



Media Release

Lynne Mee

Direct line 01423 556022

Communications and Media Manager Direct fax 01423 561154 not 24 hrs

24 hour fax “ 556010

Mobile 07884 226409

Email lynne.mee@harrogate.gov.uk

www.harrogate.gov.uk

pr.1094.Starbeck Baths cabinet decision.doc

5 January 2004

STARBECK BATHS – BACK IN THE SWIM

SWIMMERS at Starbeck Baths have been thrown a lifeline as members of Harrogate Borough Council’s Cabinet agreed to find £80,000 to carry out emergency repair works at the pool and further funds to secure their future for the next three years. The Cabinet has also supported the consultant’s recommendation that a Trust could be established to take over the management of the pool. They are asking the local community to progress this option as a way of securing the pool’s long-term future.

Consultants employed by the council have confirmed that Starbeck Baths, which opened in 1870, needs nearly £2m to bring them up to modern day standards, to comply with new health and safety legislation and to give them a life of a further 25 years.

Subsequently, Strategic Leisure Limited were commissioned to advise on the options available to the council. Their report has already been considered by the Starbeck Baths Advisory Group but was placed before Cabinet tonight for a final recommendation to full council on 9 February.

Councillor Pat Jones, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Amenity Services, said: “The Council doesn’t have the nearly £2 million required to secure the Pool’s long-term future – indeed Council officers had identified closure of the Pool as a way of saving money. The Cabinet, though, has listened to the public outcry and we are providing funds to maintain the pool and make urgent repairs for at least the next three years. In this time, we will help the community look for more stable longer-term funding which would not be affected by Government grant cutbacks and competing priorities.

At a time when the Government is threatening to cap Council spending this represents quite a commitment and the spend on the Baths over the next three years is roughly equivalent to 1% on the level of Council Tax. Harrogate Council has secured the immediate future of Starbeck Baths but now we need to work with the community to ensure a long-term future for this much-loved facility.”

An £18,000 dilapidation survey was carried out last year, which provides the council with a thorough knowledge of what is required at the pool in the short, medium and long-term. ENDS

FURTHER INFORMATION: Councillor Pat Jones is available for comment on 01423 872466. Further technical information is available from Mr Kevin Douglas, Director of Leisure and Amenity Services on 01423 556717.