

LEGACY LEISURE WORKING GROUP

Tuesday 13 October 2015

Present:-

Councillor Heather Morris (Chair)
Councillors Denham, Henson, Robson and Brimble

Also Present

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

Jeremy Wright – Legacy Leisure
Philip Roebuck – Legacy Leisure

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APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Colleen Tumelty.

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2015 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Customer Analysis

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CUSTOMER COMMENTS ANALYSIS 14/15

Steve Lyon circulated an analysis of customer comments made for each of the centres for the period July 2014 to July 2015, which monitored the trend in the quantity and type of comment received there had been 24 comments made in July 2015, which was less than the 57 comments received for the same period last year. The comments had been taken from a number of courses including emails, correspondence, notice boards as well as compliments and complaints.

The analysis was part of the contract monitoring with comments.

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CUSTOMER COMMENTS FEEDBACK OCTOBER 2015

Steve Lyon circulated a copy of the detailed customer comments for the month of July 2015, and the format included the response or action taken, under categorised headings of maintenance, health and safety, cleaning and staff and where a compliment had been recorded on a centre by centre basis. Details of the responses from Legacy Leisure were also included.

Councillor Morris referred to comments made about the staff in the crèche and if an incident including gym mats at the Clifton Hill site had been a health and safety matter. Jeremy Wright said that he would need to speak to the Centre Manager, but there would have been a valid reason. He referred to the crèche staff routine and explained in further detail their role. It was suggested that it would be more meaningful to have more detailed comments, with the Manager's view as well as the resolution, action and an update on the action. JW will investigate further and respond.

Further to the enquiry the following response was made:

The Centre Manager Simeon Lewry has spoken to the Duty Manager who recorded these comments and explained the importance of managing complaints appropriately. He has also spoken to the crèche staff and is satisfied that they are continually working and managing the crèche appropriately. Councillor Denham referred to the comment about gym mats being moved at the Clifton Hill Sports Centre, the response given was Health and Safety reasons and it was felt this needed further investigation to determine why it was a Health and Safety issue. JW will investigate further and respond.

Further to the enquiry the following response was made - The mats were originally moved as they were too close to the treadmills. The Centre Manager Michael Anderton emailed the customer after the comment was recorded and sent to the client explaining this but received no response. He then rang the customer and after discussing the issues regarding moving mats away from the mirrors he agreed to move the mats back and moved the treadmills instead.

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SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR WONFORD SPORTS CENTRE

Jeremy Wright introduced Philip Roebuck, the Centre Manager at Wonford Sports Centre and also the Northbrook Golf Course. Philip provided a brief update of the Northbrook Golf Course which had been particularly affected by the inclement weather this season. They had successfully achieved an 88% internal finance audit and an 89% internal environmental audit, and passed the external NQA environmental management audit. Wonford Sports Centre regularly appeared at the top of the company league table for energy management and was also held up as an example of best practice by the company.

The site has recently been Quest assessed and are awaiting the official outcome, however, verbally they have been told they had remained as a satisfactory level. They continued to develop schools, business and group usage.

Philip also provide an update on the Wonford Sports Centre and referred to the ongoing challenges of the location, as well as the aftermath from the closure of the Phoenix Youth Club and young people who continued to congregate around the rear of the centre. A level of antisocial behaviour remained an ongoing issue for staff despite the positive efforts made to mitigate this through a number of events and activities.

There have been a number of facility improvements having spent over £13,000 on the following:-

Redecoration of the pump room and the installation of new weights and benches
New pump exercise equipment for classes
New bouncy castle for use at children's parties and Camp Adventure.

Staff had been working on a number of different projects and activities throughout the summer -

- The Wonford Community Organisation & Groups (COGS) and the Wonford Sports Centre provided planned activities in the park with dance and football activities. Over 25 children came into the sports centre who previously had not been there before. A working group made up of representatives from COGS, the Chestnut Centre, the local Police team, Lidl's, Active Devon and Exeter City Football Club had come together to work for the benefit of the local community.

- The Doorstep Club, in partnership with Active Devon and Exeter City Football Club, with a multi sport session in the hall and an hour of football on the astro pitch for youths 11 – 19, and Badminton coaching to encourage participation, coach courses and badminton challenges.
- Walking Football 55+ had started in February and now was an established group of up to 30 players now enjoying 1½ hours of football.
- A wheelchair basketball club was also on a Saturday from 4pm until 6pm and the teams included disabled and able bodied players and provided an opportunity for disabled players to play in a league.
- Wonford Sports Centre had also achieved funding from Active Devon to provide a Sportivate Group for ladies between 16 – 25 years with an exercise class, spa and a crèche facility was provided.
- Sportivate multisport activities were also provided for a number of disabled participants and groups.
- Adult Weight Management where clients are referred by the Devon County Council Hub working with the NHS on a 10 weeks programme to hit a target for body weight loss. 12 people had been referred from the local GP and hospital.

Jeremy Wright added that they would apply for further community initiatives funding to cover all Legacy Leisure sites in Exeter to enable children and their parents of the respective local community to become more engaged.

They were also exploring a number of new initiatives:-

- Parent and toddler drop in and soft play on Thursday mornings
- Continuing to promote their facilities to local schools and also have introduced a walking club and have been encouraging parents to park in their car park and walk to their local school, the nearest being the Woodwater Academy.
- They hope to start Walking Basketball and have been working with partners to encourage more participation in the Centre through COGS, and Active Devon.
- Every effort was being made to develop the off peak usage of the sports hall.

Dave Lewis declared an interest as a user of the pitch.

Dave Lewis referred to an issue with the outdoor pitch, which although could still be played upon, was in need of replacement. The pitch was used for approximately only seven hours a week. He would speak to Paul Faulkner, the Public and Greenspace Manager to discuss the options and to establish if it was beyond economic repair. It was noted there was Section 106 monies from the Exeter Airport Development for investment in the Wonford area. Steve Lyon added that it was advantageous to keep the pitch operating as a leisure facility, and they hoped to explore options, including the possibility of adding a roof to bring the facility into the Centre, which would help alleviate vandalism and antisocial behaviour. Jeremy Wright referred to the stance taken to ameliorate some of the damage and vandalism caused to the pitch. Councillor Denham asked if it was possible to obtain a log of all incidents. Philip Roebuck would pursue that request and confirmed that they reported each incident and also spoke to the police regularly. Councillor Morris suggested that a joint letter be written to Devon County Council by herself as Chair and also from the Portfolioholder for Leisure and Culture, Councillor Denham on behalf of the Working Group in respect of the future plans for youth provision in the area, and raise the impact on the Wonford Sports Centre. A copy would be sent to Philip Roebuck and the Police.

Members thanked Philip for a very comprehensive report and to all the staff who had developed and run the events and activities.

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UPDATE ON THE HEALTHY SNACK TRIAL

Jeremy Wright provided an update on the Healthy Snack trial, following the issue being previously raised by a local GP, Dr Hayes. The sites offered a range of options including healthy snacks. Water was also made available and in many cases was conveniently placed next to the tills. Unfortunately the results of a trial resulted in a higher proportion of the healthy snack options remaining unsold despite being available in both the vending machines and the cafeteria. The main benefit was that the leisure centres offered an opportunity for exercise and over 3,000 people a week had made the decision to partake in some form of exercise.

It was noted that at least those people buying the range of snacks were participating in exercise. It was nevertheless important to provide a range of alternative options, and also make advice available on the benefits of healthy eating.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dave Lewis provided an update on a VAT charge being passed on to sports and swimming clubs, following the name change to Legacy Leisure. Legacy Leisure have kindly resolved. Jeremy Wright referred to new guidance and the complexities of tax law. There had been no intention to gain additional revenue and the matter had been resolved. The Council wish to thank Legacy Leisure for their time on this matter as it had become a very contentious issue and had drawn Members into a difficult situation. From October the Council will no longer be required to contribute towards this concession, the clubs have been advised by Legacy Leisure.

Councillor Robson stated that she was disappointed that the meetings were no longer being held at the leisure facilities as this gave Members an opportunity to visit the sites. Officers in liaison with the Chair would discuss this and see if a solution could be agreed.

Steve Lyon was arranging a tour of the facilities for early December 2015 and the idea was to make this an annual event for the Working Group Members.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING 15 DECEMBER 2015

The date of the next meeting would be held on 15 December 2015 to discuss the Northbrook Swimming Pool.

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SITE VISIT AND PROPOSED FUTURE MEETINGS

Members agreed the following dates and also discussed an annual site visit

2 December 2015 Site Visit of Facilities – 10.00am to 2.00pm

9 February 2016 - Riverside Leisure Centre (Rennes Committee Room)
19 April 2016 - Isca Bowls and Bridge Centre (Rennes Committee Room)
14 June 2016 - Exeter Arena (Rennes Committee Room)
6 September 2016 - Wonford Sports Centre/ Northbrook Golf Course (Terracina Meeting Room)

18 October 2016 - Clifton Hill Sports Centre/Pyramids Swimming Pool (Terracina Meeting Room)
13 December 2016 - Northbrook Swimming Pool (Rennes Committee Room)

(The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and closed at 11.30 am)

Chair