

# Report

Report to	<b>Community and Enterprise Resources Committee</b>
Date of Report:	<b>12 December 2017</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Cameronian Hall, Larkhall</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of the imminent closure of Cameronian Hall, Larkhall.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the imminent closure of Cameronian Hall, Larkhall be noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. The Cameronian Hall is managed by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Limited (SLLC) on the Council's behalf. It was constructed in 1940 and has been generally maintained in a manner consistent with a hall of its age and type. Many elements of the building are at the end of their economic life and would require significant investment in order to provide continued service delivery. Furthermore, over the last few years, the hall has suffered from chronic and extensive deterioration most likely as a result of water ingress and concealed rot.
- 3.2. The hall is used for a range of standard lets but has two separate bespoke areas with stand alone entrances which are used for subject specific lets: (1) a rifle range and (2) a fully equipped boxing gym with a permanent boxing ring.
- 3.3. Recent failure in the fabric of the building, including the serious buckling of the main hall floor, have resulted in SLLC relocating all standard lets from the property and engaging with the rifle club and boxing gym to advise them of the hall's anticipated closure. A dog club which used the facility was offered alternative accommodation, however, this did not suit their exact needs.
- 3.4. The Council has spent approximately £85,000 on the property since 2002/2003, including approximately £15,000 on roof repairs.

## 4. Recent Inspections and Assessment by SLLC Health and Safety

- 4.1. On 16 and 21 August 2017, officers from the Council's Housing and Technical Resources and SLLC visited Cameronian Hall following comments from staff and users about its deteriorating condition.
- 4.2. On 1 September 2017, SLLC's Health and Safety Officer advised that he had also visited the facility and recorded that he considered the building to be generally in a poor state of repair and no longer fit for the services that SLLC provide.

- 4.3. As a consequence of these visits, officers from the Council and SLLC agreed to close the main hall and adjacent meeting rooms to allow further investigation to be undertaken. Local elected members were informed and the standard lessees from the hall were relocated into nearby alternative facilities.
- 4.4. SLLC also engaged with the rifle club and the boxing club and introduced controls and measures which allowed them to continue to meet in their respective bespoke spaces until more information on the hall's issues was known.

## **5. Assessment of Building's condition**

- 5.1. Housing and Technical Resources, Building Standards and Environmental Services have now assessed the condition of the Cameronian Hall and a summary of their findings is as follows:-
- given the chronic and extensive nature of the deterioration, the property now requires extensive remedial works to the fabric throughout
  - in particular, significant water ingress to the main, high level roof has caused visible deterioration to internal building fabric and it is highly likely that there is concealed rot to structural timbers
  - long standing water ingress to the lower roof at the hall on the ground floor has caused a significant degree of deterioration to the associated internal finishes, including major splitting and buckling of the wooden floor rendering the main hall unusable
  - the rifle range has long standing issues in respect of the roof to its area which have been caused by water ingress and have resulted in the failure of an internal ceiling in the area of the target range
  - with the closure of the main hall, the travel distance for the boxing club's and shooting range's means of escape are now longer than maximum permitted distance of 15 metres
  - consideration should be given to installing a fire detection and fire alarm system in the boxing gym and shooting range
  - the installation of mechanical extraction is required in the shooting range
  - suitable access to sanitary facilities is required for the shooting range, as these no longer exist for this area with the closure of the main hall
  - to carry out water quality flushing the currently closed part of the property which contains the services would need to be visited on a weekly basis which, given the condition of the property, exposes the operatives to a potentially unhealthy environment on a frequent basis
  - an assessment of the services to determine if a mains water supply could be provided direct to the toilet facilities local to the boxing and rifle club would need to be undertaken
  - although there is currently no indication of existing airborne asbestos fibres, concerns have been expressed relative to the asbestos cement roof sheets, which are currently encapsulated, should the encapsulation become damaged
- 5.2. Housing and Technical Resources have confirmed that to rectify the issues, detailed above, would cost approximately £500,000, which would allow the building to operate in the short term.
- 5.3. Further advice is that a more comprehensive refurbishment is estimated to cost between £1m to £1.5m. Whilst this would secure the existing service delivery in the longer term, the building would not reflect modern requirements and this level of investment was not recommended for a building of the Cameronian Hall's age and type.

## **6. Boxing gym and rifle range**

- 6.1. SLLC staff have met both clubs and, in conjunction with the Council's Estates Service, have been investigating the possibility of providing some form of alternative accommodation within other operational or non-operational properties within the general Larkhall area.
- 6.2. Estates have confirmed that there are no non-operational Council properties in the area that could be used for a boxing gym without major adaptation and no non-operational Council properties in the area that could be used for a rifle range.
- 6.3. SLLC staff have advised the boxing club that there may be scope within the facilities they manage to offer some provision for boxing training, however, as the available spaces are multi-functional and used by various types of groups, the boxing club would need to operate using non-fixed equipment such as portable punch-bags and pop up rings.
- 6.4. SLLC staff have provided the boxing club with an external funding guidance pack to assist them in the purchase of new equipment if required.
- 6.5. There are no properties managed by SLLC that could accommodate a rifle range and the rifle club may have to engage with other rifle clubs that operate outwith the area to continue with their activities.

## **7. Next Steps**

- 7.1. Taking account of outcomes of the condition surveys summarised above, it is considered that the Council has no alternative other than to close the property.
- 7.2. SLLC staff will meet with the boxing club and rifle range to advise them that they can no longer use the facility and will continue discussions to help provide some alternative provision, should this be possible.
- 7.3. The property will be declared surplus to operational requirements by SLLC which will then allow the Council to include the property within its property bulletin.

## **8. Employee Implications**

- 8.1. The SLLC staffing hours attributed to Cameronian Hall have been allocated to service the lets displaced from the hall.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1. The cost to bring the Cameronian Hall up to an operational standard for up to the next 5 years is circa £500,000.
- 9.2. A more comprehensive refurbishment of the property is estimated to cost £1m to £1.5m.
- 9.3. This level of investment would also impact on funds available for other properties and may compromise future service proposals for the Larkhall area. Recent capital programmes have focused on keeping existing community facilities operational rather than providing new community provision.

## **10. Other Implications**

- 10.1. A review of community and leisure facilities in the Larkhall area has commenced to develop options for future service delivery.

10.2. It would not be standard practice to provide bespoke spaces, such as those used for the boxing club and rifle club, within new community and leisure facilities.

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

11.1. The report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required.

11.2. There is also no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in the report.

**Michael McGlynn**

**Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)**

21 November 2017

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

- ◆ Improve and maintain health and increase physical activity
- ◆ Improve the quality of the physical environment
- ◆ Efficient and effective use of resources

## **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:- David Booth, Operations Manager

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