

Item 4

KEY DECISION

REPORT TO CABINET
THURSDAY 3 JULY 2008

REPORT OF PHIL BALL
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES

Portfolio: Culture & Leisure

Arts Resource – Spennymoor Leisure Centre

1 SUMMARY

At its meeting on 19 June 2008, Cabinet approved the 2008/09 Capital Programme and the Borough Transition Plan.

Contained within both reports was approval for the development of an Art Resource located within the Spennymoor Leisure Centre, subject to a further report to Cabinet.

This report provides Members of Cabinet with the details of the project.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet approve the phase one development of the Arts Resource in line with the report.

3 DETAIL

On 14 December 2006 Cabinet, agreed to allocate £700,000 towards the development of an Arts Resource to be developed within the Spennymoor Leisure Centre.

To date approximately £50,000 has been expended on development fees.

The decision to consider an Arts Resource was taken after detailed research undertaken by Arts UK in 2004 and 2005 had identified a gap in arts provision within the Sedgefield Borough area which the proposed Arts Resource could fill.

Members are acutely aware of the need to improve the specific areas of the Leisure Centre identified at appendix 1 in the light of the success of the new Gymnastics Centre and the fact that it is included as a 2012 pre-games training camp facility and also the proposed development of a new fitness suite

3.1 The Scope of the Arts Resource

The aspirations of the Borough Council in attempting to use the Arts Resource as a cultural hub for the town relies heavily on assembling significant cultural sector partners who would come together within the Spennymoor Leisure Centre campus and re-engineer the delivery of public cultural services in a way not as yet seen across the County of Durham. The development of a master plan for the leisure

centre includes the resiting of the County Council Library from its current position on the high street to form part of the Cultural Hub. Discussions with the County's Library Service have been ongoing for over 15 months and although the Borough's concept of the Cultural Hub has been generally agreed, the timing for a relocation of the library has not yet formalised.

Therefore working within the context of the current availability of financial resources, a phased approach to the Arts Resource is recommended. Spennymoor Leisure Centre would on completion of the first phase of the project have an Arts Resource which would include a multifunction performance and rehearsal facility seating up to 200 for drama, dance, music and film performance; a specialist dance and drama rehearsal space for residents and visiting performing arts companies who will contribute to education and youth programmes working in partnership with local schools and youth clubs; a exhibition foyer, a bar/café facility, and an artist studio.

3.2 Partnerships

Collaboration is being planned with major regional bodies such as the Sage Gateshead, Centre for Children's Books, Northern Stage and Dance City who will bring expertise and resource to the Art Resource programme via joint programming of performance, education and participatory events.

Further partnership discussion have been taking place with Bishop Auckland College who are interested in siting their performing arts curriculum within the new facility and also with a voluntary sector organisation which is responsible for collecting visual art pieces by local artists. The group are looking for exhibition accommodation to provide public access to otherwise unseen paintings.

It is also intended to seek an appropriate partner to operate the Arts Resource bar/café and expressions of interest will be sought subject to Cabinet approval.

Once complete, the Art Resource will complement the Borough's strategy of assembling appropriate partners who together are able to deliver effective and efficient services. This clearly is a strategy which it is hoped the new Unitary Authority will embrace.

4 **CONSULTATION**

The Arts Resource has been conceived to complement rather than compete with other arts facilities within the Borough. The Sedgefield Borough Arts Audit and Spennymoor Arts Resource studies undertaken by Arts UK in 2004 and 2005 identified that there was a gap in professional provision of arts groups in the Borough and that there was very clear support from the community for the provision of an Arts Resource. Research in 2005 concluded that an Arts Resource development should have as a key driver adding to local arts resources and offering advice and expertise to the arts sector in all its forms.

The study found that there is no single organisation or arts group which currently supplies an open access arts facility or service for a comprehensive range of arts programme and resources as the one planned for Spennymoor.

5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cabinet in 2006 allocated £700,000 for the Arts Resource project.

When discussions to extend the footprint of the Arts Resource to incorporate a new library and significant additions to the facility as part of the master plan the anticipated costs of developing this extensive cultural facility exceeded £4m.

As the external financial landscape has changed somewhat over the past 9 months it has been much more difficult to assemble the significant external funding required to deliver the cultural master plan for Spennymoor Leisure Centre but it still remains an aspiration to deliver the extended facility. In the mean time it is more prudent to consider what can be achievable as a first phase of the master plan.

The project client team's advisors suggest that the budget to deliver the necessary redevelopment of the phase one area of the facility is in the region of £570,000.

There will be a requirement to seek financial assistance from Arts Council North East for an element of the redevelopment work valued at around £70,000. This would leave the Borough Council to invest £500,000 to deliver phase one which was reflected within the Capital Programme 08/09 and Transition Plan reports to Cabinet on 19 June 2008.

5.1 Revenue Implications

Although the Arts Resource will deliver significant arts programming, the continued success of the Borough's Arts Development Team in leveraging in sufficient external resource to deliver existing arts programming will mean that in the short term the development of the Arts Resource within the Spennymoor Leisure Centre will be cost neutral in relation to the overall operating costs at Spennymoor Leisure Centre at present.

The existing arts development team will have direct responsibility for the arts resource programming whilst existing leisure centre employees will be responsible for the day to day operation of the facility overall.

5.2 Procurement

As part of the Council's intention to seek a partner organisation for the delivery of its housing maintenance function, the development of an Arts Resource was included in the scope of work. Members of Cabinet are aware that Mears were the successful organisation now delivering relevant Council services. Discussions have been held with Mears regarding the physical development of the first phase of the Arts Resource and their cost estimates will be assessed to establish best value. Once this exercise has been satisfactorily completed it is hoped to commission Mears to commence the work.

6 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Links to Corporate Ambitions

The Arts Resource in its overall development could become a catalyst for change. Although being developed in phases, it will be at the centre of the proposed regeneration of Spennymoor Town Centre. Its programming would be designed to inspire audience participation across the age spectrum and compliment other arts venues. There is the opportunity for learning and skills development by working with partners in the sector and truly recognising of the importance of the arts in volunteering and issue based activity.

Durham County Council's Children and Young People's Services business plan 2007/10 aims to ensure that children's, young people's and family needs are met by accessible integrated multi agency local services.

Indeed a key priority of the plan is that children and young people access safe play, learning and leisure facilities that provide opportunities for personal and social development and enjoyment.

The Arts Resource will be the agent for changing the way in which services however they are commissioned conspire together for the benefit for the whole community.

6.2 Risk Analysis

The completion of the phase one building works relies on a level of external funding from Arts Council North East. This funding has been identified to allow for the provision of tiered seating to be located within the new performance and rehearsal space. Although Arts Council have confirmed their enthusiasm for the project, should grant not materialise individual seating will be used from existing stock.

The development programme of the Leisure Centre will require careful planning in an effort to minimise disruption to existing customers. Work is on-going to identify short-term alternative accommodation within the Town if it becomes necessary to re-locate.

6.3 Local Government Reorganisation

As the report describes, the concept of an extended Arts Resource and the integration of Leisure and Culture facilities on to one site remains available. The purpose of proposing a phased development allows for a progression of the scheme in line with a previously identified need, as well as refreshing areas of the facility that require essential work. Additional phases of the project would not be affected by this approach and consequently the usual financial cost, at current prices would not be affected. Given that funding is already agreed, has been consulted on as part of the Transition Plan, and has been in place for sometime and there are no direct revenue cost associated with the works it is not considered that further consultation with Durham County Council is revealed at this stage.

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Ward(s)

Key Decision Validation

Expenditure in excess of £100,000

Background Papers

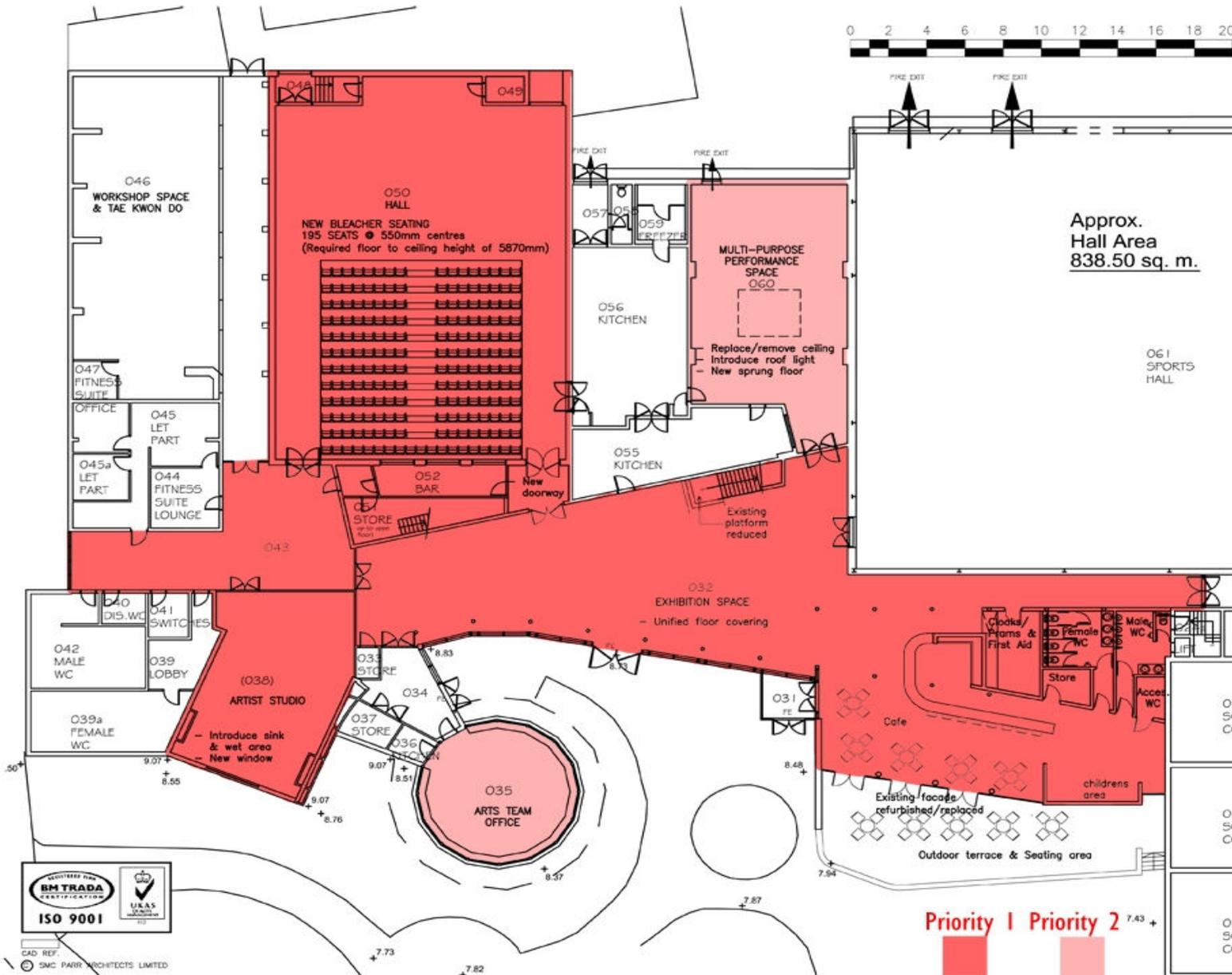
Cabinet Report December 2006

Cabinet Report June 2008

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 1



WORK TO FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY

DRAWN	DC	DATE	20.03.08	CHECKED	MD	DATE	20.03.08
INDEX							
A							

Approx.
Hall Area
838.50 sq. m.

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THIS DRAWING IS SUBJECT TO FULL CONSULTATION WITH STATUTORY BODIES AND ASSOCIATED CONSENTS.

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ALL WORKS ARE TO BE AGREED WITH ALL NECESSARY STATUTORY BODIES, PLANNING AND HIGHWAY. ACCESS AND ROAD DESIGN IS SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION WITH THE ROADS DEPARTMENT AND PLANNING AUTHORITY. PARKING PROVISION SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION WITH THE PLANNING AUTHORITY.

ALL AREAS GIVEN ARE APPROXIMATE ONLY AND SUBJECT TO DESIGN DEVELOPMENT.

STATUS
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

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SMC PARR

PROJECT
SPENNYMOOR ARTS RESOURCE CENTRE
FOR SEDGFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

TITLE
SKETCH GROUND FLOOR PLAN

DATE | SCALE | ORIGINATOR
20.03.08 | 1:200 @A3 | CG

Project No.	Building	Discipline	DWG. Type	Location	Number	Rev
6009	-	A	SK	-	1100	A

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