

## **PARKWOOD LEISURE SERVICES WORKING GROUP**

Monday 9 July 2012

### **Present:-**

Councillor Shiel (Chair)  
Councillor Morris

### **Also Present**

Darren Parrott and Stephen Hughes - Parkwood Leisure

Assistant Director Economy, Leisure Facilities Manager and Member Services Officer

10

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

These were received from Councillors Mitchell and Sheldon.

11

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 APRIL 2012**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2012 were agreed.

12

### **FEEDBACK FROM PARKWOOD**

A Member confirmed that, following a number of issues raised in respect of the Riverside Leisure Centre, there had been a very positive response from the Centre Manager and staff. Overall, the Member felt that there had been a noticeable improvement in operations and fewer complaints.

13

### **SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Stephen Hughes went through the Service Improvement Plan he had prepared with the group highlighting the following issues.

#### **Service Standards**

The **Quest Accreditation** was undertaken on a biennial basis with rolling maintenance checks, the next round beginning at the Arena in September. There had been a change from a percentage to a banded assessment process. The former system had been an aggregate of all factors therefore, in principle, even though the health and safety inspection, for example, might prove unsatisfactory, other elements might lift the overall assessment to a high percentage figure.

The Service Improvement Plan went beyond Quest requirements and Parkwood also focused on any other areas requiring improvement. The company also carried out a range of internal audits to ensure that standards were maintained with specialist internal consultants – in particular, Finance and Health and Safety. Richard Ball emphasised the importance of questioning whether “good was good enough” and asked for individual centre based continuous improvement plans to be shared with the Council. Darren Parrot and Stephen Hughes confirmed that these, as well as actions taken as a result of Quest, would be shared.

With reference to the **customer comment** tables, it was noted that there were a number of zero figures in the breakdowns, which was surprising given the large throughputs at the Centres. Stephen Hughes stated that there were a number of

ways to obtain customer feedback and it was noted that there were now comment cards and boxes as well as notice-boards set up with the City Council to encourage comments to be made and to advertise customer forums in each Centre to encourage feedback. Some comments may not have been recorded in the past because of their relatively trivial nature and because they could be rectified easily. A more robust approach had been introduced and Stephen Hughes had instructed all Centre Managers to carefully record comments/complaints. He confirmed that the spread sheet for July already contained a number of comments and it was the intention to continue this approach. Customer feedback and the capture of public comments etc. was now high up the Managers' agenda and they were also encouraged to spend more time at the reception desks.

One specific issue discussed was the response when a facility was very busy. A Member referred to a comment from a user of the Riverside when the Learner Pool had been particularly busy. It was noted that three people per square metre was the maximum standard for a normal pool and two/two and a half per square metre for a Learner. Swimmers were stopped from entering the pools until numbers were below the agreed maximum capacity.

The pros and cons of the extent of promoting public meetings was noted as these sometimes attracted a minority of motivated disgruntled rather than satisfied customers.

A summary of points relating to each centre was given.

**Pyramids** - significant increase in numbers following the installation of new gym equipment. A company policy to market to students had also increased membership at this and Clifton and Riverside Leisure Centre. A three month membership was offered at the beginning of the University Christmas Term.

Membership had increased by 207 members in the last 12 months.

**Clifton** – again, significant growth.

Membership had increased by 90 members in the last 12 months.

**ISCA/Arena** - Simon Lewry had been appointed as the new manager. Short Mat Bowls would return in 2012/13 with 19 events. New shower pipework had been fitted and a new water treatment system installed at the Arena to combat existing problems with Legionella. The Arena was well used, hosting numerous school sports days, Exeter and Devon School events, a Forces event and the Great West Run. A sponsorship deal would be entered into with Jo Pavey, the international athlete. 96 events were to be held during the course of the year. The hire rate set by the Council was very reasonable.

**Pitch and Putt** had suffered a very difficult year because of the very poor weather.

**Wonford** – ISCA Active GP referral sessions took place twice a week and there was an active teen gym.

**Riverside** – nearly 2,500 Members with a 90 station gym, use of which was balanced and excess demand was not an issue. It was estimated that there were 25 members per station at the Riverside compared with 35 at the Clifton Hill facility which was a much smaller gym and which could appear overcrowded at times. Particularly pleasing had been the attendance of 23 people at netball sessions. A running group had also been formed.

Membership had increased by 439 members in the last 12 months.

**Continuous Improvement Plan** - Parkwood had a significant capital expenditure programme and an example of capital expenditure was the creation of the new Fitness Gym facility at Riverside. The transfer of the underused Riverside café to nearer the entrance overlooking the pool was a potential scheme but the cost of between £60,000 and £100,000 prohibitive. A spinning studio would be an ideal alternative for the existing café space.

14

#### **CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

Stephen Hughes confirmed that more detailed customer comment tables would be provided at future meetings.

In response to Richard Ball, Stephen Hughes stated that Parkwood did not possess a detailed schedule of response times following the reporting of maintenance etc. problems. Each manager often asked for priority treatment. There was currently a small backlog and the maintenance manager had been asked to prioritise the smaller maintenance works through arranging for contractors to tackle this backlog after which a more structured maintenance timetable would be drawn up in consultation with senior management.

15

#### **DETAILS FOR FORUM MEETINGS FOR INFORMATION**

The following dates for Customer Forum meetings for 2012 were noted:-

Clifton Hill Sports Centre 13 August 2012  
Exeter Arena 20 August 2012  
Isca Bowls and Bridge Centre 28 August 2012  
Northbrook Swimming Pool 3 September 2012  
Pyramids 10 September 2012  
Riverside Leisure Centre 17 September 2012  
Wonford Sports Centre 24 September 2012

16

#### **REPORT TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY**

Steve Lyon reported that Parkwood representatives had first attended the Scrutiny Committee - Community in January 2012 and a report back on end of year performance would be appropriate to the next January meeting. It was agreed that a full report be made to the meeting on 15 January 2013.

17

#### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that it would not be necessary for the group to meet on a monthly basis, September being suitable for the next meeting. This next meeting could focus on the individual site Improvement Plans which would be received from Parkwood in good time.

The next meeting would be held at 2.30pm on Tuesday 25 September 2012 at the Riverside Leisure Centre. This would be appropriate given the number of issues regarding the Riverside raised at this meeting.

(The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and closed at 11.15 am)

Chair

