



## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject: Calverton Leisure Centre**

**Date: 28 April 2005**

**Author: Cllr Wendy Golland – Leisure Portfolio Holder**

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

The report contains details of the final proposals relating to the revised opening hours of Calverton Leisure Centre.

### **2. Background**

In March 2004, Cabinet agreed a proposal to examine operational changes at Calverton Leisure Centre in light of the reduction in funding from Nottinghamshire County Council for joint-use leisure centres.

The initial proposal was for a complete closure of the facility, however the Authority decided not to pursue this option but to look at alternative proposals for cost reduction, which included closure during periods of low capacity utilisation. The initial proposal, based on the low usage, was to close during the day Monday to Friday in school term time. The requirement was to achieve an efficiency saving of £32,000 per annum.

Pinpoint Consulting were engaged by the Authority to conduct a detailed examination of the Centre and its usage and to engage in an extensive and detailed consultation process with stakeholders.

A further report approved by the Leisure Portfolio Holder in November 2004, instructed officers to pursue a partial day time closure option rather than the complete closure first envisaged.

**Partial Daytime Closure** (Partial public use in school hours / term time, providing for early morning swimming two days per week)

The actual initial effects of these changes to facility opening times were detailed in the Consultants report but are summarised below.

<b>Current</b>	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Closing</b>
Monday	7.30am	10.00pm
Tuesday	7.30am	10.00pm
Wednesday	7.30am	10.00pm
Thursday	7.30am	10.00pm
Friday	7.30am	10.00pm
Saturday	9.00am	9.00pm
Sunday	9.00am	9.00pm

The most cost effective solution was to amend the opening hours as detailed below.

<b>Initial Proposal</b>	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Closing</b>	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Closing</b>
Monday			4.30pm	9.00pm
Tuesday			4.30pm	9.00pm
Wednesday	7.30am	9.00am	4.30pm	9.00pm
Thursday	7.30am	9.00am	4.30pm	9.00pm
Friday			4.30pm	9.00pm
Saturday			10.30am	7.30pm
Sunday			10.30am	7.30pm

N.B. The early morning swimming identified for Wednesday and Thursday is indicative only. The actual days would be subject to timetabling along with Primary Schools Swimming requirements.

Following concerns raised through the consultation process, and at the express request of the Portfolio Holder, which focussed on the total loss of daytime access, officers have re-examined the possible operation of the Centre. Key to the issue was the need to examine access, even for minority groups and at less popular times whilst achieving economies and efficiencies. Having listened to the needs and desires of existing users we have tried to fine-tune the proposals to take account of these needs.

The table below shows revised proposals for the opening hours of the Centre.

<b>Revised Proposal</b>	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Closing</b>	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Closing</b>
Monday			4.30pm	9.00pm
Tuesday			4.30pm	9.00pm
Wednesday	7.30am	1.00pm	4.30pm	9.00pm
Thursday	7.30am	1.00pm	4.30pm	9.00pm
Friday			4.30pm	9.00pm
Saturday			10.30am	7.30pm
Sunday			10.30am	7.30pm

These revised proposals provide for two early morning swims, popular with the more elderly customer base. In addition these hours would also allow opening of the fitness studio, addressing the concerns for GP referral customers and the Primary Care Trust within our Positive Moves programme. Additionally, it would also allow the squash courts to be opened for two mornings between these hours.

In addition to the above the Centre would open in school holidays to provide a structured programme of children's holiday activities.

By adopting this revised stance the authority will be able to meet existing demand in a cost effective manner without reducing the service to a point where future development and or changes in emphasis could not be addressed.

To re-emphasise the current low levels of demand, we have provided below, some up to date, pertinent information regarding usage levels. All the data relates to a three-month period November through to early February, which is after the consultation period.

- There were only 118 G.P referral attendances for the fitness room in daytime periods (Mon-Fri), which totalled 17 actual users.
- Mon to Friday daytime, there were only a total of 1760 attendances in the fitness room in the period. This equates to 3 people per hour or only 14% of the capacity.
- There were only 542 early morning swims during the period. This equates to less than 7 people per hour, 17% of capacity and only relates to 65 individual users.
- Average daily income from squash (Mon to Fri) before 4pm is £5, or the equivalent of 1 court booking per day, less than 6% of capacity.

These figures reinforce the data within Pinpoint's original analysis and demonstrate the continuing low level of usage.

Further to this, preliminary discussions have taken place between officers of Gedling Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council In respect of the potential impact on the recently revised joint use agreement.

A number of other significant factors have also been given consideration:

- Discussions with the same representatives from the County over the management and operation of the new synthetic pitch at the Colonel Frank Seely
- The potential redevelopment of the secondary schools in the "Building Schools for the future" programme.
- The current vacancies in the Managers posts at Calverton and Arnold Leisure Centres
- The current vacancy of an Assistant Manager at Arnold Leisure Centre
- The ongoing reduction of revenue funding from the County Council

The main issues in the changes will be the re-negotiation of the current joint use agreement and the implications for the current staff. The detailed staffing consequences will be the subject of a further report to Personnel and Resources Committee.

### **3. Implication of partial closure**

The implications fall into 3 main sections:

1. Management arrangements
2. Operational staffing
3. Other operational issues.

#### **Management Staffing**

As outlined earlier, there are a number of management vacancies within both Calverton and Arnold Leisure Centres. This factor and the desire to improve efficiency and provide a stable platform for the future have prompted an examination of the management arrangements.

With the reduction in hours at Calverton, it was not felt viable to continue with a dedicated Managers post. The cost to the Authority of this post being approximately £34,000 per annum. Equally, the close proximity of Redhill and Arnold, coupled with the need to ensure that their complimentary facilities are managed in a sympathetic manner has led to the conclusion that the overall management of these three centres should be combined.

An additional, more general managerial concern was the gulf, in responsibility, salary, and personal requirements, between the existing Manager and Assistant Managers posts. To a degree this had been addressed at Carlton Forum, where the post of Deputy Manager had been in place for some time. The scale of operation of these three sites did not allow this to happen, under an individual site-management routine.

It was clear during the examination of management proposals that Calverton Leisure Centre could not be considered in isolation and that a more extensive examination was required. After lengthy consideration it was concluded that given the desire to improve the structure, the uncertainties of the future and the need to achieve savings, that a new management approach was needed, combining Arnold, Calverton and Redhill Leisure Centres. A limited application of a multi-site management arrangement has been trialled for some months now and has been working very well.

Appendix 1 shows the existing management and proposed management structures. For information.

The main principles are;

- The creation of a General Manager post to co-ordinate the management of all three facilities

- The creation of the posts of Operations Managers at Arnold, Calverton and Redhill Leisure Centres. These posts would be responsible to the General Manager for the day to day management of the facilities
- A reduction of two Assistant Managers posts at Calverton to match the reduced opening hours.

This revised arrangement will provide a significant improvement for the potential career development paths of staff in leisure facilities management.

### **Operational Staffing**

The reduction in opening hours of the centre from its current 96.5 to 51.5 hours, results in a significant reduction in the number of hours we require for operational staff, which includes, Receptionists, Cleaners, Pool Lifeguard, Leisure Assistants and Fitness Staff.

As there has been a degree of uncertainty over the Centre, we have managed the staffing at the Centre to ensure that the impact of any future changes would be minimised. Using a combination of short-term and casual contracts, the permanent establishment for these types of staff has been kept as low as possible in order to avoid any unnecessary future staffing problems. Officers have now completed an exercise mapping the existing operational establishment against the requirements for the revised operation.

All existing staff can be accommodated within the proposed management and operational staffing structure but this may result in redeployment to other Centres.

Members need to be aware that if it is not possible to find reasonable redeployment for all employees additional costs may result if there is a requirement for early retirement or redundancy.

As with normal convention, all the above will be dealt with in a report to Personnel and Resources Committee.

Members should note that even minor changes to proposed opening hours will have a significant affect on staff shift patterns, annualised hours and holiday cover.

### **Other operational issues**

The remaining operational issues focus on three main areas:

1. Access to the swimming pool by Primary Schools
2. Pool water and safety
3. Amendments to the joint-use agreement.

The swimming pool is used by a number of primary schools, however, the current maximum level of usage is for 7 hours per week, and has been declining steadily over the years. The pupils are supervised by the school, who provide their own lifeguarding and teaching staff. The health and safety responsibilities in respect of the swimming activity clearly lies with the Education Authority and is identified as such in the joint-use agreement.

Gedling Borough Council is, however, responsible for the residual health and safety issues arising for the operation of the facility, including appropriate cleaning and health and safety checks.

The revision of the opening hours will, to a degree, assist this process by having staff on site for two mornings per week. This will accommodate 30% of the current primary timetable.

Remote monitoring of the dosing system, at a cost of £1000, using the dedicated communications links the centre now enjoys, and the new chemical dosing system installed in 2003 will allow pool tests to be undertaken by leisure centre staff for all seven days without the need to involve the school caretaking staff as proposed in the previous report.

Admissions to the facility can be controlled by issuing schools with access codes to digital door locks or by the use of the new Flex admissions system which has the capability of door access control via swipe card.

A further option for reducing operating costs at the Centre has been produced by Councillor Griffiths, which identified potential savings of £50,317.60 and allowed the Centre to open on all five midweek days. See Appendix 3.

The openings hours proposed are as follows:

Monday	7.30 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.
Tuesday	9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.
Wednesday	7.30 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.
Thursday	9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.
Friday	7.30 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.
Saturday	
Sunday	10.30 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.

This proposal reduces evening and weekend opening hours and the early morning swim sessions from five to three.

This option has been carefully examined and costed, the results of which have been discussed with him.

A summary of officer findings is as follows:

- Income reduction due to evening and weekend closing is not identified in the costings.
- The staffing costs are not calculated using the authorities base information for on costs, holiday and sickness cover.
- Staffing hours in the rotas do not reflect the opening hours of the Centre at the weekends. (At least 30 minutes setting up and close down time is required each day outside of opening hours to the public.) The additional 2 hours required each weekend, at overtime rates, is not reflected in the option costs.
- The full time establishment of the Centre is assumed to be 5.5 staff; it is in fact 5 staff. The savings identified for this option therefore need to be reduced by a half post.

- Staff working hours are 37 per week; the centres proposed opening hours require 37½ hours per week to be worked by the three full time staff. The operating costs therefore need to be increased by a further 1.5 hours per week at overtime rates.
- Holiday activities in non-school term sessions require an additional 2 hours per week at overtime rates on Tuesday and Thursday to allow the Centre to open from 8.30 a.m. this is not included in the costings.
- The General Manager post has not been costed into the structure.
- An Assistant Manager delivers holiday activity sessions for approximately 10 hours per week during non-term time this has not been included in the costings.
- Reception cover each Thursday and Friday does not allow the Duty Managers role to be fulfilled, as he will to be engaged in the fitness room.
- The Fitness Development Officers rota provides daytime cover at the Centre but this does not reflect the busiest times in the gym each evening.
- It is accepted that a single Duty Manager, with supporting staff, can operate the Centre in the evening but management responsibilities during the day require a working relationship and contact between the Managers.  
A hand over period of half an hour on three days per week is sufficient for the daily duty operation on those days but does not allow Managers time to discuss Centre development, programming, marketing, asset management, analyse income and user attendance or to hold team briefings, undertake personal development and keep aware of changes in the leisure industry.
- Providing cover for Duty Managers holidays and sickness is accounted for in the costs but the staffing structure does not provide sufficient resource in number to provide it. Current staffing at the Centre of five full time staff allows for holiday and sickness cover to be provided, reducing the structure to three full time staff removes this flexibility.  
This problem and the issues identified in the previous bullet point can be resolved, as suggested by Councillor Griffiths, by employing a third Duty Manager, it would also remove the need to provide cover during school holiday periods.
- This proposal whilst providing daytime opening on five mid weekdays does not address the low usage at these times.

Officers, taking into account the above findings, have produced the following revised costing for this option: -

	£
Staff Saving (2 Asst Managers)	-53,404
Lifeguard Saving	-1,157
Loss of Income	5,685
Additional Reception Hours	5,370
General Manager (1/3 <sup>rd</sup> of Salary)	12,913
Additional Shift Hours – Asst Manager Term time	3,882
Additional Shift Hours – Asst Manager Holiday periods	703
School Holiday Activity cover Asst. Manager	1,564
Saving	<u>£24,444</u>

As acknowledged the above does not reflect the need for an additional Duty Officer to resolve the issues of managerial operation, holiday and sickness cover.

Provision of this post, at a cost of £22688, would allow the additional resource during school holiday periods to be removed and is reflected in the costing below:

	£
Overall Saving	24,444
Less Duty Officer	-22,688
Saving on Assistant Manager overtime	2,267
Saving	<u>£4,023</u>

#### **4. Proposal**

As detailed in the Officer Proposal the Centre opening hours be reduced from 96.5 hours to 51.5 hours per week during school term time, these to be extended during school holiday periods to provide for mid-week, daytime holiday activities.

The option provided by Councillor Griffiths is not pursued, as it cannot achieve the savings required.

#### **5. Resource Implications**

It is estimated that operational savings of £36,646 less the cost of a remote dosing system at £1,000 can be achieved by adopting the officer proposal.

Appendix 2 provides details of the operational savings.

#### **6. Recommendations**

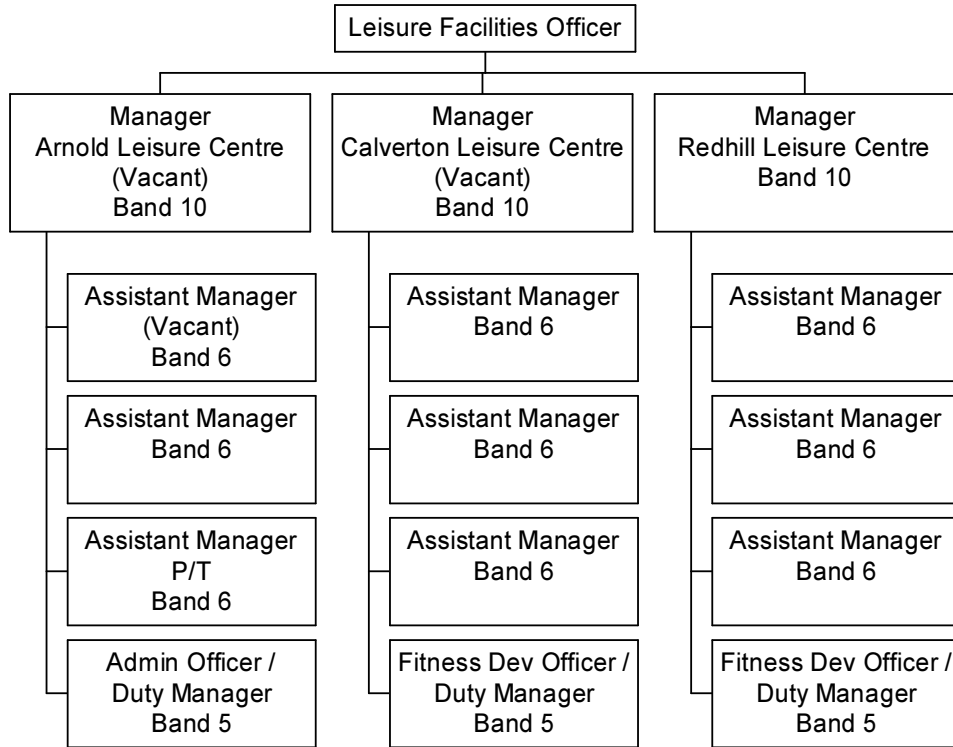
To approve the reduced opening hours of Calverton Leisure Centre as detailed in the Officer Report.

#### **7. Wards Affected**

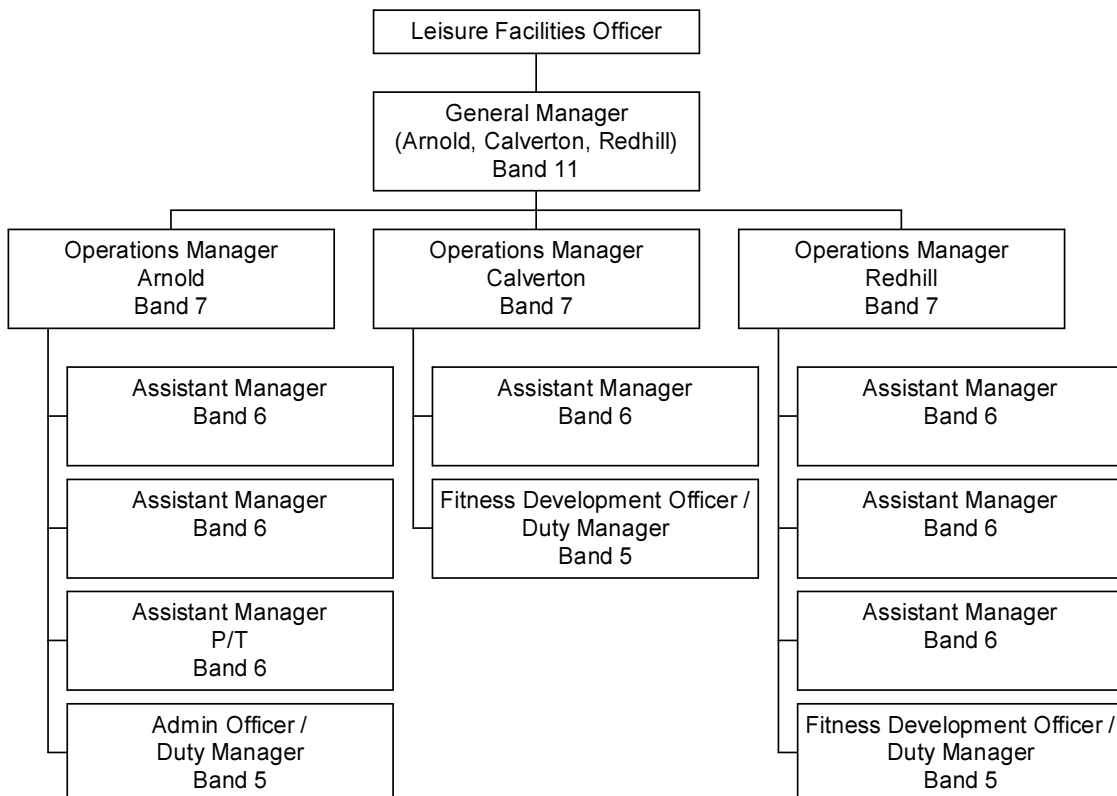
Calverton



**Existing Structure**



**Proposed Structure**



## Appendix 2

Appendix 2			
Financial Implications of operational staffing based on a model of 2 part-day openings at Calverton Leisure Centre			
	Original	As of 1/4/05	Based on all staff at top of scale
<b>Reception</b>	22538	22224	22942
<b>Fit Advisor</b>	6458	6458	6458
<b>Pool</b>	40828	43345	44343
<b>Sports hall</b>	21627	21174	22324
<b>Cleaner</b>	23713	10577	10761
<b>Holiday cover</b>	10880	9020	9020
<b>Add hol. cover</b>	22441	23030	23030
<b>Sick</b>	3455	3113	3205
	<b>151940</b>	<b>138941</b>	<b>142083</b>
	<b>151940</b>	<b>138941</b>	<b>142083</b>
<b>Operational Staff Saving</b>	0	12999	9857
<b>Management Staff Savings</b>	0	36872	33150
<b>Overall Staff Savings</b>	0	49871	43007
<b>Income loss Recovery due to day time</b>	0	16483	16483
<b>Two day opening *</b>	0	-3258	-3258
<b>Income loss after recovery</b>	0	13225	13225
<b>Overall Saving</b>	0	36646	29782

**A Fourth Option for Calverton Leisure Centre**

**Summary**

The Cabinet decided in March last year that changes were necessary in order to make savings on the running costs of Calverton Leisure Centre, as identified in last year's budget process. Pinpoint Consulting have now produced their report on options for operational change. The report proposes three options, all of which will result in reduced opening hours for the centre.

Acting on the concerns of hundreds of leisure centre users, and local residents, I have investigated other alternatives to these options that would allow the centre to remain open for as many hours per week as possible. Through lengthy and constructive discussions with the leisure centre staff and key users of the centre (such as those referred from the GP's practice who would be unable to make it to other centres), I believe we have found a way forward that would allow the centre to remain open during the day – whilst still making the necessary savings on the running costs. **I therefore recommend that the council adopts our new "fourth option" that is outlined below.**

**Background**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004 Members of Gedling Borough Council's Cabinet voted to undertake a range of operational changes at Calverton Leisure Centre in order to reduce running costs which were felt to be unsustainable. Pinpoint Consulting were contracted to carry out a consultation exercise with various stakeholders and to produce a report outlining various options for operational change at the centre that would help to make the necessary savings.

The three options proposed were:

1. Daytime Closure (saving £26,536)
2. Daytime closure, but retain 2 early swims (saving £24,742)
3. Daytime closure, but retain 2 early and 2 lunchtime swims (saving £14,366)

For all three options the bulk of the savings are purely as a result of managerial changes – 2 management posts would be lost and the centre would be managed on a "group management" basis.

All three options also result in a loss of revenue of over £15,000 though, due to the daytime closure. This immediately struck me as slightly odd – if the centre can be managed on a group basis for 7 days a week in the evenings then **surely there must be a way to extend this management arrangement to the daytime and recoup the revenue that would be lost?** This would increase the level of savings (more than doubling the savings on option 3), and it seems strange that the possibility was not discussed in the report.

There is another, much more important reason to look for ways to keep the centre open during the daytime though.

### **GP Referrals**

At present, the Calverton Practice refers over 65 people to the leisure centre. Due to the success of the scheme this number is increasing at a rapid rate, with new patients being referred every week. The leisure centre provides the practice with a local facility to aid rehabilitation programmes, and also provides a centre where people with serious medical conditions can undertake light exercise to help combat the debilitating affects of their condition and to drastically improve their quality of life. These people are unlikely to be able to get to other centres in the borough if Calverton were to close during the daytime, and this would have a disastrous affect on their health. I believe we have a **moral obligation** to these people to investigate every possible way of keeping the centre open during the daytime, whilst still making the necessary savings.

### **A Fourth Way?**

I have had numerous meetings with leisure centre staff and with key users of the centre over the last few weeks. From these discussions I have put together a fourth option for operational change at the centre, which would allow the centre to remain open during the daytime. I have checked, and been told that this option **is perfectly workable** and it seems to be the ideal solution to the problem of how to make savings at the centre while maintaining the highest level of provision possible for all users of the centre. It is fully costed and even has a detailed outline of what the shift patterns would look like under the new system.

The advantages of this option are:

- It is operationally sound, with respect to staffing, administration and maintenance.
  - It still makes the necessary cost savings
  - It allows for the continuation of the successful GP referral service (positive moves)
  - It allows for the continuation of local primary school swimming
  - It maintains the current level of revenue – and given the increasing number of GP referrals it allows scope to further increase the level of revenue from the centre
  - It may actually result in **more** savings than the options in the original report!
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#### Option 4

#### **PROPOSED HOURS OF OPENING**

MON	7.30AM to 9.00PM
TUES	9.00AM to 9.00PM
WED	7.30AM to 9.00PM
THURS	9.00AM to 9.00PM
FRI	7.30AM to 9.00PM
SAT	10.30AM to 7.30PM
SUN	

The centre would be managed on a two weekly rota basis. There would be 2 duty officers and a fitness development officer responsible for the day to day running of the centre. To provide extra cover on a Thursday and Friday (rest days for one duty officer) it would be necessary to employ a receptionist for 13 extra hours a week. The rota system would work as shown in Annex 1, with each duty officer getting every other weekend off, and working an average of 37 hours per week over the two week rota, while the fitness development officer and receptionist would work fixed hours.

As can be seen, this is a detailed proposal that has been properly thought through and costed (it has actually been costed in much greater detail than the options in pinpoint consulting's report).

The full revenue implications are outlined below

#### **Revenue Implications**

At present the centre is managed by 5 and a half duty managers in total\*. Savings are calculated against this system:

<b><i>Estimated Loss of income</i></b>	
Early morning swims (Tues and Thurs)	£1,600.00
Fitness Suite (Tues and Thurs 7:30-9:00am)	£ 500.00
<b><i>Estimated Cost of Extra Staffing</i></b>	
Receptionist (Thurs and Fri)	£3,697.72
On Costs	£ 924.43
<b><i>Potential Saving on staffing costs</i></b>	
2 and a half duty officers	£44,805.00
Reduced Sickness and Annual Leave <sup>†</sup>	£11,201.25
Early morning swim lifeguard	£ 826.80
Reduced sickness and annual leave	£ 206.70
<b>POTENTIAL TOTAL SAVING</b>	<b>£50,317.60</b>

\* 1 half manager, 3 duty officers, another duty officer on a short-term contract and a fitness development officer

<sup>†</sup> This figure is calculated as a quarter of salary costs and reflects non-wage labour costs, in line with HM Treasury guidance on appraisal.

*Note:*

- *Lifeguard charges are based on an hourly rate of £6.36 multiplied by the number of hours lost per week (2.5), multiplied by 52 weeks*
- *Receptionist charges are based on an hourly rate of £5.47 multiplied by 13 extra hours a week, multiplied by 52 weeks*

**Two things to note:**

- 1.) This option would save the council **over £50,000 per year. This is double the £25k savings identified in the pinpoint consulting report.**
- 2.) One criticism might be that the rota would mean that only one duty officer would be on duty at certain times. I am reliably informed that this would not be a problem, and that it actually happens on a regular basis under the current management arrangements at the centre. If you wanted to avoid this however, you could employ an extra duty officer and still make the necessary £25,000 savings

**Conclusion**

This option would allow the centre to remain open during the day, whilst still making the necessary savings. It is a fully considered proposal, and indications from the staff at the centre suggest that it is a perfectly workable system. This option would bring great comfort to the hundreds of users who would be disadvantaged by pinpoint's preferred option, particularly those who are referred there from their GP, and I **strongly recommend** that the council adopts this option

**Councillor Gareth Griffiths**  
**January 2005**

Annex I

**OPTION 4 - PROPOSED ROTA SYSTEM - 2 WEEKLY**

<b>DUTY OFFICER ROTA - WEEK 1</b>	
	HOURS - Person 1 - 43
	HOURS - Person 2 - 32
	HOURS - Fit. Dev. Officer - 37 ½
	HOURS - Receptionist - 13
	<b>AM</b> <b>PM</b>
<b>MON</b>	PERSON 1 7.00AM - 3.30PM FITNESS DEV. OFFICER / DO - 8.00AM - 4.00PM
<b>TUE</b>	PERSON 2 9.00AM - 5.00PM FITNESS DEV. OFFICER / DO - 2.00PM - 9.00PM
<b>WED</b>	PERSON 1 7.00AM - 3.30PM FITNESS DEV. OFFICER / DO - 8.00AM - 3.30PM
<b>THUR</b>	RECEPTIONIST 9.00AM - 3.30PM FIT DEV / DUTY OFFICER - 9.00AM - 4.00PM
<b>FRI</b>	RECEPTIONIST 9.00AM - 3.30PM FIT DEV / DUTY OFFICER - 7.00AM - 3.00PM
<b>SAT</b>	PERSON 1 10.30AM - 7.30PM
<b>SUN</b>	

<b>DUTY OFFICER ROTA - WEEK 1</b>	
	HOURS - Person 1 - 32
	HOURS - Person 2 - 43
	HOURS - Fit. Dev. Officer - 37 ½
	HOURS - Receptionist - 13
	<b>AM</b> <b>PM</b>
<b>MON</b>	PERSON 2 7.00AM - 3.30PM FITNESS DEV. OFFICER / DO - 8.00AM - 4.00PM
<b>TUE</b>	PERSON 2 9.00AM - 5.00PM FITNESS DEV. OFFICER / DO - 2.00AM - 9.00PM
<b>WED</b>	PERSON 1 7.00AM - 3.30PM FITNESS DEV. OFFICER / DO - 8.00AM - 3.30PM
<b>THUR</b>	RECEPTIONIST 9.00AM - 3.30PM FIT DEV / DUTY OFFICER - 9.00AM - 4.00PM
<b>FRI</b>	RECEPTIONIST 9.00AM - 3.30PM FIT DEV / DUTY OFFICER - 7.00AM - 3.00PM
<b>SAT</b>	PERSON 2 10.30AM - 7.30PM
<b>SUN</b>	