

PARKWOOD LEISURE WORKING GROUP

Tuesday 9 December 2014

Present:-

Councillors Denham, Henson, Robson and Morris

Also Present:-

Councillor Brimble and County Councillor Emma Morse

Colleen Tumelty - Parkwood Leisure

Jeremy Wright - Parkwood Leisure

Bob Demott – Parkwood Leisure

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

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APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2014

Minute 68 - Councillor Morris enquired whether the customer's forum group might be rolled out to other centres if the pilot was successful. Jeremy Wright said that it was not clear at this stage but the Centre Manager at the Pyramids, Michael Anderton was keen to continue to engage customers in this way for as long as possible. If it made a positive impact and they could ascertain the benefits it may be appropriate for smaller sites such as at Wonford or the Pyramids.

Minute 68 - Councillor Henson enquired about the possibility of accessing funding for activities. Jeremy Wright advised that as a commercial operation they had limited access to government sponsored funding, other than for specific sports equipment or coaching. They were able to access funding from Active Devon to enable a number of funded classes and courses including the GP referral Scheme. Funding applications were already being accepted for 2015 and Michael Anderton had already made a number of applications. Every effort had been made to reach out to as many different sectors of the community to provide a programme for local communities in some of the more challenging areas of the city.

Minute 65 - Jeremy Wight thanked Members for their continued concern for staff following the tragic death of former staff member, Nick Cole.

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CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Analysis of Customer Comments October 2014 to October 2014

Steve Lyon circulated an analysis of customer comments made for each of the centres for the period October 2013 to October 2014, which monitored the trend in the quantity and type of comment received.

Customer Comments

A copy of the detailed customer comments was also circulated for the month of October 2014 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. Steve Lyon provided a comparison between October 2013 and 2014.

Steve Lyon referred to a maintenance issue relating to the showers at Clifton Hill. Jeremy Wright referred to problems with pressure and relating to a water pump which had failed. They had inspected and repaired the pump, replacing all of the components.

Councillor Morris enquired about the eight comments in relation to the temperature of the pool at the Riverside. Jeremy Wright advised that vital pieces of technical equipment had failed in quick succession, but the situation was now under control. Although the water temperature was regulated at 29 degrees and the learner pool at 30 degrees, the air temperature continued to be cooler in the pool area, but would be addressed once the second air handler had been repaired. Although there had been an opportunity to swim once the pool temperature had been addressed, patrons who did not swim were offered a voucher for a future swim. Every effort had been made to rectify the situation or make the appropriate compensation as it was in their interest to act quickly to address any concerns. Councillor Denham enquired about the level of non standard equipment and suggested that should be considered when equipment was replaced. Jeremy Wright commented that equipment was always being updated and there was always a dilemma over repair or replace. The air handling units at the Riverside were still repairable and it was appropriate to make the effort and avoid the significant cost of replacement to the Council.

Councillor Denham asked if there was an asset management plan for leisure centres. Steve Lyon confirmed that there was an Asset Plan, which was in the process of being updated. He referred to the baseline contract and over £1m a year was spent on maintaining the sites, but some equipment would ultimately reach the point when it had reached the end of its useful life. Councillor Denham said that it would be useful to have the baseline commercial survey and a future meeting or a report or summary of the potential liability. David Lewis said that the plan was being looked at in conjunction with the Leisure Strategy. Steve Lyon and Jeremy Wright work together and have a common aim over contract negotiation.

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Jeremy Wright introduced Bob Demott, Centre Manager for the Northbrook Swimming Pool and he provided a short overview on their continuous work on the Facility Improvement Plan. He referred to the efforts being made by staff to increase the pool use over the last 12 months, introducing new classes and sessions. One particular success had been the Aqua Zone programme with over 320 users, which had proved very beneficial for the local community. One area that had a notable success was the timing of children's parties, which now made better use of the public swim time, and the numbers of parties had increased threefold with over 75 parties in the last year. The number of groups using the pool had also increased and included the Exeter Sea Scouts, a Canoe Club, Flybe as well as a local church. Staff were always looking to accommodate as many different opportunities for swimming as possible.

Bob Demott responded to a comment on the number of regular users. Councillor Morse was keen to ensure that Northbrook continued to be promoted as a community pool and understood the benefits in the community as well as the balance that the pool had to earn money. She referred to ways of promoting the local pool and that was open for individuals as well as groups and lessons. Councillor Denham suggested that there be the appropriate consultation before make any changes were made but it was positive to make changes to the

programme. Jeremy Wright advised that 66% of peak time was allocated for public swim but the programme did require some further consideration with the possibility of a promotional rate. Councillor Morse welcomed the opportunity for a Sunday morning swim session for families. Bob Demott added that they had also been operating a trial opening up at 8.00am to give the public an extra hour. Jeremy Wright and Councillor Morse agreed there needed to be a balance of use. Steve Lyon referred to the annual review of the contract which included a satisfaction survey, with a consistent approach, but that an extra question was added for each of the leisure centre on views on the programme.

Bob Demott advised that the changing rooms, reception and office area were due to be redecorated and that would commence in the New Year and include a refurbishment of the lockers. He had contacted other Parkwood sites in Exeter to see if any spare lockers could be reused. He also reported that they had received a health and safety audit score of 90%. He also referred to the disabled access and although there were no plans for it to change, staff were aware of all users.

Members made a tour of the facility after the meeting.

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FACILITY PROGRAMMES - CASUAL USEAGE

Steve Lyon circulated a survey of the individual's sites approach to casual use of the facilities. They would discuss this at the next meeting. Under the terms of the contract, there was a requirement for there to be 60% of peak time to be kept available for the public but there were a few historical issues.

It was agreed that this schedule would be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Robson referred to a local youth team playing at the Wonford Sports facility and an informal arrangement to use the facilities. Jeremy Wright would speak to the site Manager Phil Roebuck to ensure the team had access to the building.

Jeremy Wright also reported that they had a useful meeting with the Police team and local community leaders to discuss the issues faced by staff and users of Wonford Leisure facility. He hoped that the dialogue could be maintained. Councillor Denham asked to be kept informed. County Councillor Morse said that her colleague Councillor Andy Hannon was very involved and she would ask him to contact Jeremy Wright. Councillor Robson also referred to the empty Phoenix Club in relation to the upkeep of the building which was owned by Exeter City Council. The Wonford community group were still in another part of the building. Councillor Morse would discuss with Councillor Hannon.

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DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS FOR 2015

To Meet at the Venue at 10.00am
3 February 2015 – Riverside Leisure Centre
14 April 2015 - Isca Bowls and Bridge Centre
23 June 2015 - Exeter Arena
8 September 2015 - Wonford Sports Centre/ Northbrook Golf Course
13 October 2015 - Clifton Hill Sports Centre/Pyramids Swimming Pool
15 December 2015 - Northbrook Swimming Pool

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