

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE: **Education, Culture & Sport**

DATE: **21 November 2013**

DIRECTOR: **Gayle Gorman**

TITLE OF REPORT: **Aquatics Revenue Funding**

REPORT NUMBER: **ECS/13/069**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for revenue funding to be released from existing budgets for the provision of services at Tullos Swimming Pool, and for the relevant budgets to be transferred from Sport Aberdeen to Aberdeen Sports Village to support the transfer of the delivery of the performance swimming programme to the 50m swimming pool.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Agree that up to £146,329 of revenue funding is provided to Sport Aberdeen for the operation of Tullos Pool for the remainder of this financial year, to be funded from existing budgets (This amount to be inclusive of the £50,000 already approved through delegated powers and the required pre-opening start up costs, and to be appropriately adjusted as a result of the pool opening later than 1 November 2013.)
- b) Recommend that £180,838, representing a full year of revenue funding for the operation of Tullos Pool, be included in the overall grant for Sport Aberdeen in 2014/15, as part of the budget setting process (not an additional growth item).
- c) Recommend that, as part of the budget setting process, £110,769 of annual revenue funding is reduced from the grant for Sport Aberdeen and the same amount is added to the grant for Aberdeen Sports Village from 2014/15 onwards, in order to facilitate the change of management of the COAST performance swimming programme from Sport Aberdeen to Aberdeen Sports Village as the operator of the new regional performance swimming centre.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is identified budget provision within this years Education, Culture and Sport revenue budget for the operation of Tullos Pool.

For 2014/15 the budget for Tullos Pool has been included in the Council's draft budget, so this report would not require any additional growth to the draft budget.

There will be no financial impact to the Council in relation to the change of management for the COAST performance swimming programme from Sport Aberdeen to Aberdeen Sports Village.

### **4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

#### Property Implications

This report relates to the provision of services from Tullos Swimming Pool which is at the time of writing this report undergoing refurbishment.

#### Legal Implications

The proposal that Sport Aberdeen will operate Tullos Swimming Pool on behalf of the Council will require a Minute of Variation to the main Funding and Services Agreement, and will also require the provision of a licence to occupy this facility to tie in with the remaining Sport Aberdeen main licence duration.

The change of management of the COAST performance swimming programme from Sport Aberdeen to Aberdeen Sports Village will require a Minute of Variation to the main Funding and Services Agreements that the Council has with each organisation.

### **5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

#### **5.1 Tullos Swimming Pool**

The redevelopment of Tullos Swimming Pool was agreed as part of the Council's Capital Programme in February 2012. Since then, detailed structural surveys and design work have taken place and a contract was awarded just before Christmas 2012. The contract for the construction work commenced on Monday 25 February 2013.

The work includes:

- Repair of all water damage and redecoration of all internal walls;
- Retiling of both pools and poolside areas;
- Replacement of the old changing area and basket clothes storage with a modern changing area with attractive cubicles and lockers;
- Creation of new disabled changing; group and family changing areas;

- Reconfiguration of the entrance area to create a more inviting and obvious entrance from the front of the building;
- Creation of a welcoming and accessible reception area with notice boards and vending machines;
- New public and disabled toilets;
- Reconfiguration of spectator seating to meet disability access requirements
- Re-commissioning of the plant room.

At the time of writing this report, it is anticipated that these works will be completed and the facility will have opened to the public by the end of November 2013. (Note that it had been anticipated that the opening date would have been 1 November 2013, and the current business plan has been prepared by Sport Aberdeen on this basis.

5.2 At Aberdeen City Council's Education, Culture and Sport Committee in May 2013, the committee was informed that Sport Aberdeen were currently preparing a business plan for the operation of the facility. The committee instructed officers to bring forward the full years financial implications for this facility to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee when this information was forthcoming from Sport Aberdeen, and delegated powers were provided to officers to release up to £50,000 of revenue funding towards the operational costs for the current financial year.

5.3 Since that time Sport Aberdeen have produced a business plan which has been scrutinised by officers, and the relevant officers have confirmed that the proposed business plan appears to be robust and acceptable. (Note: the Sport Aberdeen business plan included provision for a sinking fund. It is not proposed to include this within the budget provided to Sport Aberdeen as no other sports facilities run by Sport Aberdeen currently include funding from the Council for the provision of a sinking fund.)

5.4 It is therefore recommended that the full anticipated funding requirement of up to\* £146,329 for 2013/14 is released to Sport Aberdeen in line with the existing grant payment schedule, to ensure the operation of this new pool, and thereafter the annual operating cost of £180,838 is built into the overall grant for Sport Aberdeen.

\*Note: at the time of completion of the most recent version of the business plan, it was anticipated that the pool would open to the public on 1 November 2013. Due to various factors, this has not happened, and the pool is now anticipated to open later in November. The business plan will require to be revised to reflect this later date, hence the recommendation that funding up to £146,329 is approved. The funding requirement for 2013/14 appears high in comparison to the full year funding requirement as a result of pre-opening costs and lags in realising full income potential until the programme is fully operational.

- 5.5 It is highlighted that any business plan for a new sports facility such as this, includes an element of risk, and can only be as accurate as the information available and projections anticipated at the time of development. In line with best practice, it is intended to commission an independent review of the business plan after one full year of operation of the newly refurbished facility.
- 5.6 **COAST – Performance Swimming Programme**  
COAST (City of Aberdeen Swim Team) is Aberdeen’s performance swimming programme. The programme allows swimming clubs within Aberdeen to train together and compete as a composite club. COAST was initially established in 1996, and is now regarded as a high performing Scottish swimming team.
- 5.7 Aberdeen City Council provides a significant level of funding to COAST, through Sport Aberdeen. When Sport Aberdeen was set up in 2010, the management of COAST transferred to Sport Aberdeen, along with annual Council funding of £110,769 per year.
- 5.8 To ensure that the highly performing athletes within COAST continue to be supported to reach their potential, it is recognised that the appropriate place for COAST swimmers to train will be in the Aberdeen Aquatics Centre. With this in mind, it would be logical for the management of COAST to transfer from Sport Aberdeen to Aberdeen Sports Village. This principle is agreed by both Sport Aberdeen and Aberdeen Sports Village.
- 5.9 When Sport Aberdeen was set up in 2010, the annual net budget for delivering COAST was £110,769. There is some ambiguity about the current net budget for this programme, and this report therefore recommends that the same amount that was initially transferred to Sport Aberdeen is transferred to Aberdeen Sports Village.
- 5.10 To progress the transfer, a formal notification of change document will be progressed in respect of each partner. It is recommended that the Funding and Services grant payment is changed for each organisation to reflect the change of operational responsibility.

## 6. **IMPACT**

Corporate – This report relates to ‘Aberdeen – the Smarter City’

- We will work with our partners to seek to reduce the levels of inequality in the city.
- We will enhance the physical and emotional wellbeing of all our citizens by offering support and activities which promote independence, resilience, confidence and self-esteem.
- We will improve access to and increase participation in arts and culture by providing opportunities for citizens and visitors to experience a broad range of high quality arts and cultural activities.

- We will aim to have a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the cultural economy.
- We aspire to be recognised as a City of Culture, a place of excellence for culture and arts by promoting Aberdeen as a cultural centre hosting high quality and diverse cultural events for the whole community and beyond.
- We will embrace the distinctive pride the people of Aberdeen take in their city and work with them to enhance the sense of well-being here, building strong communities which look out for, and look after one another.

This report also relates to the Combined Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement as follows:

- Protecting children and vulnerable adults
- People of all ages take an active part in their own learning to achieve their full potential Learning and training is appropriate and accessible to learner's needs
- Children and young people access positive learning environments and develop their skills, confidence and self esteem to the fullest potential
- Children, young people and their families/carers are involved in decisions that affect them. Their voices heard and they play an active and responsible role in their communities
- Educational attainment in Aberdeen is continuously sustained and improved
- Children and young people actively participate in their communities and have optimum involvement in decision making
- All children, young people and their families have access to high quality services when required and services provide timely, proportionate and appropriate response that meeting the needs of children and young people within Getting it Right for Every Child, (GIRFEC) requirements
- Improve the quality of life in our most deprived areas
- Citizens are increasingly more active in their communities regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, where they live, disability or faith/religion/belief and contribute to 'active citizenship'
- Develop pathways to participation which enhance the diversity of local representation at and engagement with regional, national and international arts, heritage and sporting events
- Our public services are consistently high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

Public - This report will be of interest to citizens within the Torry area of the city.

## **7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

There is a risk that any new business plan will be inaccurate. This risk has been mitigated through the robust process that has been gone through to date in respect of each facility, and will continue to be

mitigated through an independent review of each business plan on the completion of one full years operation.

The contractor is responsible for the management of risk during the development period for each of the aquatics development projects. Sport Aberdeen will be responsible for the management of operational risk for Tullos Pool, once handed over.

Seeking Committee approval for the movement of budgets associated with the provision of the COAST performance swimming programme will minimise the risk of failure to agree in relation to the changes in management responsibility for this service.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9/2/12 Full Council: Non Housing Capital Programme Report  
31/5/13 Education, Culture and Sport: Tullos Swimming Pool

## **9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

Gail Woodcock  
Service Manager Sport & Communities  
[gwoodcock@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:gwoodcock@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
01224 522732