes of Cabinet held 31 July, 2008, is attached for further information (Annex 3).
 7. It is for the Committee to decide whether it wishes to accept the decision of Cabinet or to refer the decision back to Cabinet for further consideration and if so what recommendations to Cabinet it wishes to make.
 8. A response to the questions raised by the Call-in (the stated reasons) is attached at Annex 4.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.