

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 18 FEBRUARY 2015

**EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE
SERVICE AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2015-16 / 2016-17**

Report by Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to put forward proposals developed by East Ayrshire Leisure Trust for the redesign of 4 areas of the Trust's remit, namely; Sport and Community Venues; Library Services; Cultural Services; and Countryside Development Services for Cabinet consideration and noting.

BACKGROUND

- 2 East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) that was established to manage a range of community facing sport, countryside, arts, museums, heritage, and library services on behalf of East Ayrshire Council. The Trust commenced work on 1st July 2013.
- 3 Significant financial savings have been achieved through the transfer of responsibility for services to the Trust and through service efficiencies, however, the Council's Transformation Strategy which is designed to protect key services whilst reducing spending by £35m in line with reductions in government grant, indicates that resources available to the Leisure Trust will reduce by a further £1,191,000 by 2017/18.
- 4 The Trust Board has carried out detailed service and budget reviews across its remit in order to identify savings and ensure that the Trust can operate from a sustainable financial position where the resources available to the Trust match service delivery expectations. The service reviews referred to in this report were approved by the Trust Board on 13 January 2015.
- 5 In carrying out the service reviews the Board took into account several key factors including: the need to reduce costs in line with funding; the Council's arrangements for Service provision (see para 6); the aspiration to deliver good quality services from those facilities to the retained; current usage; building condition and the requirement to offer alternative service provision wherever possible.
- 6 The Council's Property and Estate Rationalisation Programme, approved by Cabinet on 5 December 2012, envisages future service arrangements provided within identified hub areas. The underlying principle for the new service arrangements is that each area will include a range of high quality amenities accessible by communities within the area, including as a minimum a sports facility and synthetic grass pitch, a full service library, a local office and community facility. The minimum

standard relating to library provision was taken into account throughout the review of Library Services. The areas identified are;

- Cumnock/Auchinleck (including Mauchline, Catrine, Muirkirk, New Cumnock, Ochiltree, Logan and Lugar)
- Dalmellington/Patna (including Bellsbank, Dalrymple, Drongan and Rankinston)
- Galston (including Crosshouse, Gatehead, Hurlford and Crookedholm)
- Stewarton (including Kilmaurs and Dunlop)

7 The reviews and service redesign proposals also ensure that partnerships with the Council are developed to maximise community use of the school estate and in particular the new schools being planned in several communities. Community access will conform to the security standards established following the report of the Cullen enquiry.

REVIEW OF SPORT AND COMMUNITY VENUES

8 The Review of Sport and Community Venues carried out by East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is available on the Members' Portal. The Review provides full details of current facility costs and usage. In addition to a detailed review of individual facilities a full examination of the management and staff structure has also been undertaken and revised structure would be introduced if the facility proposals are accepted and implemented.

9 The Review would generate total estimated savings of £592,500 for East Ayrshire Leisure with further estimated savings of £851,000 accruing to the Council

10 The Review proposes that the following Sport and Community Venues are retained by the Trust:

- Auchinleck Leisure Centre
- Ayrshire Athletics Arena
- Darvel Town Hall
- Doon Valley Leisure Centre
- Grange Leisure Centre
- Hunter Fitness Suite and Community Rooms
- Loudoun Leisure Centre
- Scott-Ellis Playing Fields
- St Joseph's Leisure Centre
- Stewarton Area Centre
- Stewarton Sports Centre
- The Jougs (Non-operational)

11 Future sports facility provision will be predominately based at secondary school sites with joint use provision i.e. school use during the school day and public use at evenings, weekends and during school holidays being the most efficient way forward in terms of maximising the use of Council assets. The exceptions to this joint use approach would be the Ayrshire Athletics Arena (which is available to all schools), Stewarton Sports Centre, the Hunter Fitness Suite and Scott-Ellis Playing Fields. Scott-Ellis Playing Fields is retained because of its wide variety of community use

however, this is the only grass pitch facility proposed for retention by the Trust. All other pitches and pavilions have been part of the Community Asset Transfer programme.

- 12 Community Centre provision has been examined as part of the review and Stewarton Area Centre and Darvel Town Hall would be retained by the Trust and managed by the Sport and Community Venues team. Cumnock Town Hall would also be retained but this would be managed by the Cultural Services Team.
- 13 In addition the Board have identified several Sport and Community facilities that it would be keen to retain but which would require funding discussions with the Council. In each case, the Board considered that these facilities have potential for improvement and development, and working in partnership with the Council this potential could be realised. The estimated cost implications of these proposals are highlighted for each facility.

Annanhill Golf Course
Morton Hall, Newmilns
Boswell Centre, Auchinleck
Galston Community Centre
Patna Community Centre

- 14 Annanhill Golf Course has been included for possible retention by the Trust. It is considered that the facility has potential to improve and develop and recent partnership activities with Annanhill Golf Club have proved successful and could underpin a new approach to managing and providing the facilities. The net annual revenue costs of operating Annanhill Golf Course for the Trust at current operating levels is £0.050m per annum. There have been a number of instances at Annanhill of golf balls being struck into neighbouring properties and open space resulting in both personal injury and property damage and the incidence of this could be significantly reduced by the realignment of two of the holes. The estimated cost is £0.020m and the Council may wish to consider funding this from the Risk Management Challenge Fund balance.
- 15 Further information on the current costs of golf course provision and other management and operational issues will be presented to Cabinet in due course.
- 16 Morton Hall, Newmilns, requires refurbishment to meet modern standards. The Board considered that if a significant upgrading programme could be implemented by the Council, including the co-location of the part-time Library, then the facilities would have potential for attracting new customers. There would also be the opportunity to explore community involvement in the management of any refurbished facilities. The Trust's current net annual revenue cost of operating Morton Hall is £15,680 and for the library, £19,230.
- 17 It is proposed that library facilities be created within the Hall as phase 1 of refurbishment at an estimated cost of £0.030m with phase 2 thereafter being subject to a specification developed in consultation with the local community. A revenue saving would accrue from staff rationalisation once the library has transferred.

- 18 For the Boswell Centre in Auchinleck and Patna Community Centre Community Associations currently take bookings and generally administer the facilities with staff provided by the Council's Facility Management Team. It is understood that the Community Associations have one month rolling agreements in place. It is proposed that the Trust should assume responsibility for these facilities including staff and budgets, which would transfer to the Trust from the Council. Arrangements with Community Associations will be reviewed and where appropriate new agreements will be put in place. Vibrant Communities staff will support this process.
- 19 Opening hours at all three facilities will require to be reviewed to ensure maximum efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- 20 The Trust would continue to administer bookings for school facilities across East Ayrshire. Access to school facilities for community use is particularly important in some communities and a review of access and charges for school and community facilities is currently under way with a view to improved planning and availability.
- 21 In addition to those facilities identified above, a number of community facilities would be retained under their current arrangements to allow planned alternative facilities to be introduced. These include:
- New Farm Loch Community Centre will be retained pending replacement of facilities in the new Kilmarnock Learning Campus.
 - New Cumnock Community Centre will be retained pending redevelopment of New Cumnock Town Hall; and
 - Muirkirk Community Wing will be retained pending the provision of replacement facilities as part of the new school.

Funding at current levels would be provided to allow the Trust to continue to manage these facilities into 2016/17.

REVIEW OF LIBRARY SERVICES

- 22 A copy of the Leisure Trust's full review of Library Services is available on the Members' Portal. The review document provides details of the proposals for the redesigned library service, including facility provision, mobile service and introduction of a housebound service and the revised library offer.
- 23 The library review draws on comprehensive research from the Arts Council England in 2012 ('Envisioning the Libraries of the Future'), which has and continues to inform debate in Scotland. The research echoes our own experience in East Ayrshire as we see a shift from traditional ways of accessing books and attendance at libraries showing a gradual decline. Over the past three years we have seen 9% fall in visits, with the national average showing 6% fall.
- 24 To address this decline and within the context of meeting savings targets, the review proposes a significant redesign of the service. At the heart of this is a revised library offer that will provide a high quality service around four specific areas:

- Book Reading Offer - reaching out to provide a service that embraces the wider community and provides them with access to a high quality range of books and events across a range of platforms.
- Information Offer – focusing on supporting people to access information and services in important areas such as careers, job seeking, health, personnel finance and benefits.
- Digital Offer – providing services across a range of digital platforms and providing high quality training around IT learning and development.
- Health Offer – recognising the public library contribution to health and well-being in the local communities.

25 The library offer will be delivered through Buildings, Mobile Libraries, Housebound Service and Online. In addition, support will be provided for community book points.

26 The redesign proposals, if implemented in full would generate savings of £391,182 from East Ayrshire Leisure budgets and savings of £124,605 would accrue to the Council.

Buildings

27 Central to the proposals for the Library Services is the retention of full service, full time Libraries, in line with the Council’s strategy. Full service Libraries will offer book lending, access to computers, events and activities and will open for standardised opening hours from Tuesdays to Saturdays. These Libraries will be available at:

- The Dick Institute, Kilmarnock
- Cumnock Library, Rothesay House, Cumnock
- Auchinleck Library, Boswell Centre, Auchinleck
- Galston Library
- Stewarton Library, Stewarton Area Centre
- Patna Library
- Burns House Museum/Library (A basic Library service would also be provided at the Burns House Museum, Mauchline alongside the museum offer)

28 The rationalisation of opening hours and front of house staffing levels will allow savings to be achieved and will facilitate marketing and promotion. It should be noted that there will be a reduction in opening hours at some facilities including the Dick Institute. All full-time libraries will offer a Tuesday – Saturday (35 hours) opening with Thursday evening opening.

29 Part-time Libraries which open for 19 hours from Thursday to Saturday will be available at:

- Crosshouse Library, Crosshouse Resource Centre
- Darvel Library

30 In terms of the Library offer that will be available at the remaining full and part-time Library facilities the aspiration will be to provide welcoming facilities with access to up to date book stock, computers and wi-fi, supported by event and activity programmes to stimulate interest in reading, I.T and local history and heritage. Plans

are also being developed for improved access to e-book and digital lending services as part of the review.

31 In addition, the Board would be keen to retain 3 additional part-time Libraries and would want to work with the Council to ensure that existing facilities could be relocated. These facilities are:

- Newmilns Library – as indicated at paragraph 15 above, consideration should be given to the co-location of a Library in a refurbished Morton Hall, Newmilns. Newmilns Library is relatively well used and would benefit from a more accessible location.
- Drongan Library – consideration should be given to the relocation to the proposed new community facility in Drongan. Drongan Library is currently well used and co-location with other community facilities would provide an effective means of providing library services in the heart of the community.
- Bellfield Library – relocation into the proposed new primary school is proposed by the Council. Bellfield Library is a very well used community library which would be sustainable within the new school. As part of this, proposals are being developed to introduce an operating model encompassing work experience and volunteers.

32 Meeting the savings target would require some libraries to be closed and services provided by alternative means. These are listed below with details of the alternative Library services that would be provided;

<u>Library</u>	<u>Alternative</u>
Dalrymple	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
Ochiltree	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
Kilmaurs	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
Dalmellington	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
Catrine	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
Hurlford	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
Muirkirk	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
New Cumnock	Mobile/Community Bookpoint
Mauchline	Relocation to Burns House Museum

33 The timing of service changes in these communities would co-incide with Cabinet decisions on Community Asset Transfer and delivery of new facilities at Muirkirk, New Cumnock and Mauchline. If the Council decides not to support the proposals in respect of Newmilns, Bellfield or Drongan, then the service could be provided by the mobile library.

34 Working in partnership with Vibrant Communities, opportunities will be explored to develop community led book points. The EALT Library Service will provide support through the donation of book stock, when available, and through professional advice and training to community groups.

Mobile Libraries

- 35 A re-routed Mobile Library Service would provide the main means of accessing Library Services in communities where Library facilities would close. The two Mobile Library vehicles would operate on revised routes and timescales with longer stops in larger communities.
- 36 The scheduling of this service will ensure community groups will be able to access a library at regular intervals, which will be clearly advertised. It will be important to plan for replacement of the vehicles, the cost of which is in the region of £130,000 each. The Mobile libraries recorded 23,700 issues, with 718 active borrowers during 2013/2014. The use of mobiles would be expected to increase as the number of Library buildings is reduced.

Housebound Service

- 37 The Housebound Service would use a small van to pick up and deliver books to individual homes and sheltered accommodation. This service will be implemented in partnership with Vibrant Communities and Health & Social Care Services, this will assist in ensuring that Library Services remain accessible across East Ayrshire.
- 38 It is envisaged that the Housebound service would provide a service to 13 nursing homes and sheltered housing complexes. There are currently 25 house stops served by the south mobile library and 20 house stops served by the north mobile library and there is therefore a community demand for a housebound service. Community library staff could also signpost customers to the new service. The aim would be to work with Vibrant Communities and Health & Social Care to identify need and investigate other methods of book distribution, linked to the Mobile and Van service. The Housebound Service would use Crosshouse Library as its operational base in the north of the area and Auchinleck library as its base in the South.

Online

- 39 As people grow more and more reliant on digital services, the library has to meet this need and change the way it operates. As part of the review we propose to modernise our Library management system and integrate more fully with our new web platform at www.eastayrshireleisure.com This will allow people to access our library catalogue more easily online as well as providing access to ebooks. Discussions with a number of providers of ebooks are currently being held to determine the most economical and robust platform.
- 40 Where it is agreed that Library Services will change and in some cases facilities will close, communication with customers and communities will follow a Communications Plan developed jointly by the Trust and the Council. The plan will be based on the approach taken by the Council for the rationalisation of the Local Office network and the introduction of alternative methods of contacting the Council and making payments.

REVIEW OF COUNTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT

- 41 The Leisure Trust's Review of Countryside Development is available on the Members' Portal. The Review provides details of the remit of the Countryside Development team which spans management of Dean Castle Country Park, The River Ayr Way, the public path network through East Ayrshire and the strategic development of policy relating to Outdoor Access, Biodiversity Greenspaces, and Outdoor Learning in conjunctions with East Ayrshire Council.
- 42 The Service Review provides a range of operational savings but the overall budget will increase by £55,437 per year due to the inward transfer of responsibility for Visitor Services Assistants posts at Dean Castle from the Museum Service. There are currently two major externally funded projects in development for Dean Castle Country Park and with this in mind there are no proposals to reduce staffing levels at the park as the resources to implement the major changes that successful funding bids would support must be retained.
- 43 Facility opening hours with the park have been reviewed and it is proposed that from April to September the Castle and Visitor Centre will open 7 days per week and from October to March these facilities would open 5 days per week from Wednesday to Sunday.

CULTURAL SERVICES

- 44 The Leisure Trust's Review of Cultural Services is available on the Members' Portal. Cultural Services include Museum Collection management; Exhibitions and Events; Arts Development including Youth Theatre; management of the Palace Theatre, the Grand Hall and Cumnock Town Hall; Family and Local History Services; and Hospitality Services (bars and catering).
- 45 It is proposed that the following facilities within this remit are retained by the Trust:
- Dick Institute, Kilmarnock
 - Palace Theatre/Grand Hall, Kilmarnock
 - Cumnock Town Hall
 - Baird Institute, Cumnock
 - Burns House Museum, Mauchline (this would include relocation of the library service to space within the museum)
 - Dean Castle/Country Park
 - (Family and Local History Services will continue to be delivered from the Burns Monument Centre, Kilmarnock)
- 46 The redesign of Cultural Services which excludes Countryside Development and Libraries (but includes the staff/budget transfer of £55,437 to Countryside Development) would generate estimated savings of £127,277 from East Ayrshire Leisure Budgets and an estimated saving of £11,125 would accrue to the Council.
- 47 Opening hours have also been reviewed and it is proposed that Cultural Services Venues open as follows:

- Dick Institute – Tuesday to Saturday
- Burns House Museum – Tuesday to Saturday
- Baird Institute – Thursday to Saturday
- Dean Castle (See para 42 above)
- Palace and Grand Hall Complex/Cumnock Town Hall - Tuesday – Saturday and show times

HR IMPLICATIONS

- 48 East Ayrshire Leisure Trust and East Ayrshire Council will be responsible for addressing any human resources implications arising from this report where they affect their respective employees in accordance with established procedures.

POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 49 There are no policy or legal implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 50 Implementing this service re-design proposals contained in the four service reviews would generate total estimated savings of £1,110,959 from East Ayrshire Leisure’s budgets and £986,790 from East Ayrshire Council budgets. This would ensure that East Ayrshire Leisure met its budget reduction targets while retaining an extensive range of Leisure facilities. The savings can be summarised as follows:

REVIEW	SAVINGS TO EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE	SAVINGS TO EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
Sport and Community Venues	£592,500	£851,000
Library Service	£391,182	£124,605
Countryside Service	Nil	Nil
Cultural Services	£127,277	£11,125
Total	£1,110,959	£986,730
Grand Total £2,097,689		

- 51 The annual revenue costs of managing additional facilities as detailed in the report are shown below and would effectively be funded by an addition to the Annual Payment from the Council for the delivery of services.

Location	Transformation Fund	Annual Revenue Costs
	£m	£m
Annanhill Golf Course		0.051
Morton Hall/Newmilns Library	0.030	0.035
Boswell Centre	0.000	0.074
Patna Community Centre	0.000	0.021
Galston Community Centre	0.000	0.029
Drongan Library	0.000	0.016
Bellfield Library	0.000	0.024
Mauchline Library	0.030	0.000
Total		0.250
Less Community Centre Budgets Transferring		(0.082)
Net additional Cost to the Council	0.060	0.168

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 52 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- i) Consider the Service redesign proposals for Sport and Community Venues, Library Services, Cultural Services and Countryside Services included in this report in conjunction with the Property and Estate Rationalisation report included on this Agenda;
 - ii) Refer to Property and Estate Rationalisation Cabinet report in terms of Council Recommendations associated with this report; and
 - iii) Otherwise note the content of the report.

John Griffiths
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11 February 2015

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