



Delivering a Complete Leisure Centre Transformation for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

The Challenge

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CC&G) is located amongst the renowned tourist-orientated on the north coast of Northern Ireland. The challenge identified for CC&G in late 2015 was twofold:

- to develop a new leisure centre to replace the ageing facility in Coleraine Town Centre, which is the major conurbation in the Council area (the ageing leisure centre was increasingly costly to operate, and had become so dated that income and admissions were reducing); and
- to provide an alternative to Waterworld, an indoor water activity centre in Portrush, a major tourist town within the council area

CC&G's objectives for the project were to:

- positively impact the health and wellbeing of their local population and seasonal visitors through better facilities and an improved offer to encourage increased participation
- secure value for money in both the alternative facility development and future operating costs, by reducing the existing overall subsidy

As part of a multi-disciplinary team that also included speciality lawyers and architects, V4 were appointed to provide support, financial analysis, and sector-specific advice on all aspects of the project, including initial feasibility, site evaluation, the Outline Business Case (OBC), and the design development. V4 also provided support in the options appraisal for the management of the facilities and have been engaged subsequently for a range of other related project activities.

“ The Council have worked with the team from V4 Services for over 7 years now, on various leisure investment related projects. Through their hard work and commitment, they have become trusted advisors and, in many respects, they feel more like our business partners rather than traditional consultants. They are always accessible, responsive to our needs, and in many cases have had to work to tight deadlines. It's an overused term, but they are genuinely 'hands on'. ”

Richard Baker, Director of Development and Leisure Services



To find out how V4 Services can help you with your next project, please get in touch.



0161 537 8200



contactus@v4services.com



www.v4services.com



Delivering a Complete Leisure Centre Transformation for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

The Solution

Since 2015, V4 has provided advice and support as well as delivering significant and innovative outputs. It began with the development of the initial OBC, which included:

- Area needs assessment
- Extensive engagement with officers and members
- Working with the design team and cost consultants to identify the optimal facility mix
- Analysis of the different potential sites
- Potential partnerships with public sector bodies
- Operating models available
- Funding options/affordability

The OBC concluded that the options explored could provide a best fit to meet the Council's objectives, but further work on the potential costs of operating the facilities was required.

In 2018 V4 successfully completed an Early Market Engagement process to assess the markets appetite to operate CC&G's leisure estate. Post V4's report, the project board agreed that the in-house team should have the opportunity to demonstrate their ability.

During 2019, V4 developed 'procurement style' documents, including a specification, evaluation criteria, and weightings. This process was aligned to a Competition with Negotiation but minus the selection stage.

The in-house operational team provided a business plan for the first 5 years, including an investment plan of £1m and method statements to cover thirteen areas of operation from maintenance to sales and marketing.

They investigated new and more effective methods of working with their corporate counterparts leading to agreement on service level agreements.

Following evaluation, V4 completed a comparator report for the Project Board before its presentation to a full council meeting in March 2020.

This coincided with the start of the Covid-19 pandemic – the impact of which was that the decision to move forward on the project was put on hold. Although in the months following completion of their 'shadow bid' to March 2020, the In-house team commenced the implementation of their business plan until staff were either re-allocated to critical services or furloughed, which halted their work.

The Outcomes

A project of this magnitude will always have complications and, although to date the Council and its residents have not received the full potential health benefits of a new, or at least improved, leisure facilities in Coleraine, the new approach within the in-house team has significantly benefited the service. The process they embraced transformed their relationships with the other Council departments and their approach to operating the sites. It also provided results demonstrating how their improved operations the benefited their customers.

Waterworld, Portrush, was closed in 2020 as part of the efficiency savings.



To find out how V4 Services can help you with your next project, please get in touch.



0161 537 8200



contactus@v4services.com



www.v4services.com