



Chief Executive Office

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
West Lothian
EH54 6FF

Our Ref: CEO/MH CE090523
Your Ref:

Contact: Graham Hope
Tel: [redacted]

email: redacted@westlothian.gov.uk

Private and Confidential

Maree Todd MSP
Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport
ministerscmws@gov.scot
(letter sent electronically only)

9 May 2023

Dear Minister

West Lothian Leisure Request for Council Consent to Proposed Change

A meeting of Council Executive took place on Tuesday 9 May 2023 at which the above was discussed. I have attached a copy of the report and agreed Motion.

In light of the recent request from West Lothian Leisure to seek consent from West Lothian Council to close four venues, namely Xcite Livingston, Xcite Broxburn Swimming Pool, Xcite Armadale and Howden Park Centre, it was agreed that I write to you to request funding to swimming pool operators to support the retention of swimming pools and leisure venues in local communities, and in particular, West Lothian.

In view of the gravity of the situation, with the needs of the community and jobs at stake, as well as the need for West Lothian Council to respond to the request from the Board of West Lothian Leisure in the near future, I look forward to receiving your response as a matter of urgency. Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Graham Hope".

Graham Hope
Chief Executive

Encl

Scottish Government Response

T : 0300 244 4000

E : scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Morgan Hewitt

morgan.hewitt@westlothian.gov.uk

Our Reference: 202300357148

Your Reference: West Lothian Leisure Request for Council Consent to Proposed Change

9 June 2023

Dear Morgan Hewitt,

Thank you for your letter concerning the proposed closure of Xcite Swimming Pools.

The Scottish Government believes these facilities are crucial to the wellbeing of our country and most importantly, for our children and young people to be healthy and active.

We understand that local authorities, including West Lothian are facing challenging financial circumstances particularly in the maintenance and operating of facilities such as swimming pools.

Despite UK Government cuts, we have protected councils in the most challenging budget settlement since devolution, the Scottish Government is providing nearly £13.5 billion in the 2023-24 Local Government Settlement. Following the flat-cash position set out in the 2022 Resource Spending Review, the Scottish Government listened to councils and increased the resources available to Local Government this year by over £793 million.

In 2023-24, West Lothian Council will receive £405 million to fund local services, which equates to an extra £17.2 million to support vital day to day services or an additional 4.4 per cent compared to 2022-23. In addition all councils will receive their fair share of the currently undistributed sum of £329.8 million.

Local authorities also have a range of revenue raising powers that are not available to other public services including full freedom over the setting of their 2023-24 council tax rates and the newly devolved powers over empty property relief.

However, it is the responsibility of individual councils to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total financial resources available to them on the basis of local needs and priorities. Ultimately, it is for locally elected representatives to make local decisions on how best to deliver services to their local communities.

Barnett consequentialities are accrued to the Scottish Government as a whole and it is for Scottish Ministers to decide how they should be allocated based on their priorities, as part of

this process we will consider what support can be provided to the sport and leisure sector in Scotland.

Yours sincerely

Maree Todd MSP