

Item 11 - Question Time

To the Leader of the Council

'Given that HIE awarded an £8.5m funding package to Macdonald Hotels to develop the Aviemore Resort, including the construction of the leisure arena in the early 2000s, should Macdonald Hotels not allow Highlife card members to use the swimming pool facility in view of the public funds they enjoyed and has this point been raised in negotiations?'

Response to Mr J Bruce

The core issue through negotiations with the Resort, was the financial terms of an agreement, rather than public service or community obligations. Through successive agreements, there has always been a requirement for the Council to provide funding to the Resort to secure public access, rather than it being provided at no cost to the Council.

Notwithstanding the above, the Council did seek advice some months ago from HIE, regarding the public funding arrangements related to the development of the Resort. The Council will have further discussions with HIE, to explore whether there is anything further HIE can do to support the Council's wish to see public access restored.

The Council fully recognises the importance of swimming access to residents of Aviemore and the wider community, and as a result had negotiated over many months, to reach a new agreement with the Resort. The Council has previously expressed its disappointment that the Resort walked away from an agreement that it thought had been agreed, and would have provided an improved financial package to the Resort on a three-year basis.

The Council remains open to further dialogue with the Resort.