

Committee: Resources

Date: 23 January 2003

Agenda Item No: 4(i)

Title: Benefactor Contribution – Stansted Mountfitchet Leisure Centre

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Summary

- 1 The Leisure (PFI) Board has over a considerable period been in negotiations with a Benefactor from Stansted who was prepared to provide funding of £100,000 towards the Leisure (PFI) Project. One of the Benefactor's conditions was that he agrees the name for the new Centre. Following detailed discussions with the Benefactor, Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council and Mountfitchet High School, the Leisure (PFI) Board decided not to accept the name suggested by the Benefactor. As the Council could now lose the £100,000 contribution if the Benefactor withdraws his offer, under the Council's Financial Regulations the matter needs to be considered by this Committee.

Background

- 2 In December 1999 a Benefactor from Stansted agreed in principle to make a donation of £100,000 to the proposed Leisure Centre to be built on a site at the Mountfitchet High School. One of the conditions in relation to this donation was that the Benefactor requested that the name of his charitable trust was included in the title for the Centre.
- 3 Members will be aware that Contractual and Financial Close for the Leisure PFI Project occurred on 30 May 2002. Regular meetings were held with the Benefactor during the procurement process to keep him up to date with developments.

Naming of the new Leisure Centre at Stansted

- 4 Following Contractual and Financial Close, the Benefactor was contacted in relation to the various terms and conditions which needed to be fulfilled by the Council. The Benefactor indicated that he wished to name the facility "The Romeera Sports and Leisure Centre" after his charitable trust.
- 5 Whilst the Council has authority to name the centre without consultation, Leisure (PFI) Board Members felt that it was important to consult the local community. Consequently, Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council and the

Mountfitchet High School were consulted. Both indicated that the name proposed was not acceptable and that they wanted a name, which related to the locality.

- 6 Further negotiations occurred with the Benefactor and he agreed to make the contribution if the Centre were named the 'Stansted Romeera Centre'. Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council and the Mountfitchet High School were again consulted but again indicated that the name was not acceptable.
- 7 At the Leisure PFI Board meeting held on 15 January 2002, Members discussed this matter in detail and agreed that the views of the local community should be taken into consideration. They therefore agreed that the title should not include Romeera and that the Centre be named the Stansted Mountfitchet Leisure Centre. The consequence of this is likely to be that the Council will not receive the £100,000 contribution from the Benefactor.

Budgetary implications

- 8 Members agreed in 2002/1 for cash flow reasons, that the Council's Capital Programme should include the gross capital contribution to the PFI scheme. This was principally due to the timescale uncertainties of S106 contributions. However it was made clear in all reports to both this Council and the Government that specific contributions towards this scheme would come from the Benefactor, Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council and S106 funds which would reduce the net cost to the Council by over £500,000.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider making an additional capital allocation of up to £100,000 to the Leisure (PFI) project.

Background Papers: Letters to Benefactor, Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council and Mountfitchet High School