Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool
Kendal

Indicative Business Plan

2006/07 – 2008/09
‘For almost 30 years the pool has given medical respite, therapy and joy to a whole range of people with temporary and permanent disabilities, young and old.

Thousands of people who would otherwise have serious obstacles to enjoying such therapeutic exercise have found refuge in the pool’s soothing waters.’

Westmorland Gazette
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Terms of Reference

This plan was commissioned by the Local Committee for South Lakeland – Cumbria County Council in September 2005. It seeks to establish realistic and justifiable proposals for the effective continuance of the services and facilities presently offered at Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool, Kendal.

The document incorporates:

- An assessment of the factors impacting on past and present performance
- Suggested options for future functionality and organisation
- An indicative framework for managing the necessary change processes
- Illustrative aims and intentions to inform future operations

The document is intended to provide a balanced and impartial overview. It is representative rather than definitive and provides a starting point for future discussion, co-operation and negotiation.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the various elected members, employees and officers of the following organisations who have readily contributed significant amounts of time and material in the interests of the associated investigations and enquiries.

- Cumbria County Council
- South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust
- South Lakeland District Council
- South Lakeland Leisure Trust
Executive Summary

a) Background

Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool in Kendal was built in the late 1970s using money raised primarily by Westmorland Mencap Society through a public appeal to charities, companies and individuals.

The pool combines privacy with skilled supervision to offer a unique environment for providing vital therapy and exercise in warm water. It has made a significant contribution to the welfare of thousands of people and their families in the Kendal district.

In earlier years responsibility for pool operations rested with the governors of Sandgate School which is co-located at the Sandylands Road site. A decline in pupil use of the amenity resulted in the governors declaring it surplus to school requirements in 1998. Whilst Cumbria County Council - Education Committee - declared it surplus to education requirements in the same year the authority has continued to retain overall responsibility for the maintenance and management of the facility.

Some time ago Cumbria County Council took the view that running a facility offering the kind of services offered at Sandgate Pool was not part of its core business. In 2001, the Authority decided to seek to transfer the ownership of the pool to a charitable trust. South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust Limited (a company limited by guarantee) came into being in early May 2002. The Trust also achieved charitable status in October that year.

The Trust was intended to take over full operational and financial management of the pool with effect from 1st April 2003. Although this date was eventually revised to 1st April 2004 the formal transfer did not take place for technical reasons. In mid 2005 the Trust declared that it was no longer willing to accept full managerial and financial responsibility of the pool.

b) The Way Forward

Cumbria County Council clearly recognises that Sandgate Pool is a precious resource the local community can ill afford to lose. In September 2005 the authority reaffirmed its present responsibilities as principal stakeholder in pool affairs and chose to examine and evaluate options for the future of Sandgate Pool.

Sebenza Ltd – Economic, Development and Regeneration Consultants – Ambleside were subsequently appointed to conduct a comprehensive review of circumstances and conditions affecting the pool and complete an assessment on future options.
Sebenza Ltd investigations suggest there are reasonable and realistic alternatives for the future which include:

- Retain Existing Operation – Cumbria County Council take full control with South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust adopting a fund raising based role.
- Transfer Pool to another community focused organisation (e.g. South Lakeland Leisure Trust)

It is still the underlying aim of Cumbria County Council to transfer title of the pool to a local community lead/focused organisation which has the capability and capacity to preserve the ethos and durability of the facility.

An amalgamation of some of the best features apparent in each of the main options will probably prove to be the most advantageous way forward. However some breathing space and room for manoeuvre needs to be allowed.

c) Issues For Resolution

Past experiences indicate that such a ‘reconstruction’ will not be achieved overnight and it will be necessary to deal first with a variety of factors which presently impact on the serviceability of the pool – e.g.

- Determine ‘first level’ accountability for Sandgate Pool within Cumbria County Council until (as and if) ownership passes to a third party
- Clarify line management/accountability for Pool Operations
- Consolidate present day Income and Expenditure reporting – Cumbria County Council/South Lakes Hydrotherapy Trust (Above line/Below line/Donations etc)
- Agree use of shared/separate facilities with Sandgate School e.g. Utilities Metering/Fencing/Car Parking

d) System and Structure

A methodical and prioritised approach to dealing with these immediate factors will be adopted in relation to longer term management, fund raising and refurbishment – e.g.

- Establish a comprehensive/consolidated picture of current operations/responsibilities for Sandgate Pool (Where are we now?)
- Identify the aims, aspirations and obligations of principal stakeholders (Where do we want to be?)
- Model the alternatives/options for change (How do we get there?)
Select a justifiable ‘way forward’ and agree realistic roles, responsibilities, outputs and outcomes (*How do we know when we have reached our ‘destination?’*)

Incorporate discussions/deliberations into a series of mutually owned ‘process control’ documents (e.g. Actions Plans) which establish financial boundaries, responsibilities, timescales, etc

Solutions will focus on end user benefit – i.e. What is the best solution for pool users.

e) A Framework for Progress

The following formative timetable will be used to inform and direct proceedings:

- 2006/07 - Resolve operational anomalies/reconvene a Consultative Group/discuss ownership options/commence negotiations on future ownership/determine fund raising arrangements
- 2007/08 – Conclude negotiations on future ownership of the pool/Reconsider and confirm refurbishment proposals
- 2008/09 – Complete agreed refurbishment programme

f) Roles and Responsibilities

Key roles and responsibilities will be:

- Line Management – Cumbria County Council (or any organisation subsequently taking a controlling interest in Sandgate Pool)
- Service Delivery – Pool Manager and Staff
- Fund Raising/Community Liaison – South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust Ltd
- Progress/Performance Monitoring – Consultative Group

g) Change Management

Cohesion and continuity will be vital aspects of maintaining the necessary momentum in these wide ranging inputs and tasks. Cumbria County Council will identify a suitable ‘Change Manager’ from the Area Support Team to co-ordinate affairs for at least twelve months (i.e. 2006/07) – when the position will be reviewed.
Working in accordance with a formalised role specification (agreed with the Officer/Directorate holding first level accountability and the Area Support Manager) the Change Manager will have (part-time – say up to two days per week) involvement in:

- Co-operating with Cumbria County Council Directorates/Departments to conclude unfinished business relating to Sandgate Pool (e.g. Compatibility of staff arrangements)
- Co-ordination of Consultative Group activities
- Liaison with South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust (and South Lakeland Leisure Trust)
- Improving relationships with key stakeholders (actual and potential) – including the Local Strategic Partnership
- The provision of guidance and advice (and/or Line Management) to Sandgate Pool Manager
- Establish links with Cumbria ‘Change Up’ Programme
- Periodically updating the Local Committee for South Lakeland (Cumbria County Council)

**h) Intentions and Aspirations**

With these arrangements in place everyone committed to the preservation of all that is good at Sandgate Pool will be able to work together in pursuit of the following goals and ideals:

i) **Vision**

‘To make life better for local people’

ii) **Values**

Sandgate Pool will operate an exclusive ‘user first’ approach based on the following distinctive principles

- Warmth of water and welcome!
- Relief, respite and relaxation
- Affordability and enjoyment
- Privacy and confidentiality
iii) **Strategic Aims**

To support Government directives (e.g. Better Health through Self Help) and the aspirations of the Local Strategic Partnership

- Promote health for the disabled
- Rehabilitation – Back to Work
- Well Being
- Improve availability of leisure activities

To ensure Sandgate Pool plays a leading role in the creation of an strong and effective network of hydrotherapy facilities across Cumbria.

iv) **Operational Objectives**

**Management**

To determine the long term ownership and/or management arrangements for Sandgate Pool by the end of 2006/07.

**Delivery**

To provide a user bridge between major illness/surgery and a return to daily life.

To offer leisure activities for those who cannot access similar facilities at Leisure Centres or Sports Clubs.

To assist in the integration of some of the most disadvantaged members of society.

To provide support for pool users for as long as it is required.

**Facilities**

To confirm a schedule of site improvements commensurate with the needs of pool users by the end of 2007/08.

To instigate and complete the necessary building improvement works by the end of 2008/9.

**Financial**

To cap overall expenditure (Above/Below Line etc) in 2006/07 at £125k.

To ensure overall operational costs increase by no more than 3% in 2007/08 and 2008/09.

To progressively achieve a 50% contribution to overall income from pool users by 2008/09.

To establish a fund raising regime to match pool user fees by securing equitable contributions from Cumbria County Council, local authorities, grant giving organisations and the general public.
Part A – Past and Present

The Context

a) Operational Overview

Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool is heated to 94°F and measures about one third of the size of a conventional facility. The pool combines privacy with skilled supervision to offer a unique environment for providing vital therapy and exercise in warm water. It has made a significant contribution to the welfare of thousands of people and their families in the Kendal district.

Maintaining mobility enables disabled or elderly people to keep their independence and reduces the cost to social and health services. This has a second cost benefit as the general well-being of users is markedly improved through regular contact with others having similar problems.

There is also a social benefit to the community through the provision of a low cost service enabling rehabilitation of some users thus promoting an earlier return to the workplace. For some, the use of the hydrotherapy pool may be their only social activity of their week. There is anecdotal evidence on the reduction of drugs needed by users, particularly for pain relief.

b) Background

Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool in Kendal was built in the late 1970s using money raised primarily by Westmorland Mencap Society through a public appeal to charities, companies and individuals. The principal aim was to provide a therapeutic facility for users of Sandgate Special School and the Whinfell Social Services Centre. The pool is co-located on a site with Sandgate Special School in Sandylands Road.

In earlier years responsibility for pool operations rested with the governors of Sandgate School. A decline in pupil use of the amenity resulted in the governors declaring it surplus to school requirements in 1998. Whilst Cumbria County Council - Education Committee - declared it surplus to education requirements in the same year the authority has continued to retain overall responsibility for the maintenance and management of the facility.

In general use of the pool has increased considerably over time and services have been extended to include disabled people of all ages and those with short-term needs following injury or hospitalisation. Pool Users are now also attracted from a wider catchment area and it is highly regarded as a precious community resource.
(c) An Independent Operation in Prospect?

Some time ago Cumbria County Council took the view that running a facility offering the kind of services offered at Sandgate Pool was not part of its core business. In 2001, the Authority decided to seek to transfer the ownership of the pool to a charitable trust. South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust Limited (a company limited by guarantee) came into being in early May 2002. The Trust also achieved charitable status in October that year.

The Trust was intended to take over full operational and financial management of the pool with effect from 1\textsuperscript{st} April 2003. Although this date was eventually revised to 1\textsuperscript{st} April 2004 the formal transfer did not take place for technical reasons which include significant concerns about

- The implementation of TUPE regulations
- Pension costs for staff transferring from Cumbria County Council
- Costs of Insurance cover
- Revision to building rates valuations

(d) Obstacles and Impasse?

South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust did, nevertheless, begin to carry out day-to-day management at the pool, on an interim basis, in April 2004. A number of operational disparities were not fully addressed however which led to an increasing amount of complexity and complication. For example although the Trust appointed a full-time Pool Manager to deal with organisational and supervisory duties, the remainder of the staff at the pool continued to report to a Cumbria County Council Line Manager based in Carlisle.

Accounting arrangements for the Pool have been similarly split between Cumbria County Council and South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust. Whilst the pool has a separate cost centre within the authority the separate income and expenditure figures attributable to Cumbria County Council/South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust have not been formally consolidated.

An increasing number of inputs in pool ‘business’ from a variety of interested parties and stakeholder groups frequently added further distraction. An outline of Sandgate Pool relationships is included as Appendix A.

In mid 2005 the Trust declared that it was no longer willing to accept full managerial and financial responsibility of the pool.
e) **Credence and Credibility**

Despite this period of uncertainty there can be no better justification for safeguarding this valued community service than seeing the positive effect it has on the lives of so many residents in South Lakeland.

‘The pool is wonderful’ – John – Age 30 – Motorbike accident – broken leg – pool therapy – back to work in eight months

‘We are blessed to have such a pool in this area’ – Susan - a pool user for 15 years

‘I would never have recovered from devastating illness and open heart surgery if it wasn’t for using the pool’ – Lindsay – a pool user for 5 years

Born with dislocated hips the pool has kept me mobile, especially as I get older’ Jean – a pool user for 20 years

‘The pool is fantastic’ – David – Age 41 – brain haemorrhage – told he’d never walk – pool therapy – now out shopping

f) **The Way Forward**

Cumbria County Council clearly recognises that Sandgate Pool is a precious resource the local community can ill afford to lose. In September 2005 the authority reaffirmed its present responsibilities as principal stakeholder in pool affairs and chose to examine and evaluate options for the future of Sandgate Pool.

Sebenza Ltd – Economic, Development and Regeneration Consultants – Ambleside were subsequently appointed to conduct a comprehensive review of circumstances and conditions affecting the pool and complete an assessment on future options. The Framework for the investigations is included at Appendix ‘B’

g) **Alternative Courses of Action**

Sebenza investigations suggest the following are reasonable alternatives for the future – if not wholly realistic in some cases:

1. Retain Existing Operation – Maintain the ‘status quo’ (i.e. Do Nothing)
   - **Pros:** Line of least resistance?
   - **Cons:** All current issues/problems remain unresolved!
(2) Retain Existing Operation – Cumbria County Council take full control with South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust adopting a fund raising based role

> **Pros:** Tried and tested systems immediately available; Partnership

> **Cons:** The pool is not core business for Cumbria County Council, Availability of Funding?

(3) Transfer Existing Operation into the ownership of South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust with Cumbria County Council as a financial ‘partner’

> **Pros:** South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust constituted for operational control; fulfill long term aims; In accord with Cumbria County Council corporate strategy; Partnership

> **Cons:** South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust unsure of risk/liability factors; Loss of economies of scale; Availability of Funding?

(4) Transfer Existing Operation to separately constituted Social Enterprise framework – with Principal Partners – South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust as principal fund raiser and Cumbria County Council as main financier

> **Pros:** Community friendly, Direct Community Involvement and Grassroots Partnership

> **Cons:** Little local experience of option; Risk/Exposure too onerous, Availability of Funding?

(5) Outsource pool to another community focused organisation (Say South Lakeland Leisure Services) – with Principal Partners – South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust – fund raiser and Cumbria County Council - financier

> **Pros:** South Lakeland Leisure Trust already operates pool facilities in Kendal, Tentative South Lakeland Leisure Trust interest in Sandgate Pool

> **Cons:** South Lakeland Leisure Trust not fully prepared for early takeover; Funding anomalies?
SWOT analyses for the three principal organisations identified above are included as Appendices C – E.

Appendix C  Cumbria County Council
Appendix D  South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust
Appendix E  South Lakeland Leisure Trust

Characteristics identified relate specifically to actual or potential involvement of each organisation in Sandgate Pool

h)  What Next?

Despite previous delays and disappointments hasty or precipitative decisions on the future of Sandgate Pool would not be in its best long term interest. It is likely that an amalgamation of some of the best features highlighted in the option assessment included above will prove to be the most advantageous way forward.

Some breathing space and room for manoeuvre needs to be allowed.

The following proposals are based on the foregoing comments and observations and seek to establish an indicative rationale for the future stability and success of the pool.
Part B – The Future

Mission Statement

‘To sustain unique, hospitable and high quality hydrotherapy facilities which consistently meet the needs of local people suffering from disability, injury and ill health’

Vision and Values

a) Vision

‘To make life better for local people’

b) Values

Sandgate Pool will operate an exclusive ‘user first’ approach based on the following distinctive principles

- Warmth of water and welcome!
- Relief, respite and relaxation
- Affordability and enjoyment
- Privacy and confidentiality

Objectives/Aims/Targets

a) Strategic Aims

To support Government directives (e.g. Better Health through Self Help) and the aspirations of the local Strategic Partnership

- Promote health for the disabled
- Rehabilitation – Back to Work
- Well Being
- Improve availability of leisure activities

To ensure Sandgate Pool plays a leading role in the creation of an strong and effective network of hydrotherapy facilities across Cumbria.

b) Operational Objectives

i) Management

To determine the long term ownership and/or management arrangements for Sandgate Pool by the end of 2006/07.
ii) Delivery

To provide a user bridge between major illness/surgery and a return to daily life.

To offer leisure activities for those who cannot access similar facilities at Leisure Centres or Sports Clubs.

To assist in the integration of some of the most disadvantaged members of society.

To provide support for pool users for as long as it is required.

iii) Facilities

To confirm a schedule of site improvements commensurate with the needs of pool users by the end of 2007/08.

To instigate and complete the necessary building improvement works by the end of 2008/9.

iv) Financial

To cap overall expenditure (Above/Below Line etc) in 2006/07 at £125k.

To ensure overall operational costs increase by no more than 3% in 2007/08 and 2008/09.

To progressively achieve a 50% contribution to overall income from pool users by 2008/09.

To establish a fund raising regime to match pool user fees by securing equitable contributions from Cumbria County Council, local authorities, grant giving organisations and the general public.

c) Operational Aims

To maintain and improve current facilities.

To provide trained and supportive staff.

To incorporate good practice from contemporary hydrotherapy sites.

To deliver personalised and specialist sessions.

To facilitate confidence and emotional support.

To create an environment for social interaction.
Circumstances and Conditions - Cumbria

a) Social
- Many deprived neighbourhoods
- Evidence of rural isolation
- Widespread disadvantage and exclusion
- Aging population
- Poor health ‘hotspots’
- Inadequate transport links

b) Technical
- Rapid advances in IT, telecommunications and home based computing
- Tightening of statutory requirements and regulations – (e.g. DDA, H&S)

c) Economic
- The county has lowest economic growth of any UK sub region
- Decline of traditional industries – manufacturing and agriculture
- Areas of high unemployment – Furness and West Cumbria
- High levels of Incapacity Benefit claimants in parts of county

d) Political

An abstract of the objectives of Cumbria County Council – Community Unit 2005/06 to 2007/08 exemplifies prevalent political perspectives

- Put People First
- Community Engagement and Strong Team Work
- Joined Up Working/Partnership
- Meet the needs of different groups and communities
- Improve accessibility and promote equality

The Benefits of Hydrotherapy

a) In Essence

Hydrotherapy is the use of water, either internally or externally to maintain health and prevent disease. Used externally water has the power to improve blood circulation, relax tension in the tissues, alleviate pain and calm the nervous system.

Gentle exercise can be more manageable when carried out in a suitably heated pool – while the water supports much of the body weight the resistance of the water helps to strengthen muscles. The warmth of the water also increases circulation and reduces muscle-spasms helping to relieve pain.
Hydrotherapy offers

- Exercise in warm water
- Freedom of movement
- Re-education of movement
- Strengthening of muscles
- Movement without strain

b) Sandgate Pool

Clients using the pool suffer from a diverse range of physical and/or mental problems. Some have minor problems such as fractures, arthritic joints or sports injuries. Others are severely disabled or are recuperating from major surgery. Some live locally, whilst others readily travel for over an hour to reach the facility. They all have one thing in common – every single one of them gains significant benefit from the therapeutic effects of movement in water.

c) Disability disappears in water!

Henry is 8 years old. He wants to be a Fireman when he grows up. But Henry can’t walk. He can’t dress himself. He has multiple physical disabilities. He feels excluded from joining in the games of other children. But in the warm safe environment of the Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool Henry is just like any other child. This is the only place he can feel freedom of movement. He can enjoy playing with his younger sister and parents. And he’s learning to swim.

Brenda is 39 years old. She has breast cancer and has had her left breast removed. She was deeply traumatized and needs to exercise her body and left arm if she is to fully recover. But she can’t face a public pool. She has attended a specialist class at Sandgate Pool with other women recovering from breast cancer. In the privacy and supportive atmosphere the pool provides, Brenda is coming to terms with her illness. Together with new friends she gained some of the confidence she needs to pick up the threads of her life.

Experience and Expertise

Full and part-time staff are qualified lifeguards who have several years practical experience. Essential qualifications held and the courses attended include:

- National Pool Lifeguard Qualification – this includes Health and Safety
- British Red Cross Standard First Aid at Work
- Disability Awareness
Other qualifications held by some staff are:

- ASA full Teachers Certificate
- ASA Assistant Teachers Certificate
- ASA Assistant Teachers Certificate for Disability
- ASA Aqua Fit Certificate
- CALA Certificate
- Epilepsy Awareness

**Essential Characteristics**

**a) Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats**

A SWOT analysis for Sandgate Pool is included at Appendix F.

**Trends in the Service**

Keeping up to date with successful hydrotherapy treatments and techniques being tried and tested elsewhere – both nationally and internationally is an important part of making sure pool users are consistently ‘delighted’ with the services they receive.

Every opportunity will be taken to ensure local practitioners are kept informed by maintaining regular contact with professional organisations such as:

- The Hydrotherapy Association
- The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

**Market Analysis and Competition**

Potential users of the pool are people with medical referrals and disabled groups within the South Lakeland area. The market has been steadily increasing towards the national statistic of 13% of the population having a disability. There is an existing client base and the facility is well used. There is sensitivity to the needs of the customers and their health.

There is little local competition with the Kendal Leisure Centre offering no hydrotherapy facilities. Carlisle and Lancaster are the nearest places with broadly similar services on offer.
Marketing the Service

a) Competitive Advantage

The size of the pool (10 metres by 15 metres) means it is much larger than normal for a hydrotherapy pool. This allows both swimming exercise to build and maintain muscle strength, (vital for such conditions as multiple sclerosis), and more gentle non-swimming exercises and activities. The pool is available outside normal working hours and so relatively inexpensive and continuous therapy can be taken without disrupting users’ work obligations.

Staff members are well trained, experienced and motivated towards helping people with problems – they empathise with clients. The warm environment and caring ambience encourage users to relax and allow their bodies and minds to benefit from the therapy.

One of the most important advantages is the privacy factor for people with disfigurements, embarrassing physical conditions and those who are socially insecure. Many of those who use Sandgate pool who would never use a public pool.

b) Location (Place)

The best possible range of hydrotherapy services will be maintained at Sandgate Pool during the currency of this plan. In addition every opportunity will be taken to improve social inclusion for users by ensuring services harmonise with more conventional pool facilities – particularly at Kendal Leisure Centre and Troutbeck.

c) Target Client Groups (People)

The client catchment area is expected to be the Kendal ‘Travel To Work’ zone.

It is expected that the pool will maintain strong links with customary user groups which have included:

- Sandgate Special School
- Children’s Physiotherapy Group
- Cancer Care
- Arthritis Care
- MIND
- Multiple Sclerosis
- The Blind Society
- Stroke Club
- Cumbria Care Learning Disability Day Services
- Aquafit Therapeutic Group
- Ankylosing Spondylitis
- Parkinson’s Society

Community wide use will also be encouraged through GP/Hospital referrals.
d) Services Portfolio (Product/Price)

In Autumn 2005 income from users covered approximately 40% of the pool operation costs. Many of the users are financially disadvantaged and would not have the means to pay for the use of the pool if it were costed out at market rates.

It is reasonable however to examine the ‘business case’ for raising overall user contribution to 50% of pool expenditure by 2008/09. Any increase would be achieved incrementally – e.g.

2006/07 – 42.5%
2007/08 – 45%
2008/09 – 50%

Taking time out for cleaning and preparation there are currently 8 available ‘sessional’ hours per weekday and 5 at weekends – giving a total of 50 available hours a week.

The pool can accommodate up to 16/18 users at any session. It has recently had approximately 450/500 user visits per week which represents an average occupancy rate of around 9/10 users per session or around 60% of overall capacity.

Whilst there is often a waiting list for individual clients some group users have only 3 or 4 users per session. Current charges are £30 for group classes and £2.20 per person for casual/individual sessions.

Ways and means of improving pool usage will be explored to increase occupancy rates and generate higher income. Future development might be stimulated by adopting one or more of the following measures -

- Target gradual improvement in user visits to reach 550/600 per week by 2008/09
- Extend Pool Opening Hours – Open at say 7.30am each morning
- Reduce pool ‘down time’ by improving cleaning/preparation methods and techniques.
- Progressively increase pool charges towards the following rates in 2008/09
  - Standard Group Rate - £35.00/session (Groups of 8 and over)
  - Premium Group Rate - £45.00/session (Groups of 7 and under)
  - Standard Individual Session - £2.50/session
  - Special Individual Session - £3.50/session (Inclusive of Therapy etc)
  - Discounted rates for block bookings/online bookings/advanced payments
- Annual Sponsorship for Pool sessions from local businesses
e) **Strapline**

‘Sandgate Pool - a priceless ‘jewel’ in the community’

f) **Promotion**

   i) **The Message**

   There is a national drive towards health self awareness, maintaining independence and prevention of ill-health. Marketing for the pool will emphasise the benefits of using hydrotherapy for the disabled, elderly and people needing post operative recuperation.

   Publicity will also look to ‘spread the word’ that Sandgate therapeutic exercise sessions have proved very popular and will be expanded using qualified instructors. Many organisations supporting people with chronic conditions are advocating water therapy. The pool can offer the facility of a warm safe and private environment

   ii) **The Method**

   Promotion and publicity will be devised and agreed between the Pool Manager, Sandgate Hydrotherapy Trust and Sandgate Consultative Group (See Management Arrangements (h)) It will include:

   - Good news stories for the local media
   - Information and special campaign leaflets/brochures
   - Functions and Events
   - Website/On line Newsletter and Pool User Forum

   All arrangements will openly acknowledge the help and support received from key stakeholders – Cumbria County Council, South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust etc

### Service Delivery - Prospects

a) **Outputs**

   - Open 7 Days Per Week for a minimum 48 Weeks per year
   - Offers 9 Sessions per day (by 2008/09)
   - Accommodates 600 user visits per week (BY 2008/09)

b) **Outcomes**

   Rehabilitation sessions will generally help users get back to:

   - Independence
   - Community Life
   - Work
   - Normality
Buildings Plant & Equipment

Since the pool was completed in 1977 there has been vastly increased usage and the needs of the users have changed. Today the facilities do not meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and numerous users. For instance there is an urgent need to provide more suitable changing rooms.

The planned addition of two therapy rooms and improved office accommodation for pool staff would also mean that the pool will be better able to satisfy a growing need in the community for the foreseeable future.

In order to meet this challenge South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust organised the 'Jubilee Appeal Fund' to attract public support towards raising the £300,000 required to carry out the work originally envisaged. The Trust is currently holding substantial ‘restricted’ funds to be invested in site improvements.

Cumbria County Council has also promised a £50,000 Capital Grant for the building improvement programme. Planning permission has been granted but building work has yet to commence.

In view of the previous time delays and ownership entanglements outlined above it is essential to ensure that renovation proposals remain ‘fit for purpose’ and a full review and re-evaluation of plans and facilities will be a major priority for 2006/07.

Management Arrangements

a) Horizon

Although Cumbria County Council has made it quite plain that running Sandgate Pool is not part of its core business it has been unsuccessful in past attempts to transfer ownership elsewhere. Sandgate Pool consequently continues to function under the ultimate control of the authority – categorised as an education ‘asset’.

It is still the underlying aim of Cumbria County Council to transfer title of the pool to a local community lead/focused organisation which has the capability and capacity to preserve the ethos and durability of the facility.

b) Influential Factors

Past experiences indicate that such a goal will not be achieved overnight and it will be necessary to deal first with a variety of factors which presently impact on the serviceability of the pool – e.g.

- Determine ‘first level’ accountability for Sandgate Pool within Cumbria County Council until (as and if) ownership passes to a third party
Rationalise inaugural operating agreement with Mencap in accordance with current conditions/circumstances

Clarify line management/accountability for Pool Operations

Consolidate present day Income and Expenditure reporting – Cumbria County Council/South Lakes Hydrotherapy Trust (Above line/Below line/Donations etc)

Agree use of shared/separate facilities with Sandgate School e.g. Utilities Metering/Fencing/Car Parking

Confirm fundamental details for eventual conveyancing of pool property to a new owner

Establish outcome of Valuation Office enquiry re: Future Rates Liability for the pool

c) **System and Structure**

A methodical and prioritised approach to dealing with these immediate factors will be adopted in relation to longer term management, fund raising and refurbishment – e.g.

- Establish a comprehensive/consolidated picture of current operations/responsibilities for Sandgate Pool *(Where are we now?)*
- Identify the aims, aspirations and obligations of principal stakeholders *(Where do we want to be?)*
- Model the alternatives/options for change *(How do we get there?)*
- Select a justifiable ‘way forward’ and agree realistic roles, responsibilities, outputs and outcomes *(How do we know when we have reached our ‘destination’?)*
- Incorporate discussions/deliberations into a series of mutually owned ‘process control’ documents (e.g. Action Plans) which establish financial boundaries, responsibilities, timescales, etc

Solutions will focus on end user benefit – i.e. What is the best solution for pool users.

The following formative timetable will be used to inform and direct proceedings:

- **2006/07** - Resolve operational anomalies/reconvene a Consultative Group/discuss ownership options/commence negotiations on future ownership/determine fund raising arrangements
- **2007/08** – Conclude negotiations on future ownership of the pool/Reconsider and confirm refurbishment proposals
- **2008/09** – Complete agreed refurbishment programme
d) **Division of Duties**

Key roles and responsibilities will be:

- Line Management – Cumbria County Council (or any organisation subsequently taking a controlling interest in Sandgate Pool)
- Service Delivery (e.g. Client Care/Maintenance/Hygiene/H&S) – Pool Manager and Staff
- Fund Raising/Community Liaison – South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust Ltd
- Progress/Performance Monitoring/Contingency Plans – Consultative Group

An revised Organisation Chart for Sandgate Pool is included at Appendix ‘G’.

e) **Pool Operations**

i) **Pool Manager**

The manager is responsible for the everyday operation and promotion of the pool and the supervision of poolside staff.

ii) **Pool Staff**

Staff are suitably experienced and comprise 2 full-time employees and 3 part-time employees to cover weekends. The remaining staff are casual employees. Staff turnover has been low and this is not expected to change significantly.

f) **South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust**

The Trust will continue to play a vital part in the everyday life of the pool. Acting independently and in the best interests of pool users it will concentrate on:

- Organising activities for the ‘Friends’ scheme
- Fund raising from the general public and charitable organisations.
- Promotional materials and events
- Lobbying local authorities, agencies and organisations.

g) **Future Management**

Early discussions will be held with any community orientated organisation willing and able to take on the future ownership and/or management of Sandgate Pool. An initial
approach will be made to South Lakeland Leisure Trust which currently operates Kendal Leisure Centre on behalf of South Lakeland District Council. South Lakeland Leisure Trust have previously shown provisional interest in forging closer ties between Kendal Leisure Centre and Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool.

h) Consultative Group

A ‘reconstituted’ Consultative Group will be convened from principal stakeholders – Cumbria County Council/South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust/Pool Users/Sandgate School. (See Appendix H)

The group, chaired by a nominee from Cumbria County Council, will initially

- Draw up a set of succinct Terms of Reference/Membership
- Create a forum to define/agree future Roles and Responsibilities for CCC/South Lakes Hydrotherapy Trust/Consultative Group etc (Organisation Chart(s) Role Specs etc)
- Provide a means of regularly monitoring progress, performance and value for money against Business Plans/Marketing Plans/Action Plans
- Release/co-opt members according to planning requirements/progress)

j) Change Management

Cohesion and continuity will be vital aspects of maintaining the necessary momentum in these wide ranging inputs and tasks. Cumbria County Council will identify a suitable ‘Change Manager’ from the Area Support Team to co-ordinate affairs for at least the first twelve months of this plan – when the position will be reviewed.

Working in accordance with a formalised role specification (agreed with the Officer/Directorate holding first level accountability and the Area Support Manager) the Change Manager will have (part-time – say up to 2 days per week) involvement in:

- Co-operating with Cumbria County Council Directorates/Departments to conclude unfinished business relating to Sandgate Pool (e.g. Compatibility of staff arrangements)
- Co-ordination of Consultative Group activities
- Liaison with South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust (and South Lakeland Leisure Trust)
- Improving relationships with key stakeholders (actual and potential)
- On-going dialogue between those running the pool and the school
- The provision of guidance and advice (and/or Line Management) to Sandgate Pool Manager
- Establishing links with Cumbria ‘Change Up’ Programme
- Periodically updating the Local Committee for South Lakeland (Cumbria County Council)

**Health & Safety**

Management and Staff at the pool will take all reasonably practicable precautions to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its clients and workforce by providing:

- Safe and functional facilities and surroundings through the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the building and all plant, equipment
- Safe systems of work.
- Adequate instruction, information, training and supervision
- The control of situations likely to cause injury or damage to people, property and equipment
- Effective facilities for the treatment of injuries that occur at the pool
- The means to complete all tests, examinations, samples and records as are necessary to monitor the working environment

Pool management equally expect that the workforce and clients will conform to this approach and comply with the relevant sections of the Heath and Safety at Work Act 1974 and to exercise all reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others.

Health and Safety considerations will therefore be an important part of everyday operations – e.g.

- On-site risk assessments will be a mandatory element of work routines
- Cleaning Agents/Chemicals will be controlled in accordance with COSHH regulations
- Manual Lifting procedures fully complied with
- Changing rooms/walkways/poolside areas will be kept safe and secure
- Building/Plant/Equipment/Machinery will be subject to a programme of planned maintenance
Health & Safety arrangements will be reviewed annually by Pool Management, staff and the Consultative Group.

**Equal Opportunities**

It is the intention of Pool Management to ensure that equality of opportunity and treatment is afforded to its clients and workforce in accordance with the policies and practices customarily applied by Cumbria County Council or any other organisation assuming a controlling interest in pool activities during the currency of this plan.

**Environmental Awareness**

Sandgate Pool Management will adopt an environmentally friendly approach to all its rehabilitation programmes. This will, for instance, include sensible and sensitive use of chemicals and cleaning agents, disposal of waste materials, prudent power consumption - whenever possible.

**Data Protection**

Management at Sandgate Pool will ensure that all information/records relating to clients, suppliers and funders are kept safe, secure and confidential in accordance with the requirements of current Data Protection legislation.

**Quality Systems**

The proprietors of Sandgate Pool will ensure the availability of all resources and information required for the completion of its operations. Pool Management will continuously monitor and analyse work systems and procedures, in order to ensure that objectives are met and processes improved wherever possible.

Client feedback on delivery of services will be actively sought on a regular basis. All client complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated (in accordance with established procedures) and the necessary steps taken to quickly resolve any evident problem.

**Finance & Funding**

a) **Income and Expenditure**

Details of finance and funding for Sandgate Pool for the period 2006/07 – 2008/09 are included in the following Appendix:

b) Sources of Funding

A funding proposal to support the proposed transfer of the pool to the South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust was made by Cumbria County Council in 2002. In essence this consisted of a £50k initial up-front payment (on the date of transfer) and an annual grant of £20k for a period of at least 10 years. By committing a total investment of c£250k the Council clearly recognised and subscribed to the benefits enjoyed by pool users.

When South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust later identified potential funding anomalies Cumbria County Council agreed to reconfigure its finance package so that it became front loaded to a greater extent. Revised arrangements, reflecting inflation since 2002, were approved in September 2003 and consisted of:

- £50k on transfer date
- £30k pa for 2004/05 – 2006/07
- £20k pa from 2007/08 – 2010/11
- £10k pa from 2011/12 – 2013/14

It was proposed that for the first three years the annual grant be funded equally by Local Committee for South Lakeland, Education and Social Services. Thereafter the costs were to be shared 50:50 between Education and Social Services. The initial payment of £50k was to be found from corporate resources.

Equally South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust has been successful in its efforts to raise money in support of the pool. In particular it has obtained about £10,000 pa extra from external sponsors and from a ‘friends’ membership scheme.

All interested parties will need to meet during the early part of 2006/07 to determine the best possible way of applying available funds for the benefit of Sandgate pool operations.

c) Other Considerations

Cumbria County Council does not have any rights over the funds held by South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust. An equitable (and formalised) means of transferring funds raised by South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust to the pool will probably be required. Distinctive sponsorship of discrete aspects of operation (e.g. Salary costs of Pool Manager/New Equipment) might be an acceptable way to approach such transactions.

Whilst it is likely that Cumbria County Council will be precluded from bidding for financial support from many charitable funds it is probably better placed to ‘absorb’
everyday operating costs – e.g. making use off its ‘purchasing power’ to enjoy preferential rates for operational necessities such as insurance.

Cumbria County Council support the view that reasonable financial contributions should be sought from those agencies and authorities gaining clear benefits (e.g. Group usage) from pool operation. For instance the continuation of funding from South Lakeland District Council, the Primary Care Trust and Kendal Town council is assumed although it is as yet unclear what the actual level of contribution might be.

**Monitoring and Review**

Progress on the aims and intentions of this plan will be reviewed not less than quarterly by designated Cumbria County Council representatives, Pool Management and the Consultative Group.

The Plan will be updated on a twelve month ‘rolling’ basis.
Contacts

Further information and discussion on the contents of this indicative plan can be obtained in the first instance from:

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