

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Community Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>3 June 2008</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Community Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Biggar Park – Extension of Management Contract</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise on action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 36(c) because of the timescales involved, by the Executive Director (Community Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, for a one year extension to the management contract for Biggar Park to be granted to the current franchisee.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the following action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 36(c), by the Executive Director (Community Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member to grant a one year extension to 31 March 2009 of the current management contract for Biggar Park to the current franchisee, be noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Biggar Park is located south of Biggar Town and was originally set out as a traditional park providing open space for recreation. Over the years the park has developed to facilitate a wide variety of formal and informal recreation activity including caravanning/camping, golf, tennis, putting, fun boats, bowling, walking, jogging, picnicking, dog walking. The facility infrastructure of the park has developed over the years in conjunction with the development of the park programme
- 3.2. Biggar Park is owned by South Lanarkshire Council and leased to South Lanarkshire Leisure. The Council has an existing franchise agreement which dictates that the franchisee is responsible for the day to day management and operational programming of activities with the exception of golf. This contract was competitively tendered in 2000 and subsequently extended via the contract option in 2005. The contract stipulates remuneration to the franchisee is realised through an annual management fee.
- 3.3. The Park has proven to be highly attractive to caravan holiday makers with a reasonable level of demand. The other activities at the Park including golfing and general play have also proven demand. The facilities on the site however would benefit from investment to secure the long term future for those activities. It is

envisaged that capital investment proposals would be sought from those seeking to tender for the management contract and that the Council would include these proposals within its best value evaluation of the contract tender submissions.

- 3.4 The Council is aware of different local interests who have a stake in the future of the Park ranging from those seeking to expand the caravan activities, those seeking to expand the golf interests through the development of driving range facilities, those interested in developing a wetland nature reserve and those interested in preserving formal and informal play/ recreational use. These competing interests provide options to the Council and will directly affect the nature of the management contract due for re-tender by the end of March 2008.
- 3.5 To inform the Council of the options, an independent consultant (Ironsides Farrar Ltd) was engaged to carry out a consultation exercise with relevant stakeholders and to produce a master plan to guide the future of the Park. This exercise commenced in late summer 2007 however due to the complexity of the study and the need to ensure the consultation input was fully considered this exercise was not concluded until early 2008. This did not provide sufficient time for master plan to be fully considered and for the Strategic Procurement Team to subsequently advertise/ produce tender documents for the re-tender of the management contract with a reasonable lead in before the contract termination date. Given the current franchisee is resident within the Park as part of his contract and the need to mobilise management arrangements for the new season of Park activities (falling largely between March and October), there is an urgent need to consider an extension to the existing contract for up to one year (to 31 March 2009).

#### **4. Current Position**

- 4.1. The Council has met with the current franchisee and noted concerns regarding the timescales and requirement to mobilise arrangements for the 2008/9 season. No formal confirmation has been provided regarding an extension to contract although the option has been discussed with the current franchisee to confirm he is willing to agree to a one year extension to the existing contract.
- 4.2 The contract tender documentation will be drawn up, advertised and tendered by no later than October 2008 to provide an adequate notice period to both the current and potentially new franchisee.

#### **5. Employee Implications**

- 5.1. There are no employee implications regarding this proposal.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. The Council would require to agree to pay the annual management fee to the current franchisee. (Annual payment will be based on the current tender rate plus 2.5% to take account of inflation. This will be applicable from 1 April 2008.) This will be met from existing Community Resources' budgets.

#### **7. Other Implications**

- 7.1. There would be significant negative reaction to the failure of the Council to secure the delivery of the management services at Biggar Park. Should the services require to be delivered by South Lanarkshire Leisure then there would be further staffing and financial implications not outlined in the sections above.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 8.1. There are no equality issues arising from this proposal.
- 8.2 Community Resources has consulted with the Strategic Procurement Team, Finance & IT Resources; Legal Services, Corporate Resources and South Lanarkshire Leisure regarding this proposal.

**Norrie Anderson**  
**Executive Director (Community Resources)**

17 April 2008

### **Link(s) to Council Objectives**

- ◆ Improve health and increase physical activity

### **Previous References**

None

### **List of Background Papers**

None

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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