

Ballycastle Sport and Leisure Facilities	8th November 2016
To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Information	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, healthy & engaged communities
Outcome	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health
Lead Officer	Head of Sport & Wellbeing
Cost: (If applicable)	Legacy Business Case £10.4m CAPEX, £540k annual subsidy

The purpose of this Report is to present the April 2009 Moyle District Council Ballycastle “Feasibility Study Leisure / Visitor Facility Final Report” to Members.

Background

Further to the October 2016 Leisure and Development Committee and Council report that provided Members with an update on the ongoing development of the available options for the provision of sport and leisure facilities in Ballycastle, Members decided that the Legacy Moyle District Council Business Case for an Indoor Leisure and Visitor Centre in Ballycastle should be brought to Committee. Accordingly, the April 2009 Moyle District Council Ballycastle “Feasibility Study Leisure / Visitor Facility Final Report” together with the March 2013 Moyle District Council cover report are appended to this report.

Update

The following are points to note from the documents;

- The work in the report was done in the period 2006 to 2009 and the data used is therefore quite out of date.
- The Capital cost of the facility discussed in the report is estimated at £10.3m
- Contingency in the report is estimated at 5% which is considered low.
- The annual revenue subsidy for the proposed facility is estimated at £540k.
- The annual revenue subsidy estimate is considered to be low because it is based on the facility being used by 11% of visitors to the former Moyle District which is considered very high and on an average staff annual salary cost of £12,500 which is considered low.
- Referring to the 2013 Moyle District Council Report, assuming that 50% grant aid could have been found, the effect on the Moyle District rate would have been 17% and was estimated at that time to be 2.3% on the Causeway Coast and Glens District rate.
- The site selection exercise undertaken did not include the Quay Road site but the Quay Road site was subsequently chosen as the preferred site because the other sites were no longer available.

- There does not appear to be any back-up for the chosen facility mix or scale of facilities proposed.
- There is no economic justification given for the provision of the 60 – 70 seat café / wine bar facility.
- There is no analysis of the effect or potential benefits of the facility in relation to visitor numbers and associated increased visitor spend.
- There is an obvious lack of facilities in Ballycastle and a strong case for their provision but based on population and equality with the rest of the Borough, the proposed facility appears to be oversized by a factor of at least 2.
- There is undoubtedly a case to be made for provision of a tourist facility in Ballycastle, potentially including wet play; however as experience with Water World and the Dunluce Centre has shown, such facilities often have viability / sustainability issues due to their seasonal nature.
- Moving forward, as per the October 2016 report to Leisure and Development Committee and Council;
 - Subject to Business Case, the new Ballycastle High / Cross and Passion Shared Campus build may give an opportunity for joint working that would provide the facilities that are needed at a lower cost to the public purse.
 - The Business Case for provision of pool facilities is currently working through a number of options including refurbishment of the former Country Club and new build on other potential sites to establish what options best meet the need at the lowest cost

Next Steps

In accordance with Council's decision to use Staged Gateway Points ("go/no-go points") for all Capital Projects, Officers will continue to investigate and develop all options to identify the optimal solution that meets the sport and leisure service needs in the Ballycastle / Moyle area, is scaled proportionally and consequently aims to achieve sustainability.