



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CABINET 19 DECEMBER 2006

Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, and Leisure and Direct Services

Gayton Swimming Pool

SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting on 22 November Council passed a resolution which included the establishment of an all party working group to examine any future options to retain a swimming pool facility at Gayton Junior School or in a neighbouring school.
- 1.2 This followed a survey of the facility which revealed increasingly serious structural defects and proposed closure from July 2007.
- 1.3 A meeting between the relevant Cabinet Members, the Heads and Chairs of Governors of local schools has now been held.
- 1.4 Subject to any issues raised at the meeting, I support the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To set up an all party working group comprising 2 members of the Labour Group, 2 members of the Conservative Group and 2 members of the Liberal Democrat Group, along with any community representatives.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendation is a response to the resolution approved by Council.



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Report of the Corporate Directors for Children & Young People and Environmental Services

Gayton Swimming Pool

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Council on 22 November 2006, the following resolution was passed:

“Council notes with concern the poor condition of the Gayton School swimming pool at Gayton School in Blagreaves Ward which has led to the decision to consider closing the facility.

The loss of this facility could cause concern amongst some residents in Blagreaves, particularly the swimming club members.

Council therefore calls upon the Council Cabinet to carefully examine the situation, recognising that the costs to replace the pool are estimated at over £3,000,000; it further calls on the Cabinet to set up an all party working group to identify funding sources that will either mean identifying cuts that will be necessary elsewhere, if £3,000,000 is to be used for a replacement pool, or an external funding stream.”

- 1.2 The swimming pool at Gayton Junior School in Littleover was opened in 1978. It comprises a pool 15m long, 7m wide and 1m deep with changing rooms. A community lounge and bar are attached – these are leased to the Trustees of Gayton Community Association. The remainder of the building is part of the school site and is managed by the Governors.
- 1.3 The swimming pool building is constructed of an arched steel frame with lightweight timber purlins covered in twin wall polycarbonate roof sheeting. The changing rooms are of a standard type 'Vic Hallam' timber construction, re-erected at this site as a second hand building in 1975. The changing rooms are attached to the Community Centre, which is of similar construction.
- 1.4 There is nothing built into the funding formula for schools for the two schools in the city with pools. The separate allowance in the formula was removed in 2002 when premises factors were simplified. The reasoning was that all other schools have to pay for entrance and instruction, and that schools with pools would be able to generate surplus income. However, the allocation would never have been intended for major capital work.

- 1.5 The pool is managed by the school. The community centre is owned and run by the Community Association, with a lease agreement on the land from the City Council.
- 1.6 Gayton pool is used by several other schools in the area – principally, Ridgeway Infant School, St George’s Catholic Primary School, St Peter’s Church of England (Aided) Junior School and Grampian Primary School. As well as the Gayton Swimming Club, a number of other groups use the pool, including the Community Club, an Autistic Group. There are sessions for OAPs and “ducklings”, and splash parties. While loss of any swimming provision would be regrettable, the pools at Moorways and Queens Leisure Centres would be able to adjust their school swimming programmes, given sufficient notice.
- 1.7 The poor condition was highlighted in September 2005 and a more detailed survey carried out in April 2006. This identified significant problems with the main building structural frame and windows. The current view is that it would not be economically viable to repair the building and consequently a closure date of July 2007 was proposed. However, if regular inspections showed further faults, surveyors would insist on immediate closure. It is already closed in certain weather conditions.
- 1.8 The only way to ensure a long term future would be to replace the pool. The school and the Council have not had sufficient capital funds to carry out major structural improvements and have therefore only been able to fund minor maintenance and improvement. The Gayton Swimming Pool Steering Committee has requested a further survey as a second opinion and the outcome is expected in January.
- 1.9 Following the initial survey, the school commissioned options for replacement. The projected costs of a new facility at one of the three local schools ranged from £3.04M to £3.4M, depending on site and inclusion of a crèche facility, but without a community lounge.
- 1.10 On Wednesday 13 December, a meeting was held between the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and Leisure and Direct Services, the Heads and Chairs of Governors of the local schools - Gayton Junior School, Ridgeway Infant School, St George’s Catholic Primary School and Derby Moor Community Sports College - to discuss any options. Those present at the meeting stressed the value of the pool to the local community and schools. The Chair of the meeting told them that the all party working group will meet in January 2007 to explore external funding sources, taking into account the requirement for schools to provide extended services. The Chair also stressed that the Council’s capital programme was not able to fund a replacement pool.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The purpose of the Council resolution and the establishment of the all party working group was to consider any potential options to the future, instead of the closure proposed as a result of the problems set out in the survey.

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Background papers:
List of appendices: Appendix 1 - Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. These are set out in the report. As noted above, there is no scope in the Council's capital programme to fund a replacement pool.

Legal

2. Any proposals would need to take into account the Council's responsibilities under the lease agreement for the Community Centre. Some external funding sources may be more accessible for community groups than schools or the Council.

Personnel

3. The school employs a full-time swimming teacher, who would be at risk if the pool closed. Governors would follow the agreed staffing reduction procedures and would ensure that the employee is considered for any suitable vacancies in the school.

Equalities impact

4. Any new provision would need to comply with all relevant legislation and policy on access for minority groups, including the Disability Discrimination Act.

Corporate Priorities

5. Swimming pool provision is consistent with the Council's priorities to encourage lifelong learning and achievement, and to build healthy and independent communities.