

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

**FROM: Project and Programme
Executive**

REPORT NUMBER: G199

TO: STRATEGY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 7 February 2008

FACILITIES IN HADLEIGH

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider proposals put forward by the Facilities in Hadleigh Steering Group for further public consultation on a stand alone community/leisure facility adjoining the swimming pool.
- 1.2 To advise Members of other consultation and evidence that is already available about leisure needs in Hadleigh that could be made available to the Steering Group alongside any new research.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the proposals detailed in paragraph 5.4 be approved subject to officers in consultation with South Suffolk Leisure and Hadleigh Town Council, being empowered to vary the sample size for the questionnaire in order to make the research more robust.
- 2.2 That the full details of the evidence, as detailed in paragraph 5.6, be made available to the Steering Group with the request it be taken into account when formalising the final recommendations on what action should be taken.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The costs of the proposed questionnaire and public consultation event will amount to several hundred pounds but this can be met from existing budgets.
- 3.2 There is £5,000 that could be made available if further research is deemed necessary.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

There are no significant business risks associated with this proposed public consultation exercise.

5. KEY INFORMATION

- 5.1 This project is being led by a Steering Group made up of Babergh Councillors (Nick Ridley, Sue Wigglesworth, Michael Miller and Brian Riley), Hadleigh Town Councillors and Trustees from South Suffolk Leisure.

- 5.2 The remit of the Steering Group is to ascertain what facilities could be provided in a stand alone building adjacent to the swimming pool. In considering this the Steering Group has also been asked to make an assessment of the future of the pavilion site in Calais Street.
- 5.3 At the last meeting Strategy Committee agreed that the Steering Group should consider research into the views of the wider Hadleigh community including adjoining parishes. They asked that the Steering Group's views and recommendations on how this exercise should be carried out be reported to and agreed at this meeting.
- 5.4 The Steering Group has met and recommends the following process:-
- A short questionnaire (about 10 questions maximum) to be sent to every 10th household in Hadleigh and all parishes within a four mile radius of the town.
 - The questionnaire to seek views on the range of uses and activities that could be undertaken in the new building.
 - The questionnaire to be accompanied by an explanatory letter which will also explain that Babergh District Council is committed to keeping Hadleigh Swimming Pool open for as long as possible.
 - The results of the questionnaire to be reported to the Steering Group who may draw some initial conclusions as to the range of uses and activities for the building.
 - Consultation event in Hadleigh to which all clubs, societies etc will be specifically invited with a general invitation also being extended to the public.
 - The consultation event to show the results of the questionnaire and any initial conclusions of the Steering Group with the opportunity for those attending to offer comments.
 - The Steering Group will then consider the outcome of the consultation event and make recommendations to Strategy Committee on the range of uses and activities for the building.
- 5.5 Since the meeting of the Steering Group, officers have ascertained there are about 5,300 properties in the defined area. This would result in the survey being sent to 530 properties. Response rates for such surveys are unpredictable and will therefore only give a flavour of people's views. It may be that an increased survey (say 1 in 5 properties) would help. However, it is suggested the question of augmented consultation is left with the group appointed by the Steering Group to sort out the detailed process.

5.6 Members may also feel it beneficial to feed into the Steering Group the following evidence which is appropriate to include and is already available.

- Relevant recommendations from Hadleigh Leisure Needs Survey (February 2002)
- Suffolk County Council consultation with young people
- Recent research by a leisure database company which shows considerable latent demand for health and fitness (gym) provision in Hadleigh.
- Babergh's emerging Corporate Plan priorities which have been identified through a number of sources, namely stakeholder views, public opinion (3 forums run by the ORS Research Company and through Suffolk Speaks) and relevant data (Census, health, crime, education etc).

6. **APPENDICES**

None.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO**

None.

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