

## **Funding Cut and Rising Energy Costs Threaten Future of Leisureland**

30 March 2026

Leisureland faces some tough challenges as all energy bills rise, but it also has to contend with a cut to its funding this year.

Any business using a lot of energy is going to struggle as we continue to have high imported fossil fuel prices. Leisureland has substantial heating costs. Back in 2010 it was about 20% of the city council's energy use. Much has been done since then to make the heating systems more efficient along with installing solar panels on the roof and a pool cover to keep the heat in at night. But even with those measures Leisurelands energy bill for 2026 will be far higher than budgeted.

Green Party candidate in the by-election, Niall Murphy, has raised an additional concern: "In my time on the board of Leisureland there was always a subsidy provided in the city council's annual budget. Even in years when Leisureland covered its operating costs, that subsidy was vital to provide a sinking fund for one-off measures such as major repairs or energy efficiency improvements.

"When the 2026 draft budget was prepared there was a provision of €300,000 for Leisureland. However, during the budgeting process the ruling pact within the council removed this allocation. No explanation was offered at the time for how this will impact the operation of the facility.

"In the current fossil fuel crisis city council will need to decide - sooner rather than later - to ensure the financial sustainability of Leisureland.

"As the city's only fully public pool, it plays a vital role that is not matched by private facilities. It provides accessible services for people with disabilities, and the majority of school and club activities take place there. This makes Leisureland a unique and essential sporting facility for the city".