

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services

Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee: 3 May 2006

Subject: Haldane Leisure Barn, Inler Park, Talbot Road, Haldane

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the proposed disposal of Haldane Leisure Barn.

2. Background

- 2.1** As part of the General Services revenue budget exercise for 2004/2005, the Council agreed to withdraw Council operation of Haldane Leisure Barn on 31 March 2004 and enter into discussion with interested parties regarding community ownership.
- 2.2** At this time, officers from the Department of Housing and Technical Services engaged in discussions with Haldane Regeneration Group regarding transfer of the premises to community ownership however at the end of July 2004, the Council was advised by Haldane Regeneration Group that, following a feasibility study and options appraisal exercise in relation to community ownership of the facility, the group was unable to take control of the premises.
- 2.3** Thereafter, interest was shown in operation of Haldane Barn by the Tulloch Trust. Various site meetings were held with officers from the Department of Housing and Technical Services and representatives from Tulloch Trust, however, after further discussion on the costs and the practicalities of operating the centre, this interest was withdrawn.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Currently, no other individual, group or organisation has expressed interest in community ownership/management of the premises which have been surplus to the requirements of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services for more than two years now.
- 3.2** Officers from the Council's Legal Services Section and Estates Section have advised that the land upon which the building is erected can only be used for playing field purposes, although it may be possible to remove this burden by application to Scottish Ministers. At present therefore there is little prospect of selling or leasing the Leisure Barn for commercial purposes.

- 3.3** Despite closure of the facility since April 2004, ongoing revenue costs are being incurred annually by the Council. These costs relate to non-domestic rates and water/sewerage rates charges, upkeep of fire and intruder alarm systems and provision of essential electricity, gas and telephone supplies.
- 3.4** Consideration has therefore been given to demolition of the facility to save on the ongoing rates, maintenance and security costs as outlined in paragraph 3.3 above.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** Demolition costs have been estimated at £30,000.
- 5.2** Empty Property Relief was approved in respect of Non Domestic Rates at the rate of 100% discount for the first 92 days and 50% for vacant periods thereafter.
- 5.3** Essential revenue costs for non domestic rates, upkeep of fire /intruder alarm systems and provision of essential services presently amounts to approximately £7,500 per annum assuming that no major repairs to the premises are required.
- 5.4** The cost of demolition can be met from the existing Central Repairs & Maintenance Revenue budget 2006/2007.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** The facility has been vacant for over two years and attempts to generate interest in community management/ownership have failed and are no more likely to succeed in the future.
- 6.2** It is anticipated that ongoing revenue and maintenance costs will increase year upon year and demolition costs may also increase as time advances. It is therefore considered beneficial to demolish the facility and, thereafter, consider disposal options for the land.
- 6.3** At present there is little prospect of selling the Leisure Barn for commercial purposes because the land upon which the building is erected can only be used for playing field purposes. It may be possible to remove this burden by application to Scottish Ministers.

7. Recommendations

7.1 The Committee is invited to:-

- (a) note the information contained in the report in relation to ongoing revenue costs being incurred by the authority;**
- (b) authorise the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services to proceed with the demolition of the premises; and**
- (c) instruct the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services to remove the burden on the land as detailed in paragraph 3.2.**

David McMillan

Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services

Date: 20 April 2006

Wards Affected: Ward 20 - Haldane/Kilmaronock/Jamestown

Background Papers: CS&ES Committee Report - Haldane Leisure Barn,
06 October 2004

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