

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SPECIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 1ST MARCH 2006

VISIONS, CUMNOCK – PROGRESS REPORT AND REVENUE FUNDING APPLICATION

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a progress report on the Visions Leisure Centre in Cumnock for 2005/06 and seek approval for a revenue grant for 2006/07.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Visions Leisure Centre opened to the public in October 2004 following a major fundraising project successfully co-ordinated by the Cumnock and District Leisure Group.
- 2.2 The Council awarded grant aid support of £90,000 to the Cumnock and District Leisure Group in 2005/06. This grant was allocated from Quality of Life funds.
- 2.3 Visions (Cumnock) Limited has applied for a grant of £163,000 to fund the projected running costs of the facilities in 2006/07. This projection is based on the actual cost of operating the facility for a full year at the current level of opening hours and service.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Visions facility is performing well and meeting its usage targets. The facility has been well received and support from the local community is strong, particularly in terms of memberships which have exceeded targets.
- 3.2 Management of the facilities is carried out by the Kilmarnock Leisure Centre Trust which acts as a management contractor. Performance is monitored at monthly Board meetings which are attended by the Head of Leisure Services. The Council has also three Councillors nominated as Board Members. The requirements of the Service Level Agreement which underpins the Council's revenue support for the facilities have been met throughout the year and the Visions Centre is efficiently managed and marketed.
- 3.3. The grant application has been assessed and, in view of the Visions Centre's performance, location and value, it would normally be recommended that the full award of £163,000 is made. However the available budget dictates that a maximum grant of £90,000 from Quality of Life funding is recommended.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The grant requested has been assessed against the available funding and a revised sum of £90,000 which is the maximum available from existing budgets is being recommended for approval.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Financial support for the Visions facility is underpinned by the Service Level Agreement approved by this Committee on 15th September 2004 and the Council's standard Conditions of Grant.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Support for the Visions facility is in line with the East Ayrshire Community Plan, Community Learning Aim 1.1 "Support local organisations to manage their own facilities".

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The Visions Leisure Centre has been operating successfully since its opening in October 2004; the facilities are well used and well managed. A grant of £90,000 will pose significant problems for Visions (Cumnock) Limited in their operation of the pool and it may be that current levels of service could be maintained.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Committee are recommended to:-
- (i) approve a grant of £90,000 to Visions (Cumnock) Limited for 2006/07; and
 - (ii) otherwise notes the content of this report.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG/KH
10th February 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application Form from Visions (Cumnock) Limited.

Any person wishing to inspect the background paper listed above should telephone 01563 578179 and ask for John Griffiths, Head of Leisure Services.

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