

# **Management Committee**

**31 October 2017**

## **Variation of grant awarded for improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre on Portland**

### **For Decision**

#### **Portfolio Holder:**

Cllr Kate Wheller – Community Facilities

#### **Senior Leadership Team Contact:**

M Hamilton, Strategic Director

#### **Report Author:**

T. Hurley, Leisure Commissioning Manager

#### **Statutory Authority**

Localism Act 2011 – ‘general power of competence’.

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To present to the committee an urgent request from South Dorset Community Sports Trust for the variation to the purpose of the grant awarded by the council for improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre on Portland.

### **Recommendations**

2. That Management Committee:
  - a) agrees to vary the purpose of the one-off grant of £65,000 awarded to South Dorset Community Sports Trust Ltd (charity no. 1101711) by Management Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017 to enable the Trust to fund urgent repairs at the Osprey Leisure Centre in Castletown, Portland;
  - b) gives delegated authority to the Strategic Director to agree, in consultation with the Briefholder, the terms of a grant agreement with the South Dorset Community Sports Trust Ltd if the grant requested in recommendation 2 (a) is agreed.

### **Reason for Decision**

3. To enable the council to respond to a request to help with the cost of urgent repairs and improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre and, if agreed, to ensure that the grant is subject to an appropriate legal agreement.

## Background and Reason Decision Needed

4. The Osprey Leisure Centre is an independent facility that is now operated by the South Dorset Community Sports Trust Ltd under a lease from a private landowner with 42- years remaining. The Trust has run the centre since the borough council passed over the management in 2007. The council no longer has any property or operational responsibilities for the facility.
5. The Osprey Sports Centre is an important recreational facility for the residents of Portland and other nearby areas of the borough, and compliments the provision offered at Weymouth Swimming Pool. Formerly a naval facility, the Centre comprises a swimming pool, large sports hall, squash courts, fitness studios and other areas used by the community.
6. At its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017, Management Committee awarded a one-off grant of £65,000 to the South Dorset Sports Trust to assist it with the cost of reconfiguring internal spaces within the Osprey Leisure Centre. These changes would have maximised areas for sport but also potentially accommodated health and wellbeing services that could operate at the centre as a result of collaboration with both Dorset County Council and the Dorset Healthcare. This initiative is part of DCC's Living & Learning Community Offer initiative.
7. However, the council has now received an urgent request for financial assistance from the Trust following a leak being found in the swimming pool water filters during routine maintenance and repair works. As with most large swimming pools, there are two large filter tanks containing a granular medium (typically sand) through which the pool water flows in order to remove impurities and detritus. The steel filter tanks at the Osprey Leisure Centre were installed when the building was constructed by the Navy 32 years ago. Without an effective filter system, the pool cannot be used by the public.
8. An initial investigation of costs by the Trust has indicated that new filters will cost approximately £60,000-£70,000 to replace. It is proposed that both filter tanks are replaced, as although only one leaks at present it is not unlikely that the other will come to the end of its operational life.
9. The Trust has requested, therefore, that the council allows the grant of £65,000, awarded in August 2017, to be used to help fund the urgent repairs rather than as a contribution to the previously proposed reconfiguration of internal spaces. In making this request, the Trust recognises the following:
  - a) the council will not provide any additional funding to help with the facility improvements as described in paragraph 6, above;
  - b) the council is not in a position to assist with any future maintenance needs at the Osprey Leisure Centre.

10. If the committee were to agree to support the Trust, then any grant would be subject to both a legal agreement (using the council's standard grant agreement template) and the provision of satisfactory details of the works to be undertaken. No grant funding would be released in advance of the project's commencement.

## Implications

11. **Corporate Plan.** *Empowering Thriving and Inclusive Communities.* The council's support will enable the South Dorset Community Sports Trust Ltd to operate effectively for the benefit of the community.
12. **Financial.** The council does not have a budget for grants to support community sports projects. The grant allocated to the Trust by Management Committee in August 2017 is to be derived from the reserves already earmarked for one-off projects.
13. **Equalities.** The Centre also offers very affordable rates of admission and membership in order to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation.
14. **Economic Development.** Sports facilities can contribute to economic growth by creating employment opportunities.
15. **Risk Management (including Health & Safety).** In order to manage any financial risk, a legal agreement will need to accompany any grant that the council offer's the Trust and this will require evidence of expenditure before any funding is released.

## Consultation and Engagement

16. Consultation on the recommendations in this report has been undertaken with the briefholder for Community Facilities, Cllr Kate Wheller, and the local members, Cllr Kimber and Cllr West.

## Appendices

17. None.

## Background Papers

18. *Award of grant for improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre on Portland.* Report to Management Committee, August 2017.

## Footnote

19. Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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