



# Community & Leisure Services Service Policy Panel

## Briefing Paper

Report of: Cultural Services Manager  
Date: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2006  
Open

### POSSIBLE PROVISION OF AN ICE RINK IN THE DISTRICT

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 A petition for provision of an ice rink was presented to Council on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2006.
- 1.2 The petition was presented by Cllr Mrs J Salter and was signed by 123 residents. The petition had been instigated and submitted by a local schoolgirl, Chloe Worley, age 10. The petition is ongoing and, to date, a further 1,000 signatures have been added.
- 1.3 In accordance with Standing Order C12, the petition was referred to the Service Policy Panel on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2006.
- 1.4 At the Service Policy Panel, it was agreed that some preliminary information on provision of an ice rink would be provided, prior to deciding if a Task and Finish Group would be appropriate.

#### 2. Ice Rinks

- 2.1 The following has been provided by obtaining information by phone and on the Internet.
- 2.2 The nearest ice rinks to the Wyre Forest District are Telford and Solihull with a mini rink at Tamworth Snowdome.
- 2.3 The ice rink at Telford is managed by the Council, Solihull and Tamworth are operated privately. Telford is in the process of possibly developing a new ice rink which will cost in the region of £5 million. Much of this will potentially be able to be funded by regeneration money due to Telford's location, and they are considering a number of options for the development and operation of the new facility.

2.4 The following is a list of Frequently Asked Questions with the appropriate Answers:

**Q. How many ice rinks are there in England?**

A. *There are 36 ice rinks in England. There are more ice rinks in Paris than in the whole of England.*

**Q. How many people visit an ice rink per year?**

A. *At Telford there were 254,000 visits last year, 115,000 adults and 139,000 juniors.*

**Q. How much does it cost to go to an ice rink?**

A. *The cost varies depending on the ice rink but junior cost is about £5 per session and an adult cost is £6 for a full size rink. The smaller rinks can be cheaper, for example £3.65 per child and £4 per adult.*

**Q. How much does an ice rink cost to build?**

A. *This varies, but a sample taken from the construction of 9 UK rinks costs range from £542 to £1,379 pm<sup>2</sup>, roughly therefore in the region of £2 million to £5 million.*

**Q. How much does an ice rink cost to run?**

A. *Some ice rinks are managed at a profit (those run by the private sector), these ice rinks tend to be located in areas with a large population and where there are no pricing restrictions. The ice rink at Telford had a net revenue cost to the Local Authority in 2005/06 of £359,000 (£295,000 of these costs are asset rental and central charges). Within this figure no money is included for refurbishment or capital improvements.*

*Running costs for a small ring (.e.g 27m x 24m) are relatively low. Ice skating is busy in the winter and quiet in the summer and the smaller rinks can often break even.*

**Q. What are ice rinks used for other than skating?**

A. *Most ice rinks have fast removal boarding or similar which can be put over the ice to allow it to be used for other activities. Most ice rinks have bar and cafeteria facilities, some have conference facilities and others are attached to additional leisure facilities such as bowling and leisure centres. These additional facilities would to some extent offset or share ongoing operational costs.*

*Ice hockey can be played on full size or <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> size rinks but would not be appropriate on the smaller ice rinks.*

**Q. How big would the catchment area need to be?**

A. The catchment area for ice rinks seems to be substantial. Telford's catchment area covers as far north as Crewe and east to Wolverhampton, Walsall, West Bromwich and Birmingham. South of Telford the catchment extends to Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. Most ice rinks are in cities or large towns with extensive catchment areas.

**Q. How big is an ice rink?**

A. A full size ice rink is about 56m x 26m. Smaller rinks can be 27m x 24m. About 4,000m<sup>2</sup> would be required for a full size ice rink with basic bar and cafeteria facilities.

2.5 This information provides a basis for discussion on any potential way forward.

**3. Potential Issues**

3.1 The following issues would need addressing if the project were to move forward.

- Identify a revenue budget.
- Identify capital budget.
- Establish a suitable location.
- Examine potential of private operator.
- Lack of significant catchment?

3.2 Many of these issues would require specialist knowledge and analysis, particularly with regard to establishing the need and demand for such a facility.

3.3 A feasibility study of this nature would probably cost in the region of £5,000 to £10,000 which would need to be approved from the revenue budget.

**Background Papers:**

None

**Appendices:**

None

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