

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE:	Finance & Resources Committee
DATE:	17 June 2010
DIRECTOR:	Annette Bruton
TITLE OF REPORT:	Beach Leisure Centre – Heating & Ventilation Works
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/10/058

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on the condition of the heating and ventilation plant at the Beach Leisure Centre, setting out the significant risks to the continued operation of the service. The report seeks the Committee approval for funding to carry out either major repairs or replacement to the heating and ventilation installation.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 1) Notes the situation in relation to the condition of the heating and ventilation plant at Beach Leisure Centre.
- 2) That the Committee approves the request for urgent funding from the Capital Plan when contingencies allow.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost for undertaking this work, based on 2009 costs, is as follows:

- Option 1 - Remedial works – approximately £630K, or
- Option 2 - Replacement of ventilation system – approximately £1.5 million.

There is likely to require to be a slight uplift in these costs, to reflect inflationary increases.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

The report relates to the Arts, Heritage and Sport strand of the Community Plan, specifically in relation to the Sports, Leisure and Recreation vision of developing Aberdeen as an “Active City” and in relation to ensuring that our Community has ‘access to services of a high quality that meet their needs.’ under the ‘We value our

people' strand and Single Outcome Agreement Outcomes 6, 'We live longer, healthier lives' and 13, 'We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.' The report also links to Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking through Culture, Arts and Sport:

- Increase participation in sport, provide support for athletes and reward excellence
- Ensure high quality, well managed sports facilities in Aberdeen
- Recognise the contribution of Sport, Culture and Arts to promoting the area as a tourist destination
- Recognise the role of Sport and Arts in tackling anti-social behaviour

The report relates to Fit for the Future, a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Aberdeen City 2009-2015, which has 5 key objectives:

- Promote and increase opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity for everyone in Aberdeen
- Provide a comprehensive and high quality range of sports facilities in Aberdeen City Council
- Maximise the social, educational, health and economic benefits of sport and physical activity in Aberdeen City
- Develop and sustain pathways which nurture local, regional and national sporting people to reach their potential
- Raise the profile of sport in Aberdeen.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

As part of the discussions about the transfer of the Sport Service, the board of Sport Aberdeen have raised particular concerns about the condition of heating and ventilation at the Beach Leisure Centre.

The current condition of the heating and ventilation installation presents significant risks, and requires ongoing and substantial maintenance.

The Beach Leisure Centre is a major provider of the rates relief saving, which will be accrued by transferring sports facilities to Sport Aberdeen, and accounts for approximately 25% of the overall net funding for sports within the city.

6. REPORT

Beach Leisure Centre

The Beach Leisure Centre is the City Council's largest, and best used leisure facility, attracting approximately 260,000 visits per annum. However it is now nearly 21 years old, and is starting to show its age, in relation to the general condition of the fabric and some of the mechanical and electrical installation.

It is now recognised for some time that the ventilation plant within the facility is in need of attention, with frequent breakdowns. This has proved difficult to progress, in the light of ongoing budgetary pressures. In March 2009 a condition survey was

undertaken by CCDP consultant engineers, to determine the extent of the problems with the heating and ventilation plant in the Beach Leisure Centre. This included recommendations for a number of areas of work, along with associated costings.

The report states that:

“the general condition of the ventilation plant is very poor. The plant is subject to a wide range of harsh conditions and corrosive elements, which will reduce the expected life span of the individual components. A significant number of the components on all the air handling units have failed or are in the process of failure and replacement or refurbishment of these particular components would prove difficult due to access and physical size of certain items.”

It is worth noting is that the report indicated that the boiler and heating systems are generally considered to be in a good condition, although they would benefit from the associated work to the ventilation plant.

In summary, the report clearly indicates that the centre's ventilation system needs urgent attention, with three options. Either:

- a) Do nothing – this is likely to result in the Centre continuing to over-extend the limited repair budgets in order to maintain services, and will ultimately result in at best a limited year's service before catastrophic failure ensues.
- b) Remedial works – the consultants have indicated work to a cost of approximately £630K, which includes largely “fixes”. What this does not offer is the ability to recoup costs through energy efficiencies, as suggested by the report. It is likely also that this may also identify other areas of shortfall, which would require further investment.
- c) Replacement – the report recommends replacing the ventilation units, and implementing a number of energy efficiency measures. This would benefit from the fact that the Leisure Centre was linked up to the Aberdeen Heat and Power plant in late 2009, which may afford opportunities for further operational efficiencies. The overall scope of this work is in the region of £1.5 million. The report indicates that the initial outlay would be recouped within the lifetime of the installation, and overall efficiency would be improved. This also links to the national objective of reducing carbon emissions.

Both options b) and c) above would involve a degree of closure of the site, and associated reduction in admissions and income. Consideration could be given to whether a total centre closure would be required, or whether certain parts of the centre could be kept open. Initial timescales indicate that work could take up to 24 weeks to complete. Obviously it would be preferable to have this mitigated by only closing areas at a time.

In discussion with the board of Sport Aberdeen, they raised particular concerns about taking responsibility for this facility, with the heating and ventilation systems being in the current condition. Officers recommend that consideration be given for the Council to commit to undertaking priority works to the facility, as funds become available in the non-housing capital programme.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

David Wright
Service Manager (Communities)
dwright@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 814765

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cameron Chisholm Dawson Partnership (CCDP) – Report on Condition of Existing Heating and Ventilation Plant at Beach Leisure Centre (March 2009)