

'No Edinburgh Leisure facilities to close'

✘ The Leader and Deputy Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council today clarified their position regarding the future of Edinburgh Leisure venues, describing discussions around potential closures as 'entirely premature'.

Their comments follow recent media coverage around the council's budget proposals for the next financial year, 2015/16.

Council leader, Andrew Burns, said: "I want to be entirely clear that there are no proposals to close any council-owned leisure facilities and any discussion around this is entirely premature.

"As a local authority, we are facing significant challenges, most notably increasing demand on front line services and financial constraints, and Edinburgh Leisure must jointly play their part in facing up to these challenges."

"Since becoming a Trust in 1998, Edinburgh Leisure has done much to improve the delivery of sport and leisure in the city – consistently improving their annual turnover and, with that, reducing their reliance on council grant funding – and we recognise the enormous value the venues and services bring to community across the city.

"We believe this model can continue to be successful and would expect their Board to imaginatively explore and exhaust all possibilities around improving efficiency and reducing costs in the years ahead – while maintaining their level of service as far as possible."

Deputy Leader, Steve Cardownie, added: "Despite these obvious challenges, the council's commitment to sport remains

undiminished and we will continue to work closely with Edinburgh Leisure, sportScotland, and others to find the necessary funding to ensure our facilities are fit for a 21st century capital city.

“The recent refurbishment of the Royal Commonwealth Pool and successful bid for the National Performance Centre for Sport are testament to this fact, as is our continuing work on developing a sustainable and affordable replacement for Meadowbank Stadium and Sports Centre.”

The full budget proposals, the budget planner and short film can all be accessed at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/budget

You can have your say by:

- completing the online budget planner to have your say on what services you would spend or save money on in 2015 to 2018
- commenting on the 2015/16 proposals