

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny

Date: 9 February 2009

Subject: Bickershaw Country Park (The Rushes) Selection of Strategic Manager

Report of: Executive Director of Environmental Services

Contact officer: Mark Crossfield 01942 404319

Purpose / summary: To update Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the selection process for the Strategic Manager for Bickershaw Country Park (The Rushes).

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: The selection process was accepted and agreed by Cabinet at its meeting held on 2nd October 2008.

Recommendation / decision: Committee is requested to note the progress being made to select a Strategic Manager for Bickershaw Country Park (The Rushes).

The decision will be made as a result of this report and will be published within 48 hours

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	Expenditure will continue to be in line with the approved budget for the project
Staffing:	None
Policy:	Greenheart Regional Park
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	Yes
Wards affected:	Leigh West

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

No

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

No

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes**

Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No**

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x		x
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	x

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
	9 February 2009		

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 26 January 2009

1. Background

- 1.1 The Bickershaw Country Park project comprises the redevelopment of a former colliery site with an area of 250 hectares to form a new Country Park with an 18 hole golf course, driving range, pitch and putt, a visitor centre and activity island. The site includes new infrastructure, including new multi-user routes and footpaths and creates new landscaped areas and improvements to the existing natural habitat.
- 1.2 Cabinet approved the rebranding of the site to the new name of The Rushes on 13 November 2008.
- 1.3 The scheme has been successful in securing £16.6M funding from English Partnerships National Coalfields Programme. The funding award was based on the premise that an appropriate partnership solution would be applied to delivering the most sustainable long-term recreational facility possible. To ensure long-term funding is in place, English Partnerships will also provide a dowry as part of the overall funding package. The income from this, together with any income generated from on-site operations, will be used for the on-going operational management and development of the facility.
- 1.4 Delivering the facilities that can be sustained in the long-term requires the most economic, efficient and effective approach to managing and running the site. Cabinet at its meeting on 23rd September 2007 agreed an approach which would be delivered by selecting the various site operators following an evaluation process.

2. Selection Process

- 2.1 At its meeting on the 2nd October Cabinet agreed to undertake a further soft market testing exercise, invite expressions of interest, and receive a further report on the evaluation of submitted proposals for the strategic site management of Bickershaw Country Park.
- 2.2 To enable the development of the project to continue, Cabinet also agreed to offer a short-term consultancy commission to the LRT until arrangements for strategic site management are agreed.

3. Progress Update

- 3.1 On 28 January 2009 a notice was published in the European Journal (OJEU) advertising the role of Strategic Manager for The Rushes. It is anticipated that the selection process will be completed in April / May 2009 and will be reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 14 May.
- 3.2 In the meantime LRT will be supporting the project on a short term consultancy basis until the arrangements for strategic site management can be agreed.

4. Conclusions:

- 4.1 Committee is requested to note the progress being made to select a Strategic Manager for Bickershaw Country Park (The Rushes).

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section:

Environmental Services Department – Development Division

Policy/Service Area: Policy and Projects (Projects Group)

Person Completing Form: Mark Crossfield

Date: 26 January
2009

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race		X	Disability		X
Ethnicity		X	Gender		X
Age		X	Religion		X
Class		X	Sexual Orientation		X

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

There is no evidence of specific disadvantage or associated problems caused to the above groups associated with this report.

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

Not applicable

Action Plan – *What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?*

n/a

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

Yes

Timescale	On-going
Responsibility	Mark Crossfield
Comments	

Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan	No
Section/Team Plan	No
Other (Specify)	

Date for further review

Not necessary