

YIEWSLEY POOL – PEITITION TO THE COUNCIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio	Finance and Business Services
Officer Contact	Howard Griffin, Planning, Environment and Community Services
Papers with report	None

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	This report concerns a petition received objecting to the closure of Yiewsley Pool.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	N/A
Financial Cost	Estimated annual saving to the Council on NNDR (National Non-Domestic Rates) is £32,300.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' and Environmental Services
Ward(s) affected	Yiewsley and West Drayton

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Business Services:

- 1) Notes the petition received; and
- 2) Supports the closure of Yiewsley Pool and the development of a new Health Centre on the site, subject to planning permission.

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

A petition was received by Democratic Services on 25 June 2010 containing 600 signatures stating "*We the residents of Yiewsley object to any plans to close our swimming pool. We need more facilities for exercise and youth activities not less*". The Council's procedures enable such petitions to be heard by the relevant Cabinet Member.

Background

The opening of the new Hillingdon Sports & Leisure Complex in Uxbridge, and Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre in Hayes represents a combined capital investment of over £50m by

the Council to provide Hillingdon residents with an extended range of modern, fit for purpose sports and leisure facilities.

Both these facilities, along with William Byrd Pool in Harlington, are all within a 3 mile radius of Yiewsley Pool which, by contrast, is a relatively small facility with a poor and limited range of accommodation and equipment that does not meet modern standards. The building is generally also in need of significant capital investment just to keep the pool operational.

Following the opening of the new Leisure Centres, many of the existing groups that hired Yiewsley Pool have relocated to one of the alternative facilities and it is considered that these facilities provide acceptable access to any other existing users within a reasonable travel distance.

As a result, taking in to account the substantial investment programme made by the Council and the poor condition of Yiewsley Pool, YPDT (Yiewsley Pool Development Trust) that manage the facility has decided that the centre is no longer financially viable for them to operate.

This opinion is shared by the Council that, along with the recognised need to improve other vital public services in the area, has decided to replace Yiewsley Pool with a much needed new Primary Care Health Centre for the area.

Alternative options considered / risk management

Retaining Yiewsley Pool is considered unsustainable and will be a significant long term financial risk to the Council both in terms of the upgrading required and on-going subsidy that will be needed. When taking into account the investment made to sport and leisure centres that are within reach of the Yiewsley area, retaining the pool will not provide value for money and it would be more beneficial to find an alternative suitable use of the site for another public service.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage.

Supporting Information

There are three alternative swimming pools within a 3 mile radius of Yiewsley Pool that, between them, can accommodate existing users at Yiewsley Pool. These include the Botwell Green Sports & Leisure Centre that opened in June 2010 with a 25m, 8 lane pool and separate learner / leisure pool, and Hillingdon Sports & Leisure Complex in Uxbridge that opened in February 2010 and includes a 50m, 8 lane pool, separate leisure pool and refurbished outdoor pools. In addition to the new facilities, William Byrd Pool in Harlington is also within the three mile radius of Yiewsley, providing another alternative option to residents around the Yiewsley and West Drayton areas.

Yiewsley Pool, by contrast to the new build sites, is a relatively small centre with limited appeal and outdated accommodation. Originally built as an outdoor swimming pool, a pitched roof to enclose the open-air central part of the structure was added in the 1970's. As a result the building is inefficient and expensive to operate and heat.

YPDT Leisure Ltd has managed the centre on behalf of the Council since 1991 and has continued to operate the facility during the construction phase of the new facilities. Now these are operational, YPDT no longer considers the facility to be a viable option.

The Primary Care Trust's Estates Strategy identified a need for a new Health Centre in Yiewsley to replace their current facility, which is out of date and impractical to extend or modernise in its current location to meet modern healthcare standards.

Financial Implications

The proposed closure would generate an estimated annual saving to the leisure budget in NNDR of £32,300. A part refund would be expected in the current financial year. In addition, securing an alternative use for the site such as the proposed health centre will generate a revenue income to the Council. This is subject to changes in the NHS proposed by central Government.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

With three alternative leisure facilities within a 3 mile radius, residents will continue to have access to a range of alternative centres. Hillingdon Sports & Leisure Complex as a new additional facility does in particular provide a substantial increase in the amount of capacity available in a modern up to date complex. It is therefore considered that there is more than adequate capacity to cope with increased demand that may arise from the closure of Yiewsley Pool.

Officers have undertaken a series of discussions with groups using Yiewsley Pool and are finalising alternative options for any remaining groups. The existing Tae-Kwon-Do club that operates at Yiewsley Pool is also due to be relocated to the vacant first floor space at Yiewsley Library.

The proposed Health Centre to be built on the site will replace the existing Yiewsley High Street Health Centre, providing improved and enlarged facilities. It will enable three GP practices to be brought together into one facility improving patient access as well as allowing displaced physiotherapy services currently operating in West Drayton to be co-located. These will make a significant improvement to the primary care services available to local residents in the area.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Once the Council has received petitions, the Petition Hearing is the appropriate democratic process by which views and consultation are carried out before any decision is made.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Finance comments are contained within the main body of the report.

Legal

In considering the petition received, decision makers must ensure there is a full consideration of all representations arising including those which do not accord with the officer recommendation. The decision maker must be satisfied that responses from the public are conscientiously taken into account.

Corporate Property

Comments from Corporate Property are contained within the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL