

PLACES LEISURE EASTLEIGH CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Tuesday, 6 March 2018 (7:00 pm – 8:33 pm)

PRESENT:

Councillor A Broadhurst (Chairman); Councillors Hall and Mignot

Co-opted Members: P Kirkpatrick, E Szary, J Banks, R Atton, A Hardy, J Kennett and D Moore

Representing Places for People: P Leamore, L Cowper and J Parker

Representing Eastleigh Borough Council: J Pickering and M Cairley

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bain, Irish, Pragnell and Pretty

16. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

17. PLACES LEISURE EASTLEIGH UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE

Jo Parker, General Manager, provided the following updates;

Swim lessons had grown from 1928 students to 2206, which was an increase of 278 children within three months. There had been an additional 2,122 participants at group exercise classes during January 2018 compared to the 2017 which was great. Several new classes had been added to the programme, which included two additional Yoga classes and one Zumba Strong, Barre, Aqua Relax and Aqua Hit. Virtual RPM Indoor Cycling classes, which were cycling classes with an on-screen instructor, had been introduced and had seen 134 members attend in December 2017 and 233 in January 2018. It was positive that this continued to expand.

The gymnastics programme had grown from 63 students to 111; the aim was to reach 125 students. There were only four spaces left out of 24 at trampolining. There had also been a growth in casual badminton which was up 2,187 compared to last year.

Over the past three months, membership had increased by 360 members to a total of 4,585 members. Swim membership had also increased by 67 members and was now at a total of 533 members.

The new centre had a large soft play facility and they had been pleased with the usage of this; it had 2,211 visitors in December and just over 3,500 in January.

The “Mum and Baby” Programme had won Project of the Year at Eastleigh Sports Awards and had also been nominated for the Women’s Sports Trust ‘Be A Game Changer’ Awards and Hampshire Awards. The programme was run by a fantastic team and everybody was very proud of them.

On 22 February 2018 an unannounced Quest visit had taken place; this was to assess the centre for a leisure industry benchmarking accreditation that most leisure centres undertook. The report was yet to be received, however the assessor had told Jo that the staff had blown him away and the facilities were fantastic.

The Places Leisure Eastleigh open day had taken place on 17 February 2018, which Rebecca Adlington attended, and involved many of the clubs. The day was brilliant and a great success.

Councillor Mignot asked for an update on casual swimming and when leaflets would be available for members of the public which included the swimming timetable. Jo advised that they had moved away from fliers and all of the information was regularly updated on the Places Leisure Eastleigh website and visitors were signposted to this, however some new fliers were being printed. There had been a number of changes made to the swim programme as a result of customer feedback, which meant the fliers needed to be updated. With regard to casual swimming, this had increased since the new centre opened which bucked the national trend and exceeded expectations.

Janine Pickering, Lead Specialist for Health and Wellbeing, noted that it was unprecedented to have a zero shut down period when a new centre was opened and thanked the teams that went above and beyond to achieve this.

18. CUSTOMER COMMENTS

Jo Parked reported that over the past few months, there had been a lot more feedback due to the new centre. Two thousand customer comments had been received and the top three issues had been highlighted as the following;

Swim programme

As a result of the feedback, a number of changes had been made to the swim timetable, which included additional evening lane swimming sessions as well as changes to the learner pool to include Twins club on a Thursday. The Saturday inflatable session would be removed as the attendance numbers were lower and it was felt that far more families would attend day time swimming.

Pete Leamore added that the initial reason for the inflatable being introduced was with a view to stimulate the casual swimming market; that

had worked in a lot of places however due to the new pool it was felt it that currently was not needed and they would devote more time to casual swimming. The inflatable would still be available for parties and they were not taking this away; it could be reintroduced at a later date. He also advised that a number of comments had been received about the size of the lanes and after testing, it had been agreed to make them double lanes and use four instead of eight. They had also moved from rope to the proper anti-wave lanes as this provided a better quality swim. This could be reviewed; as they had not had an eight lane pool before, it was all about learning how best to use this.

Parking

Pete Leamore noted that the project had not yet been finished and Phase 2, which was 6 months work to complete additional car parking, landscaping and lighting, was in progress now that demolition of the old building had been completed. A temporary car park had been added to the site whilst the work was undertaken, although they appreciated that this was not ideal due to the surface and recent weather. The new car park would create 523 spaces whereas previously there were only 360.

Turnstiles

This was a culture shock for some customers as there were previously no control measures in place at the old centre. Place Makers had been employed for the first couple of months to support members to learn how to use their new cards and access the centre. There had been a mixed reaction, however there had not been the same levels of vandalism and unauthorised access which had been a real issue on the previous site, which was positive. It was good to control access as previously there had been individuals that tailgated and used the centre for free and it was not right that paying members subsidised those people. There continued to be one or two technical issues but overall it had settled down. Some access control had been disabled, such as for studios for classes, as this had not been practical and larger groups such as schools and clubs could not all be counted in however it was about balance of control with speed of access; this was not there yet but it had improved. One of the main issues was with customers of the concessions, such as the beauty salon and hairdressers, not being able to access these without queuing at main reception. The concessions had now created cards with codes to give to their customers and this had worked well.

David Moore, Bowls, club feedback that there was a lack of lighting on the road to the club venue and this was difficult for users of the building; this was also hired out as a community venue so it was vital that this was looked into. Janine Pickering explained that this was a private road and that the bowls club were encouraged to use the parking area on the leisure centre side; however she would look into this.

Edward Szary, fitness, said that he had feedback from customers

regarding the cycling shed and asked whether there would be anything additional put in as they felt that they were far away from the centre and they were not encouraged to cycle due to the security risk. Janine Pickering confirmed there would not be any additional cycling sheds however once phase two had been completed, the whole area would be more open and lit and this would improve the issue.

Paul Kirkpatrick provided feedback from EDSAD regarding some issues with access into the learner pool, as well as a few improvements that could benefit the showers and changing areas. They had also felt that the addition of a second pool pod would be beneficial. These comments were noted and the issues with the showers were being addressed.

19. UPDATE FROM CLUBS

Sub Aqua Club

Jonathan Banks reported that they had 53 members in the club, which was a good level. They got a natural dip through the year as members retired or finished training, so always kept membership higher to allow for this.

The open day was really good and created a spike of interest, in particular younger children that wanted to get involved, and membership would increase by 10 to 15% if they all signed up. They had settled in well to the new centre; there had been a few teething problems with regard to the turnstiles but overall it had been good. They were keen to get more settled and get a cage to store kit on site. There was a lot planned for the rest of year and the club was very active.

Bowls

David Moore advised that it was currently closed season as they played from April to September. However, the artificial surface was available to members of public throughout year by a separate arrangement with Places for People Leisure and it was fairly active over there. The club wanted to note their appreciation to Dave Bowen from Eastleigh Borough Council and Stuart, the greenkeeper, as they got on well with both of them. In October 2017, they made improvements to the green and that went well.

Janine Pickering added that Dave Bowen was purchasing the club's new signs to tie in with the new facility.

Parkwood Dance

Jenny Kennett reported that they had settled in well and the team were really happy. The children and parents loved the new studio and the seating outside as they could be close to the studio. There had not been any issues with the turnstiles and the only thing that parents had found difficult was the change of food provision in the café as they no longer did hot food.

Membership had improved and the under 5s had slowly increased; there had been more enquiries as the studio was in a more prominent place in the centre. There was a show in July 2018 and also a charity fundraiser.

Swim Club

Rob Atton extended thanks to all involved in the opening; there had been a few teething issues but the staff had been very helpful. The open day went very well and there had been a spike in interest, in particular from the Over 60 category, and some members of the public had not realised there was a swim club however the new glass design of the building had helped with publicity.

Membership was at 130 members and 140 on the Learn to Swim programme. The new moveable pool had been really useful. There had been some issues with access for the learn to swim users as they were term time only but the staff had worked on this and it was almost resolved. The county championships had taken place this month with thirteen individual members of the club swimming in 46 events; they got through to eight finals and there were also sixteen relay teams that took part. There was a very solid performance compared to this time last year and the group was looking at other options for their members, such as strength training.

There had been a very good transition to the new centre however there was a slight issue with the heating above the main pool, as it could get quite hot there. In addition, anybody could get in via a door to the seating for the learning pool which was by the membership area; it was not an issue for the group as they knew all of their parents but something that should be noted.

EDSAD

Paul Kirkpatrick reported that they were generally very pleased with the new facility. It was a big change for their members, but they were getting used to it.

The AGM was planned for 26 March 2018 and the main item on agenda would be the future of the club. Membership level (i.e. income) was sufficient to fund the old pool charges, but both membership and attendance needed to be increased to meet the increased charges for the new pool.

They had embarked on a publicity campaign, with a new Eastleigh Disability Swimming Facebook page and a new publicity flyer. They had also attended the Community Day.

The club had a very enjoyable Christmas event at the Railway Institute, and the AGM would also include a social element.

Fitness

Edward Szary advised that the gym users loved the new building as it had a nice finish and design features, although there had been some issues. There were no hooks in the showers and some members had raised that for a building that was going to be used through several decades there was no additional showers or changing rooms. Sometimes they had to queue for showers if it was a busy period.

Janine Pickering advised that the numbers were a recommendation from Sport England, as changing provisions were now lower in numbers due to lack of usage.

The group cycling classes have doubled in size which was good however there was some disappointment with the new bikes as they were quite complex for users. There was also an issue with access to the cycling room. When booking on the cycling classes, it was not always clear which class members were booking as the names were not clear and the virtual class did not tell you how long it lasted.

The fitness users had found the turnstiles difficult and they could be confusing, in particular with the Ipads and it was felt that this process could be clearer.

5-0 Club

Ann Hardy, coordinator of 5-0 Club, Sport For All SEN and Aqua Relax, advised that everything had gone well on the opening day and the Special Needs group were very excited about the new centre. The groups numbers had remained at the same amount; she felt that there was potential for this to increase and would ask about other ways to recruit. She felt privileged to work at the new building as it was so light and airy.

Some of the group members that had been attending for years had not returned due to the change of the building which was disappointing. Aqua Relax had just started and was on the third week; attendance has been okay with different people that attended each week. On one occasion she had to ask for help from a member of staff as a lady could not get in pool, so to hear about the new equipment that could be used for this was fantastic.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 2 October 2018 at 7pm at Places Leisure Eastleigh.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Broadhurst advised that he had difficulty when approaching the

entrance to the building prior to the meeting as there was no lights on the footpath and it was difficult to see other pedestrians.

Pete Leamore explained that there had been issues with the lights cutting out and they had been trying to get this addressed with the contractor.

Councillor Hall asked whether there were plans in place for the upcoming Election count on 3 May 2018 which would be held at Places Leisure Eastleigh.

Pete Leamore advised that there was staff provision and facilities in place for the evening and regular communications with Eastleigh Borough Council staff to ensure this was in place.

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