

PARKWOOD LEISURE WORKING GROUP

Tuesday 22 April 2014

Present:-

Councillors Mitchell, Denham and Leadbetter

Also Present

Events, Facilities and Markets Manager, Leisure Facilities Manager and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (SLS)

Jeremy Wright and Charlotte Tregedon

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crow and Robson and Darren Parrott.

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2014 were agreed as a true record.

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CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Analysis of Customer Comments March 2013 to February 2014

Steve Lyon circulated an analysis of customer comments made for each of the centres for the period from March 2013 to February 2014.

Customer Comments for February 2014

A copy of customer comments was also circulated and the format included the response or action taken, under categorised headings of maintenance, health and safety, cleaning and staff and also where a compliment had been recorded. It was noted that 32 comments had been received covering all of the sites, which was a lower number than for the same period last year. The customer's comments were received in a variety of ways through the comment's sheets, other written correspondence such as letters and emails as well as verbal comments. Jeremy Wright clarified that recorded verbal comments were considered to be substantial in nature rather than a passing remark. Steve Lyon added that customer's views could also be very subjective such as in the case of pool water temperature. Jeremy Wright responded to a comment made about a recent issue relating to the water temperature of the main pool at the Pyramids. Councillor Denham stated that she had been impressed with the proactive approach by both Parkwood and Exeter City Council in keeping the press informed after the Pyramids main pool's water heater failed. They provided regular public and media updates and also included social media, providing just the right level of communication. Steve Lyon added that water temperature of a swimming pool was very individual, but had to meet an official governing body's national guidelines.

Jeremy Wright replied to comments made over the response to phone calls at the Riverside Leisure Centre. He explained that Parkwood constantly monitored the volume of calls, and were continually looking at ways to improve the experience. They were in the process of ensuring that adequate training was available and were

also updating the access to booking systems in the back office. Councillor Mitchell sought more detail on how quickly maintenance and cleaning issues were resolved. Steve Lyon considered that such information could be included in the future. (Steve Lyon and Jeremy Wright to discuss and determine whether the information was available and how it could be presented).

Jeremy Wright also provided background information to a comment made over issues relating to patrons tampering with the light fitting in the sauna at the Riverside. They would ensure that replacement lights were available in stock at all times. It was noted that the Centre Manager was responsible for such maintenance issues. Parkwood used a local electrical contractor and they were now undertaking a monthly inspection with the aim of replacing bulbs or electrical equipment as appropriate rather than waiting until a problem occurred.

Members noted the report.

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FACILITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Prior to the meeting the Group visited the Exeter Arena to view the progress of the redevelopment and replacement of the athletics track and associated field event facilities.

Charlotte Tregedeon provided a short presentation on Isca Bowls Centre. She detailed the progress they had made, and also anticipated making in the future in relation to the Facility Improvement Plans for the Isca Bowls Centre. She had been managing the facility as well as the Arena since November. There had been many improvements to the facility and she also referred to progress made on staff team development, which dovetailed with the human focus training initiative. They also operated a progress plan within Parkwood to identify staff who could progress to the next level.

Parkwood had eight sites in Exeter which were all at the second quarter assessment stage of Quest, the national benchmarking quality scheme. The Quest Facility Improvements Plan provided the framework for centre and staff development, which together with the service improvement plans, outcomes of the customers' surveys and customer satisfaction surveys all helped to inform the day to day management. Quest was adhered to on all sites (except Northbrook Golf Course) and highlighted any issues and work required for the Service Improvement Plan. Quest scores for the Exeter Arena had increased and were now in the high/good satisfaction banding, the Isca Centre was also rated satisfactory and both sites were in Parkwood's top six.

A number of initiatives had a positive benefit on the service including the increased day to day inspections by the Duty Manager. Parkwood had introduced a more open management style across the contract with a Manager's open door policy. A new form of staff training called 'Human Focus' had been implemented and was offered to all new members of staff – this was a generic on line course as part of an pre-employment induction that could be carried out before the site specific introduction and induction. All staff at the Arena and 85% of staff at Isca Bowls Centre had recently completed this training (two members of staff were currently on maternity leave).

Members congratulated Charlotte and her team on the cleanliness and professionalism at the Centre.

Members had a brief tour of the facility after the meeting.

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FACILITY PROGRAMMES

Steve Lyon updated Members on the facility programme in place at the Pyramids and Riverside. It was noted that every effort was continuing to be made to encourage the city's swimming clubs to consider the Riverside as a regular training venue. Jeremy Wright confirmed that the Exeter Swimming Club and the Triathlon Swimming Club had decided to remain at the Riverside for the present, but there were issues of introducing clubs, whilst ensuring they accommodated all users, which still needed to be resolved.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dave Lewis referred to the forthcoming Ukulele Orchestra concert at the Riverside on the 3 May. Parkwood were contracted to hold a number of larger events throughout the year and the Riverside was capable of taking a higher capacity than the Corn Exchange, as this was an event which always sold well. Jeremy Wright offered to sell tickets from the Leisure Centre. Dave Lewis would contact him to discuss as there might be some benefit in the run up to the event.

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FUTURE DATE AND TIME OF MEETINGS

The date of the next meeting of 17 June which was due to take place at the Arena was discussed. It was suggested that a later date would be more appropriate to tie in with a provisional opening month of July.

(The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and closed at 11.20 am)