



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
9 November 2021
Agenda Item 9

Key Decision [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All

Using Sport England Funding to Support Leisure Services in Adur

Report by the Director for the Economy

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The main purpose of this report is to recommend a way forward for utilising a grant received from Sport England for re-opening Adur's leisure facilities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Joint Strategic Committee is recommended to:
 - i) Note the progress in reopening the Adur facilities following the ending of restrictions;
 - ii) Approve the proposed reopening payment of £104,000 funded from the grant received from Sport England.

3. Context

- 3.1 The contract to provide leisure services was awarded to South Downs Leisure in January 2021 with the intention of opening the venues in February 2021 but in the event, the impact of the extended Pandemic, was to delay the opening of the two leisure centres and Wadurs swimming pool until May.
- 3.2 One consequence of the delay was that grant funding from Sport England for the purposes of re-opening was effectively retained for costs which would be incurred in the current financial year. Additional funding (£104,000) has been requested by South Downs Leisure Trust. This is considered to be a reasonable request mindful of the purpose of the grant funding from Sport England and that it does not involve additional Council funded expenditure, nor does it vary the contract.
- 3.3 The wider context is our experience to date of South Downs Leisure Trust operating the leisure facilities. Two quarterly contract reviews with SDLT have taken place since May and many more informal conversations and meetings have taken place as part of a partnership approach to operating our leisure facilities.
- 3.4 Over the past 5 months SDLT has prioritised re-opening the centres and ensuring that they are welcoming and clean. Income figures have steadily improved as people have returned and club bookings have been particularly strong. The Aquaschool swimming lessons at Wadurs have increased from 566 attendees in July to 704 in October and Aqua Classes have doubled from 3 to 6 classes per week due to the demand.
- 3.5 SDLT's has adapted its programme to place a greater emphasis on health and well-being. Mindfulness classes have been introduced and the successful Exercise Referral scheme is about to re-start. "This Girl Can" <https://www.thisgirlcan.co.uk/> classes at the facilities have begun this Autumn.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 Mindful of the considerable financial impact of the Pandemic on leisure service operations up and down the country, it is appropriate to use the Sport England grant funding to support South Downs Leisure Trust now it has reopened Adur's leisure facilities. Mindful of the purpose these grant funds are intended for, no alternative options have been considered to be appropriate.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 Regular monitoring of SDLT's contractual performance is underway and SDLT has instigated a customer survey to establish where services can be improved and ideas for new activities.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Council in 2020/21 relet the leisure contract to South Down Leisure Trust with agreed contract payments for the next 5 years of:

| 2020/21 (Dec - March) | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 205,550 | 345,370 | 130,070 | 111,910 | 13,160 |

- 6.2 Due to the impact of the Coronavirus and the extended lockdown in the early part of this year, the leisure centres and swimming pool did not open as anticipated, eventually reopening early this financial year. Adur District Council only paid preparatory costs to SDLT rather than the full contract payment in 2020/21. In addition, as the Councils retained responsibility for the maintenance of the sites in the interim period, we also had some significant issues to address such as the retiling of the Wadurs pool. Overall the spend in 2020/21 was £607,800 against an approved budget of £717,870.

| 2020/21 | Budget | Actual | Under / Over (-) spend |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Contractor payments | £ | £ | £ |
| ACL | 125,000 | 125,000 | 0 |
| SDLT | 205,550 | 100,640 | 104,910 |
| Consultancy support | 40,000 | 47,000 | -7,000 |
| Interim venue management | 347,320 | 335,160 | 12,160 |
| | <u>717,870</u> | <u>607,800</u> | <u>110,070</u> |

- 6.3 SDLT have approached the Council for additional funding of £104,000 in the current year to fund the opening costs of the venues. Effectively this is

deferred expenditure from the previous financial year due to the extended closure of the venues.

- 6.4 The Council successfully applied in 2020/21 for grant aid of £110,000 to support the reopening of the venues which the Council has retained to fund the reopening costs in 2021/22.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 7.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.
- 7.5 Section 19 of the Local Government Act 1976 allows the Council to provide recreational facilities as it thinks fit and that includes the power to provide buildings, facilities, equipment, supplies and assistance of any kind, either without charge or on such payment as the authority thinks fit.
- 7.6 The Council must take appropriate measures to ensure that SDL expenditure of the funding is in accordance with the terms on which it was received from Sport England and is in accordance with the terms and conditions of the leisure contract between SDL and the Council.

Background Papers

- Report to the Joint Strategic Committee dated 12th January 2021 - Update on the future of Adur Leisure contract award (public report)
- Report to the Joint Strategic Committee dated 3rd November 2020 - Re-Opening Adur's Leisure Facilities
- Report to Joint Strategic Committee 8th September 2020 - COVID-19 Response to ACL Insolvency - Adur Leisure Sites
- Procurement Policy Note 01/20 dated March 2020

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

The pandemic has had a major impact on the wider economy and has made operating conditions in the leisure sector challenging.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

The pandemic has had a major impact on the lives of individuals, families and our communities. Leisure and its relationship with health and well being will be of vital importance to local communities as we recover

2.2 Equality Issues

Leisure plays a vital role in people's health and well-being. The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on some communities and this will need to be reflected in our recovery planning for leisure.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

The pandemic has raised a number of community safety issues both direct and indirect. Leisure, health and well being have an important role to play in this regard.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

No specific matters

3. Environmental

The environmental impact of leisure provision is an increasingly important consideration and encompasses aspects such as travel and the management of buildings and facilities

4. Governance

A formal quarterly review of the leisure services contract takes place.

5. Sustainability & Risk Assessment

Sustainability and risk assessment criteria are incorporated into the contract to operate leisure services in Adur